Exploring the relationship between personality traits and organisational commitment in an Irish healthcare organisation

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the BA Hons in Psychology at Dublin Business School, School of Arts, Dublin.

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March 2019

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I declare that this thesis that I have submitted to Dublin Business School for the award of BA (Hons) Psychology is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated, where it is clearly acknowledged by references. Furthermore, this work has not been submitted for any other degree.

Signed: Idelle Hawkins
Student Number: 1593899
Date: 22/03/2019
Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to Pj, Brodie, Ivy, Eden and Olive for giving me the time and support that has enabled me to complete my thesis. I could not have done it without them. I would also like to express my gratitude to the healthcare organisation for granting me access to the sample, without this my research would not have been possible. And lastly, thank you to my supervisor Ronda, for providing me with on-going guidance and support along the way.
Abstract

Global workforce shortages are reaching critical levels and organisations are looking for effective strategies to retain and develop committed employees in these turbulent times. Hence, the current study explored the relationship between Five Factor Model (FFM) personality traits and Meyer and Allen’s (1990) three component model of organisational commitment in a medium sized Irish healthcare organisation. The sample consisted of 116 employees. Pearson correlation coefficient revealed a significantly positive relationship between FFM traits and affective commitment while no relationship was found between FFM and normative or continuance commitment. Agreeableness was the trait most strongly associated with affective commitment. One way ANOVA established significant differences between age and length of service variables and commitment scores. More primary studies are required to establish the generalizability and reliability of the findings. The results provide important implications for HR recruitment and retentions practices.
Introduction

The world of work is constantly evolving and in response to this changing environment organisations are competing with each other to attract and retain a workforce of committed employees. The healthcare sector is not excluded from this international workforce challenge (Kroezen, Dussault, Craveiro, Dieleman, Jansen, Buchan, Barriballf, Rafferty, Bremner & Sermeus, 2015). Likewise, the Irish healthcare sector faces similar pressing workforce challenges as a shortage of local healthcare professionals and an overreliance on short-term migrant recruitment strategies contribute to retention issues (Humphries, Brugha & McGee, 2009). Combine this with the recent disruption to Irish healthcare delivery as a result of the national INMO nurse wage dispute, it is essential that healthcare employers develop effective strategies to attract and retain a workforce of committed healthcare employees. In view of the negative impact that these contextual factors pose to healthcare delivery and organisational outcomes it is essential that research contribute to broadening our understanding of the relationship between dispositional antecedents and organisational commitment. Subsequently effective human resource practices, which have the potential to improve individual, organisational and societal outcomes, could be advanced.

Organisational commitment is a psychological state that describes the psychological bond an individual has with an organisation (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015, p. 1542). This bond has been found to contribute to a variety factors that are of interest to academics, practitioners and employers alike. Prominent scholars in the field of organisational commitment, Meyer and Allen (1990), have posited that when an individual is strongly committed to an organisation they are said to identify with, be involved in and enjoy membership of that organisation and are therefore less likely to leave the organisation (p.2). Subsequently, when individuals are strongly committed a variety of positive individual and organisational effects have been found
to occur. Job satisfaction (Al-Hussami, 2009; Rai, 2012; Susanty & Miradipta, 2013), employee performance (Susanty & Miradipta, 2013), unit level performance (Conway & Briner, 2012), caring behaviours (Naghneh, Tafreshi, Naden, et. al., 2013), employee motivation (Kheirkhan, Masrour, Sefidi, & Jalal, 2018), organisational citizenship behaviour (Fu, 2013; Shepherd, 2017), organisational development (Gul, 2015), and organisational change (Meyer, Srinivas, Lal & Topolnytsky, 2007), have all been found to interact with organisational commitment and contribute to positive individual and organisational outcomes.

Contrastingly, when individuals possess a weak psychological bond with their organisation counterproductive workplace behaviours (CWB) emerge (Brooks, 2012). A review of the literature reveals that numerous studies have demonstrated a link between weak organisational commitment and negative behaviours such as absenteeism (Schmidt & Diestel, 2012; Somers, 1995), turnover (Somers, 1995) and workplace deviance (Guay, et.al. 2016). In view of the considerable amount of positive and negative consequences associated with organisational commitment, it is crucial to advance industrial/organisational and personality psychology theory to contribute to more positive organisational outcomes. Therefore examining stable individual differences that relate to employee commitment will provide additional support for the development of effective recruitment and retention strategies to tackle the current human resource crisis.

Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment has been defined as the ‘strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organisation’ (Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulin, 1974, p. 604). More recently the concept has matured to refer to organisational commitment as a psychological state, an attitude, which refers to the loyalty of employees and their attachment to and involvement in an organisation (Sood & Puri, 2016). In the early 90’s
the psychologists Allen and Meyer developed the Three Component Model of organisational commitment, which has become one of the most widely used models in the OC literature. Their conceptualization establishes a tripartite framework for organisational commitment incorporating, affective, continuance and normative components. Affective commitment (AC) relates to the emotional attachment individuals have towards an organisation and incorporates their identification with and involvement in an organisation. Continuance commitment (CC) is referred to as the perceived costs and benefits associated with membership of the organisation while normative commitment (NC) represents an individual’s commitment to stay with an organisation based on their feelings of obligation to remain.

