

# EXAMINE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STAFF PERSONALITY TRAITS, WORK ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING (CASE STUDY: DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH KHORASAN)

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## ABSTRACT

**Aims:**The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between staff personality traits, work engagement and organizational learning. The population in this study consisted of 210 employees of the directorate general of technical and vocational education in South Khorasan. The sampling method of present research is simple random sampling and using a Cochran formula and sample size is equal to 136 people. **Materials and methods:**In this research, the structural relations model was used to analyze the data. For data analysis and hypothesis testing and other analyzes in this paper was used lisrel statistical software. **Results:**The results showed that there is no significant relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning, but was approved work engagement as a mediator variable in the relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning.

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### KEY WORDS

staff personality traits, work engagement and organizational learning.

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## INTRODUCTION

Knowledge and how to knowing is the organization's strategic resources that must be managed and developed. Therefore the organizational learning and knowledge production in the last few years is taken into consideration [1-3]. Organizational learning is a dynamic process that enables organizations to quickly adapt to change. This process involves the production of new knowledge, skills and behaviors. Organizational learning is a way of creating a working knowledge and improve organizational performance. So successful organization must be active in learning[4]. Learning is the most important way to improve long-term performance and in the near future the organization that can claim superiority that be able to learn the capabilities and commitment and capacity to efficiently exploit people at all levels of the organization. In today's competitive and changing world, organizations can survive or can claim superiority capabilities that can benefit from commitment and capacity to learn people at all organizational levels, in other words, to be a learning organization[5]. Research in the field of personality shows that the ability to regulate the thoughts and time management is a prerequisite for any learning situation. In relation to character interaction and learning styles, research shows that people with different personality traits have different learning styles [6].

Moreover, on the other hand, since the personality characteristics of individuals act as agents for determining their behavior. It is possible to achieve behavior framework with identification of these characteristics. Knowledge of personality can help organization management to appoint qualified individuals to the organization in different positions, which it will reduce staff turnover and increase job satisfaction [7]. On the other hand, in recent years, a lot of interest shown in the issue of employee engagement. Due to the work engagement by creating positive synergies between individual employees and the organization in place that is associated with positive outcomes for both groups. These consequences may include: positive job attitudes and strong recognition with work; mental and psychological health including positive emotions and decrease burnout, inner working performance and better external jobs, enhancing intrinsic motivation, individual initiative and proactive behavior, achieving personal and professional resources.

A high level of employee engagement for the organization has following positive outcomes: retention of talented employees, a positive mental picture of the company, business performance, financial performance or service quality

[8]. When there is a sense of belonging and organizational loyalty, it creates an intimate and familiar atmosphere in the organization. In such an environment, people are familiar with each other over time and have found a sense of belonging and loyalty to live in a group, and getting things done is much easier and group activities progress well and quickly [9]. The aim of this research was to investigate the relationship between staff personality traits and work engagement and organizational learning.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### STAFF PERSONALITY TRAITS

Each job has unique characteristics, and people have their personality traits, and like to work alone in the group. Personality is a set of psychological characteristics and there is sustainability in person and is affected in their thought and behavior. Or in another word, the personality characteristics is a combination of psychological features that we use it to identify that person's position in the classification [7]. The type of personality could play an important role in deciding on organizational matters. Personality is a set of psychological characteristics that are sustainable in person and is influenced on the behavior and their thinking. The results of investigating the personality characteristics traits show that people's behavior depends on their character and personality characteristics, so their behavior is underlying personality characteristics [10].

In many researches about the personality have focused on the five personality dimensions, is classified personality characteristic traits into five dimensions: Extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism and openness to experience and refers to the comfort of the person in the relationship.

**Extroverted people:** these people enjoy from interacting with others and presence in large gathering and extraversion includes the traits of energetic, talkative, and assertive. They like to simulate the sensation and typically are cheerful and compatibility refers to respect for others.

**Agreeableness people:** These individuals are caring for others, honest and eager to help others and believes others in turn are useful to people, in contrast, incompatible people are hesitant, manipulative, self-centered and are competitive; conscientiousness implies the trustworthy of person.

