

# Employee's personal determinants of fitting the job characteristics

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## **Abstract:**

**Aim:** Over the last twenty years there have been numerous studies showing significant relationships between personality dimensions and predisposition to doing a job of a specific character. The aim of this research is to examine the relationships between personality, job characteristics and perceived job satisfaction with a view to demonstrate the rationale behind the application of personality tests as the tool for predicting the employee's fitting the job specification in the recruitment process.

**Design / Research methods:** In order to verify the selected relationships, a quantitative study on a group of Polish workers (N = 302) was carried out. It correlated five personality dimensions (tested by the NEO-FFI questionnaire) with the level of employee's satisfaction and the work characteristics (questionnaires made by the author were used). The satisfaction level was determined based on employees' job assessment and professional career development, while the character of the job was examined according to seven scales: individual vs. team work, complexity of tasks, application of new technologies, procedures, customer contact, influence on customer's emotions, dependence on supervisor.

**Conclusions / findings:** The results of the analyses showed that each personality dimension was significantly different for respondents satisfied with their performance of work of a particular nature. This can confirm the use of personality tests in the recruitment process; however, some factors need to be taken into account, including, among others, organizational environment or specific job demands.

**Originality / value of the article:** The article is an attempt to link comprehensively different studies focusing on the association between personality and the type of work performed, with this objective being expanded by adding a moderate variable - job satisfaction, which allows one to determine the extent to which the type of work fits a particular dimension of personality.

**Implications of the research:** The implicational value pertains to recruitment and selection processes, justifying the validity of the personality test application in recruitment processes.

**Limitations of the research:** In the future, it would be useful to enlarge the group examined in order to be able to generalize the results and add other moderate variables, such as, for example, organizational demands shaping the character of work.

*Key words: job satisfaction, work specification, five-factor model, neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, agreeableness*

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## 1. Introduction

The essence of the recruitment process is to select and choose people who meet the expectations posed by an employer, and who will, owing to their competences and resources, contribute to company's increased profits. Hence the paramount importance of the accurate choice of employees. Many enterprises operating in Poland tend to decide on a job interview as the selection method, followed by knowledge and skill tests, and an assessment center (Chirkowska-Smolak, Grobelny 2014: 135). However, job interviews are likely to contain predictable questions, allowing a candidate to prepare the answers in advance, and thus failing to reflect his/her real competences or character traits (Hogan et al. 1996: 473). Employees' productivity and engagement depend on the competences tested during a job interview, as well as on organizational and individual factors, including one's personality (Chirkowska-Smolak, Grobelny 2014: 126). That has been the reason behind exploring the significance of the application of personality tests in the recruitment processes. Since the start of the last century the relationships between personality and work productivity have been examined extensively by organizational psychologists. Until the 1980' it was argued that personality had no links with occupational aspects (which might have resulted from lacking the personality dimension classification and transparency of the tools applied). Moreover, since the mid 1980', standardized tools and concepts have begun to be employed to test personality, which allowed for the conclusion that indeed some personality traits correlated with work efficiency (Barrick et al. 2001: 9). Although some experts are rather skeptical about testing the personality of job candidates or employees, a well designed tool to measure personality is a significant indicator of functioning in the workplace and may be useful while conducting a fair recruitment process (Tett et al. 1991: 727; Hogan et al. 1996: 470). Also, personality testing helps predict counterproductive behaviors, that is, intentional behaviors which harm, or are supposed to do so, organization and people associated with it, e.g. theft, or damaging goods, making enemies (Ones et al. 1993: 680). In choosing a candidate, another important element is his/her professional growth, understood as work engagement, climbing the career ladder or professional fulfillment in the workplace

(Czarnota-Bojarska 2009: 41). Hence the assumption that the level of perceived job satisfaction is crucial, too.

The aim of this paper and the study is, therefore, to analyze the relationships, identify the level of interdependencies between personality dimensions and the job characteristics chosen among a group of Polish employees. Moreover, the decision was made to investigate the association between the personality dimensions, job characteristics and job satisfaction in order to examine whether there was the matching of personality to job's specific nature. Satisfaction represents a moderate variable which allows for the degree of employee's fulfillment in a particular work setting to be assessed. Examining this kind of dependency can indicate the rationale behind the application of personality tests in the process of employees selection. In order to achieve the aims set, the author formulated seven hypotheses on the job satisfaction level depending on the strength of individual personality dimensions and the character of work. In order to verify the hypotheses, the author conducted a quantitative study on a group of 302 working respondents using four tools: the NEO-FFI questionnaire and three author's questionnaires with the first one examining the characteristics of work, the second, job satisfaction evaluation and the third one career development. The results thus obtained were subject to statistical analyses, with the hypotheses being verified on their bases; conclusions were formulated on the basis of the study and the literature analysis, which allowed the level of the dependencies between variables to be identified, and also to find out whether the application of personality tests in the recruitment process can be a source of valuable information.

