

STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADER'S PERSONALITY AND
EMPLOYEES WORK SATISFACTION

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of
Bachelor of Industrial Technology Management with Honors

Faculty of Technology
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA PAHANG

DECEMBER 2013

ABSTRACT

This research is aimed to investigate the relationship between leader's personality and employees work satisfaction. 103 employees from the electronic industry in Kelantan participated in the survey questionnaire. There are two variable in this study which are independent variables (Leader's personality) and dependent variable (employee work satisfaction). Reliability test is used to identify whether the variable is reliable or not. The results of Cronbach's Alpha for all variables shows that the involved variables are reliable ranging from 0.70 to 0.907. Single mean t -test is used to identify the level of employee work satisfaction which shows a high value of 3.22. Pearson correlation results indicate that the personality of leader (extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experiences and conscientiousness) has a positive relationship with the employee work satisfaction, while only Neuroticism personality has a negative relationship with employee work satisfaction. Finding of this study is beneficial to employer to understand how important their personality style to the work satisfaction of employees, as well as to prevent recurrences of dissatisfaction among employees in an organization.

Keywords: extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experiences, conscientiousness, neuroticism and job satisfaction of employees.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji hubungan antara personaliti ketua dan kepuasan kerja pekerja. 103 pekerja daripada industri elektronik di Kelantan telah mengambil bahagian di dalam kajian soal selidik ini. Terdapat dua pembolehubah dalam kajian ini iaitu pembolehubah bebas (personaliti ketua) dan pembolehubah bersandar (kepuasan kerja pekerja). *Reliability test* digunakan untuk mengenal pasti sama ada pembolehubah boleh digunakan atau tidak . Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa *Cronbach Alpha* untuk semua pembolehubah adalah antara 0.70-0.907. *Single min t-test* telah digunakan untuk mengenal pasti tahap kepuasan kerja pekerja yang menunjukkan nilai yang tinggi, 3.22. *Pearson Correlation test* menunjukkan bahawa personaliti ketua (*extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experiences and conscientiousness*) mempunyai hubungan yang positif dengan kepuasan kerja pekerja, manakala hanya personaliti *neuroticism* mempunyai hubungan yang negatif dengan kepuasan kerja pekerja . Dapatan kajian ini memberi manfaat kepada majikan untuk memahami betapa pentingnya personaliti mereka untuk kepuasan kerja pekerja-pekerja, dan juga untuk mengelakkan berulangnya rasa tidak puas hati di kalangan pekerja dalam sesebuah organisasi.

Kata kunci: *extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experiences, conscientiousness, neuroticism* dan kepuasan kerja pekerja.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A	Agreeableness
C	Conscientiousness
E	Extraversion
IPIP	The Personality Item Pool
N	Neuroticism
n.d	No date
O	Openness to Experience
RH	Research Hypotheses
RO	Research objective
RQ	Research question
Sig.	Significant Value
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Work satisfaction is the highest achievement in human life. Achieve satisfaction in a job is not an easy matter because many contributors are involved to lead to work satisfaction among worker. Hence, employee work satisfaction was being a very sensitive issue and always be the cause of dispute between the employer and employees. The atmosphere at work is one of the roles that influence work satisfying as well as of the organization and leader personality. Employees work satisfaction is important in an organization. It is essential to the success of any business. If employee dissatisfaction occurs in the organization, it will give negative effects to the organization. As we know, every organization starts with the employees, the people who are bringing the organization alive and who are responsible for the output. Without the employee, the organization is nothing.

Studies on leader personality and employee work satisfaction become growing in popularity among professional researchers to contribute the strategies to reduce conflicts between employers and employees. Rapidity of these studies indicates that the importance of work satisfaction, especially for countries that is experiencing growth in the industrial sector such as Malaysia.

This research attempts to study the relationship between the leader personality and employee work satisfaction in the electronics industry. To succeed, the electronics industry must concern about the issue that's arisen between employer and employee, and identify why the personality of employer make employees feel dissatisfied. It is

important because employees who are satisfied with the work will be highly motivated to achieve organizational objectives.

