The Role of Big 5 Personality Traits in Determining Ethical Behaviour for Hospitality Industry Employees in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This study begins from the realisation of the important contributions of employees' personality traits and ethical behaviour in the workplace to business success. Therefore, it is imperative that further studies are conducted especially in Hospitality Industry in Malaysia, where there is paucity of research in this area. This study aims to understand the relationship of the Big Five personality traits (Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism) in predicting ethical behaviour of employees. A sample of 150 employees from The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur accepted the invitation and filled out the survey questionnaire. In a series of regression analyses, we found that the studied variables accounted for 92.8% of the variance in employees' ethical behaviour. Results show that for the employees at The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur, Openness to Experience personality trait contributes the most to ethical behaviour at their workplace, followed by Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. This paper discusses the results from the social, psychological, and human resource perspectives, as well as their implications for human resource management.

Keywords*: Extraversion; Openness to Experience; Conscientiousness; Agreeableness; Neuroticism; Employees' ethical behaviour*

INTRODUCTION

In attempting to better understand the traits included in the five-factor model of personality, we extrapolated the traits that would lead to ethical behaviour. This study begins from the realisation of the importance of employees' personality traits and ethical behaviour in the workplace. This is because, the importance of ethical behaviour to an organization is crucial (Yatich & Musebe, 2017). In modern times, ethical behaviour is viewed as an important aspect of business success. Progressively, organizations are realizing the importance of ethics in the organizations (Özbağ, 2016).

In addition, Barrick, Mount and Judge (2001) suggested that personality influences ethical behaviour of an employee. Personality traits reflect people's characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours (Diener & Lucas, 2019). Essentially, personality exerts its effects on human behaviour by shaping the manner, in which a person experiences and perceives the world (Goodstein & Lanyon, 1999). Thus, this research study identifies and examines which personality traits strongly affect the ethical and unethical behaviour of employees. The literature review suggests that there is paucity of evidence on the prevalence of personality traits that have been tested as antecedents of ethical behaviour of employees in the private sector, specifically for international franchise hotels in Malaysia. Thereby, a thorough investigation between the variation of personality traits and ethical behaviour of employees in the hospitality industry, especially in 5-Star franchise hotels in Malaysia where there is paucity of research in this area, is warranted.

Big Five personality traits were chosen as antecedents of ethical behaviour of employees because they are widely accepted as an instrument that has been recognized by many psychologists as the best representation of personality structures across different cultures (Digman, 1990; Harari et al., 2014; Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996). Judge et al. (2002) found that high scores on Neuroticism trait affect organizations negatively. Additionally, some research findings have looked into the relationships between workplace integrity, Neuroticism, Openness to Experience, Extraversion, and Agreeableness in workplace (Murphy, 2000; Barrick, Mount & Judge, 2001; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1996).

The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between big five personality traits and employees' ethical behaviour. The information gathered through this undertaking can possibly be utilized to bring issues to light to the top management, employees and investors as well for concerns in ethical behaviour of employees. It is also to give data to organizations to use with an end goal to make or improve the recruiting process that conceivably can be utilized to address the personality traits of employees for ethical behaviour at the workplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ethical Behaviour

Ethical behaviour in business practice has been developed perseveringly. In current times, ethical behaviour has been looked as a noteworthy piece of business accomplishment. Literature review of studies by Weaver (2001), Adams, Taschchian and Shore (2011), Bouckenooghe et al. (2015), as well as Menzel (2019) clearly define organizational code of conduct and moral guidelines issued by management. There are many theoretical and empirical studies, which explain the segments and factors affecting the ethical behaviour of individuals in the relationship. Each has its own different dimensions as individuals make both intentional and unintentional ethical and unethical decisions (Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe, 2008; Rees, Tenbrunsel, & Bazerman, 2019). However, even good people sometimes act unethically and may not even realize their act (Bersoff, 1999). These have been caused to see the ethical philosophy of employees and its relation to business conduct. And today, it is seen as an unmistakable component of any business.

There are different theories depending on the empirical investigations which have been assessed, Cavanagh et al. (1981) gave utilitarian, theory of right, and theory of equity; all of these theories and ways of thinking are extraordinary. Issues of morality and ethics have progressively gotten increasing significant in organizations and business settings. Customarily, an organization's capacity to deliver ethical conduct that goes far in excess of what was required can be a key resource and one that is hard for contenders to mirror (Yatich & Musebe, 2017).

