A Correlational study between Personality, Job Stress and Job Performance across Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures.

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ABSTRACT
The intent of this study is to study the relationship between Personality, and Job stress and its effects on Job performance across individualistic and collectivistic cultures. The design of this study is a quantitative design using questionnaires that assess Personality, Job Stress, and Job Performance. 50 participants (25 from India and 25 from USA) were asked to fill a survey based on the above mentioned dimensions. The relationship between personality and stress and its effects on job performance has been a frequently studied topic in Industrial
Psychology in the past century. Evidence has recommended that an individuals’ personality measures are valid predictors of various job-related criteria (Goldberg, 1993). Stress has been recognized as a factor which potentially hinders organizational effectiveness by contributing to lower employee performance (McGrath, 1976). It is important to perceive and address job stress because its elements badly affect employees’ mental as well as physical health (Rana & Munir, 2011). An individual’s personality has a great impact on the way they perceive stress which in turn has a significant impact on their performance at workplace. The Big Five inventory has been used to measure personality. The job stress scale by Parker & DeCotiis, (1983) and the individual work performance questionnaire by Koopmans et. al (2011) has been used as measures of perceived job stress, and job performance respectively. A significant positive correlation was found between Personality and Job Performance. A negative correlation was found between Personality and Job stress and Job stress and Job Performance.

**Keywords:** Job stress, Job Performance, Personality, Individualistic and collectivist cultures.

**Introduction**

Funder (1997) defined personality as “an individual’s characteristic pattern of thought, emotion, and behaviour, together with the psychological mechanisms— hidden or not— behind those patterns”. Trait theories of personality have long tried to pin down specifically how many personality traits exist. The five-factor theory emerged to explain the essential traits that function as the building blocks of personality. Evidence of this theory has been growing for several years, starting with the research of D. W. Fiske (1949) and later distended upon by different researchers as well as Norman (1967), Smith (1967), Goldberg (1981), and McCrae & Costa (1987).

The "big five" are broad classes of personality traits. They are Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Openness and Neuroticism.

- Extraversion is characterised by excitability, sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness, and high amounts of emotional expressiveness.
- Conscientiousness includes high levels of thoughtfullness, good impulse control, and goal-directed behaviours.
- Openness as a trait features characteristics such as imagination and insight.
- Agreeableness as a personality dimension includes attributes such as trust, altruism, kindness, affection, and other prosocial behaviours.
- Neuroticism is an attribute characterized by sadness, moodiness, and emotional instability.
The concept of stress was given by Hans Seyle (1936) who defined it as “the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change.” According to him, an individual when exposed to stressors, passes through three biological stages; alarm reaction, resistance and Exhaustion. He named this model as the ‘General Adaptive Syndrome’ (GAS)(1991). The term job stress will be outlines as a bunch of external harmful factors within the work atmosphere which can be psychological, physical or social (Greenberg & Baron, 2007; Arnold & Feldman, 2000). Job stress is caused by numerous factors such as job security, role conflict, work overload, autonomy and likewise.

Job performance is defined as in-role behaviours that are required in one’s job description (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

Job performance assesses whether or not a person performs a task well. Performance is a very important criterion for organizational outcomes and success. John P. Campbell describes job performance as an associate in nursing individual-level variable, or something one person does.

Both Personality and Workplace stress play an important role in the overall performance of an individual at work.

**Literature review**

A study conducted by Nathan A. Bowling and Kevin J. Eschleman (2010) on “Employee Personality as a Moderator of the Relationships Between Work Stressors and Counterproductive Work Behaviour” analysing data collected from 726 adults employed in a diverse set of occupations found that work stressors were more strongly related to Counterproductive work behaviours(Component of Job Performance) among workers who were low in conscientiousness, or high in negative affectivity (NA) than among workers who were high in conscientiousness, or low in NA.

M Jamal in 2007 carried out a study named, “Job stress and job performance controversy revisited: An empirical examination in two countries.” This study examined the relationship between the measures of job stress and job performance among personnel operating in a large North American-based multinational corporation in Malaysia (N = 305) and Pakistan (N = 325). Data was collected by means of a structured questionnaire from working personnel on job stress and turnover intention. Job performance and absenteeism data was obtained from the company’s records. In both countries, data was more favourable of the negative linear relationship between stress and performance as compared to the alternate varieties of relationships. Overall, 90% of comparisons supported the negative linear relationship, whereas a u-shaped/curvilinear relationship was supported in 10% of instances.