This chapter comprises the introduction of this research on a study to investigate relationship between leader's personality and employee work satisfaction in the electronics industry. It consists of background of study, problem statement, research objective, and research question, scope of study, research framework, research hypothesis and significance of the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Leaders issue is always being a very exciting topic for people nowadays. The leader is often linked to employee performance, behavior and reactions including work satisfaction, positive emotional affective commitment to the organization, reduced turnover and improve work performance (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). The role of leader in an organization is very important because it determines the direction of their organization, which is leader have to take care of people first, followed by profit or organization gains, before they can develop followers or employees (Maxwell, 1993). All these aspects depend to the leader on how to manage it effectively and efficiently, especially how to maintain their positive emotions towards the employees. This is because the leader with positive emotions personality tend to have a good relationship with their employees, and thus given a positive effect on employee work satisfaction.

Work satisfaction among employee may link to their relation to employee payment, communication and working environment. One dimension of employee satisfaction is satisfied with the leader (Jessica, 2004). If the employee is not satisfied with their work, they may withdraw from work, or stay but sabotage the work effort (Baird & Hamner, 1979). Employees are most important asset to the organization, since they are the people who are responsible for the output and bring the organization alive. Levels of employee work satisfaction can affect the quality of service, and also can affect the overall company profitability and success (Ksenia, 2006).

According to Zaccaro & Klimosi (2001), leaders' action and personality influenced how his/her followers reacted to him/her. As a leader, he/she should concern themselves with their followers, attitudes such as satisfaction and organizational commitment (Jessica, 2004). The Big Five Personality model is used to assess the personality dimensions of leaders, which are extroversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience (McCrae & Costa, 1997). In the organization, employees are the most often interact with their leaders than others.

Some people have strong personalities which is can influence them to act and do things. Other things, who have certain types of personality (leader), can determine the use of organization behaves. Most of previous researches done on the work satisfaction have results that there is a significant relationship between personality and work satisfaction. Employee work satisfaction absolutely necessary in the success of any business, thus it is very important for a leader to make sure keep employee satisfied with their career. Dissatisfaction of employee can come from many factors, such as stress, communications, the appreciated by leader and others. Employers with a personality that less talking or not friendly with others or employees is also a major cause of employee dissatisfaction.

According to Branham (2005), the lack of communication among employers against employees makes employees become isolated and the leader does not know how to relate to their employees on a personal or professional level. Bad communication among employers with employees cause employees feeling abandoned and feeling disconnected from the organization. This situation will affect the well-being of the company, where employees tend to performed at a low level, and they are not sure what their purpose in the workplace (Kristen, n.d). Because of that, this research needs to identify what types of leader personality could be related to employee work satisfaction and the relationship between that.

According to Avolio and Howell (1992), the relationship between personality leaders and employees, as well as the level of suitability of the leader personalities and employees, reduce employee dissatisfaction against their leader. Often, employers are only concerned about the company's revenue rather than employees that working for

them. These conditions cause employees consider their employers as not unethical. This assumption can cause work dissatisfaction by employees, as well as increase the company's turnover. Dissatisfaction may also appear, as well as the turnover rate also will rise, when the working conditions failed to have the flexibility or any source of entertainment for workers, business conditions also become bored and depressed (Kaye & Jordan-Evans, 1999).

Employees need to feel appreciated by employers, as workers and as human (Branham, 2005). Often, companies are more focused on production and revenue, from their employees, and also customers. Some of this employer rarely appreciates their employee's quality of performances, as well as encouraging employees to work hard and improve their work performance. In other words is to motivate the employees. Leaders must learn to communicate better with lower level employees. The supervisor should be modeled to promote friendly relations with employees, so that the working environment is much healthier (Kaye & Jordan-Evans, 1999).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The leader has a very important role in the organization, as well as employees. Both are important to fluctuations of an organization. In Malaysia, there are issues involving dissatisfaction among employees. This situation has led the workers to stop working from their current job. Previous studies found that employees who do not feel satisfied with the work can influence their attitudes and behavior toward their work, such as the desire to quit his job (Scott, 1993). Other than that, employee are not only stops from work, employees also tend to have bad work performance, inconsistent with their work, not interest in doing their work, often absent from work, and come late to work. All this was to show their protest to the organization and especially to leaders when they are dissatisfied with their work.

