

Relationship between Personality, Trait Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Commitment in Thai Scholarship Students

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Abstract

This study investigated a link between personality traits and organizational commitment in Thai scholarship students. Five factor model of personality, specifically Extraversion, and trait EI were used as predictors, and Allen & Meyer (1990)'s concept of organizational commitment was a criterion. 207 Thai scholarship students were participated. Results showed that Extraversion had a negative relationship with Continuance commitment. It had no significantly related to Affective and Normative commitment whereas Agreeableness was found significantly related to these two commitments. Conscientiousness was significantly related to Affective commitment while Intellect had a negative association with Normative commitment. Trait EI was hypothesised as an incremental explanatory factor. It was found positively significant relationship with Affective commitment, but had no association with other two components of commitment. Form this current research; it seems that more research with individual difference framework has to be done to find a consensus personality predictor of organizational commitment. Implications and limitations had been discussed.

บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาเรื่อง ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างบุคลิกภาพ และ ความผูกพันต่อองค์กรของนักเรียนทุนรัฐบาลไทยในครั้งนี้ มีตัวแปรที่ใช้ในการศึกษาดังนี้ คือ ตัวแปรบุคลิกภาพตามทฤษฎีบุคลิกภาพห้าองค์ประกอบ ตัวแปรลักษณะความฉลาดทางอารมณ์ เป็นตัวแปรต้น และ ความผูกพันต่อองค์กร เป็นตัวแปรตาม และกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในการวิจัยคือ นักเรียนทุนรัฐบาลไทยที่ศึกษาอยู่ในสหราชอาณาจักร จำนวน 207 คน ผลการศึกษาพบว่า บุคลิกภาพด้าน Extraversion มีความสัมพันธ์ในเชิงลบกับความผูกพันต่อองค์กรแบบ Continuance Commitment ในขณะที่ไม่มีความสัมพันธ์กับความผูกพันต่อองค์กรแบบ Affective Commitment และ Normative Commitment อย่างไรก็ตาม พบว่าบุคลิกภาพด้าน Agreeableness มีความสัมพันธ์ทางบวกกับ ความผูกพันต่อองค์กรแบบ Affective Commitment และ Normative Commitment นอกจากนี้ ยังพบว่า บุคลิกภาพด้าน Conscientiousness มีความสัมพันธ์กับความผูกพันต่อองค์กรแบบ Affective Commitment ในขณะที่ บุคลิกภาพด้าน Intellect มีความสัมพันธ์ในเชิงลบกับความผูกพันต่อองค์กรแบบ Normative Commitment สำหรับตัวแปรลักษณะความฉลาดทางอารมณ์ พบว่า มีความสัมพันธ์ทางบวกกับความผูกพันต่อองค์กรแบบ Affective Commitment แต่ไม่มีความสัมพันธ์กับความผูกพันต่อองค์กรแบบ Affective Commitment และ Normative Commitment ผลจากการศึกษาครั้งนี้แสดงให้เห็นว่า ในเรื่องของความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างบุคลิกภาพกับความผูกพันต่อองค์กรยังไม่ชัดเจนที่แน่ชัดว่า บุคลิกภาพด้านใดที่มีความสัมพันธ์กับความผูกพันต่อองค์กรทั้ง 3 แบบอย่างแน่นอน จึงจำเป็นที่ต้องมีการศึกษาเพิ่มเติมต่อไปในอนาคต

1) Office of The Civil Service Commition

นักทรัพยากรบุคคลปฏิบัติการ สำนักงานคณะกรรมการข้าราชการพลเรือน

Introduction

Organizational commitment is one of the most popular psychological constructs which has been researched for more than twenty years (Erdheim, Wang, & Zickar, 2006). Although researchers have different concept and measurement to measure it, there is one common thought that it is related to employees' turnover (Allen & Meyer 1990). In addition, the stronger organizational commitment the employee has, the less likely that he or she will leave the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Erdheim et al.,2006). Therefore, organizational psychologists are interested in studying organizational commitment because it can help companies to retain their competitive advantage by keeping their potential staff (Petrides & Furnham, 2006).

