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Effects of the big-five personality traits and organizational commitments on organizational citizenship behavior of support staff at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, Thailand

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to examine the effects of the big-five personality traits and organizational commitments on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The research method of this study was a mixed method combining quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative research method, data were collected from 144 support staff at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, Thailand and the hypotheses were tested using the stepwise multiple regression analysis technique. For the qualitative research method, in-depth interviews with 11 support staff were used to explain the quantitative findings. The findings revealed that the components of the big-five personality traits and organizational commitments which significantly affected OCB were agreeable personality, continuance commitment, conscientious personality, affective commitment, and emotionally-stable personality. In examining intensively each dimension of the OCB as a dependent variable, the results showed the following: 1) agreeable personality, affective commitment, conscientious personality, and normative commitment had positive significant effects on altruistic behavior; 2) conscientious personality, agreeable personality, and continuance commitment had positive significant effects on conscientious behavior; 3) affective commitment and agreeable personality had positive significant effects on sportsmanship behavior; 4) emotionally stable personality and continuance commitment had positive significant effects on courteous behavior; and 5) continuance commitment, agreeable personality, conscientious personality, and emotionally-stable personality had positive significant effects on civic virtue behavior.

Introduction

Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University in Thailand is a center for educational services and human resource development in the Mekong sub-region, as well as a major mechanism to drive the national and regional strategies to achieve sustainable development (Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, 2012). It is apparent that the key personnel that are responsible for the main duties in teaching, research, and academic services are at the faculty level. Nonetheless, another group of university personnel that also serve important roles following the faculty and which is classified as an essential group of staff that a university must have, is the support staff, consisting of: 1)

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office personnel, including those working and in charge of various duties in an office; and, 2) general service personnel, or those performing general tasks outside the office, such as security, landscaping, janitor tasks, building maintenance, and driving, among others (Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, 2010). Therefore, the challenging aspects of support staff management lie in encouraging these support staff members to express organizational citizenship behavior in providing assistance as well as facilitating the faculty, students, and other visitors that they come into contact with and to obtain the most satisfaction and to accomplish their missions successfully as desired.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is defined as a special addition to personnel behavior apart from the roles and responsibilities stated in the job description. It is not dependent on the organizational rewarding system but is voluntary behavior shown by staff who willingly work for the benefit of the organization as a priority (Koys, 2001; Organ, 1988; Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). Consequently, encouraging the support staff to express OCB, which includes altruistic behavior, conscientious behavior, sportsmanship behavior, courteous behavior, and civic virtue behavior (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990) might help elevate the performance quality of these support staff individuals to a greater extent. This is consistent with Robbins and Judge (2009, p. 64), who stated that an organization can become successful when its personnel possess OCB.

Hence, the researcher was interested in examining the factors that affect the OCB of the support staff at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, Thailand. Based on a review of the literature on the factors affect organizational citizenship behavior, it was found that the big-five personality traits—extraverted personality, agreeable personality, conscientious personality, emotionally stable personality, and open to experience personality—have effects on organizational citizenship behavior (Mahdiuon, Ghahramani, & Sharif, 2010; Singh & Singh, 2009). Furthermore, it was found that organizational commitments, such as affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment, affect organizational citizenship behavior as well (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002; Peng & Chiu, 2010; Salehi & Gholtash, 2011; Zheng, Zhang, & Li, 2011). It was then expected that the outcomes derived from this study would increase the awareness of the management of Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University as well as other universities in Thailand that are interested in focusing on the factors of the big-five personality traits and organizational commitments to help motivate their support staff to express OCB, which would bring about understanding, harmony, and dedication in these staff members so that they could provide better work performance in the future.

