Personality Type and Job Satisfaction

In The Irish Corporate Workplace

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between personality type and job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland. A survey conducted with Irish adults (N = 86) investigated the impact of the Big Five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) on job satisfaction, employing the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) short form. Using a correlational design, conscientiousness was found to be the strongest correlate of job satisfaction (r = .31), whilst neuroticism was negatively correlated with job satisfaction (r = -.38). Contrary to previous findings, extraversion had a non-significant relationship with job satisfaction. The Big Five had a multiple correlation of .48, and using regression analysis, accounted for a total variance of 23% in job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland. The idea that personality traits seem to be at least moderate predictors of job satisfaction is upheld by the results of this study.

Keywords: Personality, job satisfaction, traits, Big Five, Five Factor Model, corporate, Ireland.
1. Introduction

It seems clear that a reciprocal relationship between personality type and job setting exists. How well these are matched is critical for job satisfaction. Work feeds into many different aspects of people’s lives. It influences self-identity, self-esteem and opportunities for personal growth. Having a good fit in a company, both with fellow employees and supervisors, can make one feel more capable and more motivated to remain in that working environment. Dissonance between the individual and their level of job satisfaction can have many negative effects however, such as the person having high levels of stress, losing job motivation, or leaving their employment.

In general, satisfied employees are more likely to remain in a job than unsatisfied employees. Mount & Muchinsky (1978) found that those who had a higher degree of person-environment fit reported higher levels of job satisfaction than individuals with low person-environment fit. People differ greatly in their personalities, attitudes, and values, and an understanding of individual personalities is profoundly important in maximising employees’ happiness and productivity at work (Schofield, 2012, as cited in Urman & Ehrenfeld, 2012).

1.1 Personality Type

Cervone & Pervin (2008) refer to personality traits as consistent patterns in the way individuals behave, feel and think. One’s personality traits are said to be consistent over time and across situations. Trait theory therefore summarises a person’s typical behaviour, and describes what a person typically is like. Studies have suggested that personality may account for much of the variations in job satisfaction amongst employees, as some personality traits have been found to be strongly associated with satisfaction, whilst others are strongly associated with dissatisfaction (Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002).
Understanding an individual’s personality type can be extremely useful for workplace situations, to learn how a person might perform, establish how they might interact with others, and predict whether they would succeed in a managerial or leadership role. The interaction between personality and the workplace has been investigated from a number of perspectives. Individual differences in emotion regulation have been looked at with regard to work-related outcomes. Liu et al. (2010) looked at individuals who have a tendency to reappraise their emotions versus suppress their emotions. Liu et al. found that reappraisal was positively associated with positive emotions. In addition, they found that job satisfaction was positively correlated with positive emotions. Judge & Ilies (2002) looked at the relationship between personality and performance motivation, using the Five Factor Model of personality. These researchers found that 3 of the Big Five traits, namely neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness, generalized across studies. Their meta-analysis suggests that the Big Five traits are an important source of performance motivation.

Shaver & Brennan (1992) looked at the link between attachment theory and the Five Factor Model of personality. This study found that secure attachment was most associated with extraversion, agreeableness and low neuroticism. Securely attached individuals tend to see others as trusting and themselves as worth loving, and are able to control and cope with stressful events, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), as cited in Miles (2012). In turn, De Sanctis & Karantzas (2008), in a study of attachment style and transformational leadership, found that followers of securely attached leaders described their leaders as being more effective than did the followers of insecurely attached leaders. They also reported higher levels of job satisfaction. Bono et al. (2007) found that the effects of emotional regulation on stress were long-lasting. Employees who had supervisors high on transformational (people-focused) versus transactional (task-focused)
management had lower levels of job dissatisfaction, and were therefore more motivated in the workplace.

The use of personality models to measure individual differences has become increasingly popular in the workplace, and many have been the focus of a great deal of research that has investigated how individual differences relate to outcomes at work. Eysenck’s 2-Factor Theory (1947) was one of the earliest models of personality. The basis for Eysenck’s classification of traits was statistical analysis known as factor analysis. Items were correlated with each other to see if similarities existed. Originally, this model was comprised of two ‘superfactors’; Introversion- Extraversion and Neuroticism. Eysenck later added Psychoticism and the model become known as the PEN personality theory.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), developed in 1962 by Katharine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, is an outgrowth of the initial work of Carl Jung’s theory of personality. The MBTI suggests that there are four pairs of preferences or dichotomies; extraversion-introversion, sensing-intuition, thinking-feeling, and judging-perception, with a resulting 16 possible psychological types. The MBTI model suggests that individuals acquire a preference for relating to others.

Holland’s 1985 RIASEC typology suggests that vocational interests are an important expression of personality and can be used to meaningfully categorise people and work environments into six types (Realistic, Intellectual, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional). In personality research today however, Costa & McCrae’s (1992) Five Factor Model of personality appears to be the most favoured model, and is increasingly explored. Five Factor Model personality dimensions focus on an individual’s characteristic ways of acting, thinking
and feeling (Murray et al., 2003), and the model has been referred to as a meaningful taxonomy for the study of individual differences (SampathKappagoda, 2012).

The origin of Costa & McCrae’s Five Factor Model was Cattell’s 16 personality factors, extracted to the three domains of Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness. This original model was called the NEO, and was extended in later years to include two other domains, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness. In today’s literature, the Five Factor Model of personality is often referred to as the ‘Big Five’ model or the ‘OCEAN’ model. The Five Factor Model describes the basic dimensions of personality at a global level. Trait facets associated with the five domains of the Costa & McCrae Five Factor Model include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>Competence, order, dutifulness, achievement-striving, self-discipline, deliberation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>Trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, tender-mindedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>Warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement-seeking, positive emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>Anxiety, angry, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, vulnerability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Five-Factor Model has generalised across measures, cultures and sources of ratings (McCrae & John, 1992). According to Judge, Heller & Mount (2002), within the last 20 years, consensus has emerged that a five-factor model of personality, often termed the Big Five, can be used to describe the most salient aspects of personality. For the purpose of this study therefore, the Five
Factor Model of personality will be employed to assess personality traits amongst corporate employees in Ireland.

1.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a self-reported positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or from job experience (Locke, 1976). It is an individual’s collection of feelings and beliefs towards their job. Job satisfaction can also be described as the extent to which the working environment meets the needs and values of employees (Tewksbury & Higgins, 2006).

Correspondence with the environment can be described in terms of the environment fulfilling the requirements of the individual and the individual fulfilling the requirements of the environment. This means that employees will experience job satisfaction if they feel their individual capabilities, experience and values can and are being used in their work environment, and that in exchange the work environment offers them opportunities and rewards (Davis, 1992). A satisfied employee tends to hold a positive attitude toward their job, will have greater motivation, and increased job performance. Increased satisfaction equals increased engagement. A dissatisfied employee however will view their job and their working environment negatively.

