

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AMONG EMPLOYEES AT SELECTED GOVERNMENT-LINKED COMPANIES

Narehan Hassan^{1*}

^{1*}Narehan Hassan, Faculty of Business and Management Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam, Selangor, drnarehan@uitm.edu.my

Nurul Arina Nurul 'Akla²

²Nurul Arina Nurul 'Akla, Faculty of Business and Management Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, arinaakla@gmail.com

Nooranizan Ariffin³

³Nooranizan Ariffin, Faculty of Business and Management Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam, Selangor, anizanariffin95@gmail.com

***Corresponding Author:** Narehan Hassan

*Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam, Selangor

drnarehan@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

The complexity of the current global and competitive working environment means that workforce diversity can significantly impact an organization's success. To address issues like employee turnover and organizational downsizing, this study examined the understanding of job commitment and job analysis concerning employees' individual traits and job characteristics, which present major challenges in organizational behavior. The study involved 232 employees from three government-linked companies in Shah Alam, Selangor which were Telekom Malaysia Berhad, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, and Amanah Raya Berhad. Samples were selected using a convenient sampling technique. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 28). The findings revealed that the personality trait of openness to experience is significantly related to organizational commitment ($r=-.153$, $p<.05$). Additionally, there are significant effects between various dimensions of personality traits, job characteristics, and organizational commitment. In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of organizational commitment for effective and efficient functioning. It is recommended that organizations allow employees to redesign their work processes to fully utilize their skills and abilities, thereby enhancing their commitment.

Keyword: Personality Traits, Organizational Commitment, Government Linked Companies

Introduction

The complexity of the current global and competitive working environment means that workforce diversity significantly impacts an organization's success. A key success factor is the high level of commitment from employees across all departments. In 2023, Hoang noted that committed employees are more likely to stay with their organization and take fewer vacation days. According to Harter (2020), these employees are also more resilient, helping the organization navigate difficult times and ensuring steady development. Organizational commitment, therefore, influences overall success from multiple perspectives. Individual traits likely play a role in this commitment. Kaya et al. (2024) stated that personality traits are relatively stable tendencies that influence thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Research by Park and Woo (2022) has focused on the relationship between personality traits and attitudes. Employee personalities are crucial to organizational commitment, and workforce diversity reflects individual differences and similarities (Darkwah, 2014). This study aimed to explore the relationship between the five dimensions of personality traits and organizational commitment. The objectives were twofold: (1) to determine the level of organizational commitment, and (2) to identify the relationships between personality trait dimensions and organizational commitment among employees at selected government-linked companies in Shah Alam, Malaysia.

Literature Review

Personality Traits

Personality traits can be key indicators of various facets of an individual's life (Loewe et al., 2014). These traits reflect characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Opaku, Adamu & Danie, 2023). Several theories on personality traits exist, including Allport's Theory (1936), Cattell's 16PF Test, Eysenck's (1964), and the Five-Factor Model of Personality (Big Five Model) by Costa and McCrae (1992) and Goldberg (1981). Riedl (2022) defined personality as "individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving that are stable over time and provide reasons for the person's behavior." Consequently, this study adopted the Five-Factor Model of personality traits, as described by Gonzalez-Mulé (2015), to examine their relationship with organizational commitment.

Agreeableness

Agreeableness pertains to being compassionate and cooperative rather than skeptical and hostile towards others (Lim et al., 2023). This trait is also associated with an employee's ability to work effectively with team members (Barrick & Mount, 1998). Moreover, individuals with high levels of agreeableness tend to work peacefully and resolve conflicts calmly (Ongore, 2014). This characteristic fosters a harmonious work environment, which can enhance overall team performance and job satisfaction. High agreeableness is linked to altruistic behaviors, promoting

a supportive atmosphere where colleagues are more likely to help each other. Additionally, agreeableness can lead to better customer relations, as employees with this trait are often perceived as more trustworthy and empathetic, contributing to positive organizational outcomes and customer loyalty.