### **2. The five-factor model of personality**

Personality has been intriguing psychologists of various streams, hence it has been explored and defined in a variety of ways. H.J. Eyseneck, a renowned scholar of personality, described personality as a relatively stable organization of character, temperament and various intellectual and physical properties determining how an individual adapts to the environment, and which may assume four levels of

organization: the level of theoretical constructs (they can't be observed directly), the level of traits to be observed in experiments, the level of habitual behaviors and the level of attitudes (Brzozowski, Drwal 1995: 9). Today's personality concept most commonly used is the five-factor model of personality by Costa and McCrae, which stems from the correlative methods of personality exploration, focusing on the statistical relationships between the traits making people different from one another (Pervin 2002: 30). Against the studies on personality, the five-factor model by Costa and McCrae seems to be the most developed in terms of the methodology and psychological content (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 8). Costa and McCrae created a tool to examine the five factors of personality – the self-descriptive NEO-PI-R questionnaire consisting of 240 statements, which measures personality hierarchically using a top-down approach, beginning with the five main dimensions (neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience) and dividing them into six sub-scales (Costa, McCrae 1995: 46). The authors also proposed a shorter version of the NEO-FFI questionnaire comprising 60 statements, allowing for personality to be examined in a concise way, which is useful in a variety of contexts (not only the clinical one), making it possible to test the personality of people of different cultures (Costa, McCrae 2004: 592). The NEO-FFI questionnaire is also applied on a wide scale in the employee recruitment process. The five-factor model is the construct that has been tested best in the context of choice and selection of employees, and a number of studies and metaanalyses point to significant statistical correlations between the individual dimensions and an accurate match between the employee and the job (Chirkowska-Smolak, Grobelny 2014: 131).

The five-factor personality model distinguishes five personality dimensions: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Neuroticism is a dimension specifying emotional unbalance versus emotional balance. Being placed high on this scale implies a tendency to feeling negative emotions more intensively, such as anxiety, anger, sense of guilt or helplessness. Persons who are neurotic have difficulties in overcoming stress or their own drives. They often have irrational ideas and react impulsively in a situation stirring their emotions. Within this dimension six facets are distinguished: anxiety,

understood as tension and nervousness occurring in a variety of emotional situations; angry hostility, that is, the propensity to feel angry and frustrated, which an individual can direct inward; depression, i.e. being susceptible to feeling sad, lonely and powerless; impulsiveness expressed as the difficulty to control one's impulses; vulnerability, that is, being susceptible to stress and unexpected, even panic reactions in difficult situations, and the last facet which is self-consciousness manifested in having a low opinion of one's worth, feeling shy and embarrassed in the presence of others (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 12-13). People who are highly neurotic can also be described as frightened, feeling self-pity, cranky, unstable emotionally, constantly worrying about something (McCrae, John 1992: 183).

Extraversion is a dimension reflecting the level of activity of an individual and his/her optimistic attitude towards people and life experiences, openness to others, striving for being in a group, making new friends. Extraverted people are characterized by a friendly attitude, high activity and high level of energy, which they are likely to direct outwards. Their opposites are persons ranking low on this scale, so called introverts, who direct their energy towards themselves, do not need to build many relationships, they are less gregarious and active than the extraverted people. Furthermore, they keep a distance in their social contacts, look to the future less optimistically and have no need to look for a lot of stimulations and new challenges in life. The extraversion dimension consists of six facets: gregariousness, defined on the basis of the number and depth of one's relationships with others; warmth, which signifies the ability to maintain close relationships with others and which is further characterized by a friendly attitude towards others; assertiveness, that is the ability to lead others, expressing one's views, being able to manage people; activity illustrates the level of one's life energy; excitement-seeking, which is the propensity to take risks, searching for stimulations; and positive emotions meaning feeling positive emotions, expressing life optimism and a friendly attitude towards people and life (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 13). People who are highly extraverted tend to be active, assertive, enthusiastic, talkative, merry, enjoying meeting other people (McCrae, John 1992: 182). However, a high score on this scale is also associated with higher impulsiveness and the need of being constantly active,

as well as lesser insight into one's own behavior and self-analysis (Watson, Clark 1997: 769).

