

The relationship between personal characteristics, communication, and job satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

In this study, staff job satisfaction were evaluated according to their personality differences by assessing five personality factors, based on NEO-FFI scoring and those components, which are directly associated with job satisfaction. In this regard, three data collection tools including communication satisfaction questionnaires, job descriptions index and five personality trait questionnaire were used. Based on the findings there was a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and personality traits ($r = 0.97$), and job satisfaction was depended on communication satisfaction. This research showed that communication satisfaction and job satisfaction could be predicted based on the five personality traits, which are nervousness, extraversion, empiricism, responsibility, and compatibility with others.

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1. Introduction

This study presents an empirical investigation to find a meaningful relationship between the five major factors of employee's personality, job satisfaction and communication satisfaction (Judge, 1993; Judge & Bretz, 1993; Judge & Hulin, 1993; Judge et al., 1998; Chao, 1990). The pattern of five personality traits is considered as a discovery for researchers interested in identifying individual's underlying differences in personality (McCrae & Costa, 1997; Rolland et al., 1997; Spector et al., 1994). This pattern is measured through several studies concentrated on personality traits using factor analysis (Spector & O'Connell, 1994). Costa and McCrae (1985) used using factor analysis and concluded that five major dimensions could be considered among personal behavior characteristics. These five dimensions include nervousness, extraversion, empiricism, responsibility and compatibility with others, which are respectively associated with the willingness of a person to

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experience anxiety, tend to be positive, the desire for flexibility, self-regulation and individual desire for generosity and kindness (Costa & McCrae, 1992; McCrae, 1996; DeNeve & Cooper, 1998).

Finding influential factors on job satisfaction plays essential role for the success of any organization. Therefore, recognizing these factors and their relationship with other factors can improve employees' performance and job satisfaction and lead to the improvement and development of the organization itself. Meanwhile the quality of communication in a workplace can act as one of the influencing variables; because when the employees in an organization have more information about their work, and can express their ideas and take part in decision-making, they provide proper reaction and their job satisfaction increases. Improvement of employees' satisfaction consider as subsidiary result of their participation in important decisions of the organization (Meir et al., 1995; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000).

This study describes the relationship between personality traits, job satisfaction and communication satisfaction in a public company to realize whether it is possible to predict job satisfaction and communications satisfaction based on employees' characteristics.

Efficiency is vital issue in industrial and organizational activities and researchers always attempt to identify and to examine the main variables of productivity (Pettit et al., 1997; Pincus, 1986). Employees are one of the factors influencing on the productivity and they are considered as the main capital of any organization. In this regard, organizations are looking to attract the best and the most efficient people and keep them within their organization. This motivated people will do their duties in the best way to create the internal and external improvement of their organization (Argenti, 1998; Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Falcione et al., 1977). Several researches on behavioral sciences suggest that job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is one of the determinants of productivity. Employees' job satisfaction depends on various factors and there are literally many studies on the relationship between job satisfaction and communication satisfaction, which have revealed that effective and systematic communication can improve staff performance and their job satisfaction (Harigi, 1999; Downs, 1988; Falcione et al., 1977). Many researchers also pointed out the effect of individual differences of personality traits and job satisfaction. Greengerg and Baron (1993) believed that a lot of personality factors could influence on employees' job satisfaction. Since job satisfaction lead to better performance and high efficiency of the organization, so this study examines the relationship between personality traits, job satisfaction and communication satisfaction in order to use its results to help managers to achieve organization's objectives and increase efficiency and productivity .

2. Theoretical background of the research:

2.1 Job Satisfaction

Satisfaction is referred to all inclinations or positive feelings that people have toward their jobs. In addition, job satisfaction can be also defined as people's spiritual joy because of their needs, desires and hopes (Watson & Clark L.A 1997). Moreover, job satisfaction normally leads to better performance and helps organizations achieve their most important objectives, which increase efficiency and productivity (Hunt & Ebeling, 1983; Pincus, 1986).