Conscientiousness

Employees who are conscientious are organized and have a strong sense of duty. They are dependable, disciplined, and achievement-focused, preferring planned rather than spontaneous behavior. Employees who exhibit conscientiousness tend to be more efficient, easygoing, and organized compared to those who are disruptive or noisy. Conscientious workers are more productive due to their determination to succeed even in challenging situations (Nnabuihe & Eketu, 2023). This trait not only enhances individual performance but also contributes to the overall productivity of the team. Conscientious employees are likely to set high standards for themselves and others, fostering a culture of excellence within the organization. They are often proactive in identifying potential problems and finding effective solutions, which can lead to better project management and fewer workplace errors. Furthermore, their reliability and consistency make them valuable team members who can be counted on to follow through on commitments and meet deadlines, ultimately driving the organization's success.

Extraversion

Extraversion is about a person's energy, positive emotions, assertiveness, sociability, and the tendency to seek stimulation in the company of others and talkativeness (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Alam (2020) defines extraversion as traits such as engagement, energy, and self-confidence. Extraversion is a higher-order personality dimension that includes individual differences in sociability, assertiveness, positive emotionality, approach tendencies, and status motivation (Lukazewski, 2020). Individuals high in extraversion are often seen as enthusiastic and action-oriented, thriving in social settings where they can engage with others and take the lead. This personality trait is associated with numerous workplace benefits, such as improved team collaboration, enhanced leadership capabilities, and a greater ability to inspire and motivate colleagues. Moreover, extraverted employees tend to excel in roles that require frequent interaction with clients or customers, contributing to strong professional relationships and customer satisfaction. Their natural propensity for positivity and confidence can also help mitigate stress and maintain a dynamic, energetic work environment.

Neuroticism

Barrick and Mount (1991) noted that neuroticism includes traits such as embarrassment, emotional instability, worry, and insecurity. High neuroticism is associated with frequent and intense negative emotions, vulnerability to stress, and maladaptive coping skills (Terracciano, 2021). Individuals with high levels of neuroticism are more likely to experience mood swings, anxiety, and depression, which can negatively impact their professional and personal lives. In the

workplace, this trait can lead to challenges in maintaining focus, managing workload, and interacting effectively with colleagues. Furthermore, high neuroticism can affect job performance by increasing the likelihood of burnout and reducing resilience to workplace pressures. On the other hand, understanding and addressing these traits can help organizations develop better support systems and mental health resources, fostering a more supportive and productive work environment.

Openness to Experience

Openness to experience, or simply openness, is a general appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, imagination, curiosity, and variety of experience (Goldberg, 1990). Individuals who enjoy thinking creatively and working independently tend to perform better in occupations that value these traits. Christensen (2023) supports this by stating that openness to experience involves the flexibility that allows individuals to be creative, establish complex worldviews, and explore the depths of human experience.

People high in openness are often more adaptable to change and are better equipped to handle novel and complex situations, making them valuable in dynamic work environments. Their propensity for innovation and out-of-the-box thinking can drive organizational growth and inspire new approaches to problem-solving. Additionally, these individuals are typically more open to diverse perspectives and experiences, which can enhance team collaboration and foster an inclusive workplace culture. This trait also correlates with a lifelong pursuit of knowledge and personal growth, contributing to both professional development and overall job satisfaction.

1. Organizational Commitment

Commitment, as defined by Jena (2015), refers to an individual's attitude towards their work. Attitudinal commitment arises from the alignment of personal goals and values. Redmond and Alderton (2016) outline various concepts of commitment within work ethic, including commitment to career, work commitment, and organizational commitment. Commitment can manifest behaviorally, evolving after joining an organization, which aids in justifying continued membership. Nguyen et al. (2022) identify three primary domains of organizational commitment: affective, continuance, and normative. Affective commitment is characterized by an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Continuance commitment reflects the perceived cost of leaving the organization, where employees stay because they feel they have to. Normative commitment involves a sense of obligation to remain with the organization due to personal values or social norms. High levels of organizational commitment are associated with increased job satisfaction, lower turnover rates, and enhanced overall performance. By fostering a strong sense of commitment, organizations can benefit from a more dedicated and stable workforce, which can drive long-term success and employee loyalty.