A connection has been found between psychology and business ethics (Dinehart, Moberg & Duska, 2001; Messick & Tenbrunsel, 1996; Islam, 2019). Such authors have proposed that psychology can provide a basic concept to investigate the ethical or unethical behaviours of individuals. Furthermore, business malpractices can cause enormous harm to individuals, communities, and public, as well as to business organizations. Thus, doing this research can help improve and gain more information of human condition.

Overview of Personality Traits

The possibility of personality traits might be as old as human language itself. As indicated by the significance of personality traits, which investigates the management potential towards individuals' conduct at the workplace, various studies have discovered a relationship between personality traits and ethical behaviour (Brown et al., 2005; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009; Kalshoven et al., 2011; Anwar & Shah, 2018). Traits are acquired characteristics of a person in the early research custom. Numerous researchers are of the feeling that any trait impacts ethical behaviour since it generally relies upon the circumstance (Yukl & Van Fleet, 1992; Simha & Parboteeah, 2019). Personality is the reliable musing and behaviour of a person that is steady after some time and is generally predictable over various circumstances (Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). In this manner, personality traits appear as an influential factor towards individual conduct in the workplace (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Goodstein & Lanyon, 1999; Anwar & Shah, 2018).

Big Five Personality Traits /Five-Factor Model

The Five-Factor model involves five measurements, namely, Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Extraversion, and Neuroticism. These personality traits are the most adequate proportions of human personality (Wilt & Revelle, 2015).

In establishing the theoretical link between each of the Big Five personality traits and ethical behaviour of employees, a mechanism similar to that of Anwar and Shah (2018) was employed. In other words, hypotheses were developed and justified by finding the link between the

Big Five personality traits and any of the ethical behaviour of employees' cognitions or dimensions.

The most widely accepted system to emerge from this approach was "The Big Five" or "Five-Factor Model" (Goldberg, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 1987).The Big Five comprises five major traits as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptions of the Big Five Personality Traits

Big 5 Personality Traits	Definition
Openness to Experience	The tendency to appreciate new art, ideas, value, feelings, and behaviour
Conscientiousness	The tendency to be careful, on time for appointment to follow rules, and to be hardworking
Extraversion	The tendency to be talkative, sociable and enjoy others, and the tendency to have a dominant style
Agreeableness	The tendency to agree and go along with others rather than to assert one's own opinions and choice
Neuroticism	The tendency to frequently experience emotions, such as anger, worry and sadness, as well as being interpersonally sensitive

Relationship between Personality Traits and Ethical Behaviour

Many researchers suggested that to some extent, trait has an effect on ethical behaviour because it is always subject to the situation (Yukl & Van Fleet, 1992; Özbağ, 2016). Personality is the consistent thought and behaviour of an individual that is stable over time and relatively consistent across different situations (Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). In addition, Anwar and Shah (2018) mentioned in their study that there are studies that looked into a relationship between personality traits and ethical behaviour (see Brown et al., 2005; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009; Kalshoven et al., 2011). Based on this idea, in this study, the five factors of personality model were used as an instrument to study ethical behaviour. The literature review suggests that there is the paucity of evidence about five factor personality traits and ethical behaviour in Malaysia. Therefore, it is important that further studies are conducted especially in Malaysia, where there is paucity of research looking into personality traits and ethical behaviour. Literature has suggested that individuals with Openness to Experience have a positive relationship with work drive, along with work involvement and

are positively motivated towards the accomplishment of self-set work goals (Lounsbury & Gibson, 1998; Lounsbury et al., 2003; Judge & Ilies, 2002). Additionally, Anwar and (2018) also found a positive relationship between Openness to Experience, Cautiousness, Agreeableness, and ethical behaviour of employees. In contrast, Anwar and Shah (2018), Malouff et al. (1990), as well as Judge and Ilies (2002) suggested that Extraversion and Neuroticism is negatively related with ethical behaviour. Thus, the theoretical proposition and pertinent hypotheses, which are rooted in literature review of personality traits and ethical behaviour that help to explain the research questions are listed as follows:

H1: There would be a positive and significant relationship between Openness to Experience and ethical behaviour of employees.

