



Impact of Big Five Personalities on Job Performance of Executive Employees in Apparel Firms in Kurunegala District of Sri Lanka.

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Abstract

The impact of personality traits on employee job performance is well-documented, with many organizations leveraging this relationship to enhance workforce efficiency. This study investigates the impact of the Big Five Personality traits on the job performance of executive employees within selected apparel firms in the Kurunegala District of Sri Lanka. Using a questionnaire comprising 40 five-point Likert scale statements, data were collected from 285 randomly selected executives. The research followed a deductive approach, testing six hypotheses through uni-variate and bi-variate analyses. The findings confirmed that all six hypotheses were supported, indicating that each dimension of the Big Five Personality traits significantly contributes to job performance. These results emphasize the value of understanding individual personality traits for evaluating and improving employee performance in the apparel sector. This study offers practical insights for industry professionals, highlighting the importance of integrating personality assessments into performance management strategies. Including specific correlation results in the abstract could further enhance its comprehensiveness and relevance.

Keywords - Big Five Personalities, Executive Employees, Job Performance

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Introduction

Human resources are one of the most valuable and significant factors in an organization. Because of the role it plays in the organization, and also because it often accounts for a large part of an organization's cost structure. Human resources are the source of achieving competitive advantage because of their capability to convert other resources into output. Human resources are crucial for organizational success, especially in sectors like the apparel industry where they significantly impact both cost structure and competitive advantage. Personality, particularly the Big Five traits (Openness, Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism), plays a key role in determining job performance. These traits are stable over time and influence behavior at work, making them an important factor in understanding how employees perform their roles.

Previous research has highlighted the impact of these personality traits across various industries (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Ghani et al., 2016), but there

remains an empirical gap in understanding how they affect executive employees' job performance in this particular context. Despite the well-established link between personality traits and job performance in various industries globally (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Ghani et al., 2016), there is limited research focusing on the apparel sector in Sri Lanka, especially in the Kurunegala District. While prior studies have explored related topics—such as the relationship between personality traits and work-family balance (Wickramaarachchi & Perera, 2016)—there is a lack of empirical evidence on

how these traits specifically affect job performance among executives in the apparel industry. Therefore, the research problem addressed in this study is “How Does the impact of Big Five Personalities on Job Performance of Executive Employees in Selected Apparel Firms in Kurunegala District, Sri Lanka?”

Objectives

- To examine the impact of openness to experience on job performance of executive employees in selected apparel firms in Kurunegala district, Sri Lanka.
- To examine the impact of extroversion on job performance of executive employees in selected apparel firms in Kurunegala district, Sri Lanka.
- To examine the impact of agreeableness on job performance of executive employees in selected apparel firms in Kurunegala district, Sri Lanka.
- To examine the impact of conscientiousness on job performance of executive employees in selected apparel firms in Kurunegala district, Sri Lanka.
- To examine the impact of emotional stability on job performance of executive employees in selected apparel firms in Kurunegala district, Sri Lanka.
- To Examine the impact of big five personality traits on job performance of executive employees in selected apparel firms in Kurunegala district, Sri Lanka.

Significance of the Study

This study highlights the significance of understanding executive personalities to optimize task allocation, boost job

performance, and align roles with individual strengths. Using the Big Five Personality framework—Openness, Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Emotional Stability—it explores how these traits influence executive performance in Sri Lanka's apparel industry, addressing a key research gap. Practical insights are offered for HR and leadership to improve role-personality alignment, reduce turnover, and enhance productivity. While focused on Sri Lanka, the findings hold global relevance, especially for emerging markets, contributing to organizational success through better personality-role integration.

Methods

This study examined five key personality traits that may impact employees' job performance. It was carried out in a natural, real-world setting, as opposed to a controlled or experimental environment. Using a cross-sectional approach, data were gathered at one point in time from executive-level employees, specifically executives, through a questionnaire. The unit of analysis was individual executives, with a total of 285 respondents in the sample. The sample was chosen through a simple random sampling technique, which is part of the random sampling method, and the sample frame included 285 executive employees.

Results

The analysis of personal characteristics included the frequency distribution of several variables age, gender, marital status, work experience and educational background of each executive employee. The gender distribution

showed that females comprised a larger portion of the sample, accounting for 53% (151), while males represented 47% (134).

The age distribution revealed that the majority of executives 40% (115) were aged between 31-40 years. Supervisors aged between 21-30 years accounted for 32% (90), while those aged 41-50 years represented 18% (52). Additionally, 10% (28) of the supervisors were above 51 years.

Univariate analysis involved conducting frequency distribution investigations on respondents based on their demographic characteristics. Based on the data the average value of Big Five Personality scores among executive employees is calculated to be 3.8. This suggests that the personality traits exhibited by executive employees can be categorized as "Good." Additionally, the skewness and kurtosis values for the distribution are 0.272 and -0.477, respectively, indicating that the distribution of big five personality scores is approximately normal. Similarly, the average score for job performance among executive employees is computed to be 3.52, indicating a level of job performance categorized as "Good." The skewness and kurtosis values for the its distribution are 0.104 and 0.415, respectively, suggesting that the distribution of Job performance scores is also approximately normal.

Discussion

The study found significant positive relationships between the Big Five personality traits and job performance in executive employees at apparel firms in Kurunegala, Sri Lanka. Openness to experience ($r = 0.555$, $R^2 = 0.034$), extraversion ($r = 0.451$, $R^2 = 0.063$),

agreeableness ($r = 0.458$, $R^2 = 0.209$), conscientiousness ($r = 0.497$, $R^2 = 0.247$), and emotional stability ($r = 0.661$, $R^2 = 0.437$) all positively impacted job performance, with emotional stability showing the strongest effect. Traits like imagination, assertiveness, trust, self-discipline, and reduced anxiety were linked to better job performance. The Big Five collectively explained 37% of job performance variance ($R^2 = 0.370$). These results align with previous studies by Abdullah et al. (2013), Gridwichee et al. (2020), and Alsuwailam & Elnaga (2016).

