Original Article

The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction in the Relationship between Personality Traits and Organizational Commitment of Public Sector Employees in Hanoi City

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Abstract: The study aims to analyze the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between personality traits and employees' organizational commitment in the public sector in Hanoi city. From the data provided by 337 employees working in the public sector, the structural equation model (SEM) was applied to evaluate the impact of personality traits on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The result shows that a positive relationship between personality traits, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The study suggests some significant policy implications for organizations in the public sector to increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Keywords: Personality traits, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, public sector.

1. Introduction

Recent years have seen a remarkable development in social sciences. There have been studies in human resource management, focusing on employee development as a significant part of organizational resources [1]. Hence, human resources play an essential role in an organization's performance through making employees satisfied [2]. Managers realize that for an organization to achieve its best efficiency and optimal performance, it depends in part on the employee job satisfaction and commitment to the organization [3].

The importance of organizational commitment focuses on the positive relationship between employee behavior and attitudes that affect the organization [4]. Researches on

organizational behavior have shown that personality traits help improve internal resources and improve work efficiency. The big-five personality traits have a positive impact on employee behavior and attitudes at work [5].

In Hanoi, the public sector plays an essential role in the development and growth of the economy by performing official duties. The operational ability of the State administrative apparatus is significant for the maintenance of social order and the economy as well as the development of Hanoi city. However, the public sector is coping with the job displacement of highly qualified employees, which affects the level of service and the national interest. Hence, it is necessary to study the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between personality traits and organizational commitment of public sector employees in Hanoi city.

Thus, the study aims to discover the relationship between personality traits, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment of employees working in the public sector in the Hanoi city. It is essential to understand what contributes to increased job satisfaction and employees' organizational commitment. Hence, it can enhance their performance.

2. Theoretical background and hypothesis

2.1. Theoretical background

2.1.1. Personality traits

In the aspect of organizational psychology, the study of personality has flourished since the early 1990s [6]. Bradberry [7] argued that personality is a psychological difference between individuals, making a unique individual with distinctive psychological characteristics, which helps distinguish between different individuals. Personality has a positive impact on the behavior and thoughts of each person. Hence, personality traits affect work and social relationships. Carpenter et al. [8] define personality traits as a sequence of emotions and thoughts. Personality studies focus on

discovering, testing, and assessing the personality of employees in the workplace [9]. Hence, the big-five personality traits have emerged and been expanded to study outstanding aspects of each person's personality [10]. The big-five personality traits model explains that personality consists of five independent factors that have provided a meaningful explanation for the study of individual differences and their responses [11]. Thus, the big-five personality traits use words to describe the personality that exists in each person to determine attitudes and behaviors at work. Employees in the public sector are no exception. They possess the inherent personality traits of humans. The study of employee personality in the public sector could help managers arrange work positions to suit employees to bring good work results. In addition, it can contribute to improving organizational performance. In this study, the authors inherit the scale of the big-five personality traits of Jabari et al. [12].

Extraversion: related to affable, fluent, sharing, assertive, active, ambitious, and art-loving [13]. Extroverts desire praise, social recognition, and power [14]. Extroverts like to seek out stimuli from their surroundings and want to find opportunities to engage with others.

Conscientiousness: a conscientious person is a methodical and systematic person who is reliable [15]. A conscientious person is careful, thorough, responsible, organized, and self-disciplined [16]. Conscientious people will take responsibility for the work, and they often plan things rather than acting spontaneously.

Agreeableness: includes descriptors such as politeness, flexibility, trust, kindness, cooperation, forgiveness, tenderness, and tolerance [13]. Costa & McCrae [17] consider agreeable people to be trusting, helpful to others, tolerant, soft-hearted, and compassionate.

Neuroticism: includes negative personality attributes such as anxiety, depression, anger, shame, anxiety, and unsafe feelings [13]. People with high neuroticism often experience more melancholy, anger, fear, guilt, and jealousy than

other people. They often interpret ordinary situations in terms of danger, anxiety, and minor difficulties as extreme despair.

Openness: refers to imaginativeness, creativity, sensitiveness, and independence [10]. Open people often appreciate adventure, art, curiosity, original ideas, and aesthetics.