**Conscientious people,** are people focused, strong-willed and tend to depend on, hardworking, success-oriented and be healthy person. Robbins has identified the number of specific personality traits that can determine behavior in organizations, in the form of a special group distinct from the others and has shown that these features include: Locus of control, self-esteem, power, compatibility with the position [11]. Today, we believe that personality is evolving and any definition of personality, as a step on a process and personality in every moment of their evolution as an expression or manifestation of an inclusive adaptation capacity, that is, if the character is known as a complete range of Human psychological, in order to be motivated and directed behavior that we see in him. So in any moment of the individual development, we are in fact faced with some kind of mental manifestations that these manifestations considered as his comprehensive adaptation [12]. In the meta-analysis that took place by BRIC and Monte (1991) concluded that conscientiousness is the best personality trait of predictors of job performance and extraversion and neuroticism are the best predicted of job satisfaction. Employees, Shamir and Chen (2003), in analyzing the relationship between each of the five areas of personality traits and job performance and found that conscientiousness was the strongest correlation with job performance. Byrne et al (2005) to investigate the relationship between job performance and personality trait and the results showed that conscientiousness job performance is significantly predicted [13].

### WORK ENGAGEMENT

During the last decade, work engagement is highly considered in the field of human resource management and organizational behavior. Structural work engagement has a positive role in explaining and predicting the optimal organizational performance [14]. Engagement as a new concept in recent years into organizational issues and has gained popularity over the past decade. In the engagement, people in play a role employed or express all aspects of physical, cognitive and emotional expression and in working have energetic and willing to spend their effort [14]. (Isa Khani et al., 2012). Engagement of employees in work is influenced by personal, occupational and organizational factors.

Many believe that employee engagement is predictors of the results of personnel work, organizational success and financial performance [15,16,17]. The definition of engagement does not exist cosmopolitan outlook. In individual engagement play role employed or express of all aspects of physical, cognitive and emotional dimension. The lack of engagement is isolated themselves from the role of their work. In the absence of engagement, people with physical, cognitive and emotional roles are separated from their job [18]. Shafley and Bekr define work engagement as positive mental states, satisfactory and work-related, that are differentiated by three indicators of vitality, devotee and fascination. Vitality is differentiated with a high level of energy and resilience of mind at work.

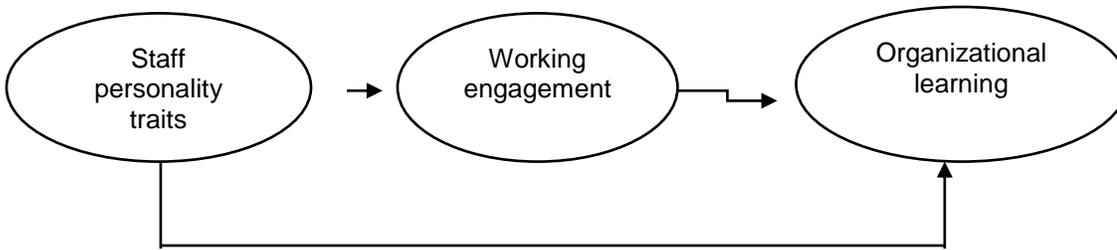
Dedicate is severe involvement to engage with the work and refers to the experience a sense of significance, enthusiasm and challenge. Fascination, is distinguished with full concentration and happily absorbed in work whereby the time quickly passed and separated themselves from the work is difficult for the person [19]. Macy et al. for engagement consider two dimensions of psychic energy and behavioral energy. In the psychic energy are also called a sense of engagement are raised four fundamental component of urgency, that a sense of being focused, intensely felt, and enthusiasm feeling. Behavioral dimension also includes four components of sustainability, innovation, expanding the role, and adaptation to change, [15].

Work engagement is emphasized that toward job performance has sense of responsibility and they care about the outcomes of performance. So, engagement is a motivational state that is created by self-responsibility and personal interest. May et al. have classification engagement to the physical dimensions (applying energy to do the work), cognitive (working is so fascinating for person that when working forgets everything) and emotional (put his best foot forward) [20,21]. Work engagement as a positive structure has a high potential to explain the organization's desired outcomes.

