RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PREDICTOR OF WORK ENGAGEMENT AMONG NURSES

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The need for healthcare workers in hospitals is increasing worldwide, and since nurses represent the greatest proportion of health workers, it is important that nurses should be highly engaged in their jobs. The present study entitled "Personality traits as predictor of Work engagement among Nurses", was aimed to understand the relation of personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability) with work engagement among nurses. Also the main objective was to identify significant personality traits that predict work enagement among them. A quantitative and correlational research design was adopted and the settings included hospitals/nursing homes of J&K, India. The participants included the 300 nurses having at least two years of working experience and selected/engaged by the authorities on substantive basis. Standardised tools were used to collect the data, Pearson's product moment correlation method and regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Results revealed that openness to experience (r =-0.126, P value 0.05); conscientiousness (r =.319, P value 0.01); extraversion (r =.328, P value 0.01) have significant positive correlation with work engagement as indicated by significant r values. However, agreeableness and emotional stability have insignificant correlation with work engagement. A regression analysis revealed that among the five personality traits only openness (β = .163, p = .009), conscientiousness (β = .171, p = .010) and extraversion (β= .243, p = .000) were found significant predictors/determinants of work engagement of nurses.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of the role of health care professionals in delivering the services to the society has prompted the experts to discuss, debate, and examine the multitude of practices to make them more productive. Nurses form the largest component of the health care workforce and the possibility of strengthening them to become partners and leaders in improving the delivery of care and the health care system as a whole and preventing them from psychological problems has grabbed the attention of researchers since a long time. Nurse is defined as a person, often a woman, who is trained to tend the sick and infirm, assist doctors (Collins English Dictionary & Thesaurus, 2003). The role of the nurse includes having to deal with and adapt to a variety of situations and events including caring for people with long term illnesses and conditions, people at the end of life, health promotion, as well as fundamental care such as bathing, comforting and assisting patients and their relatives (Fealy, 2004). Researchers revealed that heavy workload, lack of control, insufficient rewards, lack of fairness, lack of community and incongruent values are barriers that nurses perceived to work engagement (Freeney and Tiernan, 2009).

Although there is some debate over the specific scope of work engagement, most researchers agree that it consists of high levels of energy and strong identification with one's work (Bakker et al., 2008). One of the first conceptualizations of engagement was offered by Kahn (1990) who described it as "harnessing of organizations members' selves to their work roles: in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, emotionally and mentally during role performances".

Personality may play an important role in work engagement (Macey and Schneider, 2008), because individuals with a specific personality profile may be better able to mobilize their job resources than individuals with a different profile. Makikangas, Feldt, Kinnunen and Mauno (2013) found that of the Big Five factors- emotional stability, extraversion, and conscientiousness were consistently related to higher work engagement. In addition, several studies found a positive relationship between the lower-order individual factors (also called personal resources) and work engagement. Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti and Schaufeli (2007, 2009) confirmed self- efficacy, optimism, and self-esteem are related to work engagement. Christian, Garza and Slaughter (2011) showed that conscientiousness, positive affect, and proactive personality were all positively related to engagement.

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Purpose of the Study

Today's health institutions want and need nurses who are highly engaged in their work. Evidence indicates that those health institutions that have such nurses outperform those that don't. Compared to other general and professional service jobs, nursing requires handling complicated and dynamic occurrences under strict time pressures. Continuous and excessive workloads tend to deteriorate the work engagement and decrease their performance. On the other hand research evidences have shown that personality factors play an important role in determining the work engagement (Langelaan et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2009; Soliemanifar and Shaabani, 2012; Mahboubi et al., 2015; Mroz and Kaleta, 2016). Although a lot of research has been carried in past on the personality traits, and work engagement, these variables have not been often studied together on the sample group of nurses. In this context, the present research study entitled "Personality traits as predictor of Work engagement among nurses" is carried with the rationale that it may not only contribute to the literature on the said variables and help the researchers in the field of health psychology for better understanding of relationship between these variables, but also help them to develop strategies for enhancement of work engagement among the nurses and allied professionals, and to increase the effectiveness of health services. In the light of these facts, the importance of identifying personality traits as related to engagement is indisputably of great importance to improve the standard of health services and care in the nursing profession.

