

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter will discuss the results and concludes this dissertation. It will also offer suggestion for future research and the implication of these findings for the managers.

#### 5.1 Discussion

Results of this study provide evidence that there is relationship between a driver's personality and the job performance. The results provides evidence that conscientiousness and emotional stability have moderate correlation ( $r = +/- 0.30, p < 0.01$ ) while extraversion and agreeableness indicates weak correlation ( $r >> +/- 0.20, p < 0.01$ ). Consistent with prior literature, this study finds that intelligence dimension does not have a relationship with job performance dimension of a truck driver. This could be due to work nature of drivers' that do not require them to exercise intelligence in relations to work. The conscientiousness dimension is found to have the most correlations with the 16 job performance dimension. In Tichon (2005) study used a sample size of 39 drivers while this study has a sample size of 147 drivers, in which the larger the sample size the more likely that correlation may not be found in comparison to a smaller sample size in a study. Even though the sample in this study is 3.7 times the size of Tichon's study, correlations can still be found in many personality scales, especially in the dimension of conscientiousness.

107 (72.7%) of the 147 respondents have never been appraised at all by the employers. Based on this we can deduce that the supervisor who evaluate the job performance of their respective driver are not familiar on how to conduct a performance

appraisal. This findings implies that the companies may not have the necessary mechanism and data base to do a proper performance review of their driver. The supervisor may not be familiar with the prerequisite of performance measurement in evaluating the driver's job performance. The data gathering from nine different companies poses a challenge of the drivers' job performance measurement. Different company, due to the work styles may evaluate performance of their drivers differently. The combination of the difference brought from the measurement of job performance from different companies may lead to the low correlation or in most instances no correlation between the independent variables of personality traits and the dependent variables of job performance. Higher correlations may be found, provided this study is conducted in a single organization.

It is also observed that respondents in most cases respond the negative scale more strongly than the positive scale. As an example the conscientiousness dimension has eight traits, which forms this dimension. The traits are, 1) careless, 2) disorganized, 3) inefficient, 4) sloppy, 5) efficient, 6) organized, 7) systematic and 8) practical. The first four traits display the negative characteristics and the second four traits display the positive characteristics. As observed from the correlations analysis, the low or the non-presence of these negative traits correlates more frequently with job performance criteria. Based on this we can deduce that the respondents, rather than portraying oneself highly on the positive traits will most often show their characteristics by the non-presence of the negative traits. The following section will discuss in detail the conclusion for each hypothesis.

For hypothesis 1 and 8, it is found that agreeableness is positively correlated with relationship with co-workers but no relationship found for job performance criterion of ability to learn. The positive traits for this dimension are sympathetic, warm, kind and cooperative. Driver's having high scores in this traits are more

sympathetic, warm, kind and cooperative and these characteristics promotes the relationship with other co- workers. Beside this, other job performance criteria such as relationship with managers, dependability and reliability, and functioning under tress are also correlated with this dimension from the 16 job performance criteria. From these correlations only relationship with co-workers are moderately correlated, while the other three (relationship with manager, dependability and reliability, and functioning under stress) are weakly correlated.

This findings means that drivers having high agreeableness traits will have better relationship with co-workers and superiors and are better in handling work stress. This is in line with the findings by Mount, Barrick and Stewart (1998), which suggest that agreeableness is relevant to job performance needing fairly high level of interpersonal interaction and collaboration. From this we can deduce that this dimension is highly required for the sole purpose of maintaining good relationship only and not for other critical job performance criteria such as safety, ability to learn, productivity or overall rating. Hence it can be deduced that agreeableness dimension is required but not a prerequisite dimension for a driver to have, to become good performers in their job.