Literature Review and Hypotheses

The Big-Five Personality Traits

In the past several years, the concept of the big-five personality traits has been widespread among researchers, both in terms of concept development and application in the fields of psychology and behavioral sciences (Barrick & Mount, 1991, 1993; Digman, 1990; Goldberg, 1990; Kumar, Bakhshi, & Rani, 2009; Zheng et al., 2011). The big-five personality traits consist of five dimensions: 1) extraversion, a personality that depends on building up relationships with others—those that possess this personality tend to be assertive, like to socialize, and make acquaintances with other people easily; 2) agreeableness, having an accommodating personality—those that have this personality are more likely to be cooperative, warm, and reliable; 3) conscientiousness, a reliable personality—people with this personality are responsible, nice and orderly, stern at work, and self-disciplined; 4) emotional stability, a personality that enables a person to cope with any tension —those with this personality are calm, self-confident, and emotionally stable; and 5) openness to experience, an open-minded personality with an interest in new things—people with this personality are sensitive, responsive, creative, and curious (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Robbins & Judge, 2009).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is confidence in and acceptance of the goals and values of the organization, as well as a desire to maintain one's status as a member of the organization (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). As such, organizational commitment is divided into three categories: 1) affective commitment—an aspiration to continue working for the organization as the vision is aligned with the goals of the organization, resulting in willingness and happiness at work to make performance a success; 2) continuance commitment—an aspiration to continue working for the organization as continuation with the organization would be beneficial for themselves, or because a person does not want to lose what has been contributed to the organization over a period of time; and 3) normative commitment—an aspiration to continue working for the organization as it is appropriate to do so or there is reluctance to stay as a result of pressure or opinions of other people on such person if he/she is to leave the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Organizational citizenship behavior is behavior of personnel that is a special addition apart from their roles and responsibilities as stated in their job descriptions and is not dependent on the organizational rewarding system but is voluntary behavior shown by staff who are willing to work for the benefit of the organization as their priority (Organ et al., 2006, p. 3). The OCB traits have been categorized into five dimensions: 1) altruistic behavior—the behavior of an employee that helps his or her colleagues face problems in the organization (Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983); 2) conscientious behavior—the behavior of an employee that the organization desires such as cooperation, compliance with regulations and other things (Podsakoff et al., 1990); 3) sportsmanship behavior—the behavior of an employee that enables the employee to

tolerate grievances without making any complaints regarding his or her dissatisfaction (Organ, 1990a); 4) courteous behavior—the behavior of an employee that takes others into account in order to prevent problems adversely affecting each other (Podsakoff et al., 1990); and 5) civic virtue behavior—the behavior of an employee to cooperate and participate in the operation of the organization (Organ, 1990b).
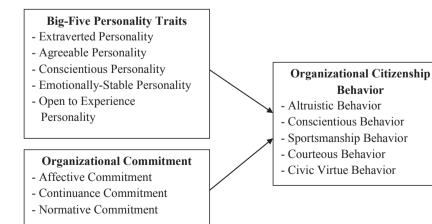
Effect of Big-Five Personality Traits on OCB

In the past several years, there has been extensive investigation into the effect of the big-five personality traits on OCB by researchers. Some of the studies reviewed are as follows: Kumar et al. (2009) and Singh and Singh (2009) revealed that of the big-five personality traits, conscientious personality, extraverted personality, and agreeable personality have significant effects on organizational citizenship behavior. Mahdiuon et al. (2010) found that some of the big-five personality traits, that is, conscientious personality, agreeable personality, and open to experience personality, are variables in predicting the staff's organizational citizenship behavior. Malik, Ghafoor, and Iqba (2012) reported that the big-five personality traits has a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior, and can explain approximately 32 percent of the variance of organizational citizenship behavior. Moreover, Sjahruddin, Armanu, Sudiro, and Normijati (2013) also revealed that the big-five personality traits have a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, based on the above research, the present study proposed the following hypothesis:

H1. The big-five personality traits—extraverted personality, agreeable personality, conscientious personality, emotionally-stable personality, and open to experience personality—have direct, positive effects on organizational citizenship behavior.

Effect of Organizational Commitment on OCB

In the past several years, there has been extensive investigation into the effect of organizational commitment on OCB by researchers, including the following: Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Bommer (1996) revealed that the staff's organizational commitment had a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Meyer et al. (2002), Peng and Chiu (2010), and Salehi and Gholtash (2011) also found that organizational commitment had a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Zheng et al. (2011) reported that affective commitment had a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Rurkkhum and Bartlett (2012) reported that organizational commitment had a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior from the perspectives of civic virtue behavior, altruistic behavior, conscientious behavior, sportsmanship behavior, and courteous behavior. Therefore, based on the above research, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H2. Organizational commitment, comprised of affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment, has positive direct effects on organizational citizenship behavior.

Conceptual Framework

From the literature review of the big-five personality traits, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior, the effect of the big-five personality traits on organizational citizenship behavior, and the effect of organizational commitment on organizational citizenship behavior, the conceptual framework of this research is shown in Figure 1.

Research Methods

The research method of this study was a mixed-methods approach comprising quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative research method, 249 support staff at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University (data as of December 24, 2013 from the Department of Personnel Administration, Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University) were the population. By using the formula to select the quota proposed by Yamane (1973), 154 samples were

Figure 1 Conceptual framework

included with a statistical significance at .05 and a deviation of 5 percent, using a simple sampling method. Data collection was conducted during April, 2014. One hundred forty-four completed questionnaires were returned, representing 93.51 percent of the sample.