Job satisfaction is the most widely researched topic in organisational psychology. Many studies have shown how job satisfaction is closely associated with job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Buitendach & De Witte, 2005; Christen, Iyer & Soberman, 2006), employee motivation (Ostroff, 1992), efficiency in work (Hampson, 1988), absenteeism and turnover intention (Buck & Watson, 2002), organisational citizenship behaviour (Organ & Ryan, 1995) and organisational commitment (Cetin, 2006; Rayton, 2006). Job satisfaction is therefore an important topic because of its many effects on the overall well-being of an organisation.
The link between job satisfaction and job performance is often referred to as the ‘holy grail’ of organisational psychology (Landy, 1989), and as Judge et al. (2001) purport, few topics have captured the attention of researchers more than this relationship. The viewpoint that satisfaction causes performance has its roots in human relations theory, which emerged from the Hawthorne Studies of the late 1920’s. Research has consistently sought to prove the maxim that happy workers are satisfied workers, and satisfied workers are more productive workers.

Christen, Iyer & Soberman (2006) found that when the three constructs, job satisfaction, job performance and effort were considered together, a significant positive effect was found between job performance and job satisfaction.

Faragher, Cass & Cooper (2003) looked at the relationship between job satisfaction and health. It was found that job satisfaction was most strongly associated with mental or psychological problems, such as burnout, self-esteem, depression and anxiety, rather than with physical illnesses. Burnout was found to have the highest correlate. It is therefore to the benefit of an organisation to have their employees respond emotionally positively to their work.

For decades, researchers have sought to explain and predict job satisfaction, due to the fact that as seen above, it is linked with many other key factors of organisational behaviour. Many theories on job satisfaction are based on the assumption that job satisfaction is dependent purely on intra-organisational factors, and they do not account for variations in satisfaction amongst workers. Over the years, evidence has emerged however that job satisfaction may not be caused just by factors originating within organisations. A long-standing debate exists between those (dispositionists) who believe that work attitudes and behaviour are determined by, or at least directly linked to individual attributes (e.g. House, Shane & Herold, 1996). Situationists on the other hand have argued that the world of work affects people much more strongly than does
individual differences (e.g. Davis-Blake & Pfeffer, 1989). It seems obvious that there are basic differences in personality amongst workers and that these differences in personality may interact with the environmental stimuli to produce different responses. Studies have consistently shown that people are most satisfied if they pursue careers that have a ‘personality’ similar to their own (Assouline & Meir, 1987; Spokane, 1985).

Herzberg’s two-factor theory (1966) is one of the earliest measurements of job satisfaction. The two-factor theory suggests that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are caused by different and independent sets of factors or needs. Intrinsic factors, or motivator factors, affect job satisfaction and include such aspects as the work itself, recognitions, achievements, responsibility and advancements. Extrinsic factors, or hygiene factors, are said to result in job dissatisfaction and include elements such as pay, benefits, supervision, company policy, administration and the working environment. The two-factor theory was heavily influenced by Maslow’s ‘hierarchy of needs’ theory.

Other job satisfaction theories that have emerged include the social information processing approach which holds that satisfaction and dissatisfaction result from comparing oneself with other workers (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974), and Locke’s (1976) value theory which is based on the discrepancy between aspects of the job one has, and aspects of the job one wants. Greater discrepancies are said to create greater dissatisfaction. Hackman and Oldman’s (1975) job characteristics model argues that job design can create working conditions that negatively or positively affect job satisfaction. This model suggests that job satisfaction can be improved by enhancing five characteristics of one’s job; task identity, task significance, skill variety, autonomy and feedback.
For the purpose of this study, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), one of the more popular measures of job satisfaction today, has been employed. The MSQ examines intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction and general satisfaction across twenty different dimensions. As a result it provides extensive information on employees’ satisfaction with numerous facets of their job or work environment. The twenty dimensions in which job satisfaction is measured include; ability utilisation, achievement, activity, advancement, authority, company, compensation, co-workers, creativity, independence, moral values, recognition, responsibility, security, social service, social status, supervision, variety and working conditions. According to Durham & Smith (1997), the MSQ provides a valid indication of job satisfaction.

Although job satisfaction is interesting for its own sake, researchers are interested in job satisfaction mainly because of its relationship to other variables of interest. Schneider & Dachler (1978) noted that job satisfaction seemed very stable over time, and they speculated that it might be the product of personality traits. It seems reasonable that a person’s trait dispositions might influence the manner in which they respond to their work contexts.

1.3 Personality Type (Five Factor Model) and Job Satisfaction

Holland’s central thesis is that people flourish in their work environments when there is a good fit between their personality type and the characteristics of the environment. Lack of congruence between personality and environment leads to dissatisfaction (Holland, 1996).

Initial research linking the Big Five (Five Factor Model) with job satisfaction indicated that neuroticism was negatively correlated with job satisfaction, whereas conscientiousness,
extraversion and agreeableness were positively correlated with job satisfaction. Openness to experience was said to have a negligible impact on job satisfaction (Neubert, 2004).

Judge, Heller & Mount’s (2002) meta-analysis is predominantly found in studies that discuss the Five Factor Model. Results of this meta-analysis review found that the Five Factor Model is a good basis for examining job satisfaction. Three of the Big Five traits, namely extraversion, conscientiousness and neuroticism, were significant predictors of job satisfaction. As a set, the Big Five traits had a multiple correlation of .41 with job satisfaction, and 17% of the variance in job satisfaction could be explained by personality traits. In particular, the traits of neuroticism ($r = -.24$), extraversion ($r = .19$) and conscientiousness ($r = .20$) displayed strong correlations with job satisfaction. Agreeableness ($r = .13$) and openness to experience ($r = .01$) displayed moderate to weak correlations with job satisfaction. Neuroticism was therefore found to be the strongest correlate of job satisfaction (albeit strongly negatively correlated), whilst conscientiousness displayed the second strongest correlation (positively correlated). In this present research study, it is hoped that the results will replicate Judge, Heller & Mount’s findings.

Neurotic individuals have a negative tendency, and therefore with respect to their jobs, their negative nature would result in diminished levels of job satisfaction. Neurotic individuals tend to socially withdraw in response to dissatisfying job conditions, allowing situations to get worse. They have a tendency to dwell on negative experiences in the workplace. Judge (2009) suggested that low emotional stability is negatively related to job satisfaction because it is a strong predictor of job stress.
Conscientious individuals tend to be more involved in their work, thus leading to a greater likelihood of higher levels of job satisfaction. Salgado (1997) found that conscientiousness was the best personality predictor of job performance. Barrick & Mount (1991) also found that conscientiousness was a strong predictor of job proficiency and performance across a wide range of occupational groups. Furnham et al. (2002) found that conscientiousness was a consistent predictor of global actual job satisfaction.