Job satisfaction depends on several factors and different studies have been conducted to predict this satisfaction. In some of these studies, some factors such as employee attitudes toward change, staffs relations and organizational communication have been examined (Winsted et al., 1995; Hunt & Ebeling, 1983). Some other studies show that organizations may encourage staffs to participate in planning and goals defining activities through integrated communication (Rings et al., 1979; Rolland et al., 1998). Organizations may only achieve the expected performance through effective and proper communication (Hargie et al., 1999; Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Brief et al., 1995; Pincus, 1986). Several researchers believe that inter-employees relationship and organizational relationship have an important role in performance and production improvements. They also influence on efficiency,

which considers the main management goal, as an example the relationship between staffs and supervisor and the how the staff could perceive this relationship, and the communication channels are correlated with job satisfaction (Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Bergeman et al., 1993). Also, researches in the field of job satisfaction have pointed out the influence of individual differences on job satisfaction. Five personality traits were introduced for the first time by Louis Gold in 1980. Early 1990s, it was confirmed and improved as the Big Five personality traits by publishing the NEO five-factor test of Costa and McCrae (1992). Among personality tests, this test is still the most comprehensive one and has a high relative acceptability. After the mid-1980s the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction became important. Goldberg Initial research on the relationship between personality factors and job satisfaction indicates that we can provide a complete classification of features related to job satisfaction.

2.2 Communication satisfaction and job satisfaction

Many studies show that communication satisfaction in organization may lead to better performance. Although, communication created through information transfer and job description may influence on communication satisfaction; employees tend to satisfy their communication needs like participation and self-satisfaction through interactions with their colleagues and supervisors (Hatfield & Huseman, 1982; Anderson and Martin 2005). If the employees' requirements are met through proper and effective communication, the relationships are strengthened and a positive correlation between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction may be created (Rings et al., 1979). The correlation between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction has been reviewed and approved in different work places. Some of these studies are Burke et al. (1969). Hotfield et al. (1982) performed a comprehensive study on supervisors and workers. The manager by creating effective communication could have a significant role in enhancing the team spirit and job satisfaction (Burke & Wilcox, 1969; Tokar et al., 1998).

3. Conceptual model

The dependent variables of this research are job satisfaction and communication satisfaction. In addition, independent variables are five main characters including nervousness, extraversion, responsibility, empiricism, compatibility with others. The conceptual model presented in Fig. 1 shows the role of five personality factors in job satisfaction and communication satisfaction of employees who are the most important capital of any organization.

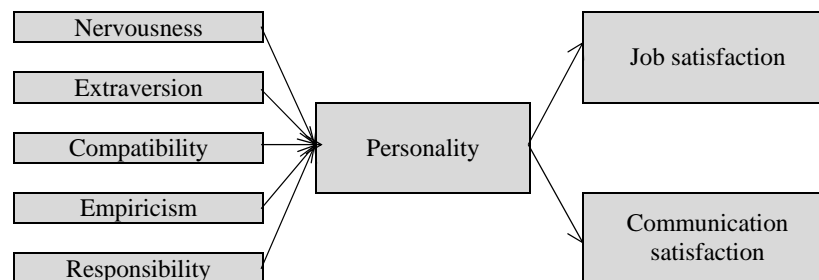


Fig. 1. The proposed study

3.1 Five main factors of personality and their scales

The top five main characters in the Neo-scale test (Costa & McCrae, 1985, 1992; Borkenau & Ostendorf, 1993; Decker & Borgen, 1993) based on a research developed at the University of Oregon are summarized in Table 1 as follows,

Table 1

Five main factors of personality

Factor	Scale
Nervousness	Negative emotions-moping
Extraversion	positive emotions-socialization-Energy
Responsibility	Discipline and flexibility-targeted efforts-being reliable
Compatibility	Orientation and cooperation agreements–tendency to be of public utility
Empiricism	Aesthetic interests–Mental interests -novelty

2.2. *Job satisfaction*

Five indices of job satisfaction, including type of job, income, work progress, supervision quality and colleagues are considered.

2.3 *Communication satisfaction*

In this study, eight factors are identified for communication satisfaction as follows,

- Horizontal communication
- Sub-Communications (upward, downward or functions)
- Meeting minutes and organizational guidelines Transparency
- Organizational vision (having enough information about the organization's goals and policies).
- The integrity of the organization (how much people have information about their environment).
- Job communication (to what extent communication encourages an employee for goal achievement).
- Personal feedback (give information to employees about their performance).
- Supervision Communication (refers to upward and downward aspects of communicating with supervisors).

2.4. *Research hypothesis*

Based on the theoretical framework of the research, literature review and conceptual model, hypotheses of this research are formulated as follows:

- Hypothesis 1: Communication satisfaction has a positive impact on job satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 2: Neurological issues have an impact on job satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 3: Extraversion has an impact on job satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 4: Empiricism has an impact on job satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 5: Compatibility with others has an impact on the job satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 6: Responsibility has an impact on the job satisfaction.

2.5 *Methodology and sampling*

This study is an applied research. The research was performed in the second half of 2011 among 50 directors and employees of a public company in Mashhad. Among the target population, sample population was randomly selected. It should be mentioned that all Participants have a college degree.