**Five Factor Model**

Personality is a complex construct. One of the most well-established and broadly used taxonomies is known as the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Even though the nature of personality is complex, traits have been found to reflect fairly stable individual differences that remain consistent over time (McCrae & Costa, 1987). The FFM taxonomies are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience. Extraversion refers to the extent to which an individual is sociable, lively and ambitious. Agreeableness is related to individual’s altruistic behaviour, helping others while encouraging and supporting harmonious relationships. Conscientiousness individuals are careful, meticulous and loyal. Neuroticism at the low level refers to emotional stability and resilience while a high level indicates negative affect and emotional instability. Lastly, openness to experience encompasses optimism, curiosity and imaginative characteristics. For the purpose of this study personality traits refer to the individual differences categorised as personal characteristics in Meyer and Allen’s (1997) three component model.
Literature Review

A large body of evidence exists that investigates the determinants of organisational commitment across a variety of domains. A sizeable proportion of these studies have primarily focused on situational factors that contribute to organisational commitment and have an effect on outcomes relevant to organisations (Choi, Oh, & Colbert, 2015). Some of the situational factors that have been found to contribute to organisational commitment include leadership (Smithikrai & Suwannadet, 2018), organisational climate (Berberoglu, 2018), organisational characteristics (Miedaner, Kuntz, Enke, Roth & Nitzsche, 2018) and perceived organisational support (Salim, Sadruddin & Zakus, 2012). In contrast, there has been a very limited amount of research on whether or not dispositional factors predict organisational commitment.

Interestingly Meyer & Allen’s (1997) three component model established personal characteristics as one of the central antecedent variables for organisational commitment. Even so, early meta-analytic data highlighted that there was a lack of evidence available in this domain (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et. al., 2002). As a result Meyer and his colleagues (2002) only included two individual difference variables in their meta-analysis, external locus of control and task self-efficacy, demonstrating a clear lack of available research at that particular point in time. Over the past decade interest in the effect that dispositional antecedents have on organisational commitment has been growing. This has been reflected by a rise in the number of scientific studies attempting to build upon previous research and theory by adopting a dimension wide and component wide approach (Sood & Puri, 2016; Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015; Khiavi, Dashti & Mokhtari, 2016; Ziapour, Khatony, Jafari & Kianipour 2015; Farrukh, Ying & Mansori, 2017; Erdheim, Wang & Zickar, 2006; Chopra, 2014; Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2012).
Researchers have recently extended the limited amount of meta-analytic data by specifically measuring the relationship between personality traits and organisational commitment across different cultures (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015). Their meta-analysis examined studies that utilized the FFM traits taxonomy and applied individualist and collectivist cultural variables as determining factors of organisational commitment. Cross cultural variation has been evidenced with findings illustrating that in collectivist cultures agreeableness is more strongly linked with affective and normative commitment than it is in individualistic cultures (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015). It is however, well documented that differences in organisational commitment are determined by a variety of cultural variables, which may contribute to findings (Chen & Francesco, 2000; Gelade, Dobson & Gilbert, 2006). Nevertheless, it is important to note that literature examining the relationship between FFM and three component model has not yet employed an Irish sample. Conducting research in an as yet unstudied population will contribute significantly to the advancement of personality and commitment literature.

Even though interest in the area of FFM and organisational commitment is mounting current research is fragmented and inconsistent. The predictive value of FFM traits and organisational commitment varies. Sood & Puri (2016) have shown that extraversion and agreeableness predict normative and affective commitment. This is consistent with evidence presented by Choi, Oh and Colbert (2015) however they asserted that agreeableness predicted AC and NC in collectivist cultures and extraversion strongly predicted AC and NC in individualistic cultures. Other researchers present openness and agreeableness as the two dimensions of personality that strongly influence organisational commitment (Khiavi, Dashti & Mokhtari, 2016). The results of these studies provide an element of agreement in their findings, such that the dimension of agreeableness is an important determinant of
organisational commitment. However, there is a lack of consistency across the other dimensions and components of commitment, which warrants further scientific enquiry.

**Affective commitment;**

Affective commitment (AC) refers to an individual’s emotional attachment towards an organisation. People who are high in affective commitment remain with an organisation because they want to (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 3). Recent meta-analytic data revealed positive relationships with all FFM traits and affective commitment (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015) a finding that has been replicated elsewhere (Ziapour, et. al., 2015). Other studies postulate that the relationship between AC and FFM traits vary. Extraversion the trait that is characterised by a tendency towards positive affectivity and sociability has generally been found to be positively associated with AC across the literature (Sood & Puri, 2016; Erdheim, Wang & Zickar, 2006).

Additionally, agreeableness has been reported as a determinant of AC (Sood & Puri, 2006, Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015). Individuals high in agreeableness are characterised as being cooperative, trusting and loyal for that reason their ‘needs for affiliation are likely to cause them to identify with their organisation’ (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015, p. 1545). Likewise, conscientiousness has been positively linked to AC in a number of cases (Farrukh, Ying & Mansori, 2016; Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015). Conscientiousness individuals tend to be hardworking, achievement orientated and dependable thus highly conscientious individuals are more likely to form affective attachments with their organisation. It should be noted that even though differences have been found across the independent personality factors and AC the nature and direction of the relationship between FFM traits and AC is dominantly a positive one.
**Normative commitment;**

Normative Commitment (NC) refers to the feelings of obligation to remain with an organisation. Individuals high in NC stay with an organisation because they ought to (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 3). It is envisaged that highly conscientious individuals would have higher levels of NC due to the nature of this trait. Highly conscientious individuals are hardworking, dependable, loyal and achievement orientated. Consequently, scholars have cited the existence of a conceptual overlap between conscientiousness and NC (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015, p.1545). Others have strongly posited that conscientiousness is a dispositional root of organisational commitment, which suggests a close bond between the two factors (Bergman, Benzer & Henning, 2009). Equally agreeable individuals will demonstrate high levels of NC as their tendency towards loyalty, affiliation and compliance augments their felt obligation to remain. Recent research supports the hypothesis that conscientious and agreeableness factors are positively correlated with NC (Sood & Puri, 2016).

