Study to Explore the Impact of Personality Traits on Employee Turnover in Public and Private Sector

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Abstract: The motive of conducting this research was to investigate the relationship between personality traits of employees and their turnover in public and private organizations. This study also highlights the numerous definitions and description of personality and its traits in contemporary literature. The purpose of this research was to explore what kinds of personality traits are more dominant in those employees who have high turnover intentions or having high job quitting probability. This study highlights that Personality traits like Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness were found negatively associated to individuals’ intents to quit, while Openness to experience were observed to be positively related with intention to quit.

Key words: Personality Traits • Extraversion • Emotional Stability • Conscientiousness • Job Quit Intensions

INTRODUCTION

One of the biggest challenges faced by the organizations is employee turnover that are having an impact on the current state of organizations productivity and performance. The organizations need to examine the personality traits of the individuals during recruitment process and choose the candidates with the best traits in order to minimize or curb the turnover of employees by improving their retention. The basic purpose of this research analysis is to investigate those personality traits among employees which will lead to their low turnover in any organization.

Objectives: The significance and main objectives of this research analysis is

• To identify the candidates with best possible traits in order to reduce turnover.

Personality: ‘Personality’ is derived from Latin word Persona which means a cover or mask used by theater actors in the play to represent their character and personality. Robin [1] defined personality as “the conduct and ways in which people responds and cooperates with another”. In other way, personality can be viewed as a composite of human characteristics and behaviors.

Big Five Model of Personality: Resulting from research work done by Raymond [2], Big five Model exhibits that individual’s personality includes five dimensions that provides a comprehensive catalog for determining and appraising the person’s dissimilarities on the basis of their attitude towards job. Costa and McCrae five factor model about personality and its trait aspects are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conscientiousness</th>
<th>Organize, Devoted, Determined, Self-discipline, Thoughtful,</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>Nervousness, Annoyed, Dismayed, Vulnerability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>Warmth, Social, Confident, Excitement-Seeking, Optimistic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>Conviction, Truthfulness, Selfless, Compliance, Reserve,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Aesthetics, Thoughts, Actions, Ideas, Morals</td>
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Personality is considered as a significant element for evaluating and appraising the employee’s job performance. It is a conduct which discriminates one individual from another [3]. Most recent studies illuminate that personality influences the environments within which people reside [4] and plays a vital role to choose a state within which people attempt to stay in. Culture regulates how good “a person fits within a particular organization because the fit denotes the sensation of ease with that culture” [5]. It was found to be directly connected to a worker’s output and determines the amount of turnovers in a corporation [6]. Therefore, it was suggested that individual’s personality traits and job performance are positively correlated with another and the organizational productivity is going to be exaggerated when their personality traits matches the organizational culture.

**Conscientiousness:** The first personality characteristic is Conscientiousness. M. R. Mount [7] suggested that such kind of person is accountable, trustworthy, determined, vigilant and systematic, who concentrate on achievement and accomplishments which is a major feature for performing job tasks. Individuals higher in conscientiousness tend to be more loyal and committed to their organization. Maertz and Griffeth [8] recommended that persons who have intention to leave their organizations may ask themselves, “Do I have any responsibility for this organization which I won’t be able to fulfill if I quit my job?” Those employees who possess high Conscientiousness will adhere themselves to their existing workplace because they believe that these contractual commitments exist.

**Extraversion:** Extraversion includes the way of behaving and interacting with others. Expressive, sociable, friendly, optimistic, talkative, confident and determined personnel are described as extraverts [9]. Extravert people always think in a positive way about their work [10]. Meyer and Allen (1991) [11] considered that these traits play a very important role in individual satisfaction. Individuals who feel themselves more satisfied with their work environment, they are expected to stick more to their organization [8]. As extraverts are socialized with others worker in the organization (Louis, 1980), so, they would be less likely to turnover.

**Emotional Stability:** Emotional stability confines the negative facets of personality which employers want to avoid among employees. Low emotionally stable individuals do not trust others easily Goldberg L. [12]. If an employee is severe anxious, unconfident or annoying, that person will be considered unfit for the organization. Low Emotional Stability leads to the low individuals’ job satisfaction. Emotional less stable people are more incline to remain doubtful about their surroundings [13]. Maertz and Griffeth [8] noticed during the study of motivational forces affecting turnover that employees who always have negative views about their job environments are usually more probable to quit.