Affective Commitment

In 2015, Mercurio emphasized that affective commitment is a fundamental aspect of commitment. Meyer and Allen (1997) define affective commitment as the emotional attachment, identification with, and involvement in the organization felt by employees. Pulido-Martos (2023) further underscores the significance of affective commitment, noting its crucial role in determining employee well-being. Additionally, it can provide organizations with a competitive advantage by positively influencing performance levels while simultaneously reducing employees' intentions to leave. Employees with high levels of affective commitment are more likely to exhibit loyalty, put in extra effort, and align their personal goals with the organization's objectives. This deep-seated connection can enhance workplace morale, foster a positive organizational culture, and improve overall productivity. By nurturing affective commitment through supportive leadership, recognition, and development opportunities, organizations can cultivate a dedicated workforce that is both motivated and engaged, ultimately contributing to sustainable success and growth.

Continuance Commitment

Meyer and Allen (1997) described continuance commitment as the awareness of costs associated with leaving the organization. Oamen (2023) defines organizational commitment as an employee's sense of involvement, attachment, and engagement with their organization's goals and ideals. Continuance commitment, according to Nguyen et al. (2022), implies that employees have considered the risks and benefits of leaving the organization. This form of commitment is largely influenced by the perceived economic or social costs of departure, such as loss of income, benefits, or professional relationships. Employees with high continuance commitment may stay with their organization not out of loyalty or emotional attachment, but because they feel they must, given the potential negative consequences of leaving. While this type of commitment can contribute to workforce stability, it may not necessarily lead to high levels of job satisfaction or engagement. Organizations aiming to build a more holistic and positive form of commitment should focus on enhancing both affective and normative commitments alongside continuance commitment, ensuring employees feel both valued and motivated beyond mere necessity.

Normative Commitment

Normative commitment, as described by Inam (2023), entails internal pressure to align personal goals with organizational values and interests. Additionally, Oamen (2023) identifies normative commitment as the sense of obligation and loyalty to remain with the organization. Schaufeli et al. (2002) found that individuals highly engaged in their work tend to exhibit higher levels of normative commitment, indicating their willingness to meet organizational expectations. This sense of duty and moral obligation often stems from socialization processes within the organization, where employees internalize the organization's norms and values.

Employees with high normative commitment often feel a moral imperative to stay and contribute to their organization's success. This can be reinforced by positive workplace cultures, ethical leadership, and strong interpersonal relationships within the organization. Organizations can foster normative commitment by emphasizing the importance of shared values, providing opportunities

for meaningful work, and recognizing employees' contributions. By doing so, they create an environment where employees feel valued and ethically bound to support organizational goals, which can lead to greater stability, lower turnover rates, and enhanced overall performance.

2. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 below displays the conceptual framework for the relationship between Personality Traits and Organizational Commitment.

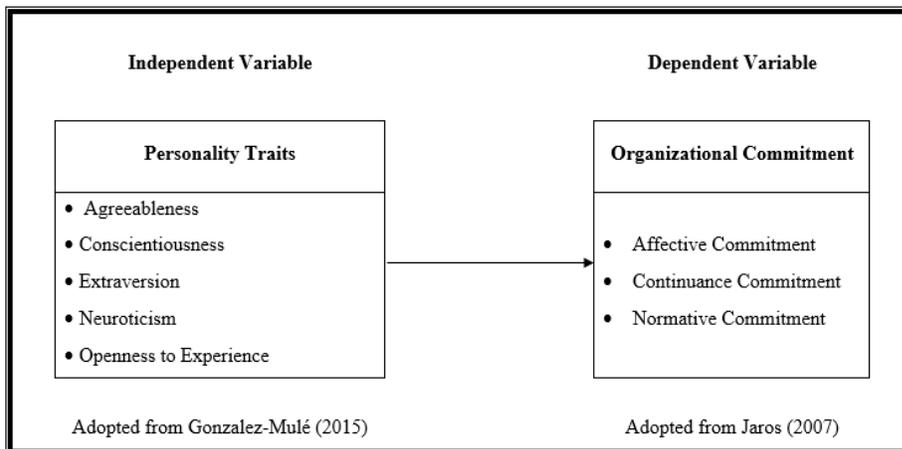


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3. Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional research design to examine the relationships between dimensions of personality traits and organizational commitment within government-linked companies (GLCs) located in Shah Alam, Selangor. Specifically, the study focused on Telekom Malaysia Berhad, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, and Amanah Raya Berhad. Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, was utilized to efficiently gather data from readily available members of the population.