Judge, Heller & Mount (2002) purported that there was a parallel between life satisfaction and job satisfaction, such that the factors that cause emotionally stable and extraverted individuals to be happy in life would also lead them to be happy in their jobs. Judge also suggested that those who are conscientious at work may be happier and more satisfied because they are more likely to achieve satisfying results at work. Anecdotally therefore, it follows that if one is engaged in an active way (extraversion), and puts great effort into their work (conscientiousness), their chances of success and satisfaction will increase (as cited in Urman & Ehrenfeld, 2012).

A number of studies support the findings of Judge’s meta analysis. Tesdimir, Asghar & Saeed (2012) looked at the variables, personality type and job satisfaction, amongst 450 sales persons employed in Turkish pharmaceutical companies. This particular study used demographic variables including age and gender as moderators. Using the Five Factor Model, these researchers found that extraversion was positively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = .56$); agreeableness was positively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = .65$); conscientiousness was significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = .71$), and openness was positively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = .59$). Neuroticism was found to be negatively correlated with
job satisfaction \( (r = -0.47) \). There was no significant correlation between gender and job satisfaction \( (r = 0.05) \), or between age and job satisfaction \( (r = 0.06) \).

Patrick (2010) looked at the same variables, personality type and job satisfaction, amongst Management Educators from 25 business schools in India. This study used both the Big Five Inventory and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. Results of this study once again showed that neuroticism was negatively correlated with job satisfaction \( (-0.26 = \text{general satisfaction}) \), whilst a positive correlation was found between extraversion and job satisfaction \( (0.25 = \text{general satisfaction}) \). Interestingly, no significant relationships were found between the variables agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience, and job satisfaction. Extraversion and extrinsic satisfaction had a significant positive relationship \( (0.39) \); the relationship between extraversion and intrinsic satisfaction was not recorded. Neuroticism and extrinsic satisfaction were significantly negatively correlated \( (-0.20) \), as were neuroticism and intrinsic satisfaction \( (-0.25) \). Overall, management faculty members recorded a general satisfaction mean of 3.75, indicating high overall job satisfaction.

In 2012, SampathKappagoda conducted a study measuring the impact of the Five-Factor Model of personality on job satisfaction of non-academic employees in Sri Lankan universities. This study once again found that personality had a strong influence on job satisfaction. The correlation between extraversion and job satisfaction \( (r = 0.25) \), agreeableness and job satisfaction \( (r = 0.27) \), and conscientiousness and job satisfaction \( (r = 0.20) \) were significant and positive. A significant negative relationship was found between neuroticism and job satisfaction \( (r = -0.31) \). The relationship between openness to experience and job satisfaction was weak positive \( (r = 0.04) \). Using a regression analysis, similar positive relationships were found for the variables extraversion \( (\beta = 0.13) \), agreeableness \( (\beta = 0.21) \) and conscientiousness \( (\beta = 0.24) \), and a similar
negative relationship was found for neuroticism and job satisfaction ($\beta = -.13$). The relationship between openness to experience and job satisfaction was not significant.

According to Seashore & l’aber (1975), there are two major factors influencing job satisfaction; personal attributes and environment (as cited in Tesdimir, Asghar & Saeed, 2012). The person-environment fit is congruent upon a successful interaction between both of these elements. In the work environment, this interaction of worker and job characteristics may have important implications for a variety of work outcomes.

### 1.4 Corporate Workplace

For the purpose of this study, the corporate workplace has been defined as employment in the fields of banking, law, accountancy, insurance, management consultancy and private equity. These working environments are by nature, fast-paced and highly pressurised, with stringent deadlines, high work volumes and long working hours. Corporate employees must have the ability to handle stress, frequent changes, and work with many stakeholders in order to succeed.

Working in corporate surroundings can be a challenge. Many corporate organisations adopt a hierarchical system, where most employees will have no say in the way things operate. Corporate employees can often be ‘just a number’, a ‘cog in the wheel’. Company politics prevail, therefore one needs to follow certain etiquette in order to sustain the environment of a corporate workplace. Finally, many corporate organisations have large numbers of staff and as a result it can take many years to climb the ‘corporate ladder’. With the demise of the Celtic tiger, and Ireland experiencing a recession over the past few years, the corporate world in particular has been the subject of negative press, scrutiny and many redundancies. This study aims to find
out if certain personality types are better suited to working in these types of environments, and looks at their current level of job satisfaction.

Studies looking at the corporate workplace have examined the relationship between corporate culture and business performance (Sorensen, 2002; Kotrba et al., 2012), and how the changing face of the corporate workplace impacts on organisations’ bottom line. Organisational wellness programs have been investigated due to their effects on absenteeism, stress levels, employee health, and job satisfaction (Parks & Steelman, 2008; Elberson, Daniels and Miller, 2000; Ho, 1997). People nowadays balance increasingly excessive work and family demands. Increasing competitive pressures along with rising household financial needs are impacting upon people effectively managing these two important areas. Many studies have therefore looked at the work/life balance from a corporate perspective (Hill et al, 2001; Hobson, Delunas & Kesic, 2011). Gender inequality has also been addressed from a corporate perspective (Bertrand, Goldin & Katz, 2009). Research on the link between personality type and job satisfaction in the corporate workplace is however largely unavailable.

One study conducted by Naz, Rehman & Saqib (2013) looked at the relationship between job satisfaction and personality traits amongst bank employees of five major banks in Pakistan. Using an alternative trait model of personality known as the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (Rentfrow et al., 2003), TIPI measures the Big Five personality dimensions. This study found that neuroticism had a significant negative correlation with job satisfaction (-.65), whilst extraversion (.82), conscientiousness (.65), agreeableness (.46) and openness to experience (.51), each had a positive correlation with job satisfaction. These results are congruent with previous results discussed above and with the hypotheses of this present study.
1.5 Need and purpose of this study

The need and purpose of this study was based on a review of literature that showed a strong relationship exists between personality and job satisfaction. There was however little to no research looking at this relationship from a corporate perspective. No research has been undertaken examining this relationship in Ireland, nor looking at this relationship in the Irish corporate workplace.

This study will determine if personality type, as measured by the Big Five Inventory, has any relationship to job satisfaction, as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. The Big Five Inventory sets out five aspects of personality; Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism (OCEAN). The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire will be used to measure participants’ levels of satisfaction with their current employment, with respect to each of the items in the MSQ-short form.

By correlating answers from both of these questionnaires, the aim of this study is to determine if there is a strong relationship between personality type and job satisfaction. More specifically, the aim is to show that the Five-Factor Model (the Big Five Inventory) is a valid predictor of workplace satisfaction in the Irish corporate workplace.
1.6 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: It is hypothesized there will be a significant positive relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction

Hypothesis 2: It is hypothesized there will be a significant positive relationship between agreeableness and job satisfaction

Hypothesis 3: It is hypothesized there will be a significant positive relationship between conscientiousness and job satisfaction

Hypothesis 4: It is hypothesized there will be a significant inverse relationship between neuroticism and job satisfaction

Hypothesis 5: It is hypothesized there will be a significant positive relationship between openness to experience and job satisfaction

Hypothesis 6: It is hypothesized there will be no significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction

Hypothesis 7: It is hypothesized there will be no significant relationship between age and job satisfaction
2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

110 Irish adults (normally employed adults) from the general population completed an online survey. A random sample was adopted.