Although researchers have postulated that no strong theoretical link exists between the remaining three traits (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015) the empirical evidence has confounded the issue. Previous studies support the notion that a positive correlation between FFM traits and NC exists (Choi, Oh and Colbert, 2015; Ziapour et. al., 2017). As extraverts tend to demonstrate positive affect when supported this may reflect in a higher sense of loyalty to remain with an organisation (Erdhiem, Wang & Zickar, 2006; Sood & Puri, 2016). The literature on openness to experience and neuroticism is also fragmented and inconsistent. For that reason further exploration is necessitated so that a more precise understanding of the association between FFM traits and NC can be advanced.
Continuance commitment;

Continuance Commitment (CC) relates to costs and benefits associated with leaving the organisation. People who are high in CC remain because they need to (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 3). Accordingly, individuals high in extraversion are driven and ambitious. Their external motivating factors are a driving force that indicates they are more likely to seek out new employment opportunities (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Extraversion is also related to sociability therefore, the ability to develop and maintain strong networks coupled with a desire to take risks and seek new opportunities suggests they will not afford any value to the costs associated with leaving an organisation. In line with the above a number of studies have shown a negative relationship between extraversion and CC (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015; Erdheim, Wang & Zickar, 2006; Farrukh, Ying & Mansori, 2017). Previous studies also reveal that openness to experience and neuroticism are negatively related to CC (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015). Neurotic individuals tend to develop and harbour negative feelings, which can result in adverse feelings towards the organisation combined with a tendency to avoid negative outcomes and neurotic individuals may be less likely to leave an organisation because of the value attributed to the cost of leaving.

Alternatively openness to experience relates to optimism, curiosity and imaginative characteristics. This curiosity can manifest in a tendency to seek and explore alternative employment options and focus on the benefits of moving to a new organisation as opposed to assessing the costs associated with leaving (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015). However, Khiavi, Dashti and Mokhtari (2016) have shown a positive association between neuroticism, extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness while other studies report no significant association between personality traits and CC (Ziapour, et. al., 2015). Hence it is legitimate to suggest that the current empirical evidence does not provide enough support to determine the
nature or direction of the correlation between CC and FFM traits and once again further investigation is warranted.

**Demographic factors;**

Equally demographic factors such as age and tenure have contributed to the organisational commitment literature. Higher levels of commitment prevail in older employees when compared with their younger counterparts (Matheiu & Zajac, 1990; Lok & Crawford, 2001). Furthermore, Meyer and Allen (1993) propose that only affective and normative commitment significantly increase with age. On the other hand Cohen (1993) emphasises that relations between these demographic variables are dependent on employment stages as the youngest group in their study demonstrated the strongest level of organisational commitment, which contradicts the dominant school of thought. Similarly, inconsistent findings are evidenced in the literature examining tenure. Beck & Wilson (2000) indicate that affective commitment decreased with an increase in tenure in a sample of 479 Australian police officers. Other findings suggest there is a positive correlation between tenure and organisational commitment (Luthans, McCaul, & Dodd, 1985; Allen & Meyer, 1993; Cohen, 1993). The contradictory nature of these findings are an important consideration for the current study as the implication of the findings will contribute to a greater understanding of the complex relationship that exists between age, tenure and organisational commitment.

There is an extensive amount of empirical literature that examines organisational commitment in the healthcare sector. Research in this domain has found that a wide variety of variables contribute to commitment. For example induction practices have been found to have a direct effect on nurse’s intent to commit to an organisation (Kamau, Medisauskaite, & Lopes, 2015). In contrast, Al-Hussami (2015) findings suggest that nurse’s job satisfaction and perceived organisational support are strongly related to organisational commitment, while Timalsina and colleagues (2018) discovered that job satisfaction, employment status and
education levels predicted organisational commitment. Unfortunately these studies have not examined the relationship between the two variables exclusively. Of the available research that has examined FFM and organisational commitment the education sector (Khiavi, Dashti & Mokhtari, 2016; Ziapour et. al., 2015) and banking sector (Sood & Puri, 2016) have been represented. Nevertheless, there is no evidence to suggest that a similar study has been conducted in a healthcare organisation. This is a considerable limitation of the available academic literature. As the HSE employs approximately 67,000 staff an opportunity exists for this research to provide significant value to scholars and healthcare employers as it is the first of its kind in its sector.

In summary, the primary purpose of this quantitative questionnaire study is to determine the relationship between personality traits (neuroticism, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness and extraversion) and organisational commitment (AC, NC and CC) among employees of a medium sized Irish healthcare organisation. Another aim of this study is to expand upon the current limited literature and investigate the relationship between personality traits and organisational commitment in an, as yet, unstudied population. As a review of the existing literature highlighted inconsistencies across the research results current research will contribute to building a more cohesive understanding of the relationships between dispositional traits and organisational commitment. Furthering the academic literature on the effects that age and tenure have on organisational commitment will also expand current understanding and may help develop differentiated strategies to foster employee commitment in the workplace.

Results of the present study will add to the limited amount of academic literature and as it will be the first of its kind examining the association between personality traits and organisational commitment, in a healthcare setting in Ireland, the findings will provide new
empirical insight into this population. Similarly, the findings may further enrich current 
human resource recruitment and retention strategies by providing a deeper understanding of the 
dispositional factors that predict higher levels of organisational commitment in an Irish 
healthcare setting. Incidentally the research may also produce important results for promoting 
the application of (FFM) questionnaires in the hiring process.
Research Question

Do FFM personality traits, neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness predict affective commitment, normative commitment and continuous commitment?

Hypotheses

H1  It is hypothesized that there will be a positive relationship between FFM traits and affective commitment.

H2  It is hypothesized that there will be a positive relationship between FFM traits and normative commitment.