There are many approaches to study organizational commitment, and one of them is an individual difference approach. Since organizational commitment is one kind of job attitudes, Eagley and Chaiken (1993) cited in Erdheilm et al.(2006) defined attitude as a psychological behaviour which is showed by evaluation of a certain situation. Staw and Ross (1985) cited in Erdheilm et al (2006) also mentioned that personality might predispose individual to experience raised or lowered levels of his or her job satisfaction. Erdheim et al (2006) pointed out that although many researches have been studied relationships between personality and organizational commitment, most of them were exercised the positive affectivity (PA) - negative affectivity (NA) taxonomy of affective temperament. Therefore, they argued that the five-factor model of personality may provide a more understanding of commitment because it may include more traits than PA-NA typology (Erdheim et al.,2006). Moreover, recently trait emotional self-efficacy (trait EI) has been intensely studied. Furthermore, there is some evidence that it

is distinct from major personality traits, and it has an explanatory power, which makes it an interesting trait to investigate more (Austin, Parker, Petrides & Saklofske, 2008, p.580-581). This study is going to explore a linkage between personality traits, which focus on Extraversion and trait EI, with organizational commitment in Thai scholarship students.

The five factor model of personality

Before the five-factor model of personality emerged, trait psychology had suffered from a thirty years' war of competing trait models by some major psychologists like Guildford, Cattell, and Eysenck (McCrae & Costa, 2008, p. 273), and there is only be twenty-five years that it has become a major approach of studying trait psychology or individual difference (McCrae & Costa, 2008, p. 273). Besides, it has been widely use by researchers in various field of psychology such as cross cultural psychology, clinical psychology, and industrial and organizational psychology (McCrae & Costa, 2008, p. 273). The model is consists of five fairly independent dimensions (Erdheim et al.,2006), which are Extraversion, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to experience.

The first factor is Extraversion which has been recognized by psychologist for many years. It is also the most easily detected facet and the most popular one (McCrae & Costa, 2008, p. 274). Barrick and Mount (1991) said that it can be measured by looking at these behaviours, for example, talkative, active, assertive, and being sociable. In addition, Soldz and Vaillant (1999) cited in McCrae & Costa (2008, p. 276) stated that it is related to social success and popularity, and also linked to self-promotion and higher lifetime income. Moreover, extraverts tend to live happier than introvert people (McCrae & Costa, 2008, p. 276).

Neuroticism is the second factor, which is more

familiar to clinical psychologist and psychiatrists than other factors because it is one of the core causes of individuals' mental disorder (McCrae & Costa, 2008, p. 274). According to Barrick and Mount (1991), the behavioural tendencies in this factor are feeling uncertain, worried, emotional, irritated, unhappy, and gloomy. Furthermore, Neurotic people tend to feel unhappy despite their life circumstance, so that they are more likely to have problems with their mental health such as personality disorders than others (McCrae & Costa, 2008, p. 276).

The third factor in the five-factor model is Agreeableness. Barrick and Mount (1991) said that it includes typical behaviours like well mannered, adaptable, caring, collaborative, kind, understanding, and patient. Moreover, there are some advantages of being high of Agreeableness, which found by Buss and Barnes in 1986 and Donnellan et al in 2004 cited in Erdheim et al (2006). They found that agreeable people tend to have better marriage life and also are more desired as partners (Erdheim et al., 2006).

Conscientiousness is the fourth factor. It represents behavioural tendencies to achieve in individuals' life. Being hard-working, punctual, systematic and responsible are typical characteristics of this factor, therefore it does not surprise that it is the most reliable predictor of job performance as Barrick and Mount found in 1991 (Erdheim et al.,2006; McCrae & Costa, 2008, p.276). In addition, Weiss and Costa (2005) cited by McCrae and Costa (2008, p.276) mentioned that Conscientiousness is also related to many good health habits such as exercise, safe-driving and healthy diet as a result people who high conscientiousness are feasible to live longer and have good health.