The questionnaire was used as a tool to collect the data. It was divided into four sections: Section 1—respondents' demographics; Section 2—the big-five personality traits based mainly on the study by Costa and McCrae (1992), consisting of 25 items, such as "you prefer having people around," "you prefer meeting and talking to other people," "you are optimistic," and "you prefer participating in activities," among others; Section 3—organizational commitment, developed from the study by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993), consisting of 15 items, such as "you are happy to be working in this position," "you are bound to working for the organization," "you feel that you are part of the organization," and "you believe that the organization's problems are your problem," among others; and Section 4—organizational citizenship behavior, developed from the study conducted by Podsakoff et al. (1990), consisting of 25 items, such as "you fill in for any colleagues who are absent from work on any given day," "you assist any colleagues who happen to have too much work load," "you give some advice to newcomers," and "you are always ready to lend a helping to any colleagues," among others. In addition, all of the items in Sections 2–4 were measured using a five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

The reliability of the questionnaire was tested for Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which was recognized at a value of not less than .7 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). In addition, the construct validity was tested using confirmatory factor analysis, as the principal method and the Varimax rotation method was used so that each factor was separated completely (Prasit-rathsint, 2008), which was recognized at a value of not less than .4 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Details are shown in Table 1.

Using the qualitative research method, the researcher created the interview outline by following the results of the stepwise multiple regression analysis, and this was used in the in-depth interviews of 11 support staff at Ubon Rachathani Rajabhat University in order to explain the quantitative findings.

Data Analysis and Results

Descriptive Statistics of Sample Demographics

About three-fifths of the sample respondents were female (62.5%), 35 years of age on average, with 77.8 percent working as a university official (support staff), holding a bachelor's degree (72.9%), having 8 years of work experience on average, and having a monthly salary of 15,366 baht on average.

Analysis of Variable Correlation

The samples showed on average the OCB as the highest (4.26), followed by conscientious personality (4.23), agreeable personality (4.20), affective commitment (4.18), emotionally-stable personality (4.12), extraverted personality (4.02), open to experience personality (3.97), normative commitment (3.88), and continuance commitment (3.74). The data yielded a slight difference within the group and a normal distribution, while each pair of independent variables showed a correlation not exceeding .75 (Prasit-rathsint, 2008). Therefore, this did not cause a multicollinearity problem for further analysis.

Results of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis

This part examined which personality variables and organizational commitment components had an effect on the OCB by using the stepwise multiple regression analysis technique. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 2.

From Table 2, it can be seen that five independent variables had significant effects on the OCB. The variable with the highest effect was agreeable personality, followed by continuance commitment, conscientious personality, affective commitment, and emotionally-stable personality. These variables were able to explain approximately 55.4 percent of the variation of the OCB.

In addition, the researcher conducted an intensive examination on the big-five personality variables and organizational commitment components and on which

Table 1
Factor loading and Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the data collecting tool

Variable	Factor loading	Cronbach's α coefficient
Big-five personality traits		
Extraverted personality	.664−.770	.758
Agreeable personality	.459−.759	.734
Conscientiousness personality	.631−.759	.815
Emotionally-stable personality	.582−.836	.815
Open to experience personality	.415−.818	.859
Organizational commitment		
Affective commitment	.769−.849	.913
Continuance commitment	.482−.896	.851
Normative commitment	.706−.809	.804
Organizational citizenship behavior		
Altruistic behavior	.669−.824	.902
Conscientious behavior	.585−.789	.785
Sportsmanship behavior	.717−.873	.884
Courteous behavior	.730−.887	.890
Civic virtue behavior	.698−.840	.925

Table 2
Stepwise multiple regression analysis of big-five personality traits and organizational commitment components on organizational citizenship behavior

Variable	Standardized coefficient (β)	t-value
Agreeable personality	.253	3.418
Continuance commitment	.201	3.105
Conscientious personality	.244	3.000
Affective commitment	.158	2.243
Emotionally-stable personality	.158	2.166

R = .744 R^2 = .554 SEE = .345 F = 34.217 p = .000

variables had an effect on the OCB separately by dimensions, including altruistic behavior, conscientious behavior, sportsmanship behavior, courteous behavior, and civic virtue behavior. Details are shown in Tables 3–7.

From Table 3, it can be seen that four independent variables significantly affected altruistic behavior. The variable with the highest effect was agreeable personality, followed by affective commitment, conscientious personality, and normative commitment, respectively. These variables were able to explain approximately 55.7 percent of the variation of altruistic behavior.