H3  It is hypothesized that there will be a relationship between FFM traits and continuance commitment.

H4  It is hypothesised that there will be differences between organisational commitment scores and age.

H5  It is hypothesised that will be differences between organisational commitment scores and length of service.
Methodology

Participants

A population of 570 employees of a medium sized, multi-site, Irish healthcare organization were approached, using an email notification, to self-select onto the current study. Non-probability convenience sampling was employed by the researcher to recruit participants. Inclusion factors required participants to be 18 years of age or over, categorized as employees of the organization who consented to participate. The total number of participants who fully completed the survey was 116 (n=116). The sample consisted of 84 females and 32 males. The age range of participants varied with the highest number of participants falling into the 55 - 64 age range (n= 32, 27.6%). The age range with a minimum number of participants was the 18 - 24 age category (n = 3, 2.6%).

The largest cohort of participants had less than 5 years of service (n = 38, 32.8%) followed by participants with 15 or more years of service and less than 20 years of service (n = 22, 19%). The organization comprises of three professional functional areas as follows; Medical/Scientific, Nursing/Collections and Administration/Support. The highest number of respondents worked in Administration/support (n= 46, 39.7%), followed closely by respondents from the Medical/scientific function (n = 45, 38.8%) and lastly the smallest number of responses were received from the Nursing/collections function (n=25, 21.6%).

Design

In order to assess the relationship between personality traits and organizational commitment a quantitative correlational study was employed. In order to obtain data from the population an online, self-report, quantitative questionnaire was designed.
The particular area of interest for the researcher was to determine whether FFM personality traits emotional stability, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness predict organizational commitment in employees of an Irish healthcare organization. Therefore the research design measured the relationship between the following criterion variables, affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment and the predictor variables, Big Five Factor personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness).

It was hypothesized that there would be a positive relationship between the FFM personality traits and affective and normative commitment. It was also hypothesized that there would be a relationship between FFM personality traits and continuance commitment but that the nature of this relationship was not postulated.

**Materials**

The materials used in this study included an online self-report questionnaire that was created using the survey platform surveygizmo ([www.surveygizmo.eu](http://www.surveygizmo.eu)). Surveygizmo complied with the relevant legislative and data protection requirements. Four elements of demographic data were incorporated into the survey and included; age range, gender, department and length of service with the healthcare organisation. Coding of the two ordinal variables was achieved using the following formula; age range (18-24 = 1, 25-34 = 2, 35-44 = 3, 45-54 = 4, 55-64 = 5, 65+ = 6) and length of service (<5 years = 1, 5 to <10 years = 2, 10 to <15 years = 3, 15 to <20 years = 4, 20 to <25 years = 5, 25 to <30 = 6, 30 to <35 = 7, 35+ years = 8). Coding of the two nominal variables was undertaken using the following methodology; gender (male = 1, female = 2) and department (medical/scientific = 1, nursing/collections = 2 and administration/support = 3).
Organisational commitment was measured using the Three Component Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (TCOCQ) (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The TCOCQ measures three dimensions of organisational commitment including affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Affective commitment refers to the level of emotional attachment and involvement an individual has for an organization. Statements measuring affective commitment include ‘I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization’. Continuance commitment relates to the perceived associated costs of leaving the organization and includes statements like ‘Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now’. The third and final dimension is normative commitment, which refers to employees felt obligations to remain. An example of an item in this subscale is ‘One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organization is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain’.

There are a total of 24 items with 8 items in each dimension. Participants are asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each of the items according to how they feel about their organisation. Respondent levels are measured using a 7 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Negatively keyed items are reverse scored according to scoring instructions and an average total score is calculated for each dimension (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Higher scores indicate higher levels of organizational commitment across the dimensions.

Various studies have confirmed the reliability and validity of the TCOCQ (Sood & Puri, 2016; Ziapour et al, 2015). Meyer and Allen (1990) documented the coefficient alpha for each scale as follows affective commitment 0.87, continuance commitment 0.75 and normative
commitment 0.79 (p. 6). Accordingly this study found acceptable reliability (coefficient alpha) that ranged from 0.84 for affective commitment, 0.73 for normative commitment and poor level reliability 0.54 for continuance commitment.

**Big five inventory (BFI);**

The five factors of personality are measured using the Big Five Inventory (John, Naumann & Soto, 2008; John, Donahue & Kentle, 1991). The five personality traits include extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness. Extraversion refers to the extent to which an individual is sociable and ambitious and is measured by items such as ‘is talkative’ and ‘has an assertive personality’. Agreeableness refers to individual’s altruistic and harmonious behaviour. Statements including ‘is helpful and unselfish with others’ represent this trait. Conscientiousness individuals are meticulous and loyal this is represented in items such as ‘perseveres until the task is finished’. Low levels of neuroticism refer to emotional stability while high levels refer to negative affect. Items representing this trait include ‘can be moody’ and ‘worries a lot’. Lastly, openness to experience encompasses optimism and curiosity and is measured by items including ‘values artistic and aesthetic experiences’.

The questionnaire consists of 44 items. Extraversion and neuroticism contain 8 items, agreeableness and conscientiousness contain 9 items and openness contains 10 items. Respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each of the items. A 5 point Likert scale is employed to measure individual levels of agreement or disagreement and include disagree strongly (1), disagree a little (2), neither disagree or agree (3), agree a little (4) and agree strongly (5). Negatively keyed items are reverse scored according to scoring instructions and an average total score is calculated for each of the five
personality traits (John, Naumann & Soto, 2008; John, Donahue & Kentle, 1991). Higher scores represent the more dominant traits that exist within the participants.

