# Nexus Between Personality Traits And Work Engagement Among Faculty Members Of Government Colleges Of Pakistan: Mediating Role Of Psychological Empowerment

**Dr. Ammara Murtaza[1], Dr. Mushtaq A Sajid[2], Dr. Salman Arshad Pansota[3], Dr. Faiqa Kiran[4*], Dr Tariq Saleem Ghayyur[5], Waqas Mahmood[6]**

[1]Lecturer, Department of Education, University of Jhang
[2]Senior Dean and Director Campus MIU Nerian Sharif AJK
[3]Lecturer Government College University Faisalabad. Email: Salmanpansota@yahoo.com
[4*]Assistant Professor, Government College University Faisalabad. Email: faiqakiran@gcuf.edu.pk
[5]Lecturer, Institute of Education, University of Sargodha, Sargodha, Pakistan (tariq.saleem@uos.edu.pk)
[6]Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Training, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan,
Email: waqas.mahmood@iub.edu.pk

## Abstract

The aim of this research was to examine the influence of personality traits (P.Ts) on work engagement (W.E), as well as to assess the role of psychological empowerment (P.E) as a mediator between P.Ts and W.E. Data were gathered from 652 faculty members employed at government institutions located in Punjab, Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Sindh for this study. The data was analyzed using SPSS and Amos. The hypotheses were tested using confirmatory factor analysis. The results of correlation revealed a statistically significant association between P.Ts and W.E (r =.367), P.Ts and P.E (r =.512), and P.E and W.E (r =.390). Structural equation modeling verified that P.E partly acted as a mediator in the association between P.Ts and W.E.

**Key Words:** Personality Traits; Work Engagement; Mediation; Psychological Empowerment; Teachers; Pakistan

## Introduction

The dynamics between personality traits and work engagement have garnered substantial attention in organizational psychology (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). This research investigates the nuanced interplay between personality traits and work engagement, with a focus on the mediating influence of psychological empowerment. Personality traits, as enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, are believed to shape individuals' propensity for engagement in the workplace. Work engagement, characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption in one's tasks, is vital for organizational success and individual well-being. Psychological empowerment, encompassing feelings of competence, autonomy, impact, and meaningfulness at work, serves as a potential mediator in this relationship, elucidating how individual dispositions influence engagement (Spreitzer, 1995). By exploring these connections, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms underlying work engagement and offer insights for enhancing employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

The current research aims to address the gap in understanding the intricate relationship between personality traits and work engagement, particularly exploring the mediating role of psychological empowerment. Despite the acknowledged significance of both personality and work engagement in organizational contexts, limited research has systematically examined the mechanisms through which personality traits influence work engagement, with a specific focus on the role of psychological empowerment (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating how individual dispositions impact work engagement through the lens of psychological empowerment, thereby offering valuable insights for enhancing employee well-being and organizational effectiveness (Spreitzer, 1995).

The significance of the proposed research lies in its potential to deepen our understanding of the complex dynamics between personality traits, work engagement, and psychological empowerment in organizational settings. By elucidating the mechanisms through which personality traits affect engagement via psychological empowerment, this study can offer valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners. Understanding how individual dispositions shape engagement levels can inform recruitment, selection, and training processes, leading to more effective workforce management strategies. Moreover, insights from this research can help organizations design interventions and policies aimed at enhancing employee well-being, job satisfaction, and overall organizational effectiveness. Eventually, the findings and recommendations of this research have the potential to support to the progress of evidence-based practices that encourage optimistic work environments and nurture employee engagement and performance. This study has the following objectives:

➤ To pinpoint the effect of personality traits on work engagement.
➤ To investigate the effect of personality traits on psychological empowerment.
➤ To investigate the effect of psychological empowerment on work engagement

➢ To verify the mediating role of Psychological empowerment in the association between personality traits and work engagement.

In earlier periods, multiple lexical investigations were conducted to investigate personality features, resulting in the consistent identification of a set of five personality attributes known as the Big Five Personality traits (Goldberg 1993). Recently, this model has emerged as one among the frequently researched frameworks of personality (Ashton, Lee and Vries, 2014). Neuroticism, extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience are five personality traits that make up this paradigm (Gogosh et al., 2021). The Personality Dimensions framework is centered just over five primary dimensions. It includes "Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and openness to Experiences" (Khan, et, al. 2021; Balfour & Wechsler, 1996). Personality encompasses persistent traits that are believed to undergo changes over an individual's lifespan (McAdams and Pals, 2006).