### Organizational Learning

Learning requires that individuals have the knowledge that obtained in their organizations to apply in their behavior. The term of organizational learning apparently referring to the so-called individual learning, but organizational learning more refers to the group or organizational-level learning. Individual learning is done by reading, interviews, knowledge, experience, practice and develops effective mental models in the mind, but organizational learning occurs when the group learns to interact, share knowledge and act collectively so that combined capacity of group's increases and to obtain the ability to understand and take effective action [22]. Regardless of the exact date of the start of organizational learning, it not attracting much attention until the late 1970s. At this time, a number of theorists, focused its activities on organizational learning [23,24]. Although the research in this field was continued till the 1980s, in 1990 the issue of organizational learning was just one of the topics that covered in the various trends in management disciplines such as strategy and production management and from that date onwards, the discussion of organizational learning was overshadowed of new management topics such as learning organizations. Organizational learning is not a fixed position or limited purpose, but rather is a continuous process and evolution that is adapted to the environmental conditions that during it, the groups within the organization are encouraged to develop skills, knowledge and develop consensus about the destination [25]. Argyris and Schon (1978) have divided learning process into three categories of Single – Loop Learning, Double – Loop Learning, and Deutero- Learning.

From the opinion of Figueiredo (2002), Learning in organizations has four sub-process of knowledge acquisition from outside the organization, the acquisition of knowledge within the organization, general knowledge and to encrypt and development of knowledge [26]. Chu (2004) note that facilitators of organizational learning are key facilitators of interaction and communication are as follows, the interaction and communication between team members, job rotation and experience, interaction and communication modes, direction and frequency of information flow between team members and occupational groups and experience is referred to able to change and real exchange of jobs between Member [27]. Generally, learning has three stages: recognition, behavior and performance. According to Garvin opinion, an organization to use new ideas to improve organizational performance and converting them into practical programs, the five skills are needed that include problem solving, gaining experience, learning from their experience and history, learning from others and transfer or implementation.



**Fig: 1. Conceptual Model**

**Hypotheses**

1. There is a significant relationship between staff personality traits and work engagement.
2. There is a significant relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning.
3. There is a significant relationship between work engagement and organizational learning.
4. There is a significant relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning through work engagement.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Required data for this research have been collected with a questionnaire that its reliability was tested. To collect data researcher has used of questionnaire that consisted of 32 questions that all questions are five-item Likert. This data has been analyzed by LISREL software. The population in this research, was 210 employees of the department of Technical and Vocational Training Organization in South Khorasan. In this survey, using simple random sampling method, and 136 employees were selected. To determine the validity and reliability were used of content validity and Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the amount was obtained equal to 89. In this research, after drawing analytical model based on data by the Path diagram program with running the Perlis program from the LISREL software was obtained measurement model that in this model have been tested hypotheses using the coefficients B and t-test. Meantime the model fit indices with automatically performances of Perlis program is also calculated for the intended model.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

**Table: 1. Fit indices of research model**

Fit index	Standard values	Estimated values
Degrees of Freedom	-----	461
Chi-Square	Due to the dependence the sample size is not a suitable criterion	1089.15
RMSEA	0.05	0.083
NFI	0.90	0.91
NNFI	0.90	0.94
CFI	0.90	0.95
RMR	0.05	0.061
GFI	0.90	0.75
AGFI	0.90	0.71

As can be seen in [Table– 1], Indicators of compliance or goodness of fit indices are in a relatively acceptable level.

**Structural equation modeling**

In this research, using confirmatory factor analysis to test the measurement model and was used path analysis to confirm the structural model. Two following figure shows the overall model output of LISREL software that simultaneous involving the structural model and the measurement model and in the following we will be examined detail separation.