Previous research has highlighted high reliability and validity reports for the BFI (Benet Martinez & John, 1998; John & Srivastava, 1999). John, Naumann and Soto (2008) reported reliability (coefficient alpha) for each personality trait scale as follows; extraversion, 0.86, agreeableness, 0.79, conscientiousness, 0.82, neuroticism, 0.87 and openness, 0.83 (p. 132). The present study analysed the reliability index for each of the BFI traits and reports the following acceptable coefficient alpha values; extraversion 0.82, agreeableness 0.72, conscientiousness 0.79, neuroticism, 0.82 and openness 0.79.

**Procedure**

An online survey was created utilizing the web survey platform surveygizmo (see Appendix A). Simple demographic questions were included and both the BFI and the three component organisational commitment questionnaires were combined into one online questionnaire. An email was circulated to all employees of the organization, via the organisations internal email service, inviting them to participate in the undergraduate research study (see Appendix B). A link to the online survey was captured in the invitation email. An information sheet formed the first page of the online questionnaire and provided information in relation to the rationale behind the study, estimated completion time, and what was expected of participants if they chose to participate (see Appendix C). Participants were also informed that their responses were anonymous and confidential and that they had the right withdraw at any point without penalty up until they had submitted their responses. Informed consent was a requirement for inclusion. In addition, researcher and supervisor contact information was provided in the event that participants sought more information or had any queries. The online questionnaire was open to the sample for a period of 3 weeks.
Ethics

The necessary ethical approval was sought from the DBS ethics committee prior to the commencement of the aforementioned study. The selected population was identified as a vulnerable group, category C, as the researcher was an employee of the organisation. Consequently a sample access request was made to the Chief Executive of the healthcare organization who subsequently granted access to the sample (see Appendix D). Similarly, as three employees in the organization were in a direct subordinate position to the researcher they were verbally informed that they were under no obligation to participate in the research. Considering the researcher was in a senior management position within the organization, ensuring that all potential participants were fully informed, could participate anonymously and voluntarily and could withdraw without consequence up until their data was submitted was essential. In an attempt to ensure the data was not identifiable the researcher omitted location from the demographic questions and captured age range instead of scale age data.
Results

Descriptive Statistics

A total number of 116 \( (n = 11) \) participants were included in the sample, 32 males \( (27.6\%) \) and 84 females \( (72.4\%) \). The majority of respondents were employed in the administration/support function \( (n = 46, 39.7\%) \) followed closely by those employed in the medical/scientific function \( (n = 45, 38.8\%) \) with the lowest proportion of respondents employed in nursing/collections \( (n = 25, 21.6\%) \). Age range frequency is represented in Figure 1 and illustrates a fairly even distribution across the age ranges with the minimum number of respondents represented in the 18-24 age category \( (n = 3, 2.6\%) \).

![Bar Chart Representing Age Range Frequencies](image)

Figure 1 *Bar Chart Representing Age Range Frequencies*

Length of service frequencies varied with the maximum number of participants employed for less than 5 years \( (n = 38, 32.8\%) \). This is illustrated in Figure 2.
Summary descriptive statistics mean and standard deviation, for BFI variables (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness) and TCOCQ variables (affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment) are presented in Table 1. Findings illustrate that the maximum and minimum level for personality traits was reported for conscientiousness ($M = 4.22$) and neuroticism ($M = 2.46$) respectively. A comparison of commitment means indicates participants self-reported moderately high levels of affective commitment ($M = 4.56$) and moderately low levels of normative commitment ($M = 3.49$).
Table 1 *Descriptive Statistics of Psychological Measures BFI and TCOCQ*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personality Traits</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
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<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
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<td>4.19</td>
<td>0.49</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
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<td>0.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Normative Commitment</td>
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</table>

**Inferential Statistics**

The main objective of this quantitative correlational questionnaire study was to determine the nature of the relationship between personality traits and organizational commitment and determine if differences existed between total organisational commitment scores and age and tenure. Subsequently Pearson’s correlation coefficient and was used to analyse the correlation between personality traits and organisational commitment where $p < 0.05$ was considered significant. One way between groups ANOVA was carried out to analyse the differences between organisational commitment scores and age and length of service. A synopsis of the relevant results pertaining to the research question and stated hypotheses follows.
Hypothesis one;

There will be a positive relationship between personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness) and affective commitment.

The mean score for personality factors was 3.57 (SD = 0.27) and 4.52 (SD= 1.26) for affective commitment. A 1-tailed Pearson correlation coefficient found that there was a moderate positive significant relationship between five factor personality traits and affective commitment (r (113) = 0.34, p <0.01) indicating 11.56% of the variance in affective commitment is explainable by personality traits. Table 2 represents these findings. There was a significant positive correlation between agreeableness and affective commitment (r (115) 0.30, p = 0.001). A moderate relationship was reported indicating that a rise in agreeableness relates to an increase in affective commitment. These results support the stated hypothesis (H1) therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2 Results for Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Personality Factors and Dimensions of Organisational Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Affective Commitment</th>
<th>Normative Commitment</th>
<th>Continuous Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.16*</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>0.20*</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total FFM</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p significant at .05 level, ** p significant at .01 level (1-tailed).
**Hypothesis two;**

There will be a positive relationship between personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness) and normative commitment.

Mean score for normative commitment was 3.49 (SD = 0.96) and this indicated the lowest (TCOCQ) dimension score. As shown above in Table 2 a 1-tailed Pearson correlation coefficient found no relationship between five factor personality traits and normative commitment (r (113) = 0.12, p = 0.11). As a result the null hypothesis is not rejected.

**Hypothesis three;**

There will be a relationship between personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness) and continuance commitment.

The mean score for continuance commitment was reported as 4.08 (SD = 1.03). A 2-tailed Pearson correlation coefficient produced a non-significant result between five factor personality traits and continuance commitment (r (113) = -0.06, p = 0.54). Therefore the hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted.