Employee job engagement is seen as a crucial attribute for achieving company success and capabilities. The term "Employee Work engagement" was initially introduced by Kahn in 1990. According to him, engagement refers to the process of effectively including and utilizing organization members in their job roles. It involves individuals physically, cognitively, and emotionally expressing themselves during their role performances (Kahn, 1990; Ullah & Khattak, 2018). Work engagement is a motivational and psychological state that consists of three dimensions. These characteristics are characterized as commitment, intensity, and immersion. Research has shown a positive correlation between high work engagement and enhanced in-role performance as well as increased extra-role activity (Ullah & Khattak, 2018). Work engagement is defined in recent study as a consistent, positive, and fulfilling mental state. It is a work-related sense of well-being that is not focused on any specific event, item, or person (Bakker et al., 2008).

Perceived control, competency, and internalization of goals constitute an individual's cognitive state known as psychological empowerment. According to Oladipo (2009), it is a complex notion that includes diverse features of psychological empowerment. It is seen as a combination of taking charge of one's own life, being proactive, and having a critical eye for the political and social climate. This perspective is based on a social action framework that emphasizes community transformation, skill development, and unity. The four cognitions of meaning, influence, competence, and self-determination were outlined by Spreitzer (1995) as the elements of psychological empowerment.

According to research conducted by Allen and Mellor (2002), there is a significant connection between individual differences, such as personality features, and burnout. The research conducted by Christian, Garza, and Slaughter (2011) demonstrated that a positive correlation exists between work engagement and job performance. As a result of the particular behavioral qualities that they possessed, some personality factors exhibited a tendency toward engagement. Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli (2009) discovered a positive relationship between elevated levels of extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience, and conscientiousness, and diminished degrees of neuroticism., and increased levels of work engagement. According to the preliminary data, these characteristics were associated with higher levels of job engagement. Research has demonstrated a significant association between the Big Five personality traits and job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991), as well as positive work attitudes like job satisfaction (Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002) and commitment (Erdheim, Wang, & Zickar, 2006). This is supported by a substantial body of evidence. Because of this, it is logical to assume that comparable relationships exist with engagement, and several empirical research have been spurred as a result of this assertion.

Although two individuals may be operating inside the same objective reality, they can have divergent perceptions and assessments of that reality. These inconsistencies can be attributed to individual characteristics, among other factors (Bandura, 1989; Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990), and can lead to different emotions and reactions towards the same situation, such as a sense of disempowerment. Personality qualities can also be associated with other facets. Psychological empowerment, as a form of internal motivation, can inspire individuals to engage in their responsibilities more effectively than the resources provided by their job or company (Albrecht, 2010; Spreitzer, 1995; Deci & Ryan, 1985). This information is based on a study conducted by Albrecht, Spreitzer, and Deci. Stander and Rothmann (2010) found an association between psychological empowerment, which includes competence, purpose, influence, and self-determination, and employee engagement. Workers tends to feel enthusiastic and dedicated to their work when they have confidence in their abilities (competence), possess the necessary knowledge to carry out their tasks (meaning), have the freedom to perform their tasks independently (self-determination), believe that their work has significance (meaning), and feel that they can make a difference in the system (impact).

**Research Hypotheses**
H1: Personality traits positively affect work engagement among teachers of government colleges, Pakistan (TGCP).
H2: Personality traits positively affect psychological empowerment among TGCP.
H3: Psychological empowerment positively affects work engagement among TGCP
H4: The nexus between personality traits and work engagement is mediated by Psychological empowerment.

