

# The Big Five Model in Relation to Job Performance: A New Look at Organizational Psychology

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The Big Five Theory is often regarded as psychology's most influential personality theoretical approach. The goal of this study is to examine the role of the Big Five Theory in the workplace, especially which personality qualities are more likely to predict work success. Which traits should companies emphasize throughout the hiring and selection processes? How can businesses use the Big Five personality model to locate employees that are more productive, efficient, and devoted to the organization's goals? A detailed assessment of existing recent research addresses the aforementioned issues. Following a review of many current articles on the subject, it was established that using this model had a positive influence on individual and group performance, working relationships, manager work performance, and workplace innovation.

*Keywords:* organizational psychology, personality, Big Five Model, job performance

## Introduction

In this research the contribution of the Big Five Model is evaluated under a specific context. The emphasis is on the contribution and use of the Big Five Theory in the workplace, specifically on the performance of the organization.

There is a substantial body of literature on the use of this idea in the workplace. A critical examination will also be performed, as well as a scope for future study surrounding this theory for further growth.

## Basic Concepts of Theory

Personality refers to the internal structures and tendencies of individuals that explain cognition, emotion, and behavior patterns. Individual differences in various patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior are defined, physical, and mental characteristics or characteristics that define an individual's distinct character and identity. The term "personality" refers to a person's behavioral patterns as well as the underlying structures, dynamics, processes, and inclinations (Hogan & Holland, 2003). While people may behave differently in different situations, some researchers argue that personality traits are universal (McCrae & Costa, 1997), consistent (Boyle et al., 2008), stable (Maltby et al., 2019), proximal to behavior (Gosling et al., 2003), and visible in the behavior of others. Following on from Cattell's (2008) earlier experiential effort, the Big Five Model demonstrates that the human personality consists of five reasonably self-determining dimensions, providing a significant and complete taxonomy for reviewing the individual's differences and providing the actual core in human nature as a result of

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the differences (Mount & Barrick, 1998). Organizational scholars in the field of personality have unanimously concluded in recent years that the Big Five Model completely reflects the idea of personality traits. The five basic personality elements described by the Big Five personality traits are extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience (Barrick & Mount, 1992; Goldberg, 1992; 1991). Extraverts are expressive, sociable, companionable, gregarious, conversational, confident, and determined (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Extraverts are characterized by their ability to be spontaneous, talkative, energetic, cheerful, and passionate (Goldberg, 1990; Watson & Clark, 1997). They crave praise, social recognition, power, and authority (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Extraverts are entirely related with emotional commitment when compared to the other five qualities (Erdheim, Wang, & Zickar, 2006). Extraverts can practice affirmative emotions, which leads to job satisfaction (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000). Extraverts are emotionally strong and certain, which is why they have a happy personality (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998), and this joyful personality is a vital component of a fulfilled existence and work fulfillment (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). According to Hogan (1986), this dimension consists of two components: Ambition and Sociability.

The second factor is called Neuroticism. Neuroticism is defined as emotional instability and unevenness in an individual's predisposition to suffer (McCrae & John, 1992). Neurotics are anxious, tense, sulky, unsociable, uneasy, ashamed, uncertain, skeptical, unconfident, fearful, and unhappy (Judge & Bono, 2000). Neurotics have little faith or confidence in others (Goldberg, 1990), and they lack social skills to deal with situations in which they pretend to be in control (Judge et al., 1997). Neurotics, once again, lack confidence and self-esteem (McCrae & Costa, 1991). Negative affectivity is linked to neuroticism. Neurotics have more unpleasant emotions in life than others. These two factors Extraversion and Neuroticism represent the "Big Two" described by Eysenk.

The third factor is Conscientiousness although it has also been called Conformity or Dependability (Fiske, 1949; Hogan, 1986). Additionally, it has been called Will to Achieve or Will (Digman, 1989; Smith, 1967; Wiggings, Blackburn, & Hackman, 1969). Diligence, alertness, vigilance, comprehensiveness, responsibility, systematization, and determination are traits of this personality type (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Conscientious people are sensible, dependable, and risk avoiders (Goldberg, 1990). These individuals are responsible, trustworthy, steadfast, cautious, and thorough, and they are focused on achievement, which is a vital characteristic for carrying out professional tasks (Barrick & Mount, 1993). Therefore, across all attributes, conscientious persons are most strongly connected with job satisfaction (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997) and job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991). There is much disagreement over the nature of this dimension. Others argue that it shows dependability, while others argue that it also incorporates volitional characteristics such as diligence and accomplishment oriented. The fourth factor is called Agreeableness, others have labeled it Friendliness (Guillford & Zimmerman, 1949) and others Social Conformity (Fiske, 1949). At one end of the scale, desirable characteristics include self-sacrifice, helpfulness, nurturance, kindness, and emotional support; at the other, disagreeable characteristics include antagonism, indifference to others, and self-interest (Digman, 1990). Polite, flexible, naive, helpful, supportive, merciful, kind, and open-minded individuals are generous, calm, trustworthy, truthful, and sincere (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Judge, Heller, & Mount 2002). Personality researchers believe that agreeableness is the most divisive personality trait in the Big Five model of personality (McCrae & Costa, 1997). The final factor is named Openness to Experience. Have an Open Mind "Technical and imaginative ability, a flexible mindset, and political moderation are connected with openness to experience" (Judge et al., 1997, p. 151-188). The social propensity frequently linked with Openness to Experience includes being creative, developed, inquisitive, openminded, clever, with a desire for diversity, aesthetic, and sensitive (Goldberg, 1990; Digman,