Openness to experience, which is also called 'intellect' or 'openness vs. closedness', is the last factor in the five factor model (McCrae & Costa,2008, p. 274). Being imaginative, curious, open-minded, and

explorative can be categorized to this factor (Erdheim et al.,2006). Moreover, McCrae (1996) found that it is a good "predictor of creative achievement, whereas closedness predicts political conservatism and religious fundamentalism" (McCrae & Costa, 2008, p. 276). According to McCrae & John (1992) cited in Erdheim et al (2006), openness people tend to have more "need of variety, aesthetic sensitivity, and unconventional values than others.

Trait Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is a recent concept, which has been brought to public interest by Goleman in 1995 (Austin et al.,2008, p.576). In general, emotional intelligence consists of abilities to perceive, understand, and manage emotion (both interpersonal and intrapersonal) (Austin et al.,2008, p.576). However, there are some disagreements between researchers about what to define it and how to measure it like many psychological constructs (Austin et al.,2008, p.576).Until recently, distinct by the way of measurement, there are two kind of emotional intelligence. One is ability EI or cognitive-emotional ability, which measured by a test like intelligence test, and another is trait EI, which assessed by self-report questionnaire (Petrides et al.,2007). According to some empirical evidence, these two constructs are different in their concepts because they are low correlated to each other. While ability EI is one subset of mental intelligence or cognitive ability, trait EI is one of lower personality traits.

Trait emotional intelligence or trait emotional self-efficacy was proposed by Petrides and Furnham in 2001 (Austin et al.,2008, p.578, Petrides et al.,2007). Using the content analysis method, they found fifteen facets inside trait EI variable as follow; "adaptability, assertiveness, emotion perception (self and others), emotion expression, emotion management (others), emotion regulation, impulsiveness (low), relationships,

self-esteem, self-motivation, social awareness, stress management, trait empathy, trait happiness, and trait optimism" (Petrides et al.,2007).

In short, trait emotional intelligence is one of personality traits which concerns of behavioural tendencies how human dealing their emotion both interpersonal and intrapersonal. Moreover, because it can be assessed by self-report questionnaire, which is the same nature as its construct (both are subjective judgement) it has one operational advantage (Petrides et al., 2007).

Organizational commitment

In general, organizational commitment is a psychological contract that employees have with their organizations. Has been defined and assessed in various ways by industrial and organizational psychologists, it can be said that there are three different reasons of employee's commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). First, it is because employees have emotional attachment to their organizations (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The second reason is because employees feel that they will lose their profit from the effort that they invest into the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Lastly, it is because employees feel responsible to their organizations (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

From three reasons that mentioned above, Allen and Meyer (1990) proposed that there are three components of organizational commitment, which call Affective commitment, Continuance commitment and Normative commitment respectively (Allen & Meyer, 1990). According to these three concepts, Allen and Meyer (1990) stated that employees who have strong affective commitment stay with their organizations because they want to, "[and] those with strong continuance commitment because they need to". Finally, employees who have strong normative commitment remain loyalty to their organization

"because they feel they ought to do so" (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

The relationship between five factor personality, trait EI and organizational commitment

Erdheim et al (2006) proposed that five-factor model of personality is one approach to study "the dispositional sources of organizational commitment". In fact, they mentioned that Extraversion is the most constant predictor of all three components of organizational commitment. Having positive emotionality is one core behavioural of Extraversion personality dimension and positive emotion and affective commitment are positively related. Therefore extraversion was favourably related to affective commitment (Erdheim et al.,2006). Moreover, it has been found that extraversion was negatively related to continuance commitment (Erdheim et al.,2006). Finally, according to a research done by Watson (2000) cited by Erdheim et al (2006), extraverts might have high normative commitment because they feel that they have a psychological contract with their organizations.

For a link between trait EI and organizational commitment, Petrides and Furnham (2006) did an empirical study with trait EI and four job-related variables; perceived job control, job stress, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Although trait EI did not have a direct association with organizational commitment it mediated the relationship between perceived job control and organizational commitment (Petrides & Furnham, 2006).