Thus, personality traits may have a high, medium, or low degree among different individuals, but personality traits will always exist in each person's personality [18].

2.1.2. Organizational commitment

There are many different views on organizational commitment, but researchers agree that the main factor affecting the process and performance of employees is organizational commitment. Organizational commitment reflects the degree of employee engagement and commitment to realize organizational goals [19]. Mowday et al. [20] argue that organizational commitment is the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. And they propose three components of organizational commitment consist of identification is a strong belief in and acceptance of an organization's goals and values. Loyalty is a strong desire to maintain membership in an organization. Involvement is participation in activities of the organization and making a voluntary effort for the organization. Meyer & Allen [21] indicate that organizational commitment is a psychological state that shows a close relationship between an individual and the organization, related to the decision for continuance of membership in the organization. They referred to these three forms of commitment as affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment relates to how much employees want to stay in their organization; continuance commitment relates to how much employees feel the need to stay in their organization; normative commitment relates to how much employees perceive they should stay in their organization. Thereby, organizational commitment is the desire to stay with the organization for a long time and devote themselves to organization

development goals. For employees working in the public sector, increasing organizational commitment is imperative today. In the public sector, organizational commitment will help managers capture employee behavior in the working process, improving work efficiency. It brings benefits to the overall goals of the organization. To be consistent with the research, the authors believe that organizational commitment is the attitude and psychology of employees that cover the components of organizational commitment. The study focuses on assessing employees' organizational commitment overall.

2.1.3. Job satisfaction

Pettijohn et al. [22] show that one of the factors that has attracted the attention of many researchers in the past few decades is job satisfaction. Each study gives different concepts depending on the approach. Luddy [23] argues that job satisfaction is an affective and emotional response to various aspects of an employee's job. Job satisfaction is an employee's affective response to a job based on a comparison between expectations and actual results [24]. Slatten [25] argue that job satisfaction is the measurement by two different directions covering overall job satisfaction and different aspects of job satisfaction. He acknowledges that overall satisfaction is a core attribute in satisfaction. The study of Ellickson [26] agree with Slatten. If measuring job satisfaction only focuses on different aspects of the job and paying little attention to overall satisfaction, it may lead to insufficient understanding of the concept of satisfaction [27]. Overall satisfaction is expressed by the emotional state of happiness, comfort, excitement, or complacency that the job brings or the employee's positive psychological perception of the job. Employees are a significant factor affecting the stable and sustainable development of the organization, both in the public and private sectors. The growth of the market economy and the process of international economic integration create many attractive job opportunities outside the public sector, attracting qualified employees to

leave state agencies. Therefore, brain drain is an alarming situation for the overall development of countries. Hence, public sector managers must create job satisfaction to retain employees and improve the performance of State agencies. Thus, to be consistent with the study, the authors choose to measure job satisfaction in terms of overall satisfaction.

2.2. Summarizing previous studies

The study of Phong [28] on the influence of job satisfaction on organizational commitment of employees at the Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development in Ben Tre province ko phai la cau hoan chinh. The results show that the nature of work, leadership, salary, training and promotion opportunities, co-workers, brand, and work pressure have an impact on affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment.

The study of Tu [29] on personality factors affecting employees' organizational commitment: a case study of a Nike footwear factory in the South of Vietnam. The study uses SPSS data analysis and exploratory factor analysis. The results show that the extroversion factor has the strongest impact on organizational commitment of employees, followed by the neuroticism factor and the conscientiousness factor. The two factors of openness and agreeableness have no impact on organizational commitment of employees.

The study of Vi [30] on the influence of psychological capital and individual attributes on the work cohesion of bank staff in Vietnam. The results show that four factors of the big five personality model including extroversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness have a positive impact on employee engagement. On the other hand, neuroticism has a negative effect on the job engagement of bank employees.

The study of Hang & Thong [31] on the correlation among job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention: a case of technical staff in the IT infrastructure services sector. The study found

six factors that affect job satisfaction in descending order including payment and benefits, training and promotion, job stress, working condition job characteristics and supervisor support. Job satisfaction positively affects organizational commitment while job satisfaction and organizational commitment negatively affect turnover intention.