Participants who were employed in the following ‘corporate’ occupations were sought to complete the survey: Banking, Law, Accountancy, Insurance, Management Consultancy and Private Equity.

Of the 110 completed surveys, 86 surveys were accepted for analysis. The remaining 24 surveys were either incomplete (7 surveys) or the respondents were not employed in the occupations requested (17 surveys). These occupations included: nursing, NFP, education, medical secretary, events, marketing, pharmaceutical, medical, administration, public service, property, healthcare, media, social services, public sector management and food distribution.

The breakdown per surveys analysed (i.e. corporate employees) was as follows:

Banking: 53 respondents (62%)
Law: 4 respondents (5%)
Accountancy: 14 respondents (16%)
Insurance: 3 respondents (3.5%)
Management Consultancy: 3 respondents (3.5%)
Private Equity: 2 respondents (2%)
Other: 7 respondents (8%)

Respondents from the ‘other’ category were employed in the following occupations: business representative body, financial outsourcing, IT, tax, financial services, and regulation.
Of the total sample used of 86 respondents, 33% were male and 67% were female.

Relative frequencies by age group were as follows: 21% of the respondents were in the age group 20-29 years, followed by 73% in the age group 30-39 years. 6% were in the age group 40-49 years. None of the accepted questionnaires included participants in the age groups 50-59 or 60-69.

15% of respondents were educated to secondary school level, whilst 37% had university degrees. 14% of respondents had a postgraduate diploma and 33% were educated to masters level. 1 respondent held a PHD.

57% of respondents have been working for 2 or more years in their current position.

100% of respondents work in Dublin.

2.2 Design

The primary goal of this research is to determine if personality is a significant predictor of job satisfaction. The secondary goal of the study is to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between personality traits and job satisfaction. The current study therefore adopted a correlational research design in order to explore the relationship between corporate employees’ Big Five personality traits (independent, predictor variable) and job satisfaction (dependent, criterion variable). All participants were placed in one group with multiple correlations employed. An independent samples t-test was carried out to see if there was a difference between males and females with regards to their current level of job satisfaction. Finally, a simple linear regression analysis was carried out to determine the percentage of the variance in total job satisfaction as explained by the Big Five personality traits.
Satisfaction needed to be measured at the individual rather than group level, and satisfaction needed to occur in a natural job setting. Thus, an experimental design was rejected in favour of a self-report multiple questionnaire design, which many participants completed whilst sitting at their desks.

A time frame of approximately four weeks was allowed for surveys to be completed and submitted for data analysis. All completed surveys were stored in a CSV file which could be downloaded into Excel for scoring and statistical analysis. SPSS data analysis package, version 23, was used to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) were used to analyse the results.

2.3 Materials

The self-report survey was divided into three parts (questionnaires) as follows:

**Part I** consisted of demographic variables. Demographic questions asked include gender, age, education level, occupation and number of years employed. All variables were measured along an ordinal scale and coded such as; gender (male = 1, female = 2) and age (20-29 = 1, 30-39 = 2, 40-49 = 3, 50-50 = 4, 60-69 = 5).

**Part II** consisted of a personality measure and in this study, The Big Five Inventory (BFI) was used. The BFI is a 44-question test developed by Oliver P. John and V. Benet-Martinez (1998). It examines the ‘Big Five’ personality traits and the breakdown of questions per trait is as follows: Conscientiousness – 9 items, Agreeableness – 9 items, Emotional Stability or Neuroticism – 8 items, Extraversion – 8 items, and Openness to experience – 10 items. Personality scales were re-coded as per the BFI scoring instructions, and scale scores were then computed to find the average of the five variables. The new computed variables are as follows:
Extraversion → bfie
Agreeableness → bfia
Conscientiousness → bfic
Neuroticism → bfin
Openness to experience → bfio

The personality items are rated on a five-point Likert scale and are scored as follows: “disagree strongly: 1, disagree a little: 2, neither agree nor disagree: 3, agree a little: 4, and agree strongly: 5”. In terms of reliability and validity, both English and Spanish versions of the original BFI-44 item questionnaire were shown to have good reliability and acceptable factorial structure, and convergent and discriminant validity (as cited in Leung et al., 2013). Because the FFM personality traits are broad constructs, each fundamentally consists of common variance, which enables them to exhibit high cross-situation reliability (Kenrick & Funder, 1991).

The BFI measures personality in five domains:

1. Openness to experience – appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, imagination, curiosity, and variety of experience
2. Conscientiousness – a tendency to show self-discipline, act dutifully, and aim for achievement; planned rather than spontaneous behaviour
3. Extraversion – energy, positive emotions, urgency, and the tendency to seek stimulation and the company of others
4. Agreeableness – a tendency to be compassionate and cooperative rather than suspicious and antagonistic towards others
5. Neuroticism – a tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily such as anger, anxiety, depression, or vulnerability; sometimes called emotional instability

**Part III** consisted of a job satisfaction measure and in this study, The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ)-short form was used. Developed by David J. Weiss, Rene V. Davis and Lloyd H. Lofquist (1966), the MSQ is a 20-item short version of the original 100-item questionnaire. The job satisfaction scale was divided into 3 separate scales and new variables were computed as per the MSQ-short form scoring instructions. No re-coding was required for these scales.

The three new computed variables are:

- Intrinsic
- Extrinsic
- General

(General job satisfaction is comprised of both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction.)

The satisfaction items are rated on a five-point Likert scale and are scored as follows: “very dissatisfied: 1, dissatisfied: 2, neither agree nor disagree: 3, satisfied: 4, and very satisfied: 5”. In terms of reliability and validity, for general satisfaction, test-retest validity was found to be 0.89 over one-week and 0.70 over one year, Weiss et al. (1967). These researchers stated that as the MSQ-short form is a subset of the long-form items, validity may be inferred from validity for the long-form. For reliability, Kinnoin (2005) reported that the MSQ-short form reliability coefficient alpha was 0.92, whilst Udechukwu (2007) reported an internal consistency alpha of 0.88, as cited in Adeogun (2008).
The MSQ measures job satisfaction in three domains:

1. **Intrinsic satisfaction** refers to the nature of the job tasks themselves and how people feel about the work they do.

2. **Extrinsic satisfaction** concerns other aspects of the work situation, such as fringe benefits and pay.

3. **General satisfaction** is the sum of intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction.

All questionnaires can be viewed in Appendix A.