Form previous researches and literatures mentioned above, this study is going to investigate these six hypotheses as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Extraversion will positively relate to affective commitment.

Hypothesis 2: Extraversion will negatively relate to continuance commitment.

Table 1 Means, standard deviations, intercorrelations and coefficient alpha of variables.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Extraversion	2.98	.58	(.77)								
2.Agreeableness	3.67	.43	.30**	(.70)							
3.Conscientiousness	3.56	.47	.17*	.22**	(.69)						
4.Emotional Stability	3.31	.63	.28**	.17*	.27**	(.81)					
5.Intellect	3.36	.47	.30**	.36**	.21**	.24**	(.73)				
6.Trait EI	5.05	.65	.48**	.40**	.37**	.58**	.30**	(.89)			
7.Affective commitment	4.74	.93	.21**	.22**	.27**	.21**	.04	.33**	(.78)		
8.Continuanace commitment	4.40	.86	-.15*	-.03	.06	.01	-.09	-.05	.13	(.62)	
9.Normative commitment	4.28	.83	.07	.18*	.14*	.06	-.05	.18**	.48**	.23**	(.69)

Note: N=207, ** p < .01 (two-tailed), * p < .05 (two-tailed)

Hypothesis 3: Extraversion will positively relate to normative commitment.

Hypothesis 4: After controlling demographic variables and five-factor personality variables, trait EI will incrementally relate to Affective commitment.

Hypothesis 5: After controlling demographic variables and five-factor personality variables, trait EI will incrementally relate to Continuance commitment.

Hypothesis 6: After controlling demographic variables and five-factor personality variables, trait EI will incrementally relate to Normative commitment.

Method

Participants

According to office of educational affairs' database, there were around 900 Thai scholarship students studying in the United Kingdom. 207 completed questionnaires were received (response rate = 23%). Respondents were 74 Male, and 133 Female (35.7% and 64.3% respectively). Age was divided into 3 groups; less than 25, 25-30, and 30 up. Age range 30 years old up was accounted for 53.6%, which is the biggest group. 97 students had been studied for less than 3 years (46%), other 91 students

had been studied here for 3-6 years, and only 9.2% had been studied for more than 6 years.

Procedure

The author got a permission and cooperation from the office of educational affairs, Royal Thai Embassy London to collect data from Thai scholarship students under their care. An e-mail asking for research participation, including a link to questionnaire online was distributed to all Thai students' e-mail address by the educational office. Students were asked to follow the link and complete the questionnaire by voluntary. In addition, they were also informed in the e-mail that their responses will be treating as confidentially and anonymously. Data were collected online using SurveyMonkey website during July to August, 2009.

Measurements

Demographic data

At the beginning of the questionnaire, participants were asked to provide their demographic data: gender, age, and study time (how long they have been study in the U.K.).

The five-factor personality

The big five factor markers which developed from

Goldberg's research in 1992 had been used in this study (Goldberg, 1992). The author obtained it from international personality item pool website. There are 50 items which is measured on Likert-type, ranging from very inaccurate (1) to very accurate (5), and have five similar dimensions of big five personality traits; Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability (Neuroticism), and Intellect (Openness to experience). Their internal reliabilities in this current study were as follows: Extraversion (.77), Agreeableness (.70), Conscientiousness (.69), Emotional Stability (.81), and Intellect (.73).

Trait EI

Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF), which developed by Petrides and Furnham (2006), had been used in this study. These 30 item short form was designed to measure a global trait EI (Petrides & Furnham, 2006). Questionnaire format was in 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree). The internal consistent (Cronbach's alpha) of measurement in this study was .89, which was very satisfactory.

Organizational commitment

Affective commitment was measured by Allen & Meyer (1990) Affective commitment scale. Responses were made on a seven-point Likert-type ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The coefficient alpha of this measure in the current study was .78, which was acceptable.

Continuance commitment was measured by Allen & Meyer (1990) Continuance commitment scale. Responses were made on a seven-point Likert-type ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The coefficient alpha of this measure in the current study was .62.