The study of Long & Nhu [32] on the impact of the big-five personality traits and ethical leadership on job satisfaction: a case study at large supermarkets in Ho Chi Minh City. The study identified three factors of personality traits including openness, conscientiousness, and extroversion that have a strong influence on job satisfaction. Besides, neuroticism has a negative effect on job satisfaction and agreeableness has no effect on job satisfaction.

The study of Giao [33] on the effects of psychological capital and personality on hotel staff working at Ho Chi Minh City. The study surveys 378 staff members who are working in hotels in Ho Chi Minh City which are rated three stars or more. The results show that all psychological capital factors, including hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism have had positive impacts on the work ethic of hotel staff. The study also demonstrated the effects of personality on the hotel staff members' engagement with their work.

The study of Tuan & Dung [34] on factors impacting on job satisfaction, organizational commitment and the intention to stay of staff working on Ho Chi Minh City's information industry sector. The results show that the working environment has a direct positive impact on job satisfaction, organizational commitment and the work-related stress directly and indirectly affects the intention to stay through job satisfaction and the organizational commitment factors. In addition, the job satisfaction positively and indirectly affects the intention of employees to stay through the organizational commitment factor.

2.3. Hypothesis

2.3.1. The relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction

Tariq et al. [35] conclude that the big five personality traits and job satisfaction have a close relationship. The study of Ilies & Judge [36] indicate that personality has a significant influence on job satisfaction. Judge et al. [5] said that neuroticism has a negative relationship with a strong level of job satisfaction. Extraversion and conscientiousness have a positive relationship (medium level) with job satisfaction. Agreeableness and openness have a positive relationship (weak level) with job satisfaction. The study of Liao & Lee [37] agree with Judge et al. Hence, the first hypothesis proposed in this study is:

H1.1: Extraversion has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

H1.2: Agreeableness has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

H1.3: Conscientiousness has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

H1.4: Neuroticism hurts job satisfaction.

H1.5: Openness has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

2.3.2. The relationship between personality traits and organizational commitment

Erdheim et al. [38] argue that personality is a predictor of organizational commitment. Judge et al. [5] said that the big-five personality traits influence the behavior and attitudes of employees. Organizational commitment has a positive effect on employee behavior and attitudes [4]. Cui [39] show a positive relationship between personality and organizational commitment of the employee. Kumar & Bakhshi [12] concluded that extraversion has a positive relationship with affective commitment. And neuroticism has a negative correlation with affective commitment. The second hypothesis proposed in this study is:

H2.1: Extraversion has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

H2.2: Agreeableness has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

H2.3: Conscientiousness has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

H2.4: Neuroticism hurts organizational commitment.

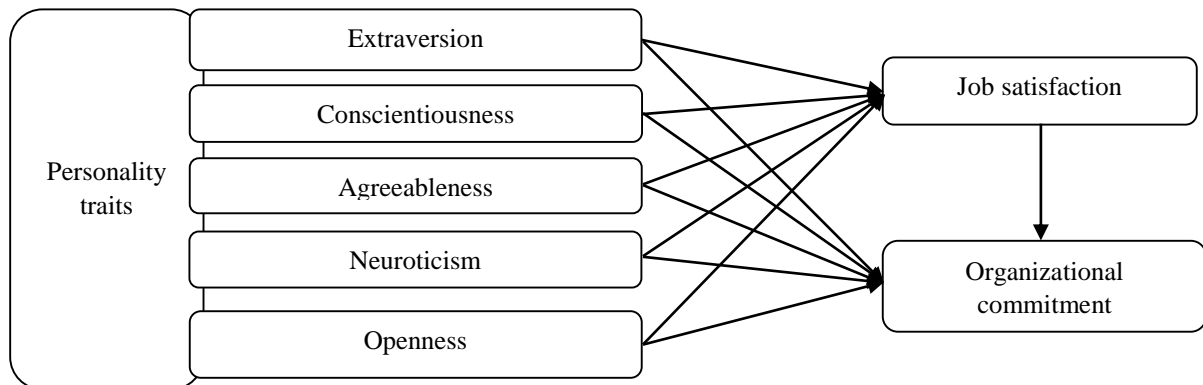H2.5: Openness has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

Figure 1: Study framework
Source: The authors' proposal.