**2.4 Procedure**

The survey was designed using a web-based engine called esurveycreator. Participants were recruited through social media (Facebook), email and word of mouth. Participants were sent a link to the survey which could be completed online. This allowed for anonymity, but also for the survey to be completed at a personally convenient time. Participants were informed of the title of the survey and that its purpose was for a final year Psychology research project, therefore no deception was used. They were informed that the survey would take less than five minutes to complete. Participants completed the survey online and provided implied consent by ticking a box on the homepage of the web-based survey.
3. Results

In this study, the data of N = 86 corporate employees was analysed. Before running tests to check for significant relationships, a number of descriptive statistics were calculated.

Table 1 *Frequency Distribution Table for Corporate Employees in Ireland*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banking</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountancy</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Consultancy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Equity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N= 86</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 *Breakdown by Occupation of Corporate Employees in Ireland*
The majority of survey participants were employed in the banking sector (53%), were of the age group 30-39 (73%), and were female (67%), as can be seen from Table 1 and Figure 1 above, and Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2 *Breakdown by Age of Corporate Employees in Ireland*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 – 29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 39</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 86</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 *Breakdown by Gender of Corporate Employees in Ireland*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 86</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A report of means and standard deviations of all predictor and criterion variables are shown in Table 4. The scoring patterns for agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience are quite similar, whilst extraversion and neuroticism scored lower. Extrinsic job satisfaction had a significantly lower mean score than intrinsic job satisfaction.

Table 4 *Means and Standard Deviations for the Predictor and Criterion Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>29.58</td>
<td>5.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>36.63</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>36.01</td>
<td>5.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>22.44</td>
<td>5.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to experience</td>
<td>34.96</td>
<td>5.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic job satisfaction</td>
<td>44.52</td>
<td>6.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic job satisfaction</td>
<td>19.78</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General job satisfaction</td>
<td>72.39</td>
<td>10.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1 *Correlation Coefficients*

The primary goal of this research is to determine if personality is a significant predictor of job satisfaction. Using a correlational design, it was possible to determine if each of the facets of the Big Five were significant predictors of job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland. In addition, it was possible to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between the predictor variable, personality type, and the criterion variable, job satisfaction, by adopting a correlational design. Tests for normality were run first to ensure all variables met the
assumptions. Table 5 demonstrates the correlation values for personality type and job satisfaction.

Table 5 Correlation Values for Predictor and Criterion Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Extraversion</th>
<th>Agreeableness</th>
<th>Conscientiousness</th>
<th>Neuroticism</th>
<th>Openness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>-0.38</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1. (a) Hypothesis 1: It is hypothesized there will be a significant positive relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction

Tests for normality showed that the variable extraversion did meet all the assumptions. The relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction was investigated using a Pearson’s correlation. A Pearson’s correlation found that there was a non-significant relationship between extraversion and job satisfaction (r = .15, p = .17, therefore p > 0.05). These results indicate an inverse relationship between the two variables, suggesting that corporate employees who score high in extraversion will not necessarily experience higher levels of job satisfaction, and will in fact experience lower levels of job satisfaction. Based on these results, the hypothesis is rejected, and the null hypothesis is accepted.
3.1. (b) Hypothesis 2: It is hypothesized there will be a significant positive relationship between agreeableness and job satisfaction

Tests for normality showed that the variable agreeableness did not meet all the assumptions. The relationship between agreeableness and job satisfaction was investigated using a Spearman’s Rho correlation. A Spearman’s correlation found that there was a weak positive significant relationship between agreeableness and job satisfaction (rs = .26, p = .02, therefore p < 0.05). These results indicate a direct relationship between the two variables, suggesting that corporate employees who score high in agreeableness will experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Based on these results, the hypothesis is accepted.

3.1. (c) Hypothesis 3: It is hypothesized there will be a significant positive relationship between conscientiousness and job satisfaction

Tests for normality showed that the variable conscientiousness did not meet all the assumptions. The relationship between conscientiousness and job satisfaction was investigated using a Spearman’s Rho correlation. A Spearman’s correlation found that there was a moderate positive significant relationship between conscientiousness and job satisfaction (rs = .31, p = .00, therefore p < 0.05). These results indicate a direct relationship between the two variables, suggesting that corporate employees who score high in conscientiousness will experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Based on these results, the hypothesis is accepted.

3.1. (d) Hypothesis 4: It is hypothesized there will be a significant inverse relationship between neuroticism and job satisfaction

Tests for normality showed that the variable neuroticism did meet all the assumptions. The relationship between neuroticism and job satisfaction was investigated using a Pearson’s
correlation. A Pearson’s correlation found that there was a moderate negative significant relationship between neuroticism and job satisfaction \( (r = -.38, p = .00, \text{ therefore } p < 0.05) \). These results indicate an inverse relationship between the two variables, suggesting that corporate employees who score high in neuroticism will experience lower levels of job satisfaction. Based on these results, the hypothesis is accepted.

3.1. (e) **Hypothesis 5: It is hypothesized there will be a significant positive relationship between openness to experience and job satisfaction**

Tests for normality showed that the variable openness to experience did meet all the assumptions. The relationship between openness to experience and job satisfaction was investigated using a Pearson’s correlation. A Pearson’s correlation found that there was a weak positive significant relationship between openness to experience and job satisfaction \( (r = .25, p = .03, \text{ therefore } p < 0.05) \). These results indicate a direct relationship between the two variables, suggesting that corporate employees who score high in openness to experience will experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Based on these results, the hypothesis is accepted.

3.1. (f) **Hypothesis 6: It is hypothesized there will be no significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction**

Tests for normality showed that the variable gender did not meet all the assumptions. The relationship between gender and job satisfaction was investigated using a Spearman’s Rho correlation. A Spearman’s correlation found that there no significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction \( (rs = .00, p = .99, \text{ therefore } p > 0.05) \). These results indicate an indirect relationship between the two variables, suggesting that gender has no impact on levels of job satisfaction. Based on these results, the hypothesis is accepted.
3.1. (g) Hypothesis 7: It is hypothesized there will be no significant relationship between age and job satisfaction

Tests for normality showed that the variable age did not meet all the assumptions. The relationship between age and job satisfaction was investigated using a Spearman’s Rho correlation. A Spearman’s correlation found that there no significant relationship between age and job satisfaction (rs = .10, p = .35, therefore p > 0.05). These results indicate an indirect relationship between the two variables, suggesting that age has no impact on levels of job satisfaction. Based on these results, the hypothesis is accepted.

3.2 Independent samples T-test

An independent samples t-test was run to establish if a difference existed in job satisfaction levels between males and females working in the corporate workplace in Ireland. The independent samples t-test found there was no significant difference between general satisfaction for males and females (t (80) = -.39, p = .70). Figure 4 provides a graphical representation of the t-test, whilst Table 6 details the means and standard deviations for both males and females. As can be seen, the mean score for both males (M = 71.75) and females (M = 72.72) is very similar.