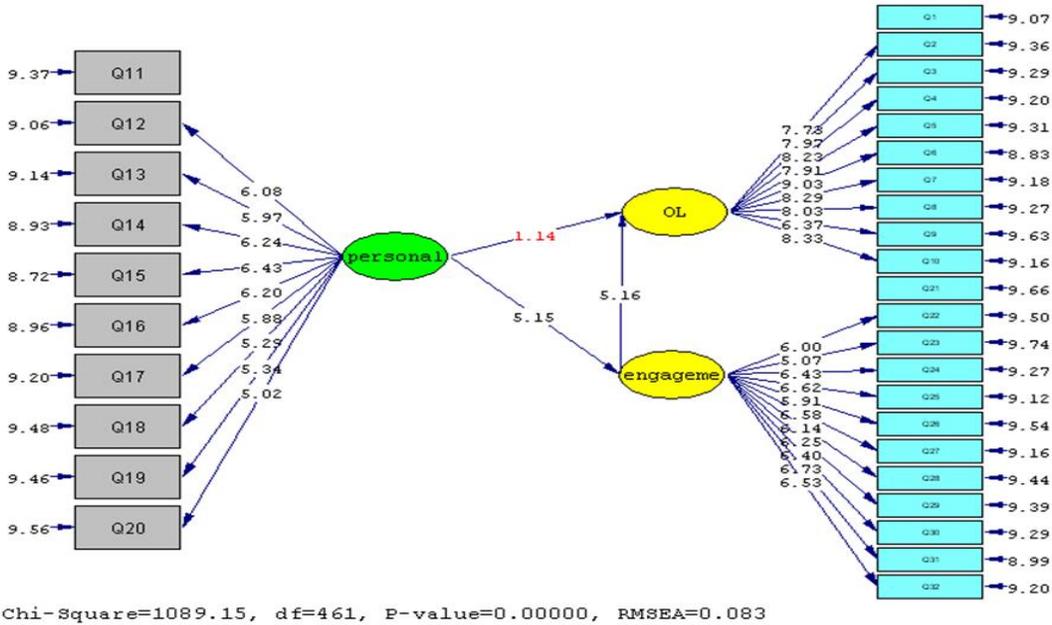


Fig: 2. The base model with T values

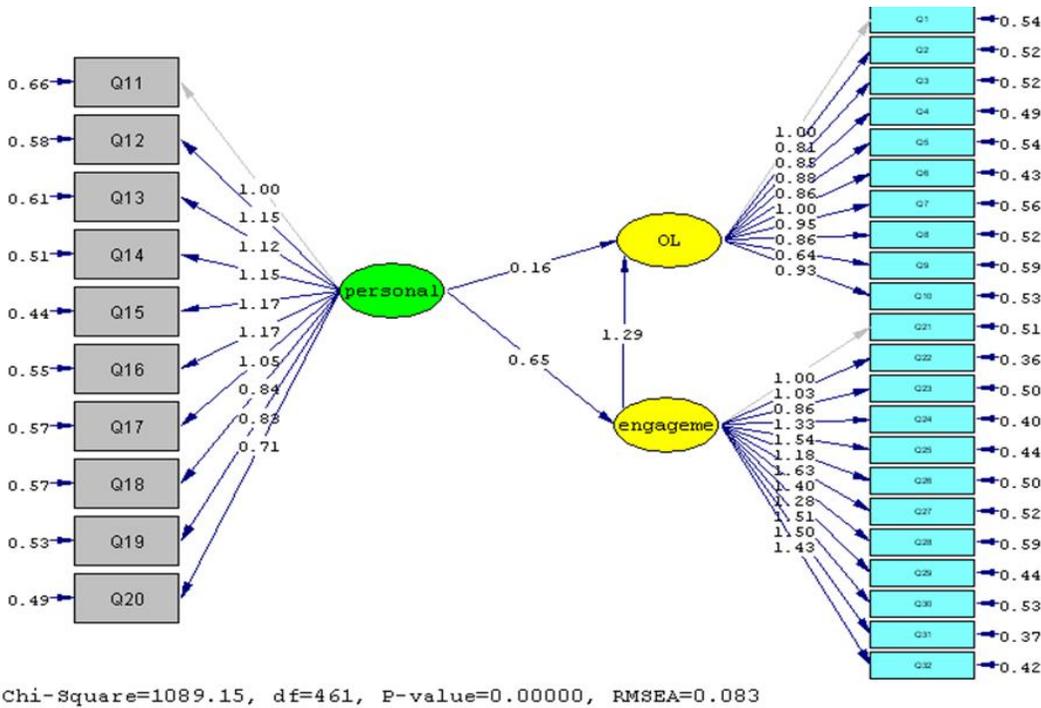


Fig: 3. The base model with path coefficients

In the structural equation modeling beta coefficients that represent the correlation between hidden variables and appear on the chart and related the hidden variables.