A total of 107 employees from Tenaga Nasional Berhad, 116 from Telekom Malaysia Berhad, and 9 from Amanah Raya Berhad participated in the study, corresponding to the respective number of employees within each GLC in Shah Alam, Selangor. The primary data collection instrument was a questionnaire structured into three sections. Part A gathered demographic background information with 5 questions, Part B assessed personality traits with 21 questions, and Part C focused on job characteristics with another 21 questions.

Responses to questions in Sections B and C were measured using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 indicated "strongly disagree" and 5 indicated "strongly agree". This structured approach allowed for a comprehensive assessment of how personality traits and job characteristics influence

organizational commitment within the selected GLCs. The use of cross-sectional design and convenience sampling enabled the researchers to efficiently capture a snapshot of the relationships under investigation, providing valuable insights into factors that may impact employee commitment within these organizations.

Results and Discussions

Table 1 Demographic Profiles of Respondents

Respondent Profile	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	119	49.2
Female	123	50.8
Race		
Chinese	36	14.9
Indian	43	17.8
Malay	163	67.4
Age		
< 30 years	61	25.2
31 – 40 years	82	33.9
41 – 50 years	28	11.6
> 50 years	71	29.3
Marital Status		
Single	54	22.3
Married	188	77.7
Position		
Higher Level Management	1	0.4
Middle Level Management	44	18.2
Lower Level Management	68	28.1
General Staff	129	53.3
Length of Work		
< 3 years	10	4.1
3 – 5 years	37	15.3
6 – 10 years	71	29.3
11 – 15 years	34	14.0
16 – 20 years	23	9.5
> 20 years	67	27.7

The majority of respondents were female (n=119, 50.8%), aged 31-40 years old (n=82, 33.9%), married (n=118, 77.7%), holding general staff positions (n=129, 53.3%), and had 6-10 years of

working experience (n=71, 29.3%). Recognizing the middle young workforce is crucial for shaping the organization's future direction. Therefore, comprehensive training programs are essential to prepare this talented young group to effectively guide the organization's future path.

4. Descriptive Statistics

The study utilized descriptive statistics to calculate the means and standard deviations for turnover intention and its dimensions, which were renamed as positive turnover intention and negative turnover intention. To define the level of turnover intention, the scoring interpretation from the Best Principles (Thaoprom, 2004) was employed. Scores were categorized into three levels: high score, average score, and low score, based on this interpretation.

- Scores between 1.00 – 2.33 = Low Level
- Scores between 2.34 – 3.67 = Average Level
- Scores between 3.68 – 5.00 = High Level

5. Table 2 Level of Organizational Commitment

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Affective Commitment	242	3.8017	.50557	High
Continuance Commitment	242	4.0041	.59290	High
Normative Commitment	242	3.6545	.61137	Medium
Overall Organizational Commitment		3.8316	.43717	High

The level of overall organizational commitment among employees at selected government-linked companies (GLCs) can be considered high, with a mean score of 3.8316. This interpretation aligns with the framework proposed by Thaoprom (2004), where scores ranging from 3.68 to 5.00 indicate a high level of commitment. This finding suggests that employees from the surveyed GLCs demonstrate a strong dedication to their respective organizations. This result is also consistent with previous research by Jena (2015), who similarly found high levels of organizational commitment among shift workers in India (M=3.87, SD=0.68).

Moreover, the study revealed that the dimensions of organizational commitment varied across medium to high levels. This variation indicates that management within these GLCs invests reasonable time and effort in understanding the diverse demographic factors influencing employee commitment. By recognizing and addressing these factors, organizations can foster an environment where employees feel valued and motivated to contribute actively to organizational goals.

The combination of high overall organizational commitment and varying commitment levels across dimensions underscores the importance of tailored approaches in management practices. By continuing to explore and enhance organizational commitment strategies, GLCs can further strengthen employee engagement, productivity, and overall organizational performance. This approach not only supports employee retention but also cultivates a positive organizational culture conducive to long-term success and sustainability.