2.3.3. The relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment

Lincoln & Kalleberg [40] argue that job satisfaction is the capital cause leading to an increase in employees' organizational

commitment. In contrast, Yucel & Bektas [41] indicate that organizational commitment is the main factor affecting employee satisfaction with the organization. The study of Krueger et al. [42] have the same view on the linear relationship

between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Thus, studies have not yet reached a consensus on this relationship. In summary, the authors believe that instead of looking for a cause-and-effect relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, it will be a reciprocal relationship. Hence, the third hypothesis proposed in this study is:

H3: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on organizational commitment.

3. Methodology

3.1. Scale design

The research includes two phases of qualitative and quantitative research. The purpose of the qualitative research is to evaluate the suitability of the factors in the research model. The research design used in qualitative research is structured interviews. The content will be saved on the questionnaire, with short answer summaries, in preparation for the next phase of the official investigation. The research design in quantitative research is the descriptive research design and the observed variables using the 5-level Likert scale.

The personality traits questionnaire includes fifteen observed variables of Jabari et al. [12]. In addition, the scale of job satisfaction of Chiva & Alegre [43] include three observed variables. And the scale of organizational commitment includes three observed variables.

3.2. Sample size

Hair et al. [44] said that the minimum sample size to use for exploratory factor analysis is 50, preferably 100 or more. The ratio of observations on an analytic variable of 5:1 or 10:1 provides the minimum sample size of the study to ensure reliability. In this study, the authors use the 10:1 rule. This study has 21 observed variables, so the number of samples needed is $21*10 = 210$. Besides, to avoid the low probability of a vote recovery, the authors will take the sample size of 358 observations and collect 337 appropriate surveys after cleaning the data.

The study uses a convenient sampling method for employees working in the public sector in Hanoi city. The study period was from March 1st to March 31st, 2021. Survey forms were sent directly to employees working in the public sector in Hanoi city. The study surveyed twenty-three State agencies of Hanoi city.

3.3. Data analysis

The study uses analytical methods including descriptive statistics, a reliability test of the scale by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SPSS 26 and AMOS 20 shows the relationship between personality traits, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Sample characteristics

The results show that the prominent characteristics of public sector employees in Hanoi participating in the survey who are male, accounting for 62.1%. The age group is from 25 to over 45 years old, accounting for 90.6%. The education level is mainly university, accounting for 87.1% and the seniority of working from five years to more than ten years, accounting for 93.7%. The characteristics of the survey sample are consistent for the public sector in Vietnam. The employees in the public sector are almost men. They are between the ages of 25 to over 45 years old, with high levels of education, and many years of work experience.

4.2. Reliability test of the scale

The results show that the lowest Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is 0.788, and the highest is 0.895. Compared with standard 0.6, all observed variables of the scale are satisfactory. The corrected item-total correlation is greater than 0.3. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the variable

types of all 21 observed variables is smaller than the sum of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, so no variables are excluded (Table 1). All scales achieve two reliability and discriminant values. Hence, the scale is good and meets the reliability requirement for exploratory factor analysis

4.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The study uses the Principal Axis Factoring extraction method along with Promax rotation. The study analyzes the overall scale including all observed variables of the personality traits scale, job satisfaction scale, and organizational commitment scale. The study obtained results with the coefficient KMO = 0.813; The Bartlett Test is statistically significant with Sig. = 0.000 (< 0.05), and 7 factors are extracted with Eigenvalue = 1.254; Sums of Squared Loadings = 81.532% (greater than 50%). Seven factors explain 81.532% of the variability of the data. Table 1 summarized the results of reliability test of scale and exploratory factor analysis.

Table 1: The results of reliability test of scale and exploratory factor analysis

Abbr.	Observed variables	Component						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Openness: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.788								
O3	You like the variety and complexity of work	0.889						
O1	You enjoy new ideas	0.880						
O2	You have no trouble adapting to new ideas	0.872						
Conscientiousness: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.841								
C1	You work meticulously and carefully, not easily distracted while working		0.885					
C2	You are an organized person, often planning and trying to follow the plan to the end		0.876					
C3	You are a hard worker		0.785					
Agreeableness: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.895								
A2	You are helpful to your colleagues and willing to share, not selfish			0.851				
A1	You like to collaborate with others or teamwork			0.843				
A3	You are a person who has faith in others and is willing to forgive			0.799				
Extraversion: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.804								
E3	You act and decide quickly, without hesitation, and confident in your decisions and words				0.874			
E2	You are a person who likes to talk and communicate with others, likely to participate in extracurricular activities, social activities				0.861			
E1	You always feel full of energy and ready to do something				0.853			
Job satisfaction: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.791								
JS1	You love your current job					0.848		
JS2	You enjoy the work that you are doing					0.832		