2.6 Questionnaires

2.6.1 Five Personality Factors (NEO-FFI)

This questionnaire consists of 60 items, which use the Big Five personality traits (nervousness, extraversion, empiricism, compatibility with of others and responsibility) for measurement. There are 12 items in 5 degrees Likert scale format for each factor. In this study, Cronbach's alpha for the five factors of personality obtained as follows: 72% for nervousness, 65% for extraversion, 64% for empiricism, 56% for compatibility with others, and 69 % for responsibility.

2.6.2 Job satisfaction descriptive questionnaire

This questionnaire included five job satisfaction indices and each index consists of 9 to 18 questions. To measure the reliability of this questionnaire, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used; here it is 92 % for the target population.

2.6.3 Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of forty questions on eight factors of Communication Satisfaction, which include horizontal communication, sub-communication, meeting minute transparency, organizational vision, and integration of information, communication atmosphere, personal feedback and supervision communication. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire is 94 %.

2.7 Statistical results and analysis

To evaluate the relationship among parameters, data normality has been examined based on Kolmogorov-Smirnov. As shown in Table 2, all data were normal except colleagues' variable.

Table 2

The results of normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov

Factor	Number	Statistic	P-value	Result
Nervousness	38	0.66	0.766	normal
Empiricism	38	0.529	0.942	normal
Extraversion	38	0.898	0.396	normal
Compatibility	38	0.713	0.69	normal
Responsibility	38	1.121	0.162	normal
Communication satisfaction	38	0.626	0.828	normal
Job satisfaction	38	1.017	0.252	normal
Salary	38	1.151	0.141	normal
Improvement opportunities	38	1.053	0.218	normal
Colleagues	38	1.43	0.033	normal
Management method	38	1.065	0.207	normal
Opinion about job	38	0.788	0.563	normal

According to the results of Table 3, the respondents are satisfied by managing method (3.47), opportunities for career (3.32) and salaries (2.97). Partner roles in the workplace with an average of 2.89 have minimal impact on satisfaction.

Table 3

The results of some statistical observations

Factor	Number	Min	Max	Mean	Standard deviation
Management method	38	1.60	4.60	3.47	0.74
Job attitude	38	2.20	4.20	3.22	0.54
Salary	38	1.40	4.00	2.97	0.53
Improvement opportunities	38	1.75	4.80	3.32	0.51
colleagues	38	1.80	4.00	2.89	0.45
Job satisfaction	38	2.73	4.15	3.22	0.29

The collected data were also examined by Friedman nonparametric test, and rank mean for each variable were obtained. Results showed that management method has the highest average rating in the test. Based on Friedman test ($P < 0.05$), the hypothesis of equality of job satisfaction variables was

rejected. So consent of people about variables was not identical and due to the average results, managing method is the most important variable. Moreover, examining the mean and standard deviation of personality characteristics showed that empiricism with an average of 37% and nervousness with an average of 30 % have the greatest average among personality factors.

Table 4

The summary of basic statistics

Factor	Numbers	Min	Max	Mean	Standard deviation
Responsibility	38	2.47	3.71	3.35	0.27
Empiricism	38	2.17	3.82	2.97	0.37
Extraversion	38	2.90	3.80	3.42	0.24
Nervousness	38	2.38	3.63	3.02	0.30
Compatibility	38	2.42	3.42	3.02	0.23

3. The results

In this section, we present details of our findings on testing various hypotheses of the survey.

Hypothesis 1: As we can observe from the results of Table 5, the Pearson correlation coefficient between job satisfaction and communication satisfaction is equal to 494%, which is an acceptable level of significance. This indicates there is a significant positive correlation between job satisfaction and communication satisfaction. It also shows that the more organizational communication is effective, the more the staffs will feel satisfaction.

Table 5

The results of Pearson correlation test for the first hypothesis

		Job satisfaction	Communication satisfaction
Job satisfaction	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	1 0	0.494 0.002
Communication satisfaction	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	0.494 0.002	1 0

Hypothesis 2: According to Table 6, there is a weak negative correlation between the nervousness and job satisfaction $P < 0.05$. Therefore, the negative significant relationship between nervousness and job satisfaction is rejected. The results show that anxiety and stress among employees have negative impacts on job satisfaction. Reducing neurological issues lead to less job satisfaction.