Based from hypothesis 2, it is found that the trait of sloppiness correlates to almost all 16 job performance criteria, except for job performance criteria of openness to learning. Apart from the correlations observation, this finding shows also that most often individuals from this sample of study are more at ease of defining their respective traits in terms of not having the said negative trait rather than having the opposite positive traits. They feel more strongly of not having a trait rather than having one. The inverse of sloppiness can be logically assumed to be more careful and attentive to details which are required in a driver to perform their tasks. Based upon observation from the correlations analysis, this trait which belongs to the conscientiousness dimension can be deduced to be one of the most important traits for a driver of not

having or having very low scores in the sloppiness trait. Most notably in the correlations analysis, it is found that the correlation between this trait and relationship with co-workers job performance criteria has the highest recorded correlation ( $r = -0.40$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The sloppiness trait is closely associated (inversely) with attention to detail trait which was used in Tichon's (2005) study in which the result showed no correlations between this trait and job performance criterion of safety. There is no logical explanation on why the relationship between these two variables has the highest correlation as far as this study is concerned. Future research could focus on this trait on identifying the underlying meaning and relation of this trait and driver's job performance criteria.

As the results indicate, for hypothesis 3, emotional stability is positively correlated with ability to work under stress. The traits of emotional stability are unenvious and relaxed on one end of the trait continuum while moody, jealous, temperamental, envious, touchy and fretful on the other end of the trait continuum. The low scores of negative traits are positively correlated to work under stress. This dimension is one of the most important dimensions affecting driver's job performance, second only to the conscientiousness dimension. 15 out of 16 job performance criteria are correlated with this dimension, although in some criteria's those correlations are weak. The low score in the negative traits of emotional stability in general is good for an individual; more so if the person works in a highly environmental dictated work condition such as the work nature of a driver. This finding is in line with the finding by Beaty, Cleveland and Murphy (2001) which posits that emotional stability is positively correlated with contextual performance. Being less temperamental, touchy and fretful will allow the driver to face the daily work stress, such as long traffic and waiting time in customer's loading or offloading premises in a more relaxed manner. The environmental factor which dictates the work nature are mostly not controllable factors

and the people who work in this environment has to some extent learn how to work within this factors.

For hypothesis 4, results show that there is a very weak positive relationship between extraversion and overall performance rating. Based on the correlation analysis, it can be seen that extraversion does not have much effect on the 16 job performance criteria, except for the criteria of attendance and overall rating, which has a weak correlations. The literature findings in this study and the finding from Tichon (2005) study does not show any relation between this personality dimension and drivers' job performance. This findings implies that traits of extraversion which are talkative, extroverted, bold and energetic on the positive trait continuum while shy, quiet, bashful and withdrawn on negative trait continuum are not a prerequisite for a drivers job requirement from the job aspect criteria of this study.

Based on hypothesis 5, it can be concluded that the negative traits of conscientiousness which are disorganized, sloppy, inefficient and careless are negatively correlated to overall performance rating. That is to say, the driver's having low scores in these traits will be able to perform better than compared to driver scoring high on these traits. The less a driver is disorganized, sloppy, inefficient or careless, the better the driver will be able to carry out the required tasks. Various studies have also shown which can be found in this study's literature review, conscientiousness as the most prominent dimension affecting job performance in various setting. Nevertheless, it may have its drawbacks as well, as high conscientiousness may also lead to drivers' not being able to perform the same or far better than those drivers' having moderate conscientiousness characteristics. This study is not able to differentiate on the strength of the relationship between the personality variables and the job performance variables. A high conscientious employee may be extremely organized, very careful and highly

systematic in which this traits may demotivate employees in an environment which is highly dynamic and disorganized and the individual has no, or lack, the control over it.

As for hypothesis 6, though not in support, this study finds evidence for a relationship between the personality scale of boldness, which is narrow trait of the extraversion dimension, with the job performance criterion of work quality. This finding indicate that drivers' who have high characteristic of boldness will able to produce superior work quality compared to those drivers' who lack the boldness characteristic. Tyler and Newcombe (2006) indicate that, those who are timid and hesitant in social settings may actually produce work of a better quality based on assumption that individuals' would spend less time chatting and focus more on the work in hand. This is an inverse relationship between boldness and work quality. In contrast to the finding of Tyler and Newcombe (2006), this study finds that the relationship between boldness and work quality has direct relationship and not an inverse relationship. This could be due to the work nature of a driver which is most often outdoors, on the public roads unlike most jobs' which are indoors. Since they work away from office and work in an environment which they have not much control, which may bring about to constant new challenges and unfamiliar people that they have to meet. Hence being bold may help them to face this situation in more composed manner and by doing so, is able to deliver superior performance than driver's whom are low on the boldness characteristic.