![Figure 4 Mean Differences in General Job Satisfaction For Males and Females](image)
Table 6 *An Independent Samples T-test table displaying the differences between males and females for the variable general job satisfaction*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>71.75</td>
<td>11.38</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>72.72</td>
<td>10.54</td>
<td>-.38</td>
<td>51.23</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 *Regression Analysis*

To examine the question of how much variance can be accounted for by the set of personality variables in predicting job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland, a simple linear regression analysis was performed for each facet of the Big Five along with general job satisfaction. Table 7 details the regression analyses results.

Table 7 *Linear Regression for Predictor and Criterion Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Extraversion</th>
<th>Agreeableness</th>
<th>Conscientiousness</th>
<th>Neuroticism</th>
<th>Openness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β-value</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²-value</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A linear regression established that extraversion could not statistically significantly predict job satisfaction, $F(1, 77) = 1.88$, $p = .17$, therefore $p > 0.05$ ($β = .16$), accounting for 2% of the variation in job satisfaction.
A linear regression established that agreeableness could not statistically significantly predict job satisfaction, $F (1, 77) = 3.01$, $p = .09$, therefore $p > 0.05$ ($\beta = .19$), accounting for 4% of the variation in job satisfaction.

A linear regression established that conscientiousness could statistically significantly predict job satisfaction, $F (1, 78) = 5.95$, $p = .02$, therefore $p < 0.05$ ($\beta = .27$), accounting for 7% of the variation in job satisfaction.

A linear regression established that neuroticism was a highly significant predictor of job satisfaction, $F (1, 77) = 12.93$, $p = .00$, therefore $p < 0.05$ ($\beta = -.38$), accounting for 14% of the variation in job satisfaction.

A linear regression established that openness to experience was a significant predictor of job satisfaction, $F (1, 77) = 4.97$, $p = .03$, therefore $p < 0.05$ ($\beta = .25$), accounting for 6% of the variation in job satisfaction.

The Five Factor Model of personality accounted for a total variance of 23% in job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland.

Table 8 Total Variance and Multiple Correlation Values of Predictor and Criterion Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model summary</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R square</th>
<th>Adjusted R square</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>9.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Discussion

The objective of this study was to assess the relationship between personality type and job satisfaction in the Irish corporate workplace. Results from this empirical analysis suggest that the Five-Factor Model is an effective measure for examining the dispositional source of job satisfaction in the corporate workplace. In particular, conscientiousness ($r = .31$), agreeableness ($r = .26$) and openness to experience ($r = .25$) displayed moderate correlations. As hypothesised, neuroticism was negatively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = -.38$). Extraversion was the only exception, displaying no significant relationship with job satisfaction ($r = .15$). Both gender and age did not correlate significantly with job satisfaction. As a set, the Five Factor Model had a multiple correlation of .48, and it accounted for a total variance of 23% in job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland.

**Extraversion and Job Satisfaction**

According to Costa & McCrae (1992), extraverts are predisposed to experiencing positive emotions. As was reported earlier by Liu et al. (2010), positive emotionality correlates positively with job satisfaction. Based on this assumption, one would conclude that the more extraverted one is the more likely one is to experience high levels of job satisfaction. Evidence suggests that extraverts have more friends and spend more time in social situations than do introverts. They are more likely to find interpersonal interactions (including those that occur at work) more rewarding (Watson & Clark, 1997). In contrast with previous findings however, extraversion did not have a significant relationship with job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland.

More formal working environments perhaps lead to extraversion not being a requirement for job satisfaction, where a more reserved, introverted personality might be better suited. With
many corporate organisations still feeling the effects of the recession, perhaps the attitude of ‘heads down’ is adopted more fervently at present than ensuring the workplace is a sociable one. Unlike more social working environments such as hospitals, schools or the retail sector, there can be a greater focus in the corporate workplace on completing tasks than on interpersonal interactions. Feelings of reward may come from reaching targets rather than helping people.

Many previous studies describe a significant positive association between job satisfaction and extraversion (Tesdimir, Asghar & Saeed, 2012; SampathKappagoda, 2012; Patrick, 2010; Lounsbury et al., 2007; Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002). Extraversion has been shown previously to be a key trait associated with job satisfaction and success, as the characteristics of extraverts result in them performing better in a job. Therefore, these findings appear to be the exception rather than the rule. Further investigation would be recommended to establish why it does not have a positive association for corporate employees in Ireland.

**Agreeableness and Job Satisfaction**

Whilst having an extraverted personality may not be a requirement for job satisfaction in Irish corporate employees, having the ability to get along with others in corporate environments does appear to have a positive relationship with job satisfaction. To the extent that working in corporate surroundings involves teamwork and interaction with colleagues, agreeableness may be a positive individual attribute. Agreeable individuals tend to find it easy to get along with their co-workers in enjoyable ways, which in turn leads to job satisfaction. Agreeable individuals are also said to be good-natured, trusting, flexible, and cooperative.

The corporate world can be highly stressful with deadlines to be adhered to, targets to be met, and many meetings with team members, colleagues, managers and clients. Under these
working conditions, it may be fruitful to have an agreeable personality that is adaptable to many daily changes and that can interact with innumerable different personalities, and many levels of management.

Consistent with previous findings (SampathKappagoda, 2012; Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002), agreeableness was positively correlated with job satisfaction and in this current study, was the third highest correlation after neuroticism and conscientiousness.

*Conscientiousness and Job Satisfaction*

Achievement-orientation and dependability or conformity have been found to be primary facets of conscientiousness (Hogan & Ones, 1997). Conscientious individuals tend to have a greater work-involvement which can lead to a greater likelihood of achieving satisfying results at work. These results can range from good appraisals from managers and recognition and respect from colleagues, to reaching one’s KPI’s (key performance indicators) and receiving monetary bonuses. Of the five facets of the Five Factor Model, conscientiousness had the highest correlation with job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland.

The nature of the work involved in corporate professions such as law or accountancy, where a high level of attention to detail and strong organisational skills are required, would suggest that those high on conscientiousness would get greater satisfaction from their jobs. Conscientiousness indicates a person’s degree of organisation, dedication and persistence, and one’s goal-motivated behaviour. All of these behaviours are a strong requirement of individuals in the corporate world, specifically those hoping for success.

Consistent with previous studies (Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002; Salgado, 1997), conscientiousness was the most significant (positive) predictor of job satisfaction amongst
corporate employees in Ireland. These workers are obviously responsible and dependable. Job satisfaction is regularly correlated with job performance, and Barrick & Mount’s (1991) meta-analysis found that conscientiousness showed consistent relations with job performance across five occupational groups, including professionals. Therefore, it seems that this personality trait is a powerful predictor of work-related behaviour.