Objectives

The following objectives have been set for the present study:

- To assess personality traits, and work engagement of nurses.
- To study the nature of relationship of personality traits with work engagement of nurses.
- To identify significant determinants/predictors of work engagement among personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability).

Hypotheses

On the basis of objectives framed above, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

H_1: Openness trait is significantly correlated with work engagement among nurses.

H_2: Conscientiousness trait is significantly correlated with work engagement among nurses.

H_3: Extraversion trait is significantly correlated with work engagement among nurses.

H_4: Agreeableness trait is significantly correlated with work engagement among nurses.

H_5: Emotional stability trait is significantly correlated with work engagement among nurses.

H_6: Openness trait will emerges as significant determinant of work engagement in nurses.

H_7: Conscientiousness trait will emerges as significant determinant Work engagement in nurses.

H_8: Extraversion trait emerges as significant determinant of work engagement in nurses.

H_9: Agreeableness trait will emerges as significant determinant of work engagement in nurses.

H_{10}: Emotional stability trait will emerges as significant determinant of work engagement in nurses.

Sample

The participants of the present study comprised 300 nurses taken from eleven different hospitals/ nursing homes of Baramulla District of Jammu and Kashmir, with inclusion criteria stated below:

The participant

- Should posses the basic qualification required for the nursing job as prescribed by the hospital/recruitment authorities
- Have at least two years of working experience
- Should be performing the nursing job in the hospital/nursing home
- Should have been selected/engaged by the authorities and not working on voluntary basis.

Research Instruments

Following research instruments were used for the data collection.

- For the assessment of personality traits, Five Dimensional Personality Inventory (FDPI) (self-report form) developed by Muzamil and Shawkat (2015) was used. It is a 20 item instrument having 4 items in each of the five dimensions namely openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability with strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat agree, neutral, somewhat agree, agree and strongly agree options for each item. Construct reliability of the scales follow the order of 0.66 to 0.78. The alpha coefficient in the present study for personality traits is 0.74.
- The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez- Roma & Bakker, 2002) measures levels of engagement. The UWES is scored on a seven point frequency scale, ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (every day). Three dimensions of engagement can be distinguished, namely vigor (six items), dedication (five items) and absorption (six items). In terms of internal consistency, reliability coefficients for the three subscales have been found to be 0.68 and 0.91. The alpha coefficient in the present study for overall work engagement is 0.82.

The above table reveals a satisfactory internal consistency of the measuring instruments as indicated by the alpha coefficient scores of 0.74 and 0.82 in case of personality traits and work engagement respectively.

Data Collection Procedure

All Block Medical Officers of Government Hospitals in Baramulla district, and administrators of nursing homes were contacted for permission to carry the present study in their respective hospitals.

Table 1. Scale Characteristics and Reliability Analysis of the Personality traits and Work engagement

Measure	Items	Response Range	N	M	SD	Cronbach's alpha(ά)
Personality Traits	15	1-7	300	85.48	9.06	.74
Work engagement	16	0-6	300	78.91	11.30	.82

Table 2. Showing range of scores within different levels of personality traits

Personality traits	M	SD	*LL-UL*	*Low*	*Average*	*High*
Openness	5.9911	.87616	5.11-6.86	<5.11	5.11-6.86	>6.86
Conscientiousness	6.1789	.65446	5.52-6.83	<5.52	5.52-6.83	>6.83
Extraversion	5.9711	.65446	5.26-6.67	<5.26	5.26-6.67	>6.67
Agreeableness	5.9633	.75584	5.20-6.71	<5.20	5.20-6.71	>6.71
Emotional stability	4.3856	1.67896	2.70-6.06	<2.70	2.70-6.06	>6.06

LL=Lower limit;   UL=Upper limit

Table 3. Frequency distribution of nurses on personality traits

Personality traits	Levels					
	Low		Average		High	
	F	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*
Openness	35	11.67	217	72.33	48	16
Conscientiousness	44	14.67	188	62.67	68	22.66
Extraversion	36	12	190	63.34	74	24.66
Agreeableness	54	18	203	67.67	73	14.33
Emotional stability	59	19.66	196	65.34	45	15