Normative commitment was measured by Allen & Meyer (1990) Normative commitment scale. Responses were made on a seven-point Likert-type ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree

(7). The coefficient alpha of this measure in the current study was .69.

Results

Before conducting regression analysis, data were checked for parametric assumptions. This study used SPSS version 16 for analysing data. Assumption of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were checked and met. Means, standard deviations, intercorrelations and internal reliability of variables were showed in table 1.

From table 1, intercorrelation among variables gave primary support to this study's hypotheses. It supported hypothesis 1 and 2 that Extraversion had significantly positive correlation with Affective commitment ($r = .21, p < .01$), but was negatively correlated to Continuance commitment ($r = -.15, p < .05$). However, there was no significant correlation between Extraversion and Normative commitment. In this case, it meant that there was no relationship between each other. Size of effect was lightly medium. In support to hypothesis 4 and 6, trait EI had significant correlation with Affective commitment ($r = .33, p < .01$) and Normative commitment ($r = .18, p < .01$) whereas a correlation between trait EI and Continuance commitment was non-significant.

Regression analysis

In order to test that Extraversion had significant relationship with three components of organizational commitment, six series of hierarchical regression analysis had been performed. Erdheim et al (2006) suggested that in order to test a unique contribution from one variable, three steps of hierarchical regression should be performed. First, in regression analysis, entering control variables was the first step. Next, adding other unhyposethised personality variables into a regression equation. Then entered a hypothesised variable was the last step. This study

Table 2 Regression coefficients of organizational commitment (Big Five as predictors)

Model		Affective Commitment			Continuance commitment			Normative commitment		
		B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
1	(Constant)	5.04	.34	-	4.98	.32	-	4.02	.31	-
	Gender	-.30	.13	-.15*	-.10	.13	-.06	-.08	.12	-.05
	Age	.26	.08	.21**	-.001	.08	.00	.20	.08	.18**
	Studytime	-.26	.10	-.18**	-.25	.09	-.19**	-.05	.09	-.04
2	(Constant)	2.04	.71	-	4.96	.73	-	2.78	.69	-
	Gender	-.30	.13	-.15*	-.12	.13	-.07	-.13	.12	-.07
	Age	.23	.08	.19**	-.02	.08	-.01	.20	.07	.17*
	Studytime	-.30	.09	-.20***	-.24	.10	-.18*	-.06	.09	-.05
	Agreeableness	.50	.15	.23***	.01	.15	.004	.42	.14	.22**
	Conscientiousness	.39	.13	.19**	.16	.14	.09	.19	.13	.11
	Emotional Stability	.18	.10	.12	.01	.10	.01	.02	.10	.01
	Intellect	-.20	.14	-.10	-.17	.14	-.09	-.28	.13	-.16*
3	(Constant)	1.92	.71	-	5.09	.73	-	2.76	.69	-
	Gender	-.29	.13	-.15*	-.13	.13	-.07	-.13	.12	-.07
	Age	.22	.08	.18**	-.01	.08	-.01	.19	.07	.17*
	Studytime	-.30	.09	-.21***	-.23	.09	-.17*	-.06	.09	-.05
	Agreeableness	.44	.15	.21**	.07	.15	.03	.41	.14	.21**
	Conscientiousness	.38	.13	.19**	.17	.14	.09	.19	.13	.10
	Emotional Stability	.15	.10	.10	.05	.10	.04	.01	.10	.01
	Intellect	-.24	.14	-.12	-.13	.14	-.07	-.28	.14	-.16*
	Extraversion	.21	.11	.13	-.23	.11	-.15*	.03	.11	.02

Note: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

R^2 Affective commitment = .07 for model 1 ($p < .001$), $\Delta R^2 = .13$ for model 2 ($p < .001$),

$\Delta R^2 = .01$ for model 3 (ns)

was adopted Erdheim et al (2006) suggestion to test its hypotheses.