**Hypothesis four;**

There will be differences between age groups and organisational commitment scores.

A one-way between groups ANOVA analysis of variance demonstrated that organisational commitment scores differed significantly between the three groups depending on the age of participants (F (2,113) = 4.23, p = .017). An illustration of these findings is presented in Table 3 below.
**Table 3 Results of One-way Between Groups ANOVA Examining Differences Between Organisational Commitment Scores and Age Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Commitment</td>
<td>18 - 34</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35 - 54</td>
<td>11.80</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55+</td>
<td>13.10</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>.017*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p significant at .05 level

Furthermore, Tukey HSD post hoc analysis confirmed that the differences were significant in nature between the oldest age group (M = 13.10, SD = 2.77) and the youngest (M = 11.58, SD = 2.15) and middle age group (M = 11.80, SD = 2.11). Consequently the results provide evidence in support of hypothesis 4 and the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Hypothesis five:**

There will be differences between length of service and organisational commitment scores.

A one-way between groups ANOVA analysis of variance established that organisational commitment scores differed significantly across the three groups depending on length of service (F (2,113) = 30.25, p = .004). Table 4 below provides an overview of the results.
### Table 4 Results of One-way Between Groups ANOVA Examining Differences Between Years of Service and Organisational Commitment Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Years of Service</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;10</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.54</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to &lt;30</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.23</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.20</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>.004*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p significant at .05 level

Additionally, Tukey HSD post hoc analysis confirmed that the differences were significant in nature between the group with the highest amount of service and least amount of service (MD = 2.66, p = .003, CI (95%) 0.78 – 4.55) and highest amount of service and moderate level of service (MD = 1.97, p = .036, CI (95%) 0.10 – 3.83). These findings attest to hypothesis 5 so the null hypothesis is rejected.
Discussion

A significant amount of research has been offered in the published literature on organizational commitment that attends to situational antecedents in this domain. However a limited amount of empirical evidence exists which examines dispositional antecedents of organisational commitment. To extend previous research in this domain the current study assessed the relationship between personality traits and organizational commitment in an as yet unstudied population. Consequently, the primary aim of this quantitative questionnaire study was to determine the relationship between personality traits (FFM) and organizational commitment (AC, NC and CC) among employees of a medium sized Irish healthcare organization and ascertains if age and tenure relate to differences in organisational commitment levels.

A summary of the findings illustrate that overall organizational commitment levels were moderate. Results revealed that FFM traits were significantly related to affective commitment only and that significant differences were evidenced between both age and tenure, and commitment scores. Of the five hypotheses that were developed only three of them were supported. What follows is a discussion of the results pertaining to each of the hypotheses.

**Hypothesis one;**

Essentially, the primary purpose of hypothesis one was to determine if a positive relationship existed between FFM traits and affective commitment in employees of a medium sized Irish healthcare organization. Results established support for hypothesis one in line with previous published research findings (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015; Ziapour et. al., 2015, Khiavi, Dashti & Mokhtari, 2016). More specifically, agreeableness bore the strongest and most significant relationship with affective commitment of all of the personality factors, demonstrating consistency with recent meta-analytic findings (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015).
Agreeable individuals are trusting, loyal and are motivated by a need for affiliation, which contributes significantly to their psychological bond and identification with an organization. The strength of this finding contributes to advancing the generalizability of the results by demonstrating the importance of the relationship between FFM, and in particular agreeableness, and organizational commitment in a healthcare organisation in Ireland.

**Hypothesis two;**

The aim of investigating hypothesis two was to discover if a positive relationship existed between FFM traits and normative commitment. This hypothesis was not supported, as no significant correlation was detected, contradicting previous research findings published by scholars such as Ziapour and colleagues (2015). As mentioned earlier however, one of the criticisms of the current academic evidence is that there is a lack of consistency and generalizability across the published results, which makes comparative analysis difficult. Sood and Puri (2016) conducted a similar study with public sector bank workers in India and found that only one of the FFM traits, agreeableness, was significantly correlated with NC (p. 428). Alternatively conscientiousness has been shown to relate to NC (Khiavi, Dashti & Mokhtari, 2016) as it is considered to have common characteristics with NC (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015). Other studies have cited a positive and significant correlation between total FFM traits and NC (Ziapour, et. al., 2015). The lack of consistent findings contributes to the complex nature of normative commitment and as there is no study examining the relationship between these variables in Ireland it is suggested that cultural factors may play a moderating role in the personality organisation relationship as proposed by Choi, Oh & Colbert (2015).

**Hypothesis three;**

The third hypothesis intended to establish the nature and direction of the relationship between personality traits and continuance commitment. No significant correlation was
evidenced and therefore the hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted. The results of the present study have been replicated elsewhere (Ziapour, et. al., 2015) providing a small level of generalizability to the present results. Nevertheless evidence of the relationship between FFM traits and CC varies greatly. Negative relationships have been found between NC and neuroticism, openness (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015; Sood & Puri, 2016; Erdheim, Wang & Zickar, 2006) extraversion (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015) and conscientiousness (Sood & Puri, 2016; Erdheim, Wang & Zickar, 2006). Conversely, positive relationships have also been evidenced between CC and neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness (Khiavi, Dashti & Mokhtari, 2016). Once again cultural factors may contribute to these differences however with an abundance of conflicting results being published comparative analysis becomes difficult and raises questions about the reliability of the current research design and generalizability of the published results.