Table 4. Range of scores within different levels of work engagement and its dimensions

Variables	M	SD	*LL-UL*	*Low*	*Average*	*High*
Vigor	4.8133	.90396	3.90-5.71	≤3.90	3.90-5.71	>5.71
Dedication	5.2592	.76101	4.48-6.01	≤4.48	4.48-6.01	>6.01
Absorption	4.8322	.86811	3.96-5.69	≤3.96	3.96-5.69	>5.69
Work engagement	4.96	.691	4.27-5.65	≤4.27	4.27-5.65	>5.65

LL=Lower limit; UL=Upper limit

Table 5. Frequency distribution of nurses on work engagement and its dimensions of work engagement

Variables	Levels					
	Low		Average		High	
	F	*%*	*f*	*%*	*F*	*%*
Vigor	48	16	207	69	45	15
Dedication	32	10.66	184	61.34	84	28
Absorption	39	13	217	72.34	44	14.66
Work engagement	44	14.66	207	69	49	16.33

After taking permission from the hospital authorities, nurses were personally contacted in eleven hospitals of Baramulla including, District Civil Hospital of Baramulla; Altaf Nursing Home; St. Joseph's Hospital; Primary Health Centre Sheeri; Primary Health Centre Boniyar; Primary Health Centre, Uri; Public Health Care Centre Dangiwacha; Primary Health Centre Rohama; Government Sub District Hospital of Pattan; Sub District Hospital of Tangmarg and Hakim Sanaullah Specialist Hospital and Cancer Centre. The data was collected from participants individually. The researcher provided all help to the participants to understand the item/s of the questionnaire. The purpose of the study was explained to each participant. The investigator assured the confidentiality of the response and verbal consent was taken from each participant.

Data Analysis

The responses obtained from the participants were subjected to different statistical treatments. Using SPSS 20.0, the data was subjected to descriptive (frequencies, percentages, mean, standard deviation), and inferential analysis like correlation, regression to meet the objectives of the study and to test the hypotheses. The level of significance chosen was 0.05. Assessment of Personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability), and Work engagement among Nurses. Descriptive analyses were conducted to assess the personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability) and work engagement among nurses. The table indicates that 11.67% of nurses have low level of openness trait,72.33% have average level and 16% of nurses are having high level of openness trait;14.67% of nurses have low level of conscientiousness trait, 62.67% have average level and 22.66% of nurses are having high level of conscientiousness trait;12% of nurses have low level of extraversion trait, 63.34% have average level and 24.66% of nurses are having high level of extraversion trait;18% of nurse's have low level of agreeableness trait, 67.67 % have average level and 14.33% of nurse's are having high level of agreeableness trait and .66% of nurse's have low level of emotional stability, 65.34% of nurse's have average level of emotional stability, and 15% of nurse's are having high level of emotional stability. The table indicates that 14.66% of nurses have low level of work engagement,69% have average level and 16.33%

of nurses have high level of work engagement;16% of nurses have low level of vigor, 69% have average level and 15% of nurses have high level of vigor;10.66% of nurses have low level of dedication, 61.34% have average level and 28% of nurses are having high level of dedication and on absorption dimension 13% of nurses have low level, 72.34% have average level and 14.66% of nurses have high level of absorption.

Relationship of Personality traits with Work engagement

To study the relationship between the personality traits, and work engagement among nurses, Pearson's Product Moment of Correlation and Multiple Regression Analyses were applied. Tables below present the results of the initial correlation analysis.

Table 6. Showing correlation Summary of Personality traits and Work engagement

Dimensions of work engagement				
Personality traits	Work engagement	vigor	Dedication	Absorption
Openness	.319**	.303**	.239**	.238**
Conscientiousness	.328**	.263**	.313**	.236**
Extraversion	.365**	.323**	.240**	.325**
Agreeableness	.074	-.067	.111	.110
Emotional stability	.047	.047	.107	-.031

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

Table 7. Showing Multiple Regression Analysis of Personality traits and work engagement

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	27.067	5	5.413	13.713	.000
Residual	116.057	294	.395		
Total	143.124	299			