Satisfaction with the work helps employees to work more diligently, quality and always eager to pursue a job and do not intend to stop. Thus, it should be realized that the employees' role in the organization or industry is very important because employees are the key drivers of the organization. Effectiveness and succeed of every organizations

heavily influenced by leaders personality. An important principle in psychology is that every person is different. Each person has a unique perception, personality and life experience, the difference in attitude, confidence, and ambitions. Therefore, leaders should know their own personalities, their act, behavior and emotions in front of their employees. Leaders are people who are always dealing with employees, where every day they would meet, discuss and talk about work. If the employee is not satisfied with the leader, it will disturb the deal of employment between leader and employees. So, the problem in this study comes from leader personality which is causing the employee feel either satisfied or dissatisfied in their work. If the leader is always angry, bossy and so on, it will cause employee feel depressed and stress and will make them feel dissatisfaction with their work.

However, studies on the relationship between leaders' personality and employee work satisfaction in Malaysia, especially in the electronics industry in Malaysia are still rarely done or not done by any researcher. Most researchers only focused on work satisfaction in the public sector and private sector workers. Thus, this research is aimed to investigate how are the exact effects of different leader personality traits to the employee satisfaction which is not clearly identified especially in the electronics industry in Malaysia.

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

So the motivation of this research is to study about the leader personality characteristics and its influence on employee work satisfaction. It focuses not only on the thought and actions of leaders, and satisfactions of employee's toward their jobs, but also finding ways to improve the performance and motivation of both leaders and employees. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

RO1: To identify the traits of leader's personality;

RO2: To examine the levels of employee work satisfaction;

RO3: To investigate the relationship between leaders' personality and the employee's work satisfaction.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

Accordingly, the research attempts to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What are the personality characteristics of leaders?

RQ2: What is the level of employees' work satisfaction?

RQ3: How does the leaders' personality affect employee work satisfaction?

This study is trying to determine the relationship between leader personality and employee satisfaction in the electronic industry. By knowing the level of employee work satisfaction and major factors that influence the satisfaction in terms of leaders' personality, it may help to better form strategies to reduce the employee dissatisfaction.

1.6 SCOPE OF STUDY

This study was conducted among employees, in order to investigate the relationship between personality leader and employee work satisfaction, and the effect of different leader personality on employee work satisfaction. The major scope of this research is about the personality leader and employee satisfaction in the electronic industry. The Big Five Personality model was used, which includes *Extraversion*, *Agreeableness*, *Conscientiousness*, *Neuroticism* and *Openness to Experience*. To carry out this study, one electronic industry in Kelantan was chosen to make this study. The participant was randomly selected. In addition, employee satisfaction about their work and during works also being measured.