Another study administered by M Jamal in 1984 titled “Job stress and Job Performance controversy: An empirical assessment” examined the relationship between job stress and employees’ performance and withdrawal behaviour among nurses (N = 440) in 2 hospitals in a Canadian town. Job stressors assessed, incorporated role ambiguity, role overload, role conflict, and resource inadequacy. Employees' performance was operationalized in terms of job performance, motivation, and patient care proficiency. In general, data were more...
favourable of the negative linear relationship between stress and performance than for positive linear or curvilinear relationship.

‘The Big Five Personality dimensions and Job Performance: A meta-analysis’ by MR Barrick and MK Mount (1991), states that, “Conscientiousness was found to be a consistently valid predictor for all occupational groups studied and for all criterion varieties. Thus, this aspect of personality appears to tap traits which are important to the accomplishment of work tasks in all jobs.” They also stated that, “Extraversion was a valid predictor (for all criterion types) across two occupations, Managers and sales.

A study conducted by Usman Bashir et. al (2010) titled “Impact of Stress on Employees’ Job Performance: A study on banking sector of Pakistan.” They collected the data of 144 graduate, senior employees including managers and customer service officers of a well-reputed bank in Pakistan. The results obtained were significant with negative (indirect) correlation between job stress and job performances and shows that job stress considerably reduces the performance of an employee.

A study undertaken by Liu, C., Liu, Y., Mills, M. J., & Fan, J. (2013) titled “job stressors, job performance, job dedication, and the moderating effect of conscientiousness: A mixed-method approach.” Administered on a group of 487 municipal law-enforcing officers from Beijing, China using a qualitative approach, accumulating 150 stressful incident descriptions which was classified into 9 stressor classifications. They found that employees who reported challenge stressors had more increased job performance and were more dedicated than employees who reported hindrance stressors. Using quantitative approach, they found that challenge stressor positively predicted job performance whereas hindrance stressor negatively predicted job performance. The quantitative data also revealed that employees’ conscientiousness level moderated hindrance stressor in relations to both job performance and dedication. Hindrance stressor was more strongly negatively related to job performance and dedication for employees high in conscientiousness than for employees low in conscientiousness.

Hence, we can conclude that job stress is negatively related to job performance. The traits of conscientiousness and extraversion show improved job performance whereas, the trait of neuroticism is an indicator of job stress.

**METHODOLOGY**

**AIM:**

A Correlational study between Personality, Job Stress and Job Performance across Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures.
VARIABLES UNDER STUDY:

Variable 1 – Personality measured using the 15-item inventory of the Big Five Factors of Personality (Lang, F. R., John, D., Ludtke, O., Schupp, J., & Wagner, G. G. (2011)).

Variable 2 – Job Stress measured by using the Job Stress Scale (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983)

Variable 3 - Job Performance measured by using the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire version 0.2 (Koopmans et. al, 2011)

SAMPLE:

50 participants from the organizational sector were asked to fill the questionnaires; 25 from Individualistic Cultures (USA) and 25 from Collectivistic Cultures (India). The mean age of participants from India was 25 years, with 76% males and 24% females. And from USA, the mean age was 32 years, with 60% males and 40% females.

MEASURES:

Tools – Personality was measured using the 15-item inventory of the Big Five Factors of Personality (Lang, F. R., John, D., Ludtke, O., Schupp, J., & Wagner, G. G. (2011)). Job stress was measured using the Job Stress Scale (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983). Job Performance scale was measured using the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire version 0.2 (Koopmans et. al, 2011).

Procedure – A google form was made by combining both the questionnaires and enquiring about demographic information such as, age, gender, etc. The link of the questionnaire was then circulated amongst people who are currently working in the organizational sector. The responses of the participants were then quantified using the scoring manuals of the scales. The scores were then listed down on an excel sheet in order to make it easier for calculations. Once the values were obtained, the correlation between the total score of Personality and Job Stress, Personality and Job Performance and Job Stress and Job Performance were found for both Countries.

RESULTS –

Descriptive Statistics – The total scores of all the scales were found by adding up all the individual scores which were quantified based on the scoring sheet for each scale. The mean, standard deviation, variance and range was found by using the formulae on excel, for each scale for India and USA.
Inferential Statistics – The correlation between Personality and Job Stress, Personality and Job Performance and Job Stress and Job Performance was found by using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the total scores of all the variables, for both countries.