**Theoretical Model**
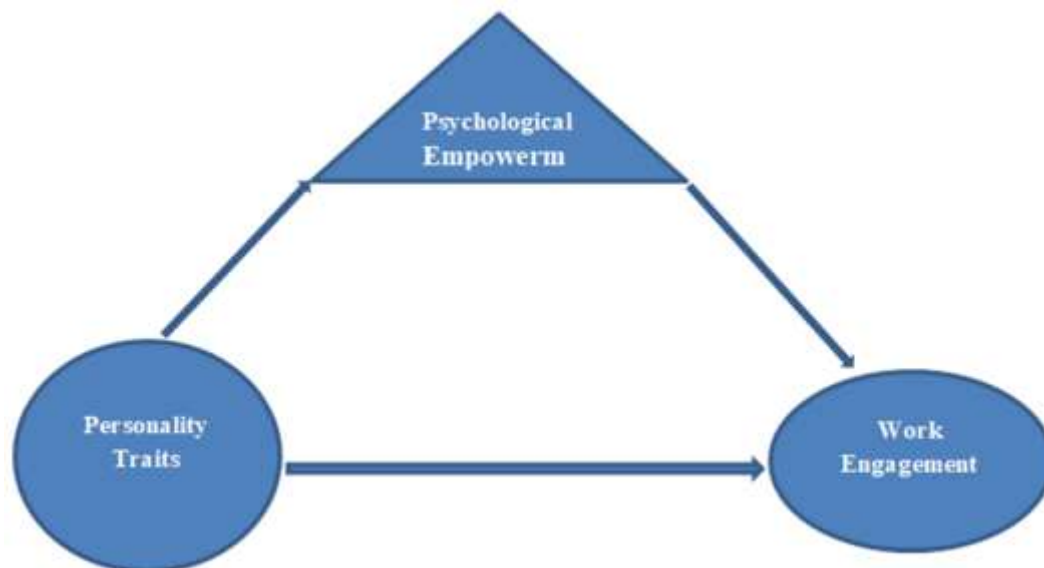


**Research methodology**
**Sample and Data Collection**
The data was obtained from teachers at government institutions in Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which are the four provinces of Pakistan. 700 questionnaires were assigned to the teachers for completion. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter that outlined the objective of the research. A total of 661 questionnaires were returned during a period of forty days. A total of 652 questionnaires were included in the study analysis due to their 100 percent completion rate. A total of nine questionnaires were excluded due to insufficient data.

**Measurement of Work engagement**
The measurement of work engagement was conducted using the 9-item abbreviated version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Survey (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004). This survey consists of three aspects, namely "vigor, dedication, and absorption". Examples of WE are "At my work, I feel bursting with energy (Vigor)", "I am proud on the work that I do (dedication)" and "I am immersed in my work (absorption)". The subjects were asked to rate their answers on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" and 5 meaning "strongly agree". "Vigor, dedication, and absorption" showed reliability of.90, .87, and.83 respectively.

**Measurement of Personality Traits**
PT and their varied characteristics were measured using the personality traits scale developed by John and Srivastava (1999). "Extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness" are the aspects of PT. The "extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness" were assessed with 8, 9, 8, 10, and 9 questions, respectively. Examples of PT are "I see myself as someone who is original, comes up with new ideas" and "I see myself as someone who is ingenious, a deep thinker (Openness to experience)", "I see myself as someone who is talkative" and "I see myself as someone who is full of energy (Extroversion)", "I see myself as someone who is helpful and unselfish with others" and "I see myself as someone who has a forgiving nature (Agreeableness)", "I see myself as someone who is depressed, blue" and "I see myself as someone who can be tense ( Neuroticism)", and "I see myself as someone who does a thorough job" and "I see myself as someone who is a reliable worker (Conscientiousness)". A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 was used. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the PT of "extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness" were .91, .84, .80, .86, and .83, respectively.

**Measurement of Psychological Empowerment**
The assessment of PE was carried out using the PE questionnaire (PEQ), which was adapted from the research undertaken by Spreitzer (1995). The measure has four separate dimensions: "competence, self-determination, meaning, and impact". Each dimension has three items. Examples of PE are "I am confident about my ability to do my job" and "The work that I do is important to me (Meaning)", "My impact on what happens in my department is large" and "My job activities are personally meaningful to me (Competence)", "I can decide on my own how to go about doing my own work" and "I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job (Self-determination)" and "The work I do is meaningful to me" and "I have significant influence over what happens in my department (Impact)". The reliability coefficients, obtained using SPSS, for the dimensions of "competence, self-determination, meaning, and impact" were .86, .84, .81, and .82, respectively.

**Table 1:** Correlation among PT, WE and PE

|      | PT     | WE     | PE     |
|------|--------|--------|--------|
| PT   | 1      | .367** | .512** |
| WE   | .367** | 1      | .390** |
| PE   | .512** | .390** | 1      |

"**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)."