Testing relationship between Extraversion and Affective commitment, in the first step, all demographic variables; gender, age, and studytime were significant ($\beta_{\text{gender}} = -.15$, $p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{age}} = .21$, $p < .05$, and $\beta_{\text{studytime}} = -.184$, $p < .05$). After that, four unhypothesised personality variables were entered, only Agreeableness and Conscientiousness were significant ($\beta_{\text{Agreeableness}} = .23$, $p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{Conscientiousness}} = .19$, $p < .05$). Finally, Extraversion was added, but it was no significantly

related to Affective commitment. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was rejected.

To test Extraversion - Continuance commitment relationship, in the first model, only studytime was significant ($\beta_{\text{studytime}} = -.19$, $p < .01$). Next, four unhypothesised personality variables were entered, and none of them were significant. When adding Extraversion in the last step, it showed that there was a small negative relationship between Extraversion and Continuance commitment. Therefore, hypothesis 2 was accepted.

Testing relationship between Extraversion and

Table 3: Regression coefficients of organizational commitment (Big Five & Trait EI as predictors)

Model		Affective Commitment			Continuance commitment			Normative commitment		
		B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
1	(Constant)	5.04	.34	-	4.97	.32	-	4.02	.31	-
	Gender	-.30	.13	-.15*	-.10	.12	-.06	-.08	.12	-.05
	Age	.26	.08	.21**	-.001	.08	.00	.20	.08	.18**
	Studytime	-.26	.10	-.18**	-.25	.09	-.19**	-.05	.09	-.04
2	(Constant)	1.92	.71	-	5.09	.73	-	2.76	.70	-
	Gender	-.29	.13	-.15*	-.13	.13	-.07	-.13	.12	-.07
	Age	.23	.08	.18**	-.01	.01	-.006	.20	.08	.17*
	Studytime	-.30	.09	-.21***	-.23	.09	-.17*	-.06	.09	-.05
	Agreeableness	.44	.15	.21**	.07	.15	.03	.41	.15	.21**
	Conscientiousness	.38	.13	.19**	.17	.14	.09	.19	.13	.10
	Emotional Stability	.15	.10	.10	.05	.10	.04	.01	.10	.01
	Intellect	-.24	.14	-.12	-.13	.14	-.07	-.28	.14	-.16*
	Extraversion	.21	.11	.13	-.23	.11	-.15*	.03	.11	.02
3	(Constant)	1.83	.70	-	5.09	.74	-	2.70	.69	-
	Gender	-.34	.13	-.18**	-.13	.13	-.07	-.16	.12	-.09
	Age	.22	.08	.18**	-.01	.08	-.01	.19	.08	.17*
	Studytime	-.33	.10	-.23***	-.23	.10	-.17*	-.08	.09	-.06
	Agreeableness	.34	.15	.16*	.06	.16	.03	.35	.15	.18*
	Conscientiousness	.30	.13	.15*	.17	.14	.09	.14	.13	.08
	Emotional Stability	-.01	.12	.00	.05	.12	.04	-.09	.11	-.07
	Intellect	-.25	.14	-.13	-.13	.14	-.07	-.29	.14	-.16*
	Extraversion	.10	.11	.06	-.23	.12	-.15	-.04	.11	-.03
	Trait EI	.34	.13	.24**	.01	.14	.01	.22	.13	.18

Note: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$, *** = $p < .001$

R^2 Affective commitment = .09 for model 1 ($p < .001$), $\Delta R^2 = .14$ for model 2 ($p < .001$), $\Delta R^2 = .03$ for model 3 ($p < .01$)

R^2 Continuance commitment = .04 for model 1 (ns), $\Delta R^2 = .03$ for model 2 (ns), $\Delta R^2 = .00$ for model 3 (ns)

R^2 Normative commitment = .03 for model 1 (ns), $\Delta R^2 = .06$ for model 2 ($p < .05$), $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for model 3 (ns)

Normative commitment, controlled variables were entered in the first step. Only age was significant ($\beta_{age} = .18$, $p < .01$). After that, four unhypothesised personality variables were entered, only Agreeableness and Intellect were significant ($\beta_{Agreeableness} = .22$, $p < .01$, $\beta_{Intellect} = -.16$, $p < .05$). Agreeableness had a positive relationship with Normative commitment whereas Intellect had a

negative one. Finally, Extraversion was added, but it was no significantly related to Normative commitment. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was rejected.