| Table 1: Total score, Mean, SD and Variance of Personality, Job Stress and Job Performance in Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures. |
|---|---|---|
| **Personality** | **Individualistic cultures** | **Collectivistic cultures** |
| Mean | 52.12 | 51.68 |
| SD | 4.033063 | 3.954946 |
| Variance | 16.2656 | 15.6416 |
| Range | 14 | 17 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Job Stress</strong></th>
<th><strong>Individualistic Cultures</strong></th>
<th><strong>Collectivistic Cultures</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>4.498889</td>
<td>5.3066</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>20.24</td>
<td>28.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
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<td>20.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
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| Table 2: Correlations between all the three scales for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures. |
|---|---|---|
| **Scales** | **Correlations for Individualistic cultures** | **Correlations for Collectivistic Cultures** |
| Personality and Job Stress | $r = -0.843^{**}$ | $r = -0.7414^{**}$ |
| Job Stress and Job Performance | $r = -0.5812^{**}$ | $r = -0.6079^{**}$ |
| Personality and Job Performance | $r = 0.7227^{**}$ | $r = 0.8356^{**}$ |

**Correlations which are significant at 0.01 levels.
Table 3: Correlations between each Personality type and Job Stress and Job Performance for Individualistic Cultures respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality types</th>
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<th>Correlations with Job Performance</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>( r = -0.7762^{**} )</td>
<td>( r = 0.7925^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>( r = 0.7036^{**} )</td>
<td>( r = -0.8078^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extraversion</td>
<td>( r = -0.6156^{**} )</td>
<td>( r = 0.5277^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>( r = -0.6092^{**} )</td>
<td>( r = 0.5399^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Mindedness</td>
<td>( r = -0.6212^{**} )</td>
<td>( r = 0.5575^{**} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlations which are significant at 0.01 levels.

Table 4: Correlations between each Personality type and Job Stress and Job Performance for Collectivistic Cultures respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality Types</th>
<th>Correlations with Job Stress</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>( r = -0.7407^{**} )</td>
<td>( r = 0.5513^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>( r = 0.4951^{*} )</td>
<td>( r = -0.0783^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>( r = -0.5174^{**} )</td>
<td>( r = 0.5774^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>( r = -0.4334^{*} )</td>
<td>( r = 0.6016^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open mindedness</td>
<td>( r = -0.7359^{**} )</td>
<td>( r = 0.6891^{**} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Correlations significant at 0.01 levels. *Correlations significant at 0.05 levels.

Discussion:

The findings of this research study suggest that there is a high positive significant correlation between Personality and Job Performance for both the countries, which means that higher scores on the Personality scale will lead to higher scores on Job Performance scale. A significant high negative correlation was found between Job Stress and Job Performance and
Personality and Job Stress for both the countries, which means that higher scores on Job Stress and Personality scales will lead to lower scores on Job Performance and Job Stress scales respectively. There was high significant positive correlation between Personality traits of Contentiousness and Job Performance and high significant negative correlation between Contentiousness and Job Stress.

A study conducted by Nathan A. Bowling and Kevin J. Eschleman (2010) on “Employee Personality as a Moderator of the Relationships Between Work Stressors and Counterproductive Work Behaviour” analysing data collected from 726 adults employed in a diverse set of occupations found that work stressors were more strongly related to Counterproductive work behaviours (Component of Job Performance) among workers who were low in conscientiousness, or high in negative affectivity (NA) than among workers who were high in conscientiousness, or low in NA. The results of this study support the research findings of the current study.

With reference to Table 2: Total score, Mean, SD and Variance of Personality, Job Stress and Job Performance in Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures, which shows the total score, Mean, SD and Variance of the Personality scale for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was 52.12, 4.033063, 16.2656 and 51.68, 3.954946, 15.6416 respectively. The total score, Mean, SD and Variance of the Job Stress scale for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was 28.6, 4.498889, 20.24 and 32.6, 5.3066, 28.16 respectively. The total score, Mean, SD and Variance of the Job Performance scale for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was 28.6, 4.498889, 20.24, and 32.68, 4.543127, 20.64 respectively.

With reference to Table 2: Correlations between all the three scales for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures, which shows the correlation between Personality and Job Stress for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was r= -0.843 and r= -0.7414 respectively. The correlation between Job Stress and Job Performance for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was r= -0.5812 and r= -0.6079 respectively. The correlation between Personality and Job Performance for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was r= 0.7227 and r= -0.8356 respectively. All correlations were found to be significant at 0.01 levels.

With reference to Table 3: Correlations between each Personality type and Job Stress and Job Performance for Individualistic Cultures respectively, which shows that the correlations between Contentiousness and Job Stress was r= -0.7762, Neuroticism and Job Stress was r= 0.7036, Extraversion and Job Stress was r= -0.6156, Agreeableness and Job Stress was r= -0.6092, Open mindedness and Job Stress was r= -0.6212. The correlations between Contentiousness and Job Performance was r= 0.7925, Neuroticism and Job Performance was r= -0.8078, Extraversion and Job Performance was r= 0.5277, Agreeableness and Job Performance was r= 0.5399, Open mindedness and Job Performance was r= 0.5575. All the correlations were significant at 0.01 levels.