1.7 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

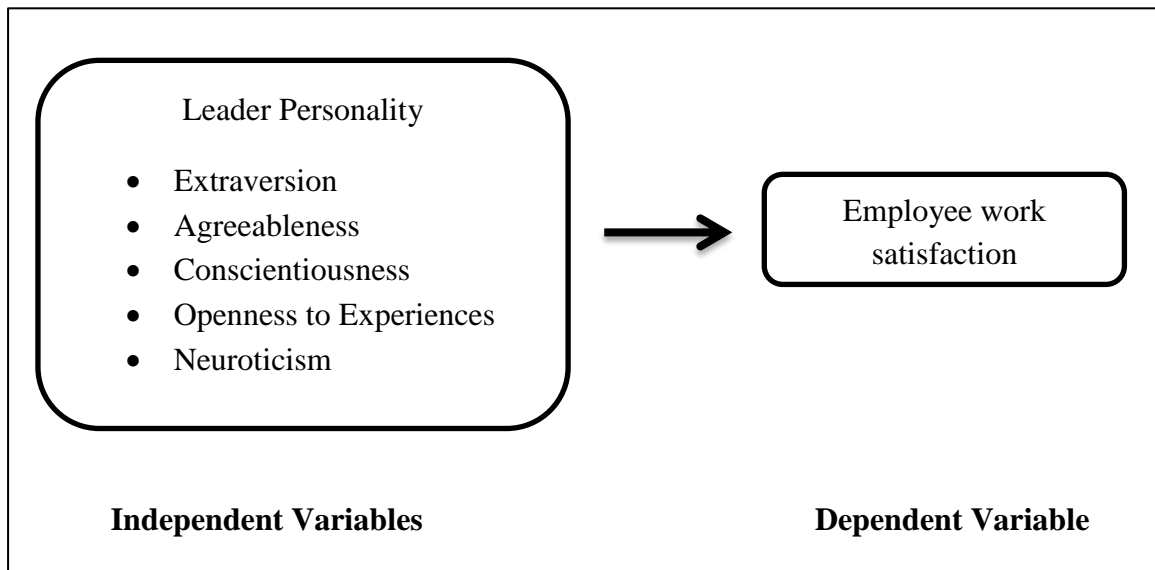


Figure1.1: The research framework

Figure 1.1 presents the research framework of this research. The leader personality (*Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to Experience*) is set as Independent variable and Employee satisfaction as Dependent Variable.

Employee satisfaction is terminology used to describe whether employees are happy and contented and fulfilling their desires and needs at work.

Leader personality is a combination of characteristics or personality traits in an individual that compels that person to inspire others to achieve goals that without the leader's motivations would not normally be accomplished (David, 2009).

Briefly, the Big Five Personality model is defined by Dr. John A. Johnson from Pennsylvania State University. Details see in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Definitions of the Big Five Personality

Item	Trait	Facets
(N)	Neuroticism	People high in Neuroticism refer to the tendency to experience negative feelings, such as anxiety, anger or depression and so on.
(E)	Extraversions	Extroversion defines individuals who enjoy being with people, like to talk and like to draw attention to them. They are very quickly in making friends.
(O)	Openness to Experiences	Openness to experience is about people who are creative and imaginative. They are more aware about their feelings, and tend to express their emotions openly to friends and others. They also are eager to try new activities and experiences different things.
(A)	Agreeableness	Individuals who are easy to getting along with others. They are easy to cooperate and considerate with others. Agreeableness individual also is tender-hearted, compassionate and easily moved to pity.
(C)	Conscientiousness	Individual who are like to live according to routines and schedules. They will keep lists and make plans, and they will take their time when making decisions. They strive hard to achieve excellence.

Source: Dr John A. Johnson

1.8 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Based on previous research, researchers have found that different leader's personality (*Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to Experiences*) can give effect on employee work satisfaction. Bolger and Zuckerman (1995) noted that personality is an important determinant of health outcomes and psychological. Personality characteristics would reduce the level of behavior, make certain behaviors more likely and others are likely. Different personalities can have a positive and a negative, either the performer or someone else.

Based on the research framework, the research hypothesis of this study is formulated as follows:

RH1: Conscientiousness is positively related to employee satisfaction.

A high scorer in C tends to have the intelligence (common sense), self-control necessary for achieving success. They are also being well organized, where they like to live according routines and schedules. They keep lists and make plans. Low scores do not feel effective, and may sense that they are not in control of their lives, disorganized and scattered, irresponsible, seen by others as lazy.

RH2: Neuroticism is negatively related to employee satisfaction.

A high scorer in N tends to easily engage anxiety, anger, depression and self-consciousness. Low scorer generally calm, fearless, do not angry often and do not feel nervous in social situations.

RH3: Extraversion is positively related to employee satisfaction.

A high scorer in E tends to be friendly people and openly demonstrate positive feelings toward others, make friend quickly, easy to form close. They also like to speak out, tend to be a leader in a group. People score low a slower and more leisurely, relaxed pace. They are also easy to feel overwhelmed by and actively avoid large crowds, not to talk much and let others control the activities of groups.

RH4: Agreeableness is positively related to employee satisfaction.