In testing trait EI - Affective commitment relationship, demographic variables were entered in the first step. Gender, age, and studytime were all significant ($\beta_{gender} = -.15$, $p < .05$, $\beta_{age} = .21$, $p < .01$, and $\beta_{studytime} = -.184$, $p < .01$). After that, five factor

variables were entered, only Agreeableness and Conscientiousness were significant ($\beta_{\text{Agreeableness}} = .20, p < .01, \beta_{\text{Conscientiousness}} = .19, p < .01$). Then, trait EI was added. It showed that trait EI was significantly related to Affective commitment ($\beta_{\text{trait EI}} = .24, p < .01$). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was accepted.

Testing relationship between trait EI and Continuance commitment, in the first model, only studytime was significant ($\beta_{\text{studytime}} = -.19, p < .01$). Next, five personality variables were entered, only Extraversion was negatively significant ($\beta_{\text{Extraversion}} = -.15, p < .05$). After that adding trait EI in the last step, it showed that there was no significant relationship between trait EI and Continuance commitment. Therefore, hypothesis 5 was rejected.

To test trait EI - Normative commitment relationship, controlled variables were entered in the first step. Only age was significant ($\beta_{\text{age}} = .17, p < .01$). After that, five unhypothesised personality variables were entered, only Agreeableness and Intellect were significant ($\beta_{\text{Agreeableness}} = .22, p < .01, \beta_{\text{Intellect}} = -.16, p < .05$). Agreeableness had a small positive relationship with Normative commitment whereas Intellect had a negative one. Finally, trait EI was added, but it was no significantly related to Normative commitment. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was rejected.

Discussion

Current results in this study suggested that Extraversion was not certainly a good predictor of all three components of organizational commitment. Considering Affective commitment, the result showed that extraversion had no significant relationship after controlled other four personality variable. It was inconsistent with previous finding by Erdheim et al (2006). It was surprising that the relationship was not significant because positive emotion is a basic behavioural tendency of Extraversion (Erdheim et

al.,2006). Instead of Extraversion, the result showed that Agreeableness and Conscientiousness were positively related to Affective commitment, which was unhypothesised finding. Conscientiousness had been found that it was significantly correlated to Affective commitment by Erdheim et al (2006), but they did not found this significant relationship in their study. However, trait EI which is a trait of emotional self-efficacy was found that it had significantly positive relationship with Affective commitment. Although Extraversion and trait EI are mainly comprised of emotional behaviour, only trait EI was significantly related to Affective commitment in this research. In the mean time, unhypothesised demographic variables were significantly related to a criterion. Gender and the amount of studied time had small negative relationship with Affective commitment whereas age was positively related to the criterion.

Talking about Continuance commitment, Extraversion was found that it had a negative relationship with Continuance commitment. The result supported to Erdheim et al (2006) research finding. It might happen because extraverts are more sociable and network. Therefore, they have more chance to find job alternatives, and it weakens their commitment to organizations. For trait EI-continuance commitment relationship, the result showed that there was no significant association to each other. In addition, trait EI was not significant correlated to Continuance commitment. When considering controlled variables, only the period of time that students study in the UK was negatively related to Continuance commitment. It meant that the more the studied time students used the less they will commit to organizations.

Consider to Normative commitment, the result showed that both Extraversion and trait EI were not significantly related to this kind of commitment. Instead of these two hypothesised variables, Agreeableness and Intellect were found that they were

significantly related to Normative commitment. Moreover, their directions of relationship were opposite to each other. Agreeableness had a positive relationship whereas Intellect had a negative one. It was due to nature of these two personalities, Organ & Lingl (1995) cited by Erdheim et al (2006) mentioned that Agreeableness people were likely to get along and compromise with others in pleasing way. This behaviour leads to emotional warmth with their colleague, then reciprocate to their organizations which had a good social environment (Erdheim et al ,2006). For Intellect people, they tend to have unconventional attitude, creative and exploratory, therefore it was their nature that they are more willing to scout new environment, and finding new experiences. As a result, they were less commit to organizations.