Correlation Analysis

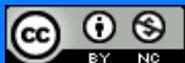
6. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was applied to determine the relationship between dimensions of personality traits and organizational commitment among employees at selected GLCs in Shah Alam, Malaysia. The findings are presented in Table 4.

7. **Table 3** Guidelines on the Interpretation of Correlation Coefficients (Cohen, 1988)

Degree of Correlation	r Values
Very Low	-0.01 to -0.29 and +0.01 to +0.29
Low	-0.30 to -0.40 and +0.30 to +0.49
Moderate	-0.50 to -0.69 and +0.50 to +0.69
High	-0.70 to -0.89 and +0.70 to +0.89
Very High	-0.90 to -1.00 and +0.90 to +1.00

Table 4 Summary of Correlation Analysis for each Dimensions and Organizational Commitment

No	Variables	Correlations				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Agreeableness					
2	Conscientiousness	.490**				
3	Extraversion	-.169**	-.008			
4	Neuroticism	-.158*	.010	.913**		
5	Openness to Experience	.815**	.526**	-.151*	-.146*	



6	Organizational Commitment	-.050	-.033	.044	.080	-.153*
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*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Correlation is significant at the level 0.01 level (1-tailed). (n=242)

The correlation analysis presented in Table 4 highlights the relationships between various dimensions of personality traits and organizational commitment. The results demonstrate a mix of positive, negative, and non-existent relationships among these variables. Specifically, a notable finding from the analysis is a weak but significant negative correlation between openness to experience and organizational commitment ($r = -0.153$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that as openness to experience increases, organizational commitment tends to decrease slightly.

Overall, the findings indicate that while certain dimensions of personality traits may influence organizational commitment positively or negatively, the impact of openness to experience on organizational commitment appears to be minimal. This finding aligns with the notion that individual traits such as openness to new ideas, creativity, and curiosity may not necessarily correlate strongly with commitment to organizational goals and values.

These results underscore the complexity of the relationship between personality traits and organizational commitment. They suggest that organizations should consider a holistic approach to understanding and managing employee commitment, taking into account diverse personality profiles and their unique implications for workplace engagement and retention strategies. By recognizing and leveraging the nuanced interplay between personality traits and commitment, organizations can better tailor their HR practices and leadership strategies to foster a supportive and motivating work environment for all employees.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

Employees at Government-Linked Companies should prioritize adherence to policies that support the implementation of interventions aimed at improving and maintaining organizational commitment. It is crucial to foster a high level of emotional intelligence among employees and to embrace individuals with dynamic personalities. Emotional intelligence enables employees to manage their emotions effectively, understand and empathize with others, and navigate social complexities, which can lead to better teamwork and collaboration. Additionally, management can enhance their commitment to the organization by encouraging employees to cultivate an optimistic attitude in their personalities. Optimism can drive resilience, reduce stress, and create a positive work atmosphere, all of which contribute to higher levels of employee engagement and productivity.

Furthermore, fostering a culture of open communication and transparency within the organization can contribute to stronger relationships between employees and management, fostering a sense of trust and mutual respect. Open communication allows employees to feel heard and valued, which can reduce misunderstandings and conflicts, and promote a more harmonious workplace.

Transparency in decision-making processes can also empower employees, making them feel more connected to the organization's goals and strategies.

Providing opportunities for professional development and career advancement can also increase employee satisfaction and commitment to the organization. Offering training programs, workshops, and mentoring can help employees acquire new skills and knowledge, making them feel invested in their personal and professional growth. Career advancement opportunities can motivate employees to perform at their best, knowing that their hard work and dedication can lead to promotions and other rewards.

By investing in their employees' growth and well-being, organizations can create a supportive and thriving work environment conducive to high levels of organizational commitment. A supportive work environment includes not only professional development but also initiatives like work-life balance programs, health and wellness activities, and employee recognition schemes. When employees feel that their well-being is a priority, their loyalty to the organization strengthens, leading to reduced turnover rates and higher overall morale. Creating such an environment requires a holistic approach, integrating policies and practices that address various aspects of the employee experience, ultimately fostering a culture of commitment and excellence.

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