**Agreeableness:** Agreeable individuals are courteous, flexible, naive, supportive, caring, sympathetic and open-minded [14]. Agreeableness is associated with an employee’s capability to work willingly with other team members (Mount and Barrick, 1998). A flexible employee will always feel easy and comfortable to work with others. Agreeable individuals adjust themselves with their organizational environment because of their flexibility, adaptability and conformity. In addition, they are pertinent to feel more about their job environments because of their aptitude to build affirmative and satisfying relations with other employees within the organizations [15].

**Openness to Experience:** "The social propensity generally related with Openness to Experience comprise of being creative, cultivated, curious, open-minded, intellectual having a need for diversity, aesthetic and sensitivity" [12]. This fifth personality trait, openness to experience, is helpful in distinguishing those who will be easy to train for specific job or are ready for training. Individuals who are creative, tolerant and inventively insightful are generally eager to discover new things and conform to new behavior of performing job tasks. Individuals higher in Openness to Experience have tendency towards shifting jobs and to leave an organization [8]. Ghiselli (1974) suggested that openness is also linked to turnover and unplanned quitting, including wanderlust. Hence, employee high in this personality trait is less inclined to stay within the current organization.

**Turnover:** Employee’s turnover is defined as “employees who are leaving, have left and will leave an organization for numerous reasons” [16]. This research deals with the employee’s intentions to leave or stay with the organization. Intent to quit or turnover is taken as dependent variable in this research. Many researches use
the term intention to leave instead of actual turnover as the outcome variable because it was observed that employees generally make pre-plan before actual quitting [17]. To reduce the turnover of employees in any organization, they need to consider the factors which influence the employee’s decision and force them to quit. A causal model designed for voluntary turnover was given by Price and Mueller [18]. They anticipated seven factors which influence turnover indirectly through job satisfaction. These determinants are

- Repetitive work,
- Participation in job related decisions,
- Being informed of job related issues,
- Having close friends as co-workers,
- Receiving good pay,
- Being fairly compensated and
- Having an opportunity to obtain a better job.

Greater the job satisfaction level, greater will be the intent to stay into the organization [18]. Past researches shows that social support plays a significant role in minimizing the intention to quit. According to Moore [19], social support from supervisors lessened the work stress level of nurses and thus decreased the nurses’ intention to leave. Kelly and Cross [20] and many other researchers found that social circle of friends, family and peers is more vital source of reducing stress level than supervisor support among employees. From the previous researches, it was explored that intrinsic satisfaction have a strong effect on the intention to leave while extrinsic satisfaction had less influence on turnover intention. From the findings of J. J. Li [21], it was discovered that job-related factors like job challenges and task repetitiveness are the initiators of employee turnover. Work stress on job has also been shown as an essential predictor of employee turnover intentions [22]. Current research in this field indicates that the probability of the employees to quit from their organizations increases due to stressful work environment [23].

From the previous researches, it was discovered that lack of effective employee retention strategies poor reward programs and unfriendly working environment forced most of the employees to leave their organization. Thus it was explored that the rate of employee turnover increased with the poor working environment, lack of competitive incentive programs and effective staff retention strategies which caused the decrease in organizational productivity and increase in running costs due to new recruitments and production disruption.

Mobley’s Empirical Model: Mobley [24] proposed an empirical model which shows that intention to quit from an organization is the last stage prior to actual turnover. Low job satisfaction level leads to bring the feelings to quit in the employees. Mobley and Hollingsworth [25] suggested that tenure and age have an indirect impact on employee’s turnover through the chances of receiving another alternative job opportunity and job satisfaction. The model proposes that lower level of job satisfaction leads to bring the thoughts of quit, which then leads to intention to explore for another possibility and eventually to the intention to quit and finally turnover.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to build a complete background of this research, material has been gathered from journals. Primary data was collected through a questionnaire. The first portion of the questionnaire is for collecting personal and professional information about the employees of public and private organizations. The second portion of the questionnaire is for measuring the dependent and independent variables. Data from approximately 301 employees both from government and private organizations has been gathered. Non-Probability sampling has been used as a sampling technique was used. In order to perform in-depth analysis following hypothesis were formed.

Hypothesis 1: Is there a relationship between Conscientiousness and Intent to quit or turnover.

Hypothesis 2: Is there a relationship between Extraversion and Intent to quit or turnover.

Hypothesis 3: Is there a relationship between Emotional Stability and Intent to quit or turnover.

Hypothesis 4: Is there a relationship between Agreeableness and Intent to quit or turnover.

Hypothesis 5: Is there a relationship between Openness to Experience and Intent to quit or turnover.