Neuroticism and Job Satisfaction

Neuroticism correlated negatively with job satisfaction in the Irish corporate workplace as hypothesised. Individuals who score high on neuroticism are characterised by high levels of anxiety, anger, depression, worry and insecurity. Staw & Ross (1985) claimed that job attitude may reflect a biologically based trait that predisposes individuals to be either negative or positive. Having a strong negative affect and a tendency to react negatively to both work and life situations would not be suitable for corporate working life.

Spector, Jex and Chen (1995) suggested that neurotic individuals are less suited to jobs that are more complex and supply more stress. Many corporate roles require specialist knowledge such as finance and accountancy practices, computer programs, or regulatory information. With high levels of adherence required, corporate employees must be attentive, meticulous and task-orientated, and should have the ability to cope with busy, potentially frenzied working environments, and any ensuing levels of stress. Grant & Langan-Fox (2007) found neuroticism predicted higher job related stress.

Individuals high on neuroticism evaluate their jobs more negatively, perhaps due to a general tendency toward negative affective reactions. Employees with low emotional stability will therefore tend to have low levels of job satisfaction. The results of this present study align
with the findings of previous studies (Naz, Rehman & Saqib, 2013; Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002), that emotional stability is a strong negative correlate of job satisfaction.

**Openness to Experience and Job Satisfaction**

Openness to experience is associated with creativity and the tendency for seeking and appreciating new experiences and novel ideas. People high on openness are said to exhibit curiosity, an active imagination, intelligence and a preference for variety. Whilst many of these may not be behaviours traditionally associated with the corporate world, openness to experience was positively correlated with job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland.

Perhaps having an open mind may benefit those working in these professional environments. The ability to ‘think outside the box’ and develop new, perhaps better processes or programs may be of benefit to those working in the corporate world. In addition, perhaps being open to taking on more work and learning new tasks results in job satisfaction, and thus job success. Individuals will achieve personal satisfaction from challenging themselves and from learning new information, and in doing so will prove reliable and hard-working to others. DeNeve & Cooper (1998) found a positive relationship between openness and life satisfaction.

As with previous studies (Tesdimir, Asghar & Saeed, 2012; Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002), openness to experience was positively correlated with job satisfaction for corporate employees in Ireland. In both Judge, Heller & Mount’s (2002) and SampathKappagoda’s (2012) findings, the correlation was weak positive, whilst in Patrick’s (2010) study, openness to experience was not correlated with job satisfaction. In the current study, this trait also had a weak positive correlation with general job satisfaction. It has been said that the qualities associated
with openness to experience may lead individuals to seek the rewarding features of jobs that generate job satisfaction.

**Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic job satisfaction**

Each of the Big Five facets in this study were correlated with general job satisfaction (a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction) to see if any significant relationships existed. The results display interesting findings for the corporate workplace in Ireland. As a set, Big Five trait scores were more consistent with extrinsic job satisfaction and displayed mixed results for intrinsic job satisfaction. Conscientiousness and Openness did however score higher on the intrinsic job satisfaction scale than on the extrinsic job satisfaction scale.

Extrinsic satisfaction refers to the benefits associated with doing the job rather than the work itself. Examples of extrinsic satisfaction are pay, promotion and work conditions. Intrinsic satisfaction refers to satisfaction derived from the work itself, such as feelings of accomplishment and personal growth. Intrinsic and extrinsic outcomes have been viewed as related but distinct aspects of career success (Judge et al., 1995). Judge et al. found that extrinsic success was linked to career satisfaction but not job satisfaction.

The fact that extrinsic job satisfaction scores were more consistent across all of the Big Five traits indicates that corporate employees are more driven by external benefits rather than by the nature of the work they are involved in. Corporate jobs are often referred to as ‘soulless’ as there is a greater focus on tasks rather than people. Perhaps for corporate employees, their salary level and attainment of bonuses is more important than whether they actually enjoy the day to day work their job entails. Extrinsic rewards may be the job factors that are keeping these employees in their roles.
The fact that conscientiousness and openness to experience also scored high on the intrinsic satisfaction scale indicates that those high on these trait dispositions are not only driven by external benefits, but will also be satisfied if they are given recognition for the work they do, are provided with opportunities to learn more, and are given room for personal growth. Organ & Lindl (1995) argued that conscientiousness should be related to job satisfaction because of the fact that it represents a greater work involvement. This in turn will result in a greater likelihood of conscientious individuals obtaining satisfying work rewards, both formal and informal. Formal rewards are essentially extrinsic rewards, whilst informal are intrinsic rewards. Organ & Lindl’s assertion confirms the findings of this present study, that both extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction are important for conscientious corporate employees.

Since job satisfaction is linked to higher levels of productivity and commitment, it would be wise on the part of corporate organisations to ensure that extrinsic factors are heavily promoted to potential future employees. It would also be beneficial for corporate organisations to hire conscientious and open individuals.

4.1 Limitations

One of the greatest challenges faced with conducting research for this present study was that there are just a handful of studies that have examined the relationship between personality and job satisfaction. In addition, there is a significant absence of literature specific to Ireland that looks at the link between these two variables. Most of the studies regarding the relationships between personality type and job satisfaction were carried out elsewhere in the world. A significant dearth of literature also existed with regards to job satisfaction and personality type in
the corporate workplace. Therefore, this research was examined in an unexplored social and cultural context.

It should be noted that the results of this study must be interpreted with caution due to the small size of the sample. In addition, limitations exist with regards to the demographics of the participants as the majority of respondents were found to be female, of the age group 30-39, and were working in Dublin. If the study was replicated with a larger sample size, the relationship between personality and job satisfaction might be more significant, particularly with regards to the trait extraversion.

Finally, the study was based around self-reports and thus the degree of respondent bias is unknown.

4.2 Strengths

The strength of this study is that it succeeded in carrying out research looking at the relationship between personality and job satisfaction amongst employees in Ireland, which has been chronically understudied thus far. Specifically, this study focused on those working in the corporate world, an area not previously addressed. Adding to previous seminal studies conducted by Judge, Heller & Mount (2002) and Barrick & Mount (1991), conscientiousness was again shown to be an important correlate of job satisfaction, and neuroticism was again negatively correlated with job satisfaction. These results confirm previous findings that the Five Factor Model describes universal traits and can accurately predict personality across cultures.
4.3 Suggestions for future research

The relationship between the Big Five personality dimensions and job satisfaction should be researched in larger samples and in other occupations in Ireland. It may be beneficial for companies to measure the personality traits of employees during selection in order to predict their levels of job satisfaction. Attracting and retaining suitable employees means keeping the company’s best assets, which could reduce turnover and thus recruiting and training costs. An interesting line of research would be to investigate whether certain personality types are better suited to working in the Irish corporate world, using a larger sample size across the country that includes a higher concentration of both men and women, and a larger mix of ages.