This study highlights the connection between Big Five Personality traits and Job Performance, offering valuable insights for practitioners. It suggests that managers incorporate personality traits like emotional stability, conscientiousness, and extraversion into strategies to improve employee performance. For policy development, organizations can integrate personality assessments into hiring and training processes, fostering a better employee-role fit. Leadership programs should focus on cultivating traits like self-discipline and emotional resilience. Additionally, creating tailored development plans and promoting continuous learning can enhance performance, self-awareness, and cooperation, contributing to organizational success.

Implications

This study offers valuable theoretical, managerial, and policy implications. It bridges a research gap by validating the link between personality traits and job performance in Sri Lanka's apparel sector, emphasizing the role of personality in executive performance. Managers can use personality

assessments in recruitment, align traits with job roles, and incorporate emotional stability training in leadership programs. Policies integrating personality testing into performance appraisals and fostering creative work environments are also recommended. Future research could address sample generalizability, adopt mixed-method designs, explore additional variables like culture and leadership, and conduct longitudinal studies to track personality-performance dynamics over time.

Conclusion

The hypotheses testing provided statistical answer for research objectives of the relationship between big five personality (independent variable) and job performance (dependent variable) in selected apparel firms in Kurunegala District, Sri Lanka. According to the findings of this study, it is substantiated that there is high level impact of big five personality and job performance among executives. According to the correlation results, there is a positive relationship between big five personality and job performance among executives in selected apparel firms in Kurunegala District Sri Lanka. And also regression analysis represented that there is a positive impact of big five personality and job performance among executives in apparel industry.

This study confirms that the Big Five Personality traits significantly influence job performance, with emotional stability, conscientiousness, and openness to experience being particularly impact. The findings align with prior studies such as Alsuwailam and Elnaga (2016) and Tuteja and Sharma (2016), reinforcing the robustness of the results.

The study contributes to the theoretical understanding of personality-performance links and offers practical insights for managers and policymakers aiming to enhance employee performance. While limitations exist, addressing these in future research will

further enrich the field, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between personality and job performance.

Figures and Tables

Figure 1: Research Framework

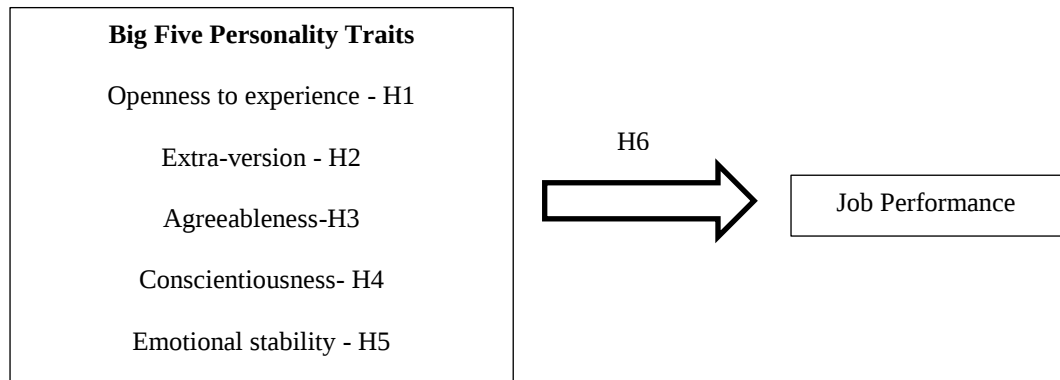


Table 1: Reliability Analysis for the Variables

Variable	Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha
Independent variable	Openness to Experience	0.875
	Extroversion	0.750
	Agreeableness	0.951
	Consciousnesses	0.883
	Emotional Stability	0.752
Dependent variable	Job performance	0.877

Source: Survey data 2023

Table 2: Univariate Analysis

Variables	Mean	Median	Mode	S. D	Skewness	Kurtosis
Big five personality	3.8	3.76	3.6	0.28	0.272	-0.477
Job performance	3.52	3.5	3.5	0.28	0.104	0.415

Source: Survey data 2023

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

		OE	Ex.	Agr.	Con.	EB	JP
OE	Pearson correlation	1	0.400**	0.420**	0.430**	0.450**	0.555**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002
Ex.	Pearson correlation	0.400**	1	0.410**	0.420**	0.460**	0.451**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Agr.	Pearson correlation	0.420**	0.410**	1	0.430**	0.470**	0.458**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
Con.	Pearson correlation	0.430**	0.420**	0.430**	1	0.480**	0.497**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
EB	Pearson correlation	0.450**	0.460**	0.470**	0.480**	1	0.661**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000
JP	Pearson correlation	0.555**	0.451**	0.458**	0.497**	0.661**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	285	285	285	285	285	285

Source: Survey data 2023

Table 4: Results of Regression Analysis

	Openness to Experience	Extroversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Emotional Stability	BFP
R	0.555	0.451	0.458	0.479	0.661	0.609
R Square	0.034	0.063	0.209	0.247	0.437	0.370
ΔR^2	0.031	0.060	0.207	0.244	0.435	0.368
Constant	3.070	2.818	2.379	2.146	1.880	1.197
B value	0.124	0.190	0.299	0.356	0.427	0.612
Sig. value	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

*P value is significant at 0.01 level.

Source: Survey data 2023

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