**Hypothesis four;**

The main aim of the fourth hypothesis was to establish if there were any differences between age groups and overall commitment scores. Results confirmed support for hypothesis four consistent with previous published research (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Findings demonstrated significantly higher commitment levels for the oldest age group compared with the two younger groups. Correlational data also supports the premise that age is positively associated with organisational commitment (Meyer, et. al., 2002). This could be attributed to the premise that costs associated with leaving an organisation voluntarily are perceived to be higher for older individuals who are in permanent, pensionable employment, than the perceived costs associated with leaving an organization at a younger age.
Hypothesis five;

The purpose of the final hypothesis was to determine if there were any differences between length of service and overall commitment scores. Results supported this hypothesis and supported previous empirical evidence (Cohen, 1993). Findings demonstrated significantly higher commitment levels for individuals in the group with more than 30 years of service when compared against the two groups with less service. This very distinct and unusual category illustrates a proportionally high amount of service in the healthcare organization and may not be representative of other organisations public or private. This may be a result of high organizational commitment scores being reported as significant predictors of tenure (Meyer & Allen, 1984) as ‘over time, the individual engages in various acts that bind her or him to the organization and lead to commitment.’ (Cohen, 1993, p.147). The strength of the current finding provides generalizability to the differences that exist between commitment scores and length of service in an Irish population.

Limitations

A number of limitations exist in the present study. Firstly, the method for data collection employed self-report online questionnaire. This methodology has been found to allow for careless responding and attrition, which contributes to measurement error (Ward, Meade, Allred, Pappalardo, Stoughton, 2017). Another limitation of the data collection method is known as socially desirable response bias. Socially desirable responses (SDR) are reported when individuals present themselves in a more favourable light and unfortunately the consequences of SDR have been revealed to confound research results (Van de Mortel, 2008).

Thirdly, although the data collected provided an adequate sample size for this study, it may not have represented the population of the healthcare organisation adequately. Approximately 30% of the population of 600 are regional frontline workers and they may not
have been represented in this sample due to their limited access to computer equipment. Similarly, the uniqueness of the distinct demographic data found in this sample may not be representative of a wider population.

This study was the first of this nature examining the relationship between personality traits and organisational commitment in an Irish population. Subsequently, only a small number of published studies existed for comparative analysis. Likewise as the data was collected at a single point in time, the complex nature of organisational commitment development and career stages were not considered when examining age and tenure as determining factors of organisational commitment (Cohen, 1993). Despite the recognised limitations this pioneering study has contributed to the limited amount of existing research on dispositional antecedents of organisational commitment.

**Future Research**

Findings in the current study exemplify the need for further investigations into the relationship between personality traits and the dimensions of organisational commitment. Even though the instruments used in the current study are empirically reliable and valid, to reduce the effect of socially desirable responding, social desirability scales can be introduced to minimize this effect (Van de Mortel, 2008). Likewise, replicating the study in the current organisation and providing paper questionnaires for regional frontline employees would contribute to ensuring the collected data is representative of the population.

More primary studies are required that adopt a multidimensional view of organisational commitment to establish the generalizability of the findings. It is recommended that a wider variety of organisations are sampled to achieve this. Future research should firstly build upon the current research by replicating the study in the Health Services Executive in Ireland to
determine if the nature of the relationship between personality traits and organizational commitment evidenced in this study can be reproduced in a larger healthcare sample. Furthermore future research should broaden the scope by replicating the current study in a sample of public and private organisations across a broader range of industries to determine if the results are generalizable across different types of organisations in Ireland.

Moreover, to expand the existing scientific understanding of the moderating role that culture plays in determining the personality commitment relationship further cross cultural research is necessitated, at a national and organisational level. This is a future direction that has also been proposed by other researchers (Choi, Oh & Colbert, 2015). This will ultimately support theoretical and conceptual development in the field. Lastly, further research is warranted to establish the relationship between career stages, age and tenure and their effect on the development of organizational commitment. Longitudinal research would contribute significantly to developing this area of enquiry.

**Practical Applications**

With the current international workforce challenges emphasized earlier, HR practitioners and employers are focusing on effective talent management strategies to attract and retain committed employees. The present study has provided understanding into the role that dispositional antecedents play in organizational commitment. It has been proposed that there is a positively significant relationship between FFM traits and affective commitment. Although organisational commitment levels cannot be determined pre-employment, understanding the role that they play in shaping organizational commitment could contribute to more effective hiring practices. Hence adopting personality assessments as part of a selection process may support positive organizational outcomes.
The influence attributed to agreeableness in the current study is notable. However, it is important for HR practitioners to promote a balanced approach to selection programs. Therefore it is suggested that FFM trait instruments should be used in conjunction with other selection strategies such as interviewing and on-boarding for maximum effect.

Lastly, practical implications of the results for retaining employees are also important. The differences associated with age and tenure are important considerations for HR practitioners. Although personality traits remain relatively stable over time (McCrae & Costa, 1987) organizational commitment levels develop and consequently vary (Cohen, 1993). Therefore adopting diverse HR practices to support employees and build their commitment levels is essential. Learning and development initiatives for example that intend to build employee commitment levels should be tailored to reflect this diversity. More effective career planning initiatives can also be designed that reflect individual differences and strengthen commitment levels to reduce negative organizational outcomes such as turnover intentions (Somers, 1995), counterproductive workplace behaviours (Brooks, 2012) and absenteeism levels (Schmidt & Diestel, 2012).