Table 1 displays the association between PT, WE, and PE. Based on the correlation study, there is a significant link between PT and WE (r =.367), PT and PE (r =.512), and PE and WE (r =.390). Therefore, the aforementioned hypotheses are deemed valid and acknowledged.
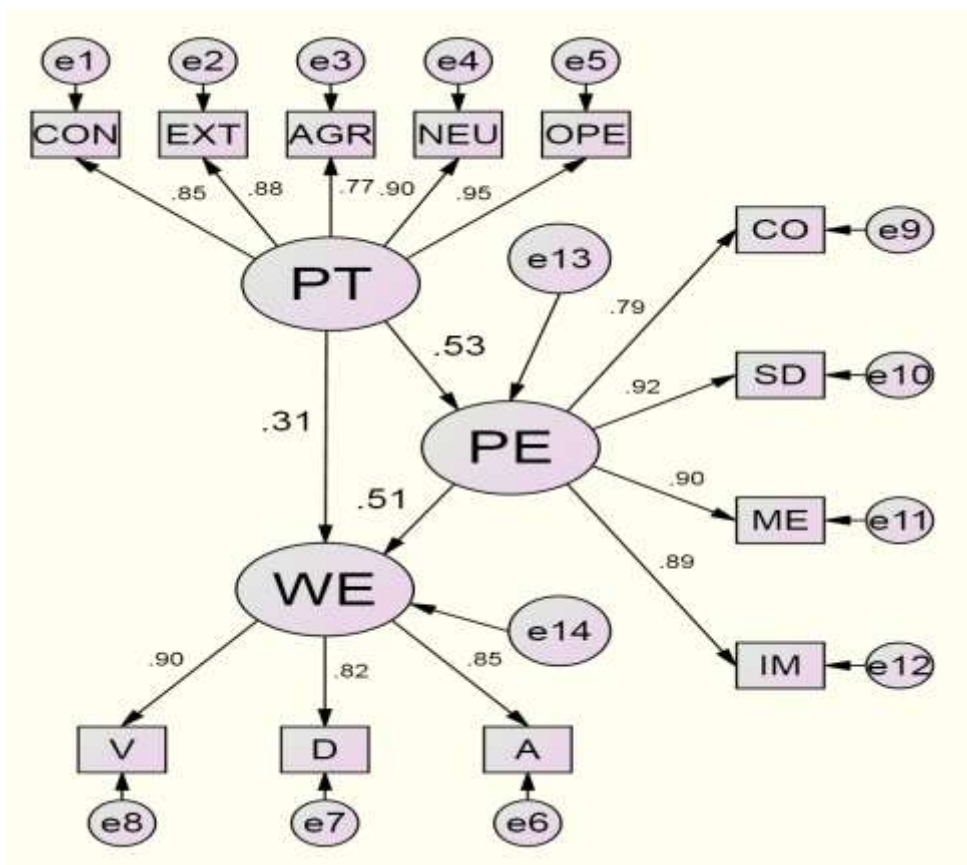


**Model: PT and WE via PE**
This research used structural equation modeling to evaluate the validity of the three-factor model, including of P.Ts, P.E, and W.E. The statistical analysis produced the following outcomes: The Chi Square value is 156.266, with 51 degrees of freedom. The CMIN/DF ratio is 3.064, the AGFI value is 0.94, the RMSEA value is 0.057, the CFI value is 0.984, the RMR value is 0.054, the p-value is 0.000, the lower bound at 90% confidence level is 0.047, the upper bound at 90% confidence level is 0.068, and the GFI value is 0.961. These figures accurately and closely align with the data. The research showed that P.Ts had a substantial effect on W.E, with a regression coefficient of .31. Moreover, the regression coefficient between P.Ts and P.E was 0.53, indicating a substantial impact of P.Ts on P.E. The regression coefficient of .51 reveals a direct and positive relationship between the PE and the W.E. The regression coefficients of the P.Ts, P.E, and W.E variables are within an acceptable range. The influence of P.Ts on W.E diminished when P.E was included as a mediator, leading to a reduction in the coefficient from 0.51 to 0.31.

**Table 2:** Values of AGFI, GFI, DF, CFI, LO90, RMSEA, HI90 and RMR

| Index | RMR  | GFI  | AGFI | CMIN    | DF | P    | CMIN/DF | CFI  | RMSEA | LO 90 | HI 90 |
|-------|------|------|------|---------|----|------|---------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Value | .054 | .961 | .940 | 156.266 | 51 | .000 | 3.064   | .984 | .057  | .047  | .068  |

Table 2 displays the Chi Square/CMIN, RMR, CFI, LO 90, GFI, HI 90, AGFI, and RMSEA values. The following values are deemed acceptable: The chi-square value is 156.266 with 51 degrees of freedom. The CMIN/DF ratio is 3.064. The adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) is 0.940. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is 0.057. The comparative fit index (CFI) is 0.984. The root mean square residual (RMR) is 0.054. The p-value is 0.000. The lower bound

of the 90% confidence interval is 0.047 and the upper bound is 0.068. The goodness-of-fit index (GFI) is 0.961. Therefore, we support the three-factor research paradigm comprising of P.Ts, P.E, and W.E.