With respect to Table 4: Correlations between each Personality type and Job Stress and Job Performance for Collectivistic Cultures respectively, which shows that the correlations between Contentiousness and Job Stress was r= -0.7407, Neuroticism and Job
Stress was r= 0.4951 which was significant at 0.05 level, Extraversion and Job Stress was r= -0.514 , Agreeableness and Job Stress was r=-0.4334 which was significant at 0.05 level, Open mindedness and Job Stress was r= -0.7359. The correlations between Contentiousness and Job Performance was r= 0.5513, Neuroticism and Job Performance was r= -0.0783, Extraversion and Job Performance was r= 0.5774 , Agreeableness and Job Performance was r=0.6016, Open mindedness and Job Performance was r= 0.6891. All the correlations were significant at 0.01 levels unless mentioned otherwise.

There have been various other researches done on the same topic, which help in supporting the findings of the current study. A study conducted by I Abdullah, Y Rashid, R Omar(2013) named, ‘Effect of Personality on Job Performance of Employees: Empirical Evidence from Banking Sector of Pakistan’ investigating the effects of personality on the job performance of employees. They found that personality is a good predictor of performance. Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Openness to Experience has positive and significant effect on Job Performance of employees while neuroticism has negative effect on task and contextual performance of Employees. The results of this study support the conclusions of the current study.

Another study conducted by André Arsenault and Shimon Dolan in the year 1983 called ‘The role of personality, occupation and organization in understanding the relationship between job stress, performance and absenteeism’ on 1200 hospital workers examining The relationship between job content and job context sources of stress and selected behavioural and attitudinal outcomes, absenteeism and perceived performance, while controlling for differences in personality, occupation and organizational culture. Job context stress was found to increase absenteeism and reduce perceived performance. Personality was found to have a significant effect on performance but not on absenteeism; A significant interaction between job context stress and personality types was documented for the two outcomes. The results found backed the results of the current study.

Limitations –

Although the study was conducted keeping all factors in mind, there were various limitations with respect to the methodology which the researcher could not control. Such as, there could be various factors affecting Job Performance such as work environment, motivation, relationship with the co-workers, etc. that were not taken into consideration. Since the sample size of the study is small (50 participants) the results cannot be generalized. This study considered only the corporate sector, and not the other sectors of jobs where the levels of Job Stress and Job Performance could be drastically different. A further limitation of the study was that the mean age of participants from India was 25 years whereas for USA it was 32 years, which means that the participants were not matched on age. From India, 76% of the participants were male and from USA 60% of the participants were male, which implies that the participants weren’t matched on gender either, which could be a factor that effects Job Performance and Job Stress levels. Other related factors like absenteeism and the type of stress (Eustress or Distress) weren’t taken into consideration which might affect the results. The survey was circulated in the form of a google form due to which the researcher couldn’t
physically be present while participants filled the survey and couldn’t personally examine whether the responses were given in the right circumstances and conditions, there is a possibility that the results are not reliable and could be prone to user error.

**Future Suggestions**

Some future suggestions to improve the outcomes of the research and get reliable findings could be, to use a bigger sample size to get generalizable results. The participants can be matched on various factors such as age, gender, etc. Researchers can also consider other factors such as the effect of work environment, motivation, absenteeism, etc. They can also try to either get participants from broadly all working sectors or match the occupation by getting participants from the same organisational sector/background.

**Conclusion**

With the obtained results and the various past researches to support the findings, it can be concluded that Personality traits such as Contentiousness, Extraversion, Neuroticism, etc affect Job Stress and Job Performance. Job Stress has a negative effect on Job Performance. Therefore, organizations must make sure to keep in mind the stress levels and the personality traits of its employees to ensure better productivity, less turnover intention and absenteeism.