H2: There would be a positive and significant relationship between Conscientiousness and ethical behaviour of employees.

H3: There would be a positive and significant relationship between Extraversion and ethical behaviour of employees.

H4: There would be a positive and significant relationship between Agreeableness and ethical behaviour of employees.

H5: There would be a negative and significant relationship between Neuroticism and ethical behaviour of employees.

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

A self-administered questionnaire was made with suitable modifications from previous studies to measure the impact of personal traits towards the ethical behaviour of employees in The Ritz Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur, which focused on the private sector employees and the hospitality industry from September 2019 to November 2019.

Sampling

The respondents in this study were from selected from the operation employees in The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur, which comprised 150 employees (food and beverages, housekeeping, the kitchen,

concierge, financial, human resources, sales and marketing, maintenance and engineering, and other departments).

Measurement of the Variables

Table 2: Descriptions of the Measurement Items

No.	Variables	Item	Source
1.	Independent Variable 1; Openness to Experience	I enjoy hearing new ideas. I rarely look for a deeper meaning in things. I get excited by new ideas. I like to get lost in thoughts. I experience my emotions intensely. I am a creative and imaginative person.	Goldberg (1993)
2	Independent Variable 2; Conscientiousness	I pay attention to details. I make plans and stick to them. I get your chores done right away. I need a push to get started a work. I always get prepared.	Goldberg (1993)
3.	Independent Variable 3; Extraversion	I prefer meeting new people. I prefer to have few friends. I am mostly quiet around people. I hate being in crowd of people. I find it difficult to approach others. I always start the conversations with people.	Goldberg (1993)
4.	Independent Variable 4; Agreeable	I am not interested in other people's problems. I am concerned about others. I get along with people easily. I can work well with my colleagues. I find it hard to give full cooperation in my work.	Goldberg (1993)
5.	Independent Variable 5; Neuroticism	I tend to worry too much about things. I get panic easily. I rarely get irritated. I get stressed out so easily. I have frequent mood swings. I am not easily bothered by things. I am relaxed most of the time.	Goldberg (1993)
6.	Dependent Variable 1; Ethical Behaviour of Employees	I utilize my authority properly. I balance organizational and personal needs. I follow orders from superiors even though they are unethical. I am able to manage my personal biases. I am honest when sharing information with others. I respect the diversity within my organization. I maintain appropriate confidentiality. I prioritize my favouritism in decision making.	Ferrell & Gresham (1985); and Hunt & Vitell (1986)

The background information collected includes age, gender, race, education, number of years working, and department.

The items used to measure the independent and dependent variables in the study are listed in Table 2. The analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS 25.0. In this study, the tests performed were validity and reliability tests, as well as four classical assumption tests (normality, autocorrelation, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity test). Next, correlation analysis was performed to ensure the relationships and the power amongst all of the variables that the researcher tested. In addition, the linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables was interpreted using regression analysis to predict how well the independent variables were able to explain the dependent variables.

RESULTS

Before conducting a regression analysis, the relevant assumptions of statistical analysis were tested. Firstly, a sample size of N=150 employees was deemed adequate given the five independent variables to be included in the analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The assumption of singularity was also met among the independent variables (Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeable, and Neuroticism). An exami-

Table 3: Correlations and Cronbach's Alpha

	O	C	E	A	N	EB	Cronbach Alpha
O	1						0.973
C	.906**	1					0.956
E	0.054	0.101	1				0.894
A	.686**	.649**	.576**	1			0.718
N	.550**	.570**	.792**	.875**	1		0.807
EB	.932**	.889**	0.097	.756**	.619**	1	0.951

*Openness to Experience (O), Conscientiousness (C), Extraversion (E), Agreeable (A),
Neuroticism (N), Ethical Behaviour of Employees (EB)

nation of correlations (see Table 3) revealed that no variables were highly correlated. A reliability test was conducted to assess the internal

consistency of multiple indicators for each construct. Cronbach's alpha values of 0.71 - 0.97 confirmed the internal reliability.