For hypothesis 7, results provide no evidence for a relationship between personality scale of cooperation, which is narrow trait of the agreeableness dimension, and job performance dimension of teamwork rating. Further to this finding, this trait does not have any correlation with the rest of 15 job performance criteria measured in this study. In contrast to this finding, Tichon (2005) found evidence of a relationship between this trait and job performance criterion of teamwork. The logical explanation

for this observation in this study could be due to the fact that, a driver works on single person basis. Most often, there is no partner driver involved, which could be due to the driver shortage problem faced by the haulage companies. In comparison to other work nature of other common occupation which are closed door within a factory or office compound, the drivers' occupation are less dependent on other working co-workers for them to complete their required delivery activities. Based on this argument, drivers' may not require high cooperation from other co-workers for them to complete their tasks, hence the cooperation traits may not be a prerequisite trait for a driver based on the haulage work environment in Malaysia.

As for hypothesis 8, results provide no support for a relationship between personality dimension of agreeableness and job performance criterion of ability to learn. This means to say that being agreeable does not lead to a driver in their ability to learn new things. Being agreeable may lead to acceptance of people's idea, but this does not constitute to them (the drivers') of adapting to those ideas or learning and applying them to oneself. Motowildo, Brownlee and Schimt (2008) posit that individual who are highly agreeable have more knowledge in handling social situation in which kind and considerate response is required. This may lead to better relationship with co-workers, but does not necessarily lead to actual improvement in work performance itself. Based on this argument, we can theorize that driver's (and individual's) who are highly agreeable, may be liked by their co-workers, which may improve relationship and working condition but this alone may not bring about or lead to improved task performance or the improvement to the actual work itself.

Result for hypothesis 9 provides no evidence that there is a significant correlation between the personality scale of relaxed and job performance criterion of productivity. This trait does not show correlation with any of the job performance criterion except for the job performance criterion of dependability and reliability, and

the correlation is weak ( $r = -0.22$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The literature findings has only shown that high emotional stability is significantly correlated with psychological well-being for military personnel's but it does not provide evidence that the relaxed trait, which is a trait to emotional stability having any effect on drivers' job performance.

As expected, the results of the step wise regression shows that once the conscientiousness negative dimension is included in the regression, no other dimension significantly affects the job performance criterion of overall rating. The second closest dimension affecting job performance dimension is emotional stability, but the correlation for emotional stability and job performance is weaker in comparison to the correlation of conscientiousness and job performance. This result strongly indicates that, for a driver to perform well in their given task, conscientiousness is a prerequisite and the other three dimensions which are extraversion, agreeableness and intelligence is not important as far as the job performance of a driver is concerned. This could be due to the characteristics of the traits belonging to the conscientiousness dimension which are organized, efficient, systematic, practical, disorganized, sloppy, inefficient and careless is more closely related work environment compared to other traits belonging to the other four dimensions.

From another perspective, respondents understanding of the personality traits may have also have affected the correlations findings. The respondents, in answering the personality scale for dimension of extraversion, emotional stability and intelligence may have not been able to distinguish of what these traits really mean as far as from the meaning in Bahasa Malaysia is concerned. This could be the cause for the low or no correlations as far as this dimension and job performance is concerned must be also noted. Personality dimensions and their respective traits were used together in this investigation of the relation between personality and job performance. This study finds that in some aspect of job performance criteria, there is high correlation between



personality traits and job performance criteria. In some aspects there is high correlation if we use the personality dimension and not personality traits, such in the case of using conscientiousness dimension in comparison to traits such as efficient, organized, systematic or practical. From this aspect this study concludes that the use of both personality dimension and personality traits will be better in explaining the relationship between the personality of an individual and the job performance criteria.