Openness to experience is a dimension specifying the degree of openness to new experiences; it shows whether an individual seeks stimulations, is cognitively curious and whether he/she is tolerant to the new and the other. People with a low score on this scale prefer to stick to the established schemes, their way of thinking is more conventional, and they evince less tolerance for novelties and controversial views. People who are open to experience are often creative, absorbing new knowledge, in addition, being skeptical of the prevalent norms and authorities. The six facets of this dimension are made up of: fantasy; aesthetics, which is being sensitive to beauty, being interested in art or poetry; feelings specified as openness to other people's emotions; actions signifying actively seeking new stimulations; ideas understood as cognitive curiosity and taking interest in the nature of other things and laws; values which identify the capability to analyze and even undermine present social, religious and political norms (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 14). High openness to experience goes hand in hand with broad interests, rich imagination, curiosity and inquisitiveness, and openness to original ideas and various intellectual stimulations (McCrae, John 1992: 183).

Agreeableness is a dimension reflecting the strength of a positive attitude towards other people and the wish to help them; it is also the degree of trust and sensitivity to the needs of the other. People scoring low on this scale show more antagonistic than agreeable attitudes, whose degree of trust and openness towards people is smaller, and who are not keen on being altruistic, preferring to compete and approach other people's intentions with skepticism. Moreover, people with high agreeableness tend to be cooperative, helpful, warm to people, believing that others show similar attitudes. Extremely high agreeableness can lead to social dependency on others and to becoming a person who is taken advantage of as someone who is always ready to help, even at his/her own cost. Extremely low agreeableness, on the other hand, can be associated with anti-social behaviors, egoism and narcissism. The agreeableness dimension also consists of six facets: trust expressing the belief that other people have honest intentions (or quite contrary, that they are dishonest and capable of manipulation); straightforwardness, that is, on the one side, honesty,

simple-heartedness, social naivety, and on the other, a tendency to manipulate and take advantage of others; altruism signifying consideration for the needs of other people and fulfilling those needs even at one's own cost vs. egocentrism and egoism; compliance is yet another facet, which is restraining aggression, a tendency to mitigate conflicts, being submissive and forgiving, and, on the other hand competitive behaviors, feeding conflicts, showing aggressive behaviors. The other two remaining facets include modesty, that is, a realistic picture of oneself vs. a tendency to look down on others; and the last facet – a tendency to tender-mindedness expressed as honesty, proclivity to support charitable actions or, on the other hand, being guided by rational thinking and low sensitivity to the needs of others (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 15). People scoring low on the agreeableness scale are cynical, suspicious, more likely to behave immorally, having no qualms about that; they prefer to compete rather than cooperate, they might be arrogant and narcissistic due to lacking in modesty and well-developed empathy, which is characteristic of the agreeable people (Costa et al. 1991: 888-889). People who are highly agreeable are easy to forgive others, they are more generous than people scoring low on the scale; in addition, they are kind, trustworthy and capable of being compassionate to others, supporting them at a difficult time (McCrae, John 1992: 182).

The last dimension in the five-factor model by Costa and McCrae is conscientiousness, which is mostly characterized by people's attitude towards work and striving for growth. People with a high level of conscientiousness are organized, characterized by endurance, determination in achieving their goals, as well as by meticulousness and reliability. A high score on this scale predisposes people to being dedicated to work, to professional growth and competence enhancement. The six facets of conscientiousness are: competence which is the belief in one's own resourcefulness or lacking the ability to cope with tasks and challenges; order, a tendency to keep things in order, in other words, a degree of being organized and orderly; dutifulness reflected in one's reliability and rule following, or in contrast to that, unreliability; achievement striving which is having high ambitions, being highly motivated and engaged in work vs. having no clear aims, low work motivation. Another facet is self-discipline, i.e. the ability to self-motivation, even to do difficult and arduous tasks vs. abandoning work before it has been completed;

deliberation which is a rational analysis of decisions and well-thought out action vs. spontaneity, making decisions impulsively, but also choosing solutions under time pressure (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 16-17). Conscientious people could be described as those who are effective in their operations, reliable, organized, capable of postponing pleasure, and in addition, those who respect rules and ethics, and who can be relied upon as reliable and trustworthy individuals (McCrae, John 1992: 182). A high level of conscientiousness is associated with inward control and a high standard of the tasks performed, which does not stem from high morality but from dutifulness and rule observations (Costa et al. 1991: 889).