**References:**


Introduction

Funder (1997) defined personality as “an individual's characteristic pattern of thought, emotion, and behaviour, together with the psychological mechanisms—hidden or not—behind those patterns”. Trait theories of personality have long tried to pin down specifically how many personality traits exist. The five-factor theory emerged to explain the essential traits that function as the building blocks of personality. Evidence of this theory has been growing for several years, starting with the research of D. W. Fiske (1949) and later distended upon by different researchers as well as Norman (1967), Smith (1967), Goldberg (1981), and McCrae & Costa (1987). The "big five" are broad classes of personality traits. They are Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Openness and Neuroticism. • Extraversion is characterised by excitability, sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness,
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Hindrance stressor was more strongly negatively related to job performance and dedication for employees high in conscientiousness than for employees low in conscientiousness. Hence, we can conclude that job stress is negatively related to job performance. The traits of conscientiousness and extraversion show improved job performance whereas, the trait of neuroticism is an indicator of job stress.
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The findings of this research study suggest that there is a high positive significant correlation between Personality and Job Performance for both the countries, which means that a higher score will lead to higher scores on Job Performance scale. A significant high negative correlation was found between Job Stress and Job Performance and Personality and Job Stress for both the co higher scores on Job Stress and Personality scales will lead to lower scores on Job Performance and Job Stress scales respectively. There was high significant positive correlation between Per Contentiousness and Job Performance and high significant negative correlation between Contentiousness and Job Stress. A study conducted by Nathan A. Bowling and Kevin J. Eschleman [20 as a Moderator of the Relationships Between Work Stressors and Counterproductive Work Behaviour* analysing data collected from 726 adults employed in a diverse set of occupations fou more strongly related to Counterproductive work behaviours(Component of Job Performance) among workers who were low in conscientiousness, or high in negative affectivity (NA) than am in conscientiousness, or low in NA. The results of this study support the research findings of the current study. With reference to Table 1: Total score, Mean, SD and Variance of Personality, J Performance in Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures, which shows the total score, Mean, SD and Variance of the Personality scale for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was 52.12, 4 3.954946, 15.6416 respectively. The total score, Mean, SD and Variance of the Job Stress scale for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was 28.6, 4.498889, 20.24 and 32.6, 5.3066, 28.16 res Mean, SD and Variance of the Job Performance scale for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was 28.6, 4.498889, 20.24, and 32.6, 4.543127, 20.64 respectively. With reference to Table 2: three scales for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures, which shows the correlation between Personality and Job Stress for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was r= 0.843 and r=-0. correlation between Job Stress and Job Performance for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures was r= 0.5812 and r= -0.6079 respectively. The correlation between Personality and Job Perf and Collectivistic Cultures was r= 0.7227 and r= 0.8356 respectively. All correlations were found to be significant at 0.01 levels. With reference to Table 3: Correlations between each Personality type for Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures respectively, which shows that the correlations between Contentiousness and Job Stress was r= -0.7762, Neuroticism and Job Stress was r= 0.7036, Ex r= -0.6156, Agreeableness and Job Stress was r= -0.6092, Open mindedness and Job Stress was r= -0.6212. The correlations between Contentiousness and Job Performance was r= 0.7925, Neu Performance was r= -0.8078, Extraversion and Job Performance was r= 0.5277, Agreeableness and Job Performance was r= 0.5399, Open mindedness and Job Performance was r= 0.5575. All t significant at 0.01 levels. With respect to Table 4: Correlations between each Personality type and Job Stress and Job Performance for Collectivistic Cultures respectively, which shows that the Contentiousness and Job Stress was r= -0.7407, Neuroticism and Job Stress was r= 0.4951 which was significant at 0.05 level, Extraversion and Job Stress was r= -0.514, Agreeableness and Job was significant at 0.05 level. Open mindedness and Job Stress was r= -0.7359. The correlations between Contentiousness and Job Performance was r= 0.5513, Neuroticism and Job Performance Extraversion and Job Performance was r= 0.5774, Agreeableness and Job Performance was r= 0.6016, Open mindedness and Job Performance was r= 0.6891. All the correlations were significa mentioned otherwise. There have been various other researches done on the same topic, which help in supporting the findings of the current study. A study conducted by I Abdullah, Y Rash ‘Effect of
Personality on Job Performance of Employees: Empirical Evidence from Banking Sector of Pakistan investigating the effects of personality on the job performance of employees. The good predictor of performance. Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Openness to Experience has positive and significant effect on job Performance of employees while neur task and contextual performance of Employees. The results of this study support the conclusions of the current study. Another study conducted by André Arsenault and Shimon Dolan in th personality, occupation and organization in understanding the relationship between job stress, performance and absenteeism on 1200 hospital workers examining The relationship between sources of stress and selected behavioural and attitudinal outcomes, absenteeism and perceived performance, while controlling for differences in personality, occupation and organization was found to increase absenteeism and reduce perceived performance. Personality was found to have a significant effect on performance but not on absenteeism; A significant interaction b and personality types was documented for the two outcomes. The results found backed the results of the current study.