1990; McCrae & John, 1992). People who are especially receptive to new experiences tend to suit other elements better. Openness to Experience is frequently referred to as a “two-edged sword” since it causes people to experience both strong pleasurable and severe awful experiences (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998). It demonstrates how openness affects emotional reactions such as subjective well-being (Judge et al., 2002).

Because personality dimensions are the consequence of people’s personal attributes, they are used to examine interpersonal connections and interactions (Kelly & Conley, 1987). Personality traits have been used to define and predict attitudes (Ones et al., 2007), actions (Shuck & Reio, 2013), fit (Campion, Medsker, & Higgs, 1993; Halfill et al., 2005), results (Hogan & Holland, 2003), and performance in a variety of organizational environments (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). Meta-analytic studies have examined the five dimensions that have been used in applied psychology (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2015), organizational psychology (Peeters et al., 2006), and human resource management (Campion et al., 1993) to determine the relationship between personality and multiple job outcomes (Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Hogan & Holland, 2003; Barrick & Mount, 1991; Goldberg, 1990).

Productivity is a popular metric for measuring performance. In general, productivity is defined as the ratio of a manufacturing process’s output to its inputs. Labor, time, equipment, materials, and energy are examples of inputs. The number of things produced to a certain quality and standard is one of the outputs (Loosemore, 2014). Productivity is classified into two types: single-factor productivity and multi-factor productivity (Crawford & Vogl, 2006). A single factor evaluates one input (for example, labor), whereas a multi-factor analyzes two or more elements (e.g. labor, equipment, materials). Furthermore, productivity may be measured at several levels (Kenley, 2014), ranging from macroeconomic measures at the industry level that include projects (Nasir, Ahmed, Haas, & Goodrum, 2014) to microeconomic measures at the project level that combine activities and at the activity or task level (Meikle & Best, 2015). Work productivity refers to how much work a person completes in a given length of time, as well as how efficient an employee is with the time and tasks assigned to him. When an employee is assigned a task that he is comfortable with and has supportive conditions, his productivity increases; yet, if the employee is not assigned work in his area of expertise, interest, or has other impediments in his work, his production decreases. The relationship between productivity and personality is critical for any workplace’s recruiting so that they have the individual with the personality that will have a good influence on productivity or else difficulties will occur. Not only is the individual’s performance correlated with personality but also the group performance. Group performance is crucial in any business since it represents the entire performance of the organization. If a company’s personnel are unable to work together as a team, the organization’s financial and operational performance will never be ideal. Because group efforts and collaboration are critical components of every successful organization, it is critical to ensure that all group members’ personalities are compatible for organizational goals to be met. Personality is a transformation process that pertains to an individual’s psychological growth and development. Personality traits are crucial in today’s competitive corporate environments. The “wrong” type of personality is frequently detrimental and produces unpleasant tensions and anxiety in the workplace. Employee personalities may propel a firm to greater heights while poor personalities can drive the organization down. Intelligence and emotional quotient, which essentially comprise an employee’s personality type, must be balanced for the employee to perform efficiently and readily relate to his/her job and other employees in a courteous manner. Workplace characteristics (Ailabouni et al., 2007), project characteristics (Sanders & Thomas, 1991), resources (Thomas & Sudhakumar, 2013), management (Chih, Kiazad, Cheng,

Lajom, & Restubog, 2017), and motivation are all factors that impact group productivity (Raoufi & Robinson Fayek, 2018). Productivity is also affected by human factors and the interdependence of personnel in a group (Dozzi & AbouRizk, 1993). Employees have a range of personality qualities, and the mixing of personalities has an influence on group performance (Culp & Smith, 2001). Employees with compatible personalities are thought to be more productive. Individual personalities mix when individuals create teams, and team building is consistent with a psychological viewpoint. The goal of this strategy is to organize teams in order to enhance associated results (Campion et al., 1993). As a result, while allocating individuals to teams, a manager must evaluate their personality in order to assist the team achieve high performance (Culp & Smith, 2001; Regans et al., 2004). If employees with complementary personalities are considered to perform well, a manager should staff teams with an acceptable balance of personalities since the team has the potential to be extremely productive.

Within its framework, the Big Five Model spawned hundreds of personality studies across different nations and cultures, with a diverse range of residents (Ackerman, 2021). According to 2015 research published in the *Academy of Management Journal*, all of the qualities were “more predictive of work performance” when done in an unstructured setting with the freedom to make decisions, and the traits also suggested how a person’s unique attributes would function in a situation.