Hypothesis 6: Is there a relationship between the turnover of men and women.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In data analysis, the proficient survey forms were assemble and statistically analyzed. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 has been used to carry out the analysis and for the generation of charts and graphs. These statistics generated by SPSS has been then interpreted. Both descriptive and inferential dimensions were used for analysis.

Reliability Test: Reliability test was performed to measure the consistency for scale used for this research for all items. The value 0.812 of Cronbach's Alpha indicates a high level of internal consistency for our scale with this specific sample.

Demographical Analysis: The first part of the questionnaire consists of biographical information that was used to analyze the data. The frequency and percentage for gender, marital status, sector, income and qualification has been shown in Table 2. Out of 301, 192 respondents (64%) were male and 109 (36%) respondents were female. 114 respondent (38%) belongs to the age group less than 25, 164 respondents (55%) belongs to the age group 25-35 while only 22 respondents (7%) belongs to the age group 35-45 and only 1 respondent belongs to the age group of more than 45 years old. 203 respondents (67%) were single and 98 (33%) respondents belong to the married group. 132 respondents (44%) were from Government sector and 169 (56%) respondents belong to the Private sector. 139 respondents (46%) had an income less than 30 thousand rupee, 123 respondents (41%) had an income ranging between 30,001 to 50,000 while 27 respondents (9%) had an income between a range of 50,001-80,000 and 12 respondents (4%) have the income of above 80,000. 3 respondents (1%) were of matric level. 8 (3%) were intermediate level students, 138 respondents (46%) were bachelor’s level students while 152 respondents (50%) were Masters level students.

Correlation Test: Pearson’s correlation test is applied to check relationship between personality traits and employees turnover. The relationship between conscientiousness and turnover was found to be moderately strong at 99% confidence level. Correlation value of -.497 for conscientiousness and turnover is showing a moderate negative relationship between these two variables. Similarly correlation value of -.476, -.459 and -.457 for Extraversion, Emotional Stability and Agreeableness respectively are showing moderate negative relationship with employee turnover. While 0.303 value of correlation for openness to experience and turnover is showing a weak positive relationship between these two variables.

Regression: Further to inspect the correlation relationship between personality traits and employee turnover, regression analysis was conducted. Result has been summarized in Table 7.9. 0.247 value of r-square for conscientiousness shows that 24.7% of the variation in turnover can be explained as an effect of the variation in the conscientiousness. 0.227 value of r-square for Extraversion shows that 22.7% of the variation in turnover can be explained as an effect of the variation in the Extraversion. These results affirmed that there exists a correlational relationship in two variables and Extraversion is a predictor of turnover. 0.210 value of r-square for emotional stability shows that 21% of the variation in turnover can be explained as an effect of the variation in the Emotional Stability. Value of r-square for Agreeableness is showing that 20.9% of the variation in turnover can be explained as an effect of the variation in the Agreeableness. Similarly, value of r-square for openness to experience shows that 21% of the variation in turnover can be explained as an effect of the variation in the Openness to Experience. These results affirmed that there exists a correlational relationship in two variables and Openness to Experience is a predictor of turnover. Moreover, to test the proposed relationship, hypothesis were tested by using one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) that give p-value= 0.00 which showed that there exist a relationship between five dimensions of personality and employee turnover. To further understand the direction of relationship, coefficients of regression equation (Y=α+βX) has also been shown in Table 2.

T-Test: T-Test has been used to check the association of turnover with Gender, Marital Status and Sector. Results of T-Test, shown in Table 7.29 depicted a p-value greater than 0.05 for gender which provided a strong evidence of no impact of gender on employee turnover. A p-value of .556 for marital status shows that there is no impact of marital status on turnover and a p-value for sector is less than 0.05 which is showing that employee’s Sector has some impact on employee turnover [26].
One way Anova: One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also used to check if age and qualification have any impact on the employee’s turnover. Results of one-way ANOVA, shown in Table 7.34 depicted a p-value of 0.343 for age which is greater than 0.05, which provides strong evidence that there is no impact of age on turnover. ANOVA test shows a p-value of 0.147 which shows that employee’s Qualification has no impact on employee turnover [27].

The demographic data was analyzed and correlation, Regression test was applied on personality traits to find their relationship with employee turnover [28-30]. It was found that there is a moderate negative relationship of turnover with Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Emotional Stability and agreeableness while a weak positive relationship with Openness to experience. When t-test was applied to find the impact of gender, marital status and sector on turnover, it was determined that there is no impact of gender and marital status on turnover while sector of employee has some impact on their turnover. ANOVA test to determine the impact of age and qualification shows that there is no association of turnover with age and qualification.

REFERENCES