From Table 4, it can be seen that three independent variables had significant effects on conscientious behavior. The variable with the highest effect was conscientious personality, followed by agreeable personality and continuance commitment, respectively. These variables were able to explain approximately 45.7 percent of the variation of conscientious behavior.

From Table 5, it can be seen that two independent variables significantly affected sportsmanship behavior. The variable with the highest effect was affective commitment, followed by agreeable personality. These variables were able to explain approximately 14.6 percent of the variation of sportsmanship behavior.

From Table 6, it can be seen that two independent variables had significant effects on courteous behavior. The variable with the highest effect was emotionally-stable personality, followed by continuance commitment. These variables were able to explain approximately 16.0 percent of the variation of courteous behavior.

From Table 7, it can be seen that four independent variables had significant effects on civic virtue behavior. The variable with the highest effect was continuance commitment, followed by agreeable personality, conscientious personality, and emotionally-stable personality, respectively. These variables were able to explain approximately 40.9 percent of the variation of civic virtue behavior.

In-depth Interview Results

The in-depth interviews were conducted to find additional explanation of the above quantitative research findings.

Effect of Agreeable Personality on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior of the Supportive Staff

From the interviews with key informants, it was found that most of them emphasized collaboration and helping colleagues while trying not to create any conflict in the

Table 3
Stepwise multiple regression analysis of big-five personality traits and organizational commitment components on altruistic behavior

Variable	Standardized coefficient (β)	t-value
Agreeable personality	.291	4.000
Affective commitment	.238	3.355
Conscientious personality	.249	3.328
Normative commitment	.193	2.809

R = .746 R^2 = .557 SEE = .388 F = 43.693 p = .000

Table 4
Stepwise multiple regression analysis of big-five personality traits and organizational commitment components on conscientious behavior

Variable	Standardized coefficient (β)	t-value
Conscientious personality	.415	5.099
Agreeable personality	.248	3.136
Continuance commitment	.176	2.673

R = .676 R^2 = .457 SEE = .444 F = 39.262 p = .000

Table 5
Stepwise multiple regression analysis of big-five personality traits and organizational components commitment on sportsmanship behavior

Variable	Standardized coefficient (β)	t-value
Affective commitment	.281	3.338
Agreeable personality	.173	2.052

R = .383 R^2 = .146 SEE = .647 F = 12.099 p = .000

Table 6
Stepwise multiple regression analysis of big-five personality traits and organizational commitment components on courteous behavior

Variable	Standardized coefficient (β)	t-value
Emotionally-stable personality	.307	3.871
Continuance commitment	.194	2.449

R = .400 R^2 = .160 SEE = .696 F = 13.445 p = .000

Table 7
Stepwise multiple regression analysis of big-five personality traits and organizational commitment components on civic virtue behavior

Variable	Standardized coefficient (β)	t-value
Continuance commitment	.252	3.654
Agreeable personality	.235	2.794
Conscientious personality	.191	2.057
Emotionally-stable personality	.189	2.328

R = .639 R^2 = .409 SEE = .458 F = 24.005 p = .000

workplace. They mentioned that this can affect the organizational citizenship behavior of the supportive staffs.

Effect of Conscientious Personality on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior of the Supportive Staff

The in-depth interviews revealed that almost all of the key informants perceived order, diligence, cross-checking, and consideration of impacted stakeholders to be important. They mentioned that these factors affected the organizational citizenship behavior of the supportive staff.

Effect of Emotionally-Stable Personality on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior of the Support Staff

Most of the key informants stated that self-control and emotional stability affected the organizational citizenship behavior of the support staff. In addition, some of them recommended that empathy can also have an effect on behavior.

Effect of Affective Commitment on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior of the Support Staff

From the interviews with the majority of key informants, it was found that affection amongst colleagues, faculty and students, as well as affection and goodwill towards the organization, can affect the good organizational citizenship behavior of the support staff.

Effect of Continuance Commitment on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior of the Support Staff

From the in-depth interviews, more than half of the key informants mentioned that continuance commitment from compensation was important. On the other hand, for some key informants, continuance commitment from previous contributions to the organization was also seen as important, and both compensation and previous contribution affected the organizational citizenship behavior of the support staff. However, some of them felt that affection towards the organization had a greater effect than continuance commitment.