### **Methodology**

In order to complete this essay, we conducted secondary research as well as qualitative analysis. The influence and correlation of the Big Five Theory on the workplace specifically for job performance was assessed in several articles (systematic-review). Furthermore, a large number of recent and different publications were gathered in order to have a complete grasp of how this theory corresponds to job performance.

### **Results**

As previously mentioned, our focus was not only to see how the Big Five Theory Model is correlated to an individual’s performance but also for group performance. Personality traits have been studied to see how they affect group performance. According to the findings of a study, when the Big Five Personality Traits are positively portrayed in the workplace, group performance increases. More precisely, the Big Five Theory traits have been found to be highly related to group performance. According to findings, openness to experience is 75%, conscientiousness is 73%, extroversion is 83%, agreeableness is 95%, and neuroticism is 90% associated with group performance (Aremu, Olaonipekun, & Mu’azu, 2018). These percentages are high, which shows a strong correlation between these factors. This is similar with prior research by Colquitt, Le-Pine, and Wesson, M. (2009) and Organ and Ligt (1995), which found a significant relationship between the top five personality traits and employee performance. Two hypothesis tests revealed that the Big Five personalities had a significant impact on group performance. Similarly, all the independent variables are strongly related to the dependent variable. As a result, the independent variables statistically represent the components of the Big Five personality traits. There is a strong relationship between the Big Five personality traits and group performance. Because of the preceding research, employees that match the Big Five requirements may be highly productive and efficient group performers.

According to another study (Lebowitz, 2016), “leaders who understand how different people’s personalities are, can use this understanding to boost their leadership effectiveness and lead to improved employee job performance.” (p. 199-205). Leaders may use the Big Five Theory to review their own behaviors and educate

staff how to not only optimize their strengths/skills, but also learn from their shortcomings as they drive the company to success and continue to assess firm behavior. Additional findings indicate that HRM practices and CEO personality traits impact corporate innovation performance and should be seen as complements rather than substitutes (Hasso, 2013). Furthermore, Barrick and Mount (1991) discovered that conscientiousness demonstrated consistent relationships with all job performance criteria across all occupational groups studied when they investigated the relationship of the Big Five personality dimensions to three job performance criteria (personnel data, job proficiency, and training proficiency). Individuals who demonstrate attributes related with a strong sense of purpose, commitment, and persistence outperform those who do not. Lastly, Fang et al. (2015) identified that personality could predict work performance and career success.

### **Discussion of the Results**

Many studies have been conducted with that specific theme, with many variations and providing either similar or different results. Unquestionably the Big Five theory is the most well-known and most researched theory in today's literature. The previously mentioned studies made clear that the employee's personality is critical for a successful organization. Personality evaluation can be used to categorize a candidate's personality based on his capability and adaptation to the organization's criteria. Furthermore, when an organization employs someone, it searches for specific traits in that individual that will allow him or her to work successfully and contribute to the growth of the organization. The Big Five theory includes all the characteristics that will be seen on the job, such as interacting with coworkers, controlling emotions in stressful situations, and being open to new ideas, being self-aware or helpful to coworkers. As a result, the results from the use of the theory can provide the information needed to anticipate a person's productivity. As for group performance, the interrelationships of a group have been demonstrated to affect productivity. Employees have a variety of personality qualities, and the mix or combination of these traits influences group performance. Employees with compatible personalities are thought to be more productive.

We can't overlook though some limitations that were observed during the study of this research. The first limitation is that most research has a small sample size. The sample size may be inadequate to make broad conclusions in general, specifically about the relationship between compatibility and productivity. Many of them employed a tiny sample size, which might raise concerns. The second constraint stems from, as previously said, the generalization of results. The third is that in the research studied it was not taken into account the potential of moderating effects. These moderators, such as age, professional and social background might affect the results and should be assessed individually.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Human resources are the most important resources and assets that businesses can boast of in the twenty-first century workplace since they are governed and guided by people. People are in charge of creating goals and attaining them (Ibikunle, 2015). As a result, the performance of an organization is defined by the sum of its members' performances. In today's global and competitive economy, it is widely assumed that corporations that rely on diversity outperform organizations that do not profit from variety. This diverse workforce must work in groups and teams and develop a feeling of commitment which is a vital part of organizational citizenship. When employees demonstrate positive personality traits, the overall performance of the organization increases. Organizations should continually employ the best human resource techniques, such as successful recruiting and

selection, to attract the best individuals who exhibit positive characteristics that may successfully build team spirit, task coherence, and the achievement of the organization's vision and mission.

Other human-related aspects that influence group productivity, such as skills, motivation, and capabilities, could be investigated alongside the Big Five theory to develop a more complete group productivity function. We also applaud studies which will aim at developing a more thorough multivariate model of the personality-job performance link. Finally, as for future recommendations even though psychologists' agreement on the validity and utility of the Big Five component model is not universal, we support research that attempts to demonstrate the link between personality and economic outcomes by delving inside traits for dimensions of personality.

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