### **3. Personality dimensions and work characteristics**

The many years of research on the links between the five-factor personality model and the functioning in the workplace allow the conclusion to be made that there are certain correlations between the individual dimensions and the selected aspects of work (Barrick et al. 2001: 9). The metaanalyses of the studies have shown that conscientiousness and emotional stability indeed correlate with a variety of work parameters in nearly every profession, whereas the other dimensions (openness to experience, agreeableness and extraversion) have a significant link with some work aspects and professions (Barrick et al. 2001: 11; Salgado, Tauriz 2014: 3).

Considering that professions and workplaces vary in terms of demands and specificity, it is difficult to state clearly to which occupation a particular personality dimension predisposes an individual. However, it is possible to find a common denominator between various professions and that is the character of work, i.e. the conditions of work and task specificity. We can work in a team or individually, regardless of the workplace or occupation. Therefore the decision was to estimate the relationships between the personality dimensions and the work character. The nature of work (e.g. team work, independent decision-making or task complexity) is assessed by an individual through the prism of different schemes, values and also personality dimensions, having impact on job satisfaction (Judge et al. 2000: 239). Therefore, the decision was to examine the relationship between the work

characteristics and personality dimensions and employee's satisfaction. Examining the level of job satisfaction allows one to check whether an individual feels fulfilled with the particular characteristics of work, and what follows, whether an individual's personality complies with the work performed. Locke (1976: 1319) when referring to job satisfaction talks about achieving values which are important to an individual and the fulfillment of needs. Somewhat different than meeting one's needs, is Spector's (1997:2) definition of job satisfaction, as he focuses on the cognitive component of the attitude relating to the evaluation of one's own work. The satisfaction from the work performed can be a predictor of, for example, greater work engagement (Albrecht et al. 2015: 11-12), while diminished job satisfaction correlates with increased absenteeism and turnover of employees (Chmiel 2002: 348).

According to the literature and research, each personality dimension correlates with certain factors characterizing work. A high score on the conscientiousness scale correlates positively with the work performance practically in every profession, as conscientiousness people are organized, determined, responsible and can work assiduously, which is conducive to task execution in nearly every job (Barrick, Mount 1991: 5, 18). Moreover, a higher level of conscientiousness correlates negatively with the counterproductive behaviors such as theft or failing to show up to work (Ones et al. 1993: 680, 693). People with a high level of conscientiousness appear to prefer a job that is complex enough to achieve further goals (Tett, Burnett 2003: 512) and individual rather than team work, for then they can organize their duties independently (Neal et al. 2012: 180). The metaanalyses have also found that significant correlations occur between the employee's overall productivity and the level of conscientiousness and extraversion, while high neuroticism reduces the employee's efficiency, as the only one doing so out of the five personality factors (Barrick, Mount 1991: 5, 18; Tett et al. 1991: 730). Strong neuroticism is not conducive to high work performance owing to such traits as insecurity, anxiety, being prone to depression and hostility (Barrick et al. 2001: 11). People who are very neurotic have difficulties in autonomous functioning, particularly when being under pressure as this triggers their neurotic character traits, which reduces their work productivity (Barrick, Mount 1991: 20). Changes at work and complex tasks

requiring that some expectations should be met can evoke negative emotions and cognitive schemata in neurotic persons, which will diminish their work productivity (Neal et al. 2012: 180). Spector (1982, after Judge et al. 2000: 239) observed that a high level of anxiety present in neurotic people at the moment of performing complex tasks was conducive to their having the feeling of performing worse, with those feelings of anxiety being less acute when performing simple tasks. In light of this we can conclude that they feel better doing relatively less complex tasks. Studies also show that a low level of neuroticism, i.e. a high level of emotional stability correlates positively with work productivity, being the second, following conscientiousness, most significant dimension in the occupational context (Dunn et al. 1995: 501).