JS3	You are satisfied when working at the office	0.821
Neuroticism: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.839		
N1	You often experience stress and find it hard to overcome	0.888
N2	You cannot control yourself in stressful situations	0.780
N3	You are a neurotic person, easily affected by external circumstances, leading to negative emotions	0.772
Organizational commitment: Cronbach's Alpha = 0.815		
OC2	You consider your workplace as a second home	0.861
OC1	You always want to continue working and make long-term contributions to the organization	0.855
OC3	You feel affection for the agency	0.838

Source: Authors' analysis.

4.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The results of CFA of the overall model scale show that the weights of the observed variables meet standard (≥ 0.5). Hence, the scales reach the convergent value. The results show that the model has 542 degrees of freedom, the test value CMIN (Chi-square) = 421.135 with value = 0.000; index CMIN/df (Chi-square/pdf) = 2.354 < 3 and GFI index = 0.903; TLI = 0.912; CFI = 0.923 greater than 0.9; RMSEA = 0.035 less than 0.08. So, the research model is consistent with the research data (Tho, 2011) [45].
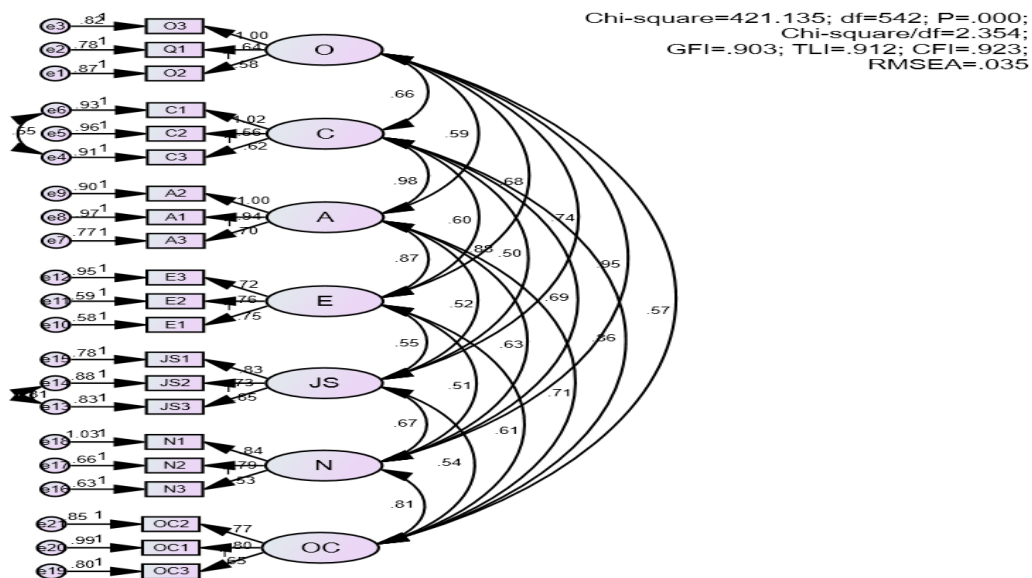

Chi-square=421.135; df=542; P=.000; Chi-square/df=2.354; GFI=.903; TLI=.912; CFI=.923; RMSEA=.035

Figure 2: The results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the overall model scale
Source: Authors' analysis.

4.5. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Based on the outcomes of the confirmatory factor analysis of the overall model scale, the results of the structural equation modeling are consistent with the research data. That is shown by the Chi index CMIN/df (Chi-square/pdf) = 1.989 < 3 and the GFI index = 0.905, TLI = 0.917, CFI = 0.933 greater than 0.9; RMSEA = 0.037 is less than 0.08.