A high scorer tends to trust people where they assume that most people are fair, honest and have good intentions, while low scorer in A, see the other as selfish, devious and potentially dangerous. High scorer also thinks that they don't need to do manipulation when dealing with others, while low scorer think deception are needed in a social relationship, and also they tend to not help those in need. It is different with people who are high scorer who are like to assist those who are in need.

RH5: Openness to Experiences is positively related to employee satisfaction.

A high scorer in this personality is love beauty, both in art in nature, while low scores are not sensitivity and interest in the arts. A high scorer in O also tends to aware about their feelings and openly expresses their emotions, different with the low scorers who are less aware about their feelings and tend to not express their emotions openly. If high scores are like to try new activities and experiences different things, while low scorer feel uncomfortable with change and they prefer familiar routines.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The electronic industry is one sector that contributes to the economy of a country, including Malaysia. Recognizes the importance of the electronic sector to the economic growth of Malaysia, the government has encouraged labor intensive and export- oriented industries. Malaysia has become a major global manufacturing hub for the electrical & electronics industry, since the first semiconductor plant have establish in Penang in 1972. A large number of multinational companies (MNCs) such as the United States, Europe, Japan, Taiwan, Korea and others have chosen Malaysia as their base (Brandt & Wei, 2012).

Over the years, Malaysia's electronics industry has developed significant capabilities and skills for the manufacture of a wide range of semiconductor devices, high-end consumer electronic and information and communication technology (ICT) products. The industry has moved up the value chain into the manufacture of high-end products and has moved away from labour-intensive to more capital-intensive operations.

To ensure the electronic sector in Malaysia succeeds, the organization must be aware of the level of job satisfaction among their employees to ensure their employees are able to provide quality work and continuing. Leader role is also important in this effort, because past researcher had found that the personality of the leader had linked to the employee satisfaction. Therefore, a study should be conducted to find out what level

of employee satisfaction in electronic industry and leader personality in the workplace that affect employee satisfaction.

So, finding of this study will be beneficial to employer to understand how important their personality style to the work satisfaction of employees, as well as to prevent recurrences of dissatisfaction among employees in an organization.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the previous relevant literatures were reviewed. It presented the several definitions of leader personality in order to get a broad indication of the different aspects of this definition. The Big Five Personality Model also describes in detail in this chapter, which includes the five dimensions of personality. Other than that, the definitions of employee satisfaction and also the relationship between leader personality and employee work satisfaction were also discussed in this chapter.

2.2 DEFINITION OF LEADER PERSONALITY

The leader was defined by Stogdill's (1974) as an interaction between members or a group. The leader is agents of change, persons whose acts affect them (employee). Leader occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group. Other than that, Bennis (1989) described a leader as a person who is must clearly express the vision, devise the vision, make use of it to hold the staff together, and cultivate an atmosphere of trust, but should also deeply know himself/herself.

Pollard (1997), saying that a leader has a lot of different roles, such as a role model, a servant, a risk bearer, a giver or a listener and so on. Other than that, the leader is an individual who are exert or influence the other member in group or organizations to help the group achieve its goals. (Jennifer and Gareth (2005), cite in Bertocci, (2009).

Byrne (1974), define personality as a combination of all enduring dimension of individual differences in which he can be measured. Personality in other words is about thought, feelings and actions. This is the set of all characteristics and tendencies that determine the differences and similarities in the behavior of a person (Maddi 1996). Personality refers to an individual's characteristic pattern of thought, emotion, and behavior, and the psychological mechanisms behind those patterns (Funder, 2001).

Ones et al., (2005) also agrees that personality can be defined as a wide range of the individual's traits, behavior, attitudes and description as to how a person may feel, act or behave. Personality is a characteristic that distinguishes us from others. Peoples have emotional, social and physical characteristics that differ from each other. All this is the core of which is that trait that generally remain stable between ages of 25 to 30 and make us the unique person we are (Sheperd, 2007).

Thus, leader personality can be described as combination of personality traits in the individual (leader) which distinguishes him with someone else. These characteristics determine how the leader inspires employees to achieve goals, and without leader motivation, the goal can't be achieved (Bertocci, 2009).