A high level of extraversion predisposes one to a job requiring contacts with others, e.g. as a sales person or a manager, for it allows one to demonstrate such traits as gregariousness, talkativeness, activity and assertiveness (Barrick, Mount 1991: 19). People who are highly extraverted are fulfilled professionally in that they build effective interpersonal relationships and feel more energetic working in a group, hence the assumption that they feel more comfortable working in a team than individually (Neal et al. 2012: 179). Extraverted persons are more likely to evaluate their experiences and themselves positively, having an optimistic approach to challenges, which translates into their preference of complex tasks and work offering diversity (Judge et al. 2000: 237). Openness to experience corresponds to cognitive curiosity and the need of new stimulations, hence people scoring high on this scale derive much from trainings, opportunities of professional growth and complex tasks that can be done without clear directives, for this allows them to demonstrate their range of skills and stimulates them cognitively (Barrick, Mount 1991: 19). However, openness to experience is a dimension failing to be a clear predictor of professional efficiency, as every job varies in terms of demands and specificity, and openness to experiences is strongly correlated with situational demands (Tett et al. 1991: 725). Moreover, people with high scores on the agreeableness scale are pro-active, so it seems that they should prefer team work and tasks in the interest of organization (Neal et al. 2012: 179).

## EMPLOYEE'S PERSONAL DETERMINANTS OF FITTING THE JOB CHARACTERISTICS

In order to examine the links between the personality dimensions and the selected factors of the work character and the level of employee's job satisfaction the following hypotheses were advanced on the basis of the literature analysis:

H1. Respondents with a higher level of conscientiousness feel satisfied with their job working individually rather than in a team.

H2. Respondents with a higher level of conscientiousness feel satisfied with their job doing complex rather than simple tasks.

H3. Respondents with a higher level of extraversion feel satisfied with their job working in a team which requires being in contact with another person.

H4. Respondents with a higher level of neuroticism feel satisfied with their job doing simple tasks rather than complex ones.

H5. Respondents with a higher level of openness to experience feel satisfied with their job doing tasks without clearly formalized procedures.

H6. Respondents with a higher level of openness to experience feel satisfied with their job doing complex rather than simple tasks.

H7 Respondents with a high level of agreeableness feel satisfied with their job doing team work rather than working individually.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Tools and the surveyed group**

In order to verify the hypotheses, a quantitative study was conducted on a group of 302 working respondents, among whom 140 women (43.8%) and 162 men (56.2%) were examined. The quota-sampling was made on the basis of the working population distribution in Poland. Among those surveyed were people between 19 and 71 years of age (persons working on retirement), having varying education levels, and pursuing different occupations, e.g. jobs in the commercial services sector, e.g. sales person, customer advisor, hair dresser, tailor, occupations relating to taking care of others or teaching, such as a nurse, teacher, policeman, as well as

jobs involving working with data or machines (IT programmer, mechanic, machine operator).

**Table 1. The dimensions of the questionnaire examining the character of work performed**

Please indicate the character of your work by marking with an X the most accurate description.

**At my work:**

I mostly perform individual work						I mostly perform team work
I use modern technologies at work						I do work which does not require being familiar with new technologies
I do simply and repetitive tasks						I do complex and extraordinary tasks
I have to comply to strictly defined rules and procedures						I haven't got clearly formalized procedures of conduct.
I have a direct contact with customers or service recipients						I have no direct contact with customers of service recipients
I influence customers' or service recipients' emotions						I don't influence customers' or service recipients' emotions
I'm dependent on decisions made by my supervisors						I have much freedom in making decisions

Source: Author's own study.

Four tools were employed in the survey. The first one was the NEO-FFI questionnaire comprising 60 statements to which respondents respond by choosing one of the five options: 1 I strongly disagree, 2. I disagree, 3. I have no opinion, 4. I agree, 5 I strongly agree. Three other tools include three questionnaires devised by the author. The first examining character of work consists of seven dimensions: individual vs. team work; work with modern technologies vs. work requiring no

knowledge of the new technologies; simple vs. complex tasks; work according to strict procedures vs. lack of formalized procedures; working in direct contact with customers vs. without direct contact with customers; influencing client's emotions vs. no influence on client's emotions; and being dependent on supervisor's decision vs. independent decision-making. The formulation of the questions in detail is presented in Table 1.

The other two questionnaires examined job evaluation and career development. From each survey questionnaire two items were included in the study: from the first one relating to work evaluation, the first two items were correlated: "I like my job very much" and "If only I could, I would change my work"; and also two items from the career development questionnaire: "The job I'm doing does not allow me to use my potential", and "I'm satisfied with my career development". Respondents could respond to the first two statements on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 meant I strongly disagree and 5 I strongly agree; to the other two statements they responded by marking answers on a 6-point scale, where 1 meant I strongly disagree; 2- I disagree; 3- I rather disagree; 4- I rather agree; 5- I agree; 6- I strongly agree. In order to analyze the level of job satisfaction and career development (i.e. overall job satisfaction), the results of the responses to the 4 statements were added up (for two statements a reverse scale was used, where one signifies 5 or 6 points) and the mean result was taken to the analyses.