Theoretical and practical implication

Personality traits or individual difference have been proven to be a functional framework for studying psychological variables such as job attitudes, employee's performance or other organizational outcomes in workplace settings (Ones, Dilchert, Viswesvaran, & Judge, 2007). Theoretically, Five-factor model of personality is a useful approach to study organizational commitment. Extraversion which found in previous research (Erdheim et al, 2006) is the most consistent predictor. However, from this current result, Extraversion was found significantly related to only Continuance commitment, not all three components of commitment. The result also showed that Agreeableness was a good predictor of Affective and Normative commitment. In addition, Conscientiousness was found positive relationship with Affective commitment. Moreover, Intellect was found negative relationship with Normative commitment. Therefore, it seems that more research have to be done to confirm what personality is a

consistent predictor of organizational commitment. Trait EI was proposed by Petrides et al (2007) that it was a lower-order construct of personality traits, and distinct from five -factor personality variables. However, in this study, the result showed that it was moderately correlated to all five factor personality traits. High trait EI was found to be related to high levels of commitment (Petrides & Furnham, 2006). The positive significant relationship between trait EI and Affective commitment was supported to that finding. In addition, it showed that trait EI had an incremental explanatory power, but might be specific on emotional-related job attitude (Petrides & Furnham, 2006).

In practical, organizational commitment has been found that it is a good predictor of employee's turnover. A meta-analysis done by Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky (2002) had been confirm that the higher committed the employee is, the lower turnover rate the organization has. Moreover, keeping promising employees is one way of building competitive advantages. Therefore, knowing the good predictor of organizational commitment might help organizations to design their human resource management practices, for example, selection process, compensation system, and talent management. Although it was a preliminary research, the result from this study might give a picture of Thai scholarship students' commitment to their country. Furthermore, it can be help to improve a selection method of Thai scholarship students, and managing scholarship students system -talent management. Because Thai government spend a big amount of budget for students, it is important to know that they will commit and come back to work for the country.

Limitations and future researches

This study has several limitations which should

be taken into account. First, it was a cross sectional and correlational study, therefore an interference of causality was limited. A longitudinal research was suggested because it is better design to detect causality. Second, samples are all Thai nationality. Although it was one purpose of this research, the result can be bias because of cultural background. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalised. Lastly, the effect sizes of relationship in this research were quite small, which were similar to Erdheim et al (2006)'s study. For that reason, there is a chance that there are other personality factors which might better explain organizational commitment than Extraversion and trait EI.

Most of personality researches were done in western culture, and there are not many personality researches which studied in Asian population. This study is one of an attempt to do research in eastern population, and the results showed some differences from previous findings, which most done with western population. Therefore, future studies with differential psychological approach should be done in other population groups.

Conclusion

To sum up, using individual difference approach, this study explored the relationship between five-factor model of personality, trait EI and organizational commitment in Thai scholarship students. Extraversion and trait EI were specifically hypothesised that they were related to three components of organizational commitment. Results showed that Extraversion was negatively related to Continuance commitment, and Agreeableness had positively significant relationship with both Affective and Normative commitment. In addition, Conscientiousness was also positively related to Affective commitment. Moreover, Intellect had a small negatively significant association with Normative

commitment. Lastly, trait EI had a positively significant relationship with Affective commitment. Theoretically, the result supported that personality traits is a practical framework to study organizational commitment. However, future research should be done with longitudinal research design in order to improve an interferential causality. In practical, organizational commitment has been acknowledged that it is a consistent predictor of employees' turnover, and this current result gave a look of Thai scholarship student's commitment to their organizations. For that reason, the finding was given some insight information about students' commitment, and it might lead to the improvement of scholarship student management of Thai government.

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