Effect of Normative Commitment on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior of the Support Staff

According to the interviews, almost all of the key informants mentioned that care and concern about other colleagues who might not continue working for the organization would lead to the expression of good organizational citizenship behavior, such as assistance with class preparation and on the job training in their free time. On the other hand, some staff members were afraid that their colleagues might be criticized and so they expressed positive behavior in trying to provide assistance and stand in when their colleagues were not present. In addition, more than half of the key informants perceived that organizational loyalty should be considered to be normal practice and was identified as a factor that had an effect on organizational citizenship behavior.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings above revealed that the big-five personality traits and organizational commitment have positive effects on the OCB. The highest effect was agreeable personality, followed by continuance commitment, conscientious personality, affective commitment, and emotionally-stable personality.

Furthermore, when examining the effects of the big-five personality traits and the organizational commitment variables on the OCB by each dimension, the results revealed the following.

1) Altruistic behavior: the results showed that four independent variables had positive significant effects on altruistic behavior. The variable with the highest effect was agreeable personality, followed by affective commitment, conscientious personality, and normative commitment.

2) Conscientious behavior: the results showed that three independent variables had significant positive effects on conscientious behavior. The variable with the highest effect was conscientious personality, followed by agreeable personality and continuance commitment.

3) Sportsmanship behavior: the results showed that two independent variables significantly and positively affected sportsmanship behavior. The variable with the highest effect was affective commitment, followed by agreeable personality.

4) Courteous behavior: the results showed that two independent variables had significant positive effects on courteous behavior. The variable with the highest effect was emotionally-stable personality, followed by continuance commitment.

5) Civic virtue behavior: the results showed that four independent variables significantly and positively affected civic virtue behavior. The variable with the highest effect was continuance commitment, followed by agreeable personality, conscientious personality, and emotionally-stable personality.

Regarding the results above, the study found that the findings were consistent with the literature reviewed at the beginning. It can be assumed that of the big-five personality traits, agreeable personality, conscientious personality, and emotionally-stable personality had positive effects on organizational citizenship behavior (Hakim, Nimran, Haerani, & Alam, 2014; Kumar et al., 2009; Mahdiuon et al., 2010; Malik et al., 2012; Singh & Singh, 2009; Sjahruddin et al., 2013). In addition, organizational commitment, comprised of affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment, also had positive effects on organizational citizenship behavior (Meyer et al., 2002; Peng & Chiu, 2010; Podsakoff et al., 1996; Salehi & Gholtash, 2011; Zheng et al., 2011).

However, based on the review of the literature, it was found that the emotionally-stable personality had no positive effect on the OCB (Mahdiuon et al., 2010; Singh & Singh, 2009). On the contrary, the results of this study found that the emotionally-stable personality has a significantly positive effect on the OCB. Therefore, the researcher had to refer to the in-depth interviews to help confirm the findings as to why the emotionally-stable personality had a positive effect on the OCB. Some of the in-depth interviews went as follows:

" … it affects. The emotion is very important because if we are not happy being blamed or scolded at, we just need to keep such emotions inside. It means work comes first. The work must go on. And when we are condemned or blamed, we should think about it and consider improving our work. If the mood for work is not good at such time, but we need to deal with this

person, whom we prefer not to talk to, the work would not be accomplished. So, we must know how to keep unpleasant emotions like anger or detestation and make them disappear. And we use a good mood to approach colleagues so we will be back with friendship …"

"… it affects. We often have an emotion such as rage or fury inside. If we come together, we must be calm. Not to be fussy at all time. We just need to calm down to find a solution. When lots of people stay together, we need to adjust and control our mood when angry. If we cannot control our temper, working with colleagues is impossible. It will give them a hard time and they will not communicate with us. And the work will not progress …"

According to the results of the in-depth interviews, it can be concluded that if personnel possess an emotionally-stable personality or the ability to cope with tension at work and could control their temper while working with colleagues, this might have an effect on their expression of OCB. In other words, this will encourage such personnel to demonstrate courteous behavior by trying to prevent conflict with colleagues. This also can lead to the expression of civic virtue behavior on the part of the personnel and allows for smooth and convenient operation in the organization, create friendship among colleagues, and reduce any delays at work. This will result in an improvement in the operation of the organization and make it more efficient.

Limitations and Suggestions

1) Since this study investigated specifically the effects of the big-five personality traits and organizational commitments on OCB, further studies should include other factors.

2) As this study examined the effects the big-five personality traits and organizational commitments on the OCB among the support staff at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University only, future study should expand the scope: for example, 2.1) with other groups of personnel that have a responsibility that requires OCB, such as nurses, soldiers, police, salespeople, as well as other kinds of staff that provide services; and, 2.2) the same group of support staff at other Rajabhat Universities throughout the country, as well as in the public and private universities where the results and findings are likely to be useful in the establishment and development of guidelines to enhance OCB among personnel in different professions and in different contexts in various organizations in the future.

Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest.

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