#### **4.2 Statistical verification of the hypotheses**

In order to verify the hypotheses statistically, the raw scores obtained in the study using the NEO-FFI tool were converted to sten scores, thus receiving the distribution of the levels of personality dimensions in the sample examined. Sten scores from 1 to 3 signify low strength of a particular dimension, sten scores from 4 to 6 show moderate strength, with sten scores between 7 and 10 signifying high and very high strength. The descriptive statistics of the personality dimensions are illustrated in Table 2.

Next, the mean ten scores of each dimension in terms of work character and job satisfaction were compared. The aim of this analysis was to verify the dependencies between the strength of a particular personality dimension (low, moderate, high) and

the chosen character of work. A moderate variable was introduced – job satisfaction to determine the interdependencies between personality and the work character which gives the worker satisfaction. It was assumed that the satisfaction level should be equal to 4 or more, which means that respondent had to obtain in four statements the mean score of at least 4 points, implying that he/she rather agrees, agrees or strongly agrees with the positive statements, and in terms of the negative statements, he/she rather disagrees, disagrees or strongly disagrees. Thus the score equal or higher than 4 indicates job satisfaction at the level that is at least moderately high. Following that, the correlations between the temperament strength expressed in sten intervals and the satisfaction level (equal or higher than 4) achieved at performing work of a particular character were compared. The results of the comparisons of the mean scores and their statistic significance are presented in Table 3. The scores show at what strength in terms of the individual personality dimensions respondents feel job satisfaction that is higher or equal 4 while performing work of a particular character.

**Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the five personality factors in the sample.**

	Neuroticism (sten standard)	Extra- version (sten standard)	Openness (sten standard)	Agreeable- ness (sten standard)	Conscientious ness (sten standard)
N	302	302	302	302	302
medium	4.4073	6.2924	4.9967	5.3642	6.2583
Median	4	6	5	5	6
Dominant	4	5.00	5.00	5	6
Standard deviation	2.04021	2,11051	2.11387	2.22186	2.08447
Skewness	0.272	-0.156	0.166	0.151	-0.055
Standard error of skewness	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Kurtosis	-0.365	-0.414	-0.381	-0.391	-0.459
Standard error of kurtosis	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28

Source: Author’s own study.

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**Table 3. Comparing correlations between the respondents’ personality dimensions and satisfaction derived from the character of work performed**

Work character	Dimension	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
		Mean score				
Work form	individual	3.82	6.64	5.48	5.75	6.55*
	team	3.24	7.32	4.8	6.68	8.16*
New technologies	Using new technologies	3.65	6.81	5.42	5.75	6.9
	No new technologies	3.83	6.67	5.31	6.25	6.87
Tasks	simple	4.22*	6.4	4.94	5.6	6.3*
	complex	3.34*	7.04	5.62	6.18	7.3*
Procedure formalization	present	3.79	6.81	5.01*	5.94	7.07
	Lack of f.p.	3.51	6.7	6.08*	5.95	6.46
Contact with customers	direct	3.51	7.13*	5.67*	6.05	6.77
	Lack of or indirect contact	4.14	5.97*	4.59*	5.7	7.24
Influencing customer’s emotions	Influence	3.57	7.13*	5.57	6.08	6.85
	Lack of it	3.91	6.2*	4.96	5.72	6.93
Dependence on supervisor	dependency	3.98	6.53	5.0	5.9	6.89
	independency	3.44	7.02	5.66	5.98	6.9

\*Correlation significant at 0.05 (both sides). Based on these comparisons we can adopt or reject the hypotheses advanced earlier.

H1. Respondents with a higher level of conscientiousness feel satisfied with their job working individually rather than in a team.

H2. Respondents with a higher level of conscientiousness feel satisfied with their job doing complex rather than simple tasks.

The comparison of the correlation of the satisfaction level with doing work individually or as a team indicates that respondents with a higher conscientiousness score feel satisfaction at the level of at least 4 from team work. On the basis of this finding the hypothesis H1 should be rejected, since the score is the reverse of what was assumed before the statistical verification. Moreover, looking at the correlations of task complexity with satisfaction we can see that respondents whose satisfaction was at 4 or higher while performing complex tasks showed a higher level of conscientiousness, which confirms hypothesis no. 2

*H3. Respondents with a higher level of extraversion feel satisfied with their job working in a team which requires being in contact with another person.*

Looking at the extraversion dimension, the analyses suggest that there are no significant differences between the extraversion level and satisfaction from team or individual work; however, significant differences occur for direct contact with customers and having influence on their emotions and comfort. The surveyed who are satisfied with work involving direct contact with customers, and where they can influence their emotions showed a higher extraversion level. Hence, hypothesis no. 3 was confirmed only partly. This could be the result of the specificity of respondents' work, of whom many have autonomous jobs, e.g. customer advisor, yet their work is based on interpersonal contacts.