**TESTING HYPOTHESES**

**The first hypothesis**

Table: 2. Results of the testing first hypothesis

Result	T-statistic	Coefficient	Hypothesis
Accept	5.15	0.065	1. there is a significant relationship between work engagement and staff personality traits

Based on the results that shown in Table- 2, the impact of the independent variable on the dependent is supported by data and the path that are related these two variables to each other is a positive and significant (at the level of 5% is significance) ( $t = 5.15, \beta_{22} = 0.65$ ) As a result, we can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant relationship between staff personality traits and work engagement.

The second hypothesis

Table: 3. Results of the testing second hypothesis

Result	T-statistic	Coefficient	Hypothesis
Reject	1.14	0.16	2. There is a significant relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning.

Based on the results that shown in Table- 3, the impact of the independent variable on the dependent is not supported by the data and the path that are related these two variables to each other is not a positive and significant (at the level of 5% is significance) ( $t = 1.14, \beta_{22} = 0.16$ ) As a result, we can say with 95 confidence that there is not a significant relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning.

The third hypothesis

Table: 4. Results of the testing third hypothesis

Result	T-statistic	Coefficient	Hypothesis
Accept	5.16	1.29	3. There is a significant relationship between work engagement and organizational learning.

Based on the results that shown in Table- 4, the impact of the independent variable on the dependent is supported by the data and the path that are related these two variables to each other is a positive and significant (at the level of 5% is significance) ( $t = 5.16, \beta_{22} = 1.29$ ) As a result, we can say with 95 confidence that there is a significant relationship between work engagement and organizational learning.

The fourth hypothesis

Table: 5. Results of the testing fourth hypothesis

Result	T-statistic	Coefficient	Hypothesis
Accept	$0.65 \times 1.29 = 0.83$		4. There is a significant relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning through work engagement.

The result of testing fourth hypotheses examined according to the data in Table-5 (5). The coefficient of hidden variable of exogenous staff personality traits on work engagement endogenous variable is 0.65 and with a T value is equal to 5.15 of the confidence level is 0.05 with confidence of 0.95 the intendent statistic is significant and the coefficient of work engagement endogenous variable on organizational learning endogenous variable is 1.29 and a T value is equal to 5.16 of the error level is 0.05 with confidence 0.95 the statistics are significant. As a result, the influence of the mediating role of work engagement between staff personality traits and organizational learning is equal to  $0.65 \times 1.29 = 0.83$  and is confirmed the researchers claim.

RESULTS

The results of the first hypotheses indicated that the path coefficient between staff personality traits and work engagement is equal to 0.65 and the amount of corresponding t is  $5.15 > 1.96$ , which according to t-test with critical value is 0.05 at a confidence level of 95% and can be rejected the null hypothesis as a result, the first claim of researchers is approved and can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant relationship between staff personality traits and work engagement.

The results of the second hypotheses indicated that the path coefficient between staff personality traits and organizational learning is equal to 0.16 and the amount of corresponding t is  $1.14 < 1.96$ , which according to t-test

with critical value is 0.05 at a confidence level of 95% and cannot rejected the null hypothesis, as a result, the second claim of researchers not approved and can say with 95% confidence that there isn't any significant relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning.

The results of the third hypotheses indicated that the path coefficient between work engagement and organizational learning is equal to 1.29 and the amount of corresponding t is  $5.16 > 1.96$ , which according to t-test with critical value is 0.05 at a confidence level of 95% and can rejected the null hypothesis, as a result, the second claim of researchers is approved and can say with 95% confidence that there is a significant relationship between work engagement and organizational learning.

The results of the fourth hypotheses indicated that the path coefficient between staff personality traits and work engagement is equal to 0.65 and the amount of corresponding t is  $5.15 > 1.96$ , and the path coefficient between work engagement and organizational learning is equal to 1/29 and the amount of corresponding t is  $5.16 > 1.96$ , which according to t-test with critical value is 0.05 at a confidence level of 95% and can rejected the null hypothesis, as a result, the fourth claim of researchers is approved and the effect of the mediating role of work engagement between staff personality traits and organizational learning is equal to  $0.65 \times 1.29 = 0.83$ .

## CONCLUSION

The results showed that there is no significant relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning, but was approved work engagement as a mediator variable in the relationship between staff personality traits and organizational learning.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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None.

## FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

None declared.

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