This study provides further support to Tichon (2005) that there is relationship between personality of a driver and his job performance. This study also finds conscientiousness dimension as the main dimension affecting job performance. 11 out of 16 job performance criteria are correlated with conscientiousness. This finding is also in support of Tyler and Newcombe (2006) who observe that conscientiousness has strong correlations with average of all performance scores of an employee. Based on this study findings it can be concluded that there is a relationship between driver personality and job performance. The characteristics of conscientiousness dimension are highly required for a driver in the haulage industry in specific and trucking industry in general.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This study's objectives were to investigate the effect of truck driver's personality traits on their job performance and also to investigate which of the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality dimensions have the most effect on driver's job performance. Based on these objectives two research questions were derived. The first question; do drivers' personality traits influence their job performance? And the second; which of the FFM of personality dimensions have the most effect on truck drivers' job performance?

The objectives of this study are achieved. This study finds evidence that personality traits influences job performance and conscientiousness dimension have the

most effect on the truck drivers' job performance. Results provide support for 5 hypothesis out of 9 hypothesis. Table 5.1 shows the findings for the hypothesis.

Table 5.1  
Hypothesis Findings

Hypothesis	Findings
H1 Agreeableness is positively correlated with the truck drivers' relationships with co-worker of delivery driver's	Supported
H2 Sloppiness is negatively correlated to safety aspect of truck drivers' job performance.	Supported
H3 Emotional stability is positively correlated with the drivers' ability to work under stress.	Supported
H4 Extraversion is positively correlated with truck drivers' overall performance rating.	Supported
H5 Conscientiousness is negatively related to truck drivers' overall performance rating.	Supported
H6 Boldness is negatively correlated to truck drivers' work quality.	Not Supported
H7 Cooperation is positively correlated to drivers' teamwork rating.	Not Supported
H8 Agreeableness is positively related to drivers' ability to learn	Not Supported
H9 Relaxed is positively correlated to drivers' productivity	Not Supported

### 5.2.1 Suggestion for Future Research

Another area of research which may be of interest to researchers and practitioners is the personality traits of the drivers and truck dispatcher and how these personality traits affect the relationship between truck driver and truck dispatcher. Truck dispatchers are office personnel who do the delivery planning and schedule for the drivers'. They are most often the contact personnel for the drivers' to the base operations office. Keller and Ozment (1999) find that the behavior of the dispatcher affects the drivers' job

performance. The way the dispatcher manages the driver will affect the drivers' performance and hence, their retention in the organization.

This study find that conscientiousness have the most correlation with drivers job performance criteria. Future studies could also focus on the relationship between conscientiousness dimension and its traits and job performance alone, which may bring about better understanding on how this dimension affects job performance.

### **5.2.2 Implications to Managers**

According to de Croon, Sluiter, Blonk, Broersen and Frins-Dresen (2004), truck driving is an occupational field with high turnover. In Malaysia, the situation is also similar where the haulage industry is plagued with high driver turnover and driver shortage (Hanif, 2011). The consequences of high driver turnover have many implications, namely low service level and high truck maintenance cost. The constant change of the service provider, the driver, will cause the service level to the customer to drop, which may lead to disgruntled customer and this may hurt the company's sales. On the other hand, the frequent change of truck drivers on a particular truck may lead to higher maintenance cost, which is mainly due to the different styles of handling of the truck by the drivers. To address this issue, managers should look into ways to improve the selection and recruitment method. The results of this study can be used for driver selection purpose, depending on the type of job in hand and the job requirement. These results can be used with the current selection tools that are used by the managers, which may help the managers, make a more informed decision in the hiring process and choose the right candidate whom may stay longer with the company.

As for the drivers who are currently employed with their respective companies, a better understanding of the driver's characteristics will be beneficial for both the

drivers and managers. The understanding of their personality traits and the job requirement that these drivers have to fulfill in the course of their work may lead to a lesser stressful life for the drivers and the managers.

This study indicates that a mismatch between personality trait and job performance requirement may lead to low job performance. This realization to the managers and driver that the low performance of the driver may be partly due to the personality traits may guide the company in providing appropriate training and guidance to their drivers to improve job performance.