## Conclusion

The aim of this research was to examine the influence of P.Ts on W.E, as well as to assess the role of P.E as a mediator between P.Ts and W.E. Data were gathered from 652 faculty members employed at government institutions located in Punjab, Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Sindh for this study. The data was analyzed using SPSS and Amos. The hypotheses were tested using confirmatory factor analysis. The results of correlation revealed a statistically significant association between P.Ts and W.E (r =.367), P.Ts and P.E (r =.512), and P.E and W.E (r =.390). Structural equation modeling verified that P.E partly acted as a mediator in the association between P.Ts and W.E.

## References

1. Albrecht, S. L. (2010). Employee engagement: 10 key questions for research and practice.
2. Allen, J., & Mellor, D. (2002). Work context, personal control, and burnout amongst nurses. Western Journal of Nursing Research, 24(8), 905-917.
3. Ashton, M. C., Lee, K., & De Vries, R. E. (2014). The HEXACO honesty-humility, agreeableness, and emotionality factors: A review of research and theory. Personality and Social Psychology Review, 18(2), 139-152.
4. Bakker, A., Demerouti, E. and Verbeke, W. (2004) Using the Job Demands-Resources Model to Predict Burnout and Performance. Human Resource Management, 43, 83-104.
5. Bakker, A. B., Schaufeli, W. B., Leiter, M. P., & Taris, T. W. (2008). Work engagement: An emerging concept in occupational health psychology. Work & stress, 22(3), 187-200.
6. Balfour, D. L., & Wechsler, B. (1996). Organizational commitment: Antecedents and outcomes in public organizations. Public Productivity & Management Review, 256-277.
7. Bandura, A. (1989). Human agency in social cognitive theory. American psychologist, 44(9), 1175.
8. Christian, M. S., Garza, A. S., & Slaughter, J. E. (2011). Work engagement: A quantitative review and test of its relations with task and contextual performance. Personnel psychology, 64(1), 89-136.
9. Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). The general causality orientations scale: Self-determination in personality. Journal of research in personality, 19(2), 109-134.
10. Erdheim, J., Wang, M., & Zickar, M. J. (2006). Linking the Big Five personality constructs to organizational commitment. Personality and individual differences, 41(5), 959-970.
11. Gogosh, M., Idrees, R. N., Hussain, B., Khan, A., & Ullah, R. (2021). Hexaco Model of Personality as a Predictor of Academic Entitlement. Elementary Education Online, 20(1), 3006-3006.
12. Goldberg, L. R. (1993). The structure of phenotypic personality traits. American psychologist, 48(1), 26.
13. John, O. P., & Srivastava, S. (1999). The Big Five Trait taxonomy: History, measurement, and theoretical perspectives. In L. A. Pervin & O. P. John (Eds.), Handbook of personality: Theory and research (2nd ed., pp. 102–138). Guilford Press.
14. Judge, T. A., Heller, D., & Mount, M. K. (2002). Five-factor model of personality and job satisfaction: a meta-analysis. Journal of applied psychology, 87(3), 530.
15. Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. Academy of management journal, 33(4), 692-724.
16. Khan, A., Sheraz, F., Khan, I. A., & Gogosh, M. (2021). The Impact of Personality Dimensions of Employees on the Job Performance. Elementary Education Online, 20(5), 6086-6086.
17. Oladipo, S. E. (2009). Psychological empowerment and development. Edo Journal of Counselling, 2(1), 118-126.
18. McAdams, D. P., & Pals, J. L. (2006). A new Big Five: fundamental principles for an integrative science of personality. American psychologist, 61(3), 204.
19. Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 25(3), 293–315. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.248
20. Spreitzer, G. M. (1995). Psychological empowerment in the workplace: Dimensions, measurement, and validation. Academy of Management Journal, 38(5), 1442–1465. https://doi.org/10.2307/256865
21. Stander, M. W., & Rothmann, S. (2010). Psychological empowerment, job insecurity and employee engagement. SA Journal of Industrial Psychology, 36(1), 1-8.
22. Thomas, K. W., & Velthouse, B. A. (1990). Cognitive elements of empowerment: An "interpretive" model of intrinsic task motivation. Academy of management review, 15(4), 666-681.
23. Ullah, R., & Khattak, S. R. (2018). The Buffering Effect of Teamwork Effectiveness on the Relationship between Employee Work Engagement and Behavioral Outcomes. Journal of Managerial Sciences, 12(1).
24. Xanthopoulou, D., Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2009). Reciprocal relationships between job resources, personal resources, and work engagement. Journal of Vocational behavior, 74(3), 235-244.