Personalities have several characteristics which are assessing the uniqueness of an individual by using The Big Five Personality Model. The Big Five Personality Model is regarded as the most reliable for differentiating personality traits. It includes Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to Experience. More explanations about the model are provided in the following sections.

2.2.1 Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is made up of six facets labeled self-efficacy, orderliness, dutifulness, achievement striving, self-discipline, and cautiousness. Gellatly (1996), found that individual conscientiousness is very ambitious and disciplined. In addition, employees with such personalities tend to believe that they can be successful, choose a difficult goal, but they can achieve and set high performance standards for themselves.

Conscientiousness individuals would be more dependable, organized and efficient at work (Ehrhart, 2006). Individuals that score highly usually regard themselves as very competent in life (competence) and very organized (order). Additionally, individual who score high in this dimension also tend to feel obligated to their job (dutifulness) and are highly motivated to succeed in anything they do (achievement striving) while for those who are scoring low are typically careless and irresponsible.

As well as with Furnham (2008), also saying the same thing that conscientious individuals usually a very careful and tend to work overtime and are often missed and ignore the opportunity comes. They follow the rules, highly organized, self-controlled, and hard-working planners. Additionally, these individuals also tend to be healthier, live longer and do well at work.

Almost all researchers gave the same definition of conscientiousness, including Yusof, et al., (2010). According to them, common trait of conscientiousness included of good impulse control, very hard working personality, thoughtful and self-discipline. In the workplace, they are usually very punctual and good at time management, hardworking, very productive and reliable. Additionally, they are very hard to say no and sometimes very busy until they are called as 'workaholic'.

2.2.2 Neuroticism

Additionally, the term 'neuroticism' has also been used interchangeably with the term "negative affectivity" (McCrae, 1990; Ormel&Wohlfarth, 1991; Schwebel & Suls, 1999). Ormel and Wohlfarth (1991) asserted that neuroticism accompanies a susceptibility to psychological distress and indicates a proclivity to hold unrealistic ideas, inefficient ways of coping with stress, and an inability to control urges.

Neuroticism also refers to a predisposition toward experiencing anxiety, tension, self-pity, hostility, irrational thinking, impulsivity, self-consciousness, depression and low self-esteem (Penley& Tomaka, 2002). Zobel et al., (2004) defined neuroticism as a temperamental sensitivity to negative stimuli. According to them, people who are high

in negative affectivity appear to be especially sensitive to the minor failures and frustration of daily life. Neuroticism would be the one with low emotionally stable, less poise and high on instability (Ehrhart, 2006).

According to Furnham (2008), neuroticism is associated with a negative personality. They tend to have a negative personality such as mental illness, physical health impairment, communication failures and isolated from social activities. Additionally, Yusof, et al., (2010) also found that neuroticism people will experience emotional instability, anxiety, depression, anxiety and grief and tend to having emotional problems and persist for unusually long periods of time, which means they are often in a bad mood.

However, if an individual low score in this personality, they are less upset and are less emotionally reactive. They tend to be calmer and have more stable emotions (John, n.d). Yusof, et al. (2010), says that, low score individuals show a more emotional stability, maturity and a strong self-image. This is definitely different with people who are scoring high in neuroticism. They are easy to be a positive, confident and able to manage stress well. Additionally, they are very good to motivate and lead a team, especially in a challenging role, or face a crisis and emergency. They also will be difficult to upset and less likely to suffer from emotional instability. They are also rare to encounter a bad mood. They are calmer, emotionally stable, and free from persistent negative passions (John, n.d).

2.2.3 Extraversion

Extraversion tends to be manifested in outgoing, talkative, energetic personality. A person with a high level of extraversion is competitive and ambitious and such a person may find his/her need for power and dominance fulfilled in a competitive situation. Accordingly, individuals high in Extraversion may seek excitement and social stimulation, causing them to be drawn to jobs, fields, and organizations that are characterized by other highly energized and talkative people (Schneider, 1987). Additionally, Judge et al., (2002) saying that extraverts people who are enjoying social situation, they would likely to enjoy work interactions as well.