At the same time, based on the analysis results, the value of the impact relationships between the factors is less than 0.05. Hence, the relationship between personality traits, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment is statistically significant in the structural equation modeling (SEM). So, hypothesis H1, H2 and H3 are accepted.

Table 2: The results of regression weights

Correlation			Estimate	S.E	C.R	P
Job Satisfaction	←	Openness	0.476	0.074	3.725	0.000
Job Satisfaction	←	Conscientiousness	0.574	0.062	3.651	0.000
Job Satisfaction	←	Agreeableness	0.387	0.069	0.704	0.000
Job Satisfaction	←	Extraversion	0.489	0.082	2.261	0.000
Job Satisfaction	←	Neuroticism	-0.156	0.188	2.171	0.000
Organizational Commitment	←	Openness	0.441	0.093	3.394	0.000
Organizational Commitment	←	Conscientiousness	0.583	0.197	2.363	0.000
Organizational Commitment	←	Agreeableness	0.577	0.194	2.953	0.000
Organizational Commitment	←	Extraversion	0.301	0.078	1.918	0.000
Organizational Commitment	←	Neuroticism	-0.233	0.062	1.283	0.000
Organizational Commitment	←	Job Satisfaction	0.672	0.153	1.563	0.000

Source: Authors' analysis.

The results show that personality traits affect job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The results show that openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion affect job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The results of the study are similar to the studies of Tariq et al. (2014) and Vi (2018). A person who has a high sense of responsibility for work and has a detailed work plan has good work results leading to job satisfaction and long-term organizational commitment. In addition, extraversion has an impact on job satisfaction. Work environments, whether private or public, value extroverted employees. Extroverted people always have open communication with others, giving the opposite person a feeling of friendliness, openness, and fun. Agreeableness and openness have a positive effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In another way, the results also show that the neuroticism factor hurts job satisfaction and organizational

commitment of employees working in the public sector in Hanoi. The results of the study are similar with Long & Nhu (2019). If employees have neuroticism, they are always in a state of anxiety and insecurity leading to lower work performance than other employees. Without neuroticism, they will have a peaceful mind while working. Hence, it brings better work efficiency. The results show a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The results are similar to the studies of Krueger et al. (2002) and Tuan & Dung (2020).

5. Policy implications

Based on the obtained results, the study provides some policy implications to help organizations in the public sector in Hanoi improve employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment:

According to the results, organizations can arrange for employees to take on jobs based on their personality traits, which will improve job satisfaction and long-term organizational commitment. In addition, regularly deploying multiple-choice tests on employees' personalities to understand their characteristics to have orientations will help them develop and arrange suitable jobs.

To improve the conscientiousness of employees, leaders need to manage people effectively. Hence, subordinate employees will become conscientious and bring good results to the organization. Leaders need to show transparency, speak with action, and treat employees equally. Leaders need to help employees understand the meaning of their work to improve the motivation of each employee.

Besides, leaders need to create many activities to express themselves for extroverted employees. It could be organizing parties, assigning new roles, and appointing them as Masters of Ceremonies for agency programs. The purpose of these activities is to promote the creative ideas of employees. Hence, it helps improve organizational satisfaction and commitment.

Neuroticism is inherent in every human being. Hence, leaders need to build psychological counseling sessions with psychologists to help employees solve psychological problems to reduce negative impacts on satisfaction and organizational commitment. In addition, leaders need to pay attention to training employees to think positively, reduce stress, and raise morale.

6. Conclusion

In this study, the relationship between personality traits, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment is analyzed through the data set obtained by the direct survey method of employees working in the public sector in Hanoi. Confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling analyses were performed to determine the relationship between the scales in the research model. The analysis results show that there is a positive relationship between the factors of personality traits, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Besides, job satisfaction has an impact on the organizational commitment of employees in the public sector. Thus, hypotheses H1, H2, H3 are accepted.

Although the study's aim is perfect, the study still has limitations that need to be handled in the future. First, the study is done only in the public sector in Hanoi city. In further studies, the authors could focus on researching a broader scale to get an overview of the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of public sector employees in other localities.

Second, the survey questionnaire is relatively simple, abbreviated, and does not clearly show the content of the variables. Hence, other studies may consider focusing on more clearly showing the content of variables to suit agencies in the public sector.

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