4.4 Conclusion

The idea that personality traits seem to be at least moderate predictors of job satisfaction is upheld by the results of this study. Conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness have significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction whereas neuroticism showed a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction. Extraversion is not a significant predictor of job satisfaction according to the findings of this research. Personality has long been considered as one among many factors that act as sources of job satisfaction, and in this study, accounted for a moderate 23% of job satisfaction amongst corporate employees in Ireland.

Judge, Heller & Mount (2002) emphasized the tripartite effect of personality on job satisfaction. Cognitively, personality influences how individuals interpret characteristics of their jobs; affectively, personality influences an individual’s mood at work; and behaviourally, personality operates through job performance. With job satisfaction being referred to as an individual’s affective response or feeling for work (Blum & Naylor, 1968), it can therefore be
assumed that personality traits have an important part to play. The identification of significant drivers that impact different personalities can provide corporate organisations with information that can be used to increase employee job satisfaction, which ultimately determines organisational performance.
References


Locke, E. A. The nature and causes of job satisfaction, Dunnette MD, Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology, 1976, 1297-1349.


Tesdirim, M. Z., Asghar, M. Z., & Saeed, S. *PERSONALITY TRAITS AND JOB SATISFACTION.*


Appendices

Appendix A – Questionnaires

Survey: Measuring the Relation between the Level of Job Satisfaction and Personality Type in the Irish Corporate Workplace

Part 1: General Questions about You

Gender:  Male □
         Female □

Age:     20-29 □
         30-39 □
         40-49 □
         50-59 □
         60-69 □

Which of these best describes your education level:

Secondary School □
University Degree □
Postgraduate Diploma □
Postgraduate Masters □
PHD □
Please select the Industry you work in:

Banking
Law
Insurance
Accountancy
Mgmt. Consultancy
Private Equity
Other please state ___________________

How many years have you been working in your current job: ______________________

If you held a previous position in the same company, how many years in total have you been employed by this company: ______________________

In which county in Ireland is your company located: ____________________________

I consent to take part in this survey and for my answers to be used  Yes □  No □
Part 2: Big Five Inventory

How I am in general

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who likes to spend time with others? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>a little</td>
<td>nor disagree</td>
<td>a little</td>
<td>strongly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am someone who...

1. Is talkative ____  
2. Tends to find fault with others ____  
3. Does a thorough job ____  
4. Is depressed, blue ____  
5. Is original, comes up with new ideas ____  
6. Is reserved ____  
7. Is helpful and unselfish with others ____  
8. Can be somewhat careless ____  
9. Is relaxed, handles stress well ____  
10. Is curious about many different things ____  
11. Is full of energy ____  
12. Starts quarrels with others ____  
13. Is a reliable worker ____  
14. Can be tense ____  
15. Is ingenious, a deep thinker ____  
16. Generates a lot of enthusiasm ____  
17. Has a forgiving nature ____  
18. Tends to be disorganised ____  
19. Worries a lot ____  
20. Has an active imagination ____  
21. Tends to be quiet ____  
22. Is generally trusting ____  
23. Tends to be lazy ____  
24. Is emotionally stable, not easily upset ____
25. Is inventive ______

26. Has an assertive personality ______

27. Can be cold and aloof ______

28. Perseveres until the task is finished ______

29. Can be moody ______

30. Values artistic, aesthetic experiences ______

31. Is sometimes shy, inhibited ______

32. Is considerate and kind to almost everyone ______

33. Does things efficiently ______

34. Remains calm in tense situations ______

35. Prefers work that is routine ______

36. Is outgoing, sociable ______

37. Is sometimes rude to others ______

38. Makes plans and follows through with them ______

39. Gets nervous easily ______

40. Likes to reflect, play with ideas ______

41. Has few artistic interests ______

42. Likes to cooperate with others ______

43. Is easily distracted ______

44. Is sophisticated in art, music, literature ______
Part 3: Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ)-Short Form

How satisfied I am with my current job

The purpose of this questionnaire is to give you a chance to tell how you feel about your present job. Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to how satisfied or dissatisfied you are.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the present job, this is how I feel about...

1. Being able to keep busy all the time ____
2. The chance to work alone on the job ____
3. The chance to do different things from time to time ____
4. The chance to be somebody in the community ____
5. The way my boss handles his/her workers ____
6. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions ____
7. Being able to do things that don’t go against my conscience ____
8. The way my job provides for steady employment ____
9. The chance to do things for other people ____
10. The chance to tell people what to do ____
11. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities ____
12. The way company policies are put into practice ____
13. My pay and the amount of work I do ____
14. The chances for advancement on this job ____
15. The freedom to use my own judgment ____
16. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job ____
17. The working conditions ____
18. The way my co-workers get along with each other ____
19. The praise I get for doing a good job ____
20. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job ____
Appendix C – Tests for Normality

A Shapiro-Wilks test (p > 0.05) and a visual inspection of its histogram showed that **extraversion** is normally distributed, with a skewness of -0.359 (SE = 0.264), and a kurtosis of -0.505 (SE = 0.523). p = 0.094, therefore p > 0.05. The null hypothesis for normality is accepted.

A Pearson’s correlation was run on the variable extraversion with job satisfaction.

![Histogram](image)

Figure 4 Test for Normality for Extraversion

A Shapiro-Wilks test (p > 0.05) and a visual inspection of its histogram showed that **agreeableness** is not normally distributed, with a skewness of -0.606 (SE = 0.264), and a kurtosis of 0.610 (SE = 0.523). p = 0.018, therefore p < 0.05. The null hypothesis for normality is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis for normality is accepted. A Spearman’s Rho correlation was run on the variable agreeableness with job satisfaction.
A Shapiro-Wilks test (p > 0.05) and a visual inspection of its histogram showed that conscientiousness is not normally distributed, with a skewness of -0.108 (SE = 0.264), and a kurtosis of -0.881 (SE = 0.523). p = 0.029, therefore p < 0.05. The null hypothesis for normality is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis for normality is accepted. A Spearman’s Rho correlation was run on the variable conscientiousness with job satisfaction.
A Shapiro-Wilks test \((p > 0.05)\) and a visual inspection of its histogram showed that neuroticism is normally distributed, with a skewness of 0.372 (SE = 0.266), and a kurtosis of 0.232 (SE = 0.526). \(p = 0.171\), therefore \(p > 0.05\). The null hypothesis for normality is accepted. A Pearson’s correlation was run on the variable neuroticism with job satisfaction.

Figure 7 Test for Normality for Neuroticism
A Shapiro-Wilks test (p > 0.05) and a visual inspection of its histogram showed that openness to experience is normally distributed, with a skewness of -0.072 (SE = 0.266), and a kurtosis of -0.257 (SE = 0.526). p = 0.872, therefore p > 0.05. The null hypothesis for normality is accepted.

A Pearson’s correlation was run on the variable openness to experience with job satisfaction.

Figure 8 Test for Normality for Openness to Experience