Table 6

The results of Pearson correlation test for the second hypothesis

		nervousness	Job satisfaction
Nervousness	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	1 0	-0.192 0.248
Job satisfaction	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	-0.192 0.248	1 0

Hypothesis 3: According to Table 7, there is a weak positive relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction $P < 0.05$. Therefore existence of a significant relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction is rejected.

Table 7

The results of Pearson correlation test for the third hypothesis

		Job satisfaction	Extraversion
Job satisfaction	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	1 0	0.283 0.085
Extraversion	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	0.283 0.085	1 0

Hypothesis 4: Based on the result of Table 8, there is a weak negative correlation between empiricism and job satisfaction, below $P < 0.05$. So, the lack of connection between empiricism and job satisfaction will be accepted. Empiricism does not any effect on job satisfaction.

Table 8

The results of Pearson correlation test for the fourth hypothesis

		Job satisfaction	Empiricism
Job satisfaction	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	1 0	-0.055 0.742
Empiricism	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	-0.055 0.742	1 0

Hypothesis 5: According to Table 9, there is a positive with up to 5% error between compatibility and job satisfaction. Therefore, compatibility with other has positive effect on job satisfaction.

Table 9

The results of Pearson correlation test for the sixth hypothesis

		Job satisfaction	Compatibility
Job satisfaction	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	1 0	-0.054 0.746
Compatibility	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	-0.054 0.746	1 0

Hypothesis 6: Based on Table 10, there is not a significant positive relationship between responsibility and job satisfaction.

Table 10

The results of Pearson correlation test for the seventh hypothesis

		Job satisfaction	Responsibility
Job satisfaction	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	1 0	0.271 0.100
Responsibility	Pearson correlation coefficient of the two sided test	0.271 0.100	1 0

We have also performed multi-variables regression analysis and Table 11 shows the beta coefficients and their significance levels. Based on column B, which reflects the significance of regression variables, it could be found that both nervousness and compatibility have high beta coefficients (92%). Other factors do not have significance percentage between 92 and 99. So they are considered as poor predictors and could be neglected.

Table 11

The results of stepwise regression analysis

Factor	abnormal correlation		Normal	T	Significance level
	Beta	Standard error	Beta	B	Standard error
Invariant	0.533	0.400		-1.333	0.194
Responsibility	0.55	0.59	0.50	0.942	0.354
Nervousness	0.80	0.49	0.82	1.632	0.114
Compatibility	0.79	0.69	0.63	1.154	0.259
Empiricism	0.18	0.40	0.23	0.448	0.658
Extraversion	0.35	0.64	0.29	0.549	0.588
Job satisfaction	0.156	0.36	0.347	4.391	0.000
Colleagues	0.211	0.36	0.323	5.909	0.000
Salary	0.165	0.30	0.297	5.470	0.000
Opinion about job	0.191	0.42	0.350	4.537	0.000
Management method	0.190	0.21	0.438	8.987	0.000

4. Conclusions and recommendations

So far, many studies have been carried out on job satisfaction, communication satisfaction and personality traits. This study was conducted with the same title, but what made it different from the other studies is its triple variables used to see whether they impact on each other and whether there is a significant relationship among them. Job satisfaction refers to a person's attitude about his/her job and reflects all types of feeling. This factor increases performance and (internal) satisfaction. Also, communication satisfaction is another influential factor in increasing the performance. This study can help us in choosing individuals that fit into the job characteristics.

According to this study and along with previous researches, there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and communication satisfaction, so the first hypothesis has been confirmed, which shows that having more effective communication could create more satisfaction, reliance to managers and better performance. The findings show that the level of job satisfaction and communication satisfaction of the staffs could be predicted regarding their five personality characteristics. According to research findings, nervousness and empiricism earned the highest score among all other personality characteristics; but it could be argued that there was a significant relationship among the personality traits, communication satisfaction and job satisfaction.

This research has aimed at examining the relationship between job satisfaction and personality traits. Based on the findings, nervousness had influenced on job satisfaction of employees, negatively and there was no acceptable relationship between job satisfaction and extraversion. Negative relationship between the extroverted personality and job satisfaction can be justified in the way that more extroverted individuals seeking challenging opportunities, they can't endure autocratic management, they are more irritable and do not tend to perform repetitive tasks. These people have better performance in positions where high level of communication exists.

The results also show that there was no clear relationship between empiricism, job satisfaction and compatibility with others and sense of fulfilling duty do not have positive impact on job satisfaction. Therefore, the fifth and the sixth hypotheses are rejected. Negative relationship between job satisfaction and willingness to experiment could be justified because among five personality traits affectivity is associated with a willingness to experiment.

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