Multiple Regression Analysis *(Summary of Predictor Variables)*

Outcome	Predictors	B	SE B	B	T	Sig
	Constant	2.236	.412		5.423	.000
	Openness	.129	.049	.163	2.632	.009
	Conscientiousness	.181	.070	.171	2.590	.010
	Extraversion	.237	.062	.243	3.821	.000
	Agreeableness	-.096	.053	-.105	1.800	.073
	Emotional stability	.000	.023	.001	.010	.992

$R^2 = .189 (p < .005)$

The above table reflects that openness, conscientiousness and extraversion personality traits were significantly and positively correlated with work engagement. However, the correlation of agreeableness and emotional stability traits were found insignificant with work engagement. Thus hypotheses H_1, H_2 and H_3 stands accepted where as hypotheses H_4 and H_5 stands rejected.

Multiple Regression Analysis (ANOVA Summary)

The table shows that about 18.9% of variation in work engagement of nurses can be attributed to their personality traits as the obtained $R^2 = .189$ *(p <.005)*. Further, among the five personality traits openness, conscientiousness and extraversion were found significant predictors/ determinants of work engagement of nurses as their respective values ($\beta = .163$, $p = .009$; $\beta = .171$, $p = .010$ and $\beta = .243$, $p = .000$) are significant at 0.05 level of significance. Agreeableness and emotional stability traits were found as insignificant predictors/determinants of work engagement as their respective values were insignificant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore hypothesis H_6, H_7, and

H_8 stands accepted where as hypothesis H_9 and H_{10} stands rejected.

DISCUSSION

The results of present study revealed that openness, conscientiousness and extraversion had significant positive correlation with work engagement. Lot of research evidence is available that supports the present finding. Van Rhenen, Schaufeli and Van Dijk, (2008); Wefald and Reichard and Serrano (2011); Zaidi, Wajid, Zaidi, Zaidi and Zaidi (2013) found that personality traits like extraversion, conscientiousness and openness to experience are positively related to work engagement. Langelaan, Bakker, Doornen and Schaufeli (2006) also found that high levels of extraversion correlated to high levels of work engagement.

However, insignificant relation was found between agreeableness, emotional stability and work engagement. One study by Kim, Shin & Swanger (2009) reported that positive personality traits such as agreeableness are weakly related to employees' work engagement and low neuroticism are related to high engagement. The results further indicated that, among the five personality traits openness, conscientiousness and extraversion were found significant predictors/determinants of work engagement of nurses. This finding is in line with the research studies of Mostert and Rothmann (2006); Opie and Henn (2013); Ongore (2014) who also demonstrated that conscientiousness, and extraversion each made an independent contribution to predicting work engagement and conscientiousness positively predicts work engagement.

Limitation and Suggestions

The present study yielded many productive, encouraging and useful results; however it is imperative to draw attention to some limitations of the study, with some possible suggestions with the aim that this will assist the new researchers who are fascinated to carry out research in this field.

- The data was collected only from the hospitals/ nursing homes of Baramulla district on a small sample, if the future study will include large sample of nurses from a broad cross section of hospitals/ nursing homes of various districts it will ensure greater generalizability of results.
- Besides quantitative measures qualitative procedures need to be adopted to get into the grounded factors of work engagement in nurses.
- The study focused only on dispositional (personality traits) determinants of work engagement and hence future studies should also incorporate situational determinants in the form of job demand and job resources.

Implications

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following support services and care, in supporting the needs of nurses.

- Organizations should strive to enhance the level of engagement of their employees and should encourage personality of nurses with agreeableness and openness to experience traits to work in teams so as to improve the overall performance of teams.
- Sponsored higher education programmes that may lead to employee commitment and thereby total involvement and engagement of employees.
- Lastly there is need for more research to delineate the specific psychological and other problems faced by the nurses in Kashmir.

Conclusion

This study investigated how personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability) are related with work engagement. The results of correlational analysis revealed that openness, conscientiousness and extraversion had significant positive correlation with work engagement, two personality traits (agreeableness and emotional stability) has insignificant correlation with work engagement. The results further indicated that, among the five personality traits openness, conscientiousness and extraversion were found significant predictors/determinants of work engagement of nurses.

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