*H4. Respondents with a higher level of neuroticism feel satisfied with their job doing simple tasks rather than complex ones.*

Looking at the neuroticism dimension, we can observe that there is a significant dependency between job satisfaction at the level of at least 4 and performing simple tasks instead of complex ones, for a higher level of neuroticism. Thus, the findings confirm hypothesis no. 4 and the research conducted by other authors.

*H5. Respondents with a higher level of openness to experience feel satisfied with their job doing tasks without clearly formalized procedures.*

*H6. Respondents with a higher level of openness to experience feel satisfied with their job doing complex rather than simple tasks.*

Respondents feeling satisfied with their jobs and performing tasks without strictly defined procedures indeed showed a higher level of openness to experience. The analyses showed similar findings for contact with customers - job satisfaction for people working in direct contact with customers went hand in hand with a higher level of openness. No significant dependencies were verified for openness to experience and task complexity. This means that hypothesis no. 5 was not confirmed, yet hypothesis no. 6 was.

*H7 Respondents with a high level of agreeableness feel satisfied with their job doing team work rather than working individually.*

Agreeableness is the only dimension of all the dimensions tested which showed no significant correlations between the character of work and job satisfaction, whatever the strength. Thus hypothesis no. 7 should be rejected.

## **5. Conclusions**

The statistical analyses which were conducted allowed the strength of four out of the five personality factors to be compared: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience and conscientiousness in terms of the character of work and perceived job satisfaction. The analyses showed no statistically significant differences between the strength of agreeableness and the other examined variables in the sample. For neuroticism the analyses revealed that persons with a higher level of neuroticism felt satisfied with their jobs at the level equal to or over 4 (i.e. moderately high satisfaction) doing simple tasks. That was the only statistically significant correlation for this dimension. Those findings confirm the reports coming from other research (Neal et al. 2012: 180; Spector 1982 after: Judge et al. 2000: 239) where it has been observed that complex tasks burden an individual, evoking negative

thoughts and cognitive schemata. Complex tasks are more satisfying to respondents who are more conscientious. This could be explained by the desire to have more accomplishments, which is more likely to happen with complex tasks (Berg et al. 2003: 336). This is complemented by the findings made by Gerhard Blickle and his co-workers (2013: 1158), showing that people with high conscientiousness are more productive in doing complex and demanding tasks. In the sample analyzed, people with high job satisfaction and who were working in a team more often than individually showed a higher level of conscientiousness, which was inconsistent with the findings published by foreign scholars (Neal et al. 2012: 180). This could be dependent on the group surveyed and the interpretation of the term “team work”. Meanwhile, the analyses confirmed that respondents with higher extraversion felt satisfied with the job which required direct customer contact. This most likely allows for interpersonal skills to be developed and the need of social contacts to be fulfilled (Barrick, Mount 1991: 19; Neal et al. 2012: 179). The last of the dimensions to be tested was openness to experience. The analyses show that this dimension is stronger among people who feel satisfied with the job where there are no clearly formalized procedures and, in addition, there is the possibility to be in direct contact with customers. A similar dependency was, however, not confirmed for complex tasks, which, according to Barrick and Mount (1991: 19) should attract people open to experience as the complexity of tasks stimulates them cognitively and enables them to display their range of skills. The satisfaction stemming from doing less formalized work can, meanwhile, correspond to unconventionality and divergent thinking of persons with high openness who are also ready to undermine authorities and search for new stimulations (Zawadzki et al. 2010: 14).