**Conclusion**

In conclusion the primary findings of this quantitative questionnaire study indicated that a positively significant relationship existed between FFM traits and affective commitment in a medium sized Irish healthcare organisation. Contrary to previous research no other significant relationships were found between these variables. Significant differences in commitment levels were evidenced in the eldest cohort and in the group with the longest amount of service as predicted. Most notably research examining the dispositional antecedents of organisational commitment is limited and provided challenges for comparative analysis. Nevertheless current findings advance the small empirical evidence base and contribute
significantly to broadening psychological understanding of the role that personality and demographic factors play in determining organisational commitment in an unstudied population. Progressing research in this domain may strengthen scholastic theory and concept development while implications for practitioners centre on developing effective talent management strategies for producing positive individual, organisational and societal outcomes. Knowledge that dispositional antecedents shape organisational commitment may provide healthcare employers with the requisite advantage to attract and retain a committed workforce in a highly competitive era.
References


Appendix

Appendix A - Undergraduate research study questionnaire

Consent Form

1) By consenting to participate you are acknowledging the following;

- The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing and/or verbally.
- I am participating voluntarily.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am completing the questionnaire.
- I understand that withdrawal is not possible after submitting the questionnaire.
- I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up as no identifiable data is being collected.
- I understand that information gathered will be used in the thesis and poster presentation and will be made available to the IBTS upon request.

Should you require any further information about the research, please contact Idelle Hawkins, idelle.hawkins@ibts.ie. Alternatively, my supervisor Ronda Barron can be contacted at ronda.barron@dbs.ie*

[ ] I consent to participation

Individual Information

2) Age*

( ) 18-24
( ) 25-34
( ) 35-44
( ) 45-54
( ) 55-64
( ) 65+

3) Gender*

( ) Male
( ) Female
( ) Other
4) Department*

( ) Medical/Scientific
( ) Nursing/Collections
( ) Administrative/Support

5) Length of Service*

( ) < 5 years
( ) 5 to < 10 years
( ) 10 to < 15 years
( ) 15 to < 20 years
( ) 20 to < 25 years
( ) 25 to < 30 years
( ) 30 to < 35 years
( ) +35 years

Individual Characteristics

6) Listed below 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 indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree Strongly</td>
<td>Disagree a little</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Agree a little</td>
<td>Agree 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 disorganized
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, or literature
Organisational Commitment

7) Listed below are comments about how people may feel about their organisations. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 Moderately disagree</th>
<th>3 Slightly disagree</th>
<th>4 Neither disagree or agree</th>
<th>5 Slightly agree</th>
<th>6 Moderately agree</th>
<th>7 Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I really feel as if this organisation’s problems are my own.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I think that I could easily become as attached to another organisation as I am to this one. (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I do not feel like ‘part of the family’ at my organisation. (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I do not feel ‘emotionally attached’ to this organisation. (R)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation. (R)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up. (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>It would be very hard for me to leave my organisation right now, even if I wanted to.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organisation now.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>It wouldn’t be too costly for me to leave my organisation now. (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Right now, staying with my organisation is a matter of necessity as much as much as desire.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation. (R)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organisation would be the scarcity of available alternatives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organisation is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice-another organisation may not match the overall benefits I have.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I think that people these days move from company to company too often.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organisation. (R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Jumping from organisation to organisation does not seem at all unethical to me.(R)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organisation is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organisation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organisation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organisation for most of their careers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
24. I do not think that wanting to be a ‘company man’ or ‘company woman’ is sensible anymore. (R)
Appendix B – Invitation to participate email

Afternoon Everyone,

I am conducting research, as part of my final year thesis in Psychology in the Dublin Business School. This undergraduate research is examining the relationship between personality traits and commitment in the IBTS.

***Participation is anonymous and confidential and therefore all answers are anonymous. Thus, responses cannot be attributed to any one participant.***

I would really appreciate if you would take the time (approximately 8 minutes) to complete the survey and contribute to the research in this field and will contribute to developments in the organisation related to recruitment and retention.

The questionnaire and a detailed information sheet can be found by clicking on the following link:


Cheers
Idelle

Idelle Hawkins
Learning & Development Manager
Appendix C – Information sheet

Title: Exploring the relationship between personality traits and organisational commitment in and Irish healthcare organisation

The undergraduate research questionnaire will take an estimated 8 minutes to complete.

I would like to invite you to take part in an undergraduate research study. Before you decide it’s important to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

Who and Why?
My name is Idelle Hawkins and, as some of you know, I am the Learning and Development Manager in the IBTS. As part of my final year undergraduate research project in Psychology with Dublin Business School, I am investigating the relationship between people’s personality traits and organisational commitment. The need to understand some of the factors that predict a person’s commitment can contribute to developing useful recruitment and retention practices and support a reduction in turnover. This study is designed to develop a greater understanding of the role of personality traits in predicting organisational commitment and the final thesis will be submitted for examination.

What will taking part involve?
This study will involve the completion of an online or paper questionnaire.

Do you have to take part?
Participation is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part. You can choose to withdraw at any point without penalty up until you have submitted your answers. Therefore, withdrawal from the study can only take place before you submit your questionnaire.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential?
Participation is anonymous and confidential and therefore all answers are anonymous. Thus, responses cannot be attributed to any one participant.

What will happen to the information that you give?
The data gathered during the research will be kept confidential for the duration of the study, available only to me. The data will be stored in my office securely. All data will be recorded in electronic format anonymously on a password protected computer. An anonymised copy of the research data will be made available to the Irish Blood Transfusion Service on request.

If you agree to take part in this study, please select the consent button on the next page.

Should you require any further information about my undergraduate research, please contact Idelle Hawkins, xxxxxxx My supervisor can be contacted at xxxxxxxx
Appendix D – Permission to access sample letter

23 October 2018

Re: Ms Idelle Hawkins.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am writing to confirm that I am giving my consent for Ms Idelle Hawkins to undertake research in the field of Organisational Psychology in the Irish Blood Transfusion Service and gain access to a sample of employees for the aforementioned research who will be appropriately informed of the purpose of the Research and will consent to participate.

Yours faithfully,

Andrew Kelly
Chief Executive