The analyses did not confirm all of the previous findings presented in the literature. This could be linked to certain factors like, for example, specificity of analyzed group, tools applied or researcher’s interpretation of statements. Furthermore, the comparison of the Polish research findings to the US or European ones should be done with a distance, for the personality measures are more sensitive than, for example, the measures of cognitive functioning, and their usefulness depends on the demands of a specific job (Czarnota-Bojarska 2009: 54). Also, it is worth creating a model of employee’s personality instead of concentrating on one

personality dimension. The best selective predictions are based on the combination of the personality dimensions, therefore, focusing on the score of one scale, e.g. conscientiousness, might not be accurate (Hogan et al. 1996: 472). Looking at the respondent's entire personality structure, it might appear that he/she shows high strength of more than just one dimension, and then the correlations between a particular factor characterizing work and job satisfaction may result from a different variable. It is worth expanding the studies on the links between personality and the choice of character of work with directional analyses, which will allow for determining how variables impact each other. Moreover, it would be useful to include the analysis of organizational and situational factors (Tett, Burnett 2003: 513).

With a view to continue this area of research in the Polish setting, it is worth duplicating the study on a bigger sample or focus on some occupational groups and identify clearly individual factors influencing the character of work. Confining the research to a particular group or industry will allow one to avoid inaccurate generalization and to select the personality dimensions which are important in specific recruitment processes. As suggested by Hogan, Hogan and Robert (1996: 475), it is worth classifying work by occupational types and demands (e.g. one could employ Holland's occupational types), and then compare them with employee's personality dimensions, as only thus devised model increases the selective accuracy. Although the analyses conducted in this study do not allow the findings to be generalized for populations, nor do they indicate the significance of particular dimensions for a specific job, they still provide the findings which confirm the important role of the personality of a candidate or employee in performing work of a specific character. Therefore, when employers want to use personality tests in the recruitment process, they should consider what tool to choose and the particular nature of the job for which they hire a candidate. If they look for a customer advisor who will be in contact with many people (not always showing a friendly attitude) during the day, they should, as the findings suggest, pay more attention to the level of extraversion or openness to experience. By combining the personality test with other recruitment methods we can obtain a broad picture of candidates and increase the accuracy in the selection of the right workers.

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## Osobowościowe uwarunkowania dopasowania pracownika do charakteru pracy

### Streszczenie

**Cel:** Na przestrzeni ostatnich dwudziestu lat przeprowadzono wiele badań, które wykazały istotne związki między poszczególnymi wymiarami osobowości a predyspozycjami do pracy w określonym charakterze. W badaniach własnych postanowiono zbadać związki między osobowością, charakterem wykonywanej pracy oraz odczuwaną satysfakcją z tej pracy, w celu wykazania zasadności stosowania testów osobowościowych w procesie rekrutacji jako narzędzia prognozującego dopasowanie pracownika do charakteru pracy.

**Metoda badawcza:** W celu zweryfikowania wytypowanych związków, przeprowadzono badania ilościowe na grupie polskich pracowników (N = 302), w których korelowano pięć wymiarów osobowości (badane za pomocą kwestionariusza NEO-FFI) wraz z poziomem satysfakcji pracownika i charakterem wykonywanej pracy (kwestionariusze własne). Poziom satysfakcji określono w oparciu o ocenę pracy oraz przebieg kariery zawodowej pracownika, natomiast charakter pracy badano na siedmiu skalach: praca samodzielna vs zespołowa, złożoność zadań, stosowanie nowych technologii, występowanie procedur, kontakt z klientem, wpływ na emocje klienta, zależność od przełożonego.

**Wnioski:** Wyniki analiz pokazały, że natężenie wymiarów osobowości istotnie jest różne u respondentów usatysfakcjonowanych z wykonywania pracy o danym charakterze. Przemawia to za stosowaniem testów osobowości w procesie rekrutacji, jednak z uwzględnieniem pewnych czynników, m.in. otoczenia organizacyjnego czy konkretnych wymagań stanowiska.

**Wartość artykułu:** Artykuł jest próbą kompleksowego powiązania wyników różnych badań skupiających się na zależności między osobowością a typem wykonywanej pracy, dodatkowo pogłębioną o zmienną pośredniczącą – satysfakcję zawodową, która pozwala określić, na ile typ wykonywanej pracy jest dopasowany do danego wymiaru osobowości.

**Implikacje badań:** Wartość implikacyjna odnosi się do procesów rekrutacji i selekcji pracowników i uzasadnia słuszność zastosowania testów osobowości.

**Ograniczenia badań:** W przyszłości warto powiększyć grupę badawczą, w celu generalizacji wyników oraz dodać kolejne zmienne pośredniczące, np. czynniki organizacyjne kształtujące charakter pracy

*Słowa kluczowe: pięcioczynnikowy model osobowości, satysfakcja z pracy, charakter pracy, neurotyczność, ekstrawersja, sumienność, otwartość na doświadczenie, ugodowość*

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