The skewness and kurtosis of the regression model in this paper indicate that the assumptions of normality were all satisfied (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Pallant, 2013). Moreover, the Durbin-Watson values of 1.836 showed no autocorrelation in the regression models. An examination of the Mahalanobis Distance scores indicates two multivariate outliers. The outliers identified in the initial data screening were deleted.

Descriptive Analysis

The results show that 47.3% of the respondents are male with a total of 71, while 52.7% of them are female with a total of 79. 42.67% of them are 30-39 years old, born from the year 1980 to 1989. The results also show that people from Gen Y or Millennials, who were born between 1980 to 1994, make up the most number of people in that age range working in The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur. This is followed with the ages of 20-29 years old, who were born from year 1990 to 1999, which consist of 25.33% of respondents. The least age group range is from the age of 60 years old and above, which is 4.57% from the Baby Boomers generation, who were born between 1944 and 1964. For race or ethnicity of the employees working in The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur, the highest group is Malaysian Chinese ethnicity, which consists of 27.33% from the total number of the respondents. Most of the people working in The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur are undergraduates, which consist of 60.67% from the total number of people, while the smallest group consists of people with Master's Degree and Doctorate Degree (6%). For the period of service, the highest number of years working at The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur is between 6 to 10 years consisting of 36.0% with 54 people. The least working group is between 16 and more years, which consist of 16% with 24 people. Finally, the highest number of respondents is from the housekeeping department, with 17.3% from the total number of people. This is followed by Food and Beverage (16.7%), kitchen (19.7%), Front office (7.3%), Concierge (7.3%), Financial (11.3%), Human Resource (6.7%), Sales and marketing (11.3%), and other departments (5.3%). See Table 4 for the details on the respondents' profiles.

Table 4: Profile of Respondents

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	71	47.3
	Female	79	52.7
Age	17 – 19 Years Old	8	5.3
	20 – 29 Years Old	38	25.3
	30 – 39 Years Old	64	42.7
	40 – 49 Years Old	14	9.3
	50 – 59 Years Old	19	12.7
	60 Years Old and Above	7	4.7
Race	Malay (Malaysian)	38	25.3
	Chinese (Malaysian)	41	27.3
	Indian (Malaysian)	14	9.3
	Sabahan Native	5	3.3
	Sarawakian Native	7	4.7
	Other Race (Malaysian)	5	3.3
	Foreigner (Non-Malaysian)	40	26.7
Education	Primary School	7	4.7
	Secondary School	43	28.7
	Undergraduate	91	60.7
	Postgraduate	9	6.0
Number of years working	Below 1 – 5 Years	29	19.3
	6 – 10 Years	54	36
	11 – 15 Years	43	28.7
	16 - More Years	24	16.0
Department	Food and Beverage	25	16.7
	Housekeeping	26	17.3
	The Kitchen	16	10.7
	Front Office	11	7.3
	Concierge	11	7.3
	Financial	17	11.3
	Human Resources	10	6.7
	Sales and Marketing	9	6.0
	Maintenance and Engineering	17	11.3
	Others	8	5.3

Regression Analysis

Next, the regression analysis was conducted with the Big 5 personality traits as the independent variables and employees' ethical behaviour as the dependent variable. The results indicate the percentage variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the variation in the independent variables. The R^2 of 0.928 implies that all the independent variables explain 92.8% of the variance in the dependent variable. 7.2% of

the variance in the dependent variable is not explained by the independent variables in this study. Additionally, F-test is significant based on the value of 0.000. Hence, all the independent variables significantly explain the dependent variable.

Hypotheses Testing

The summary of findings for the hypotheses testing can be found in Table 5.

H1 = There would be a positive and significant relationship between Openness to Experience and ethical behaviour of employees. Since p-value is lower than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to support H1. Therefore, there is a positive relationship between Openness to Experience and ethical behaviour of employees ($\beta = 0.420$, $p < .000$).

H2 = There would be a positive and significant relationship between Conscientiousness and ethical behaviour of employees. Since p-value is lower than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to support H2. Therefore, there is a positive relationship between Conscientiousness and ethical behaviour of employees ($\beta = 0.167$, $p < .05$).

H3 = There would be a positive and significant relationship between Extraversion and ethical behaviour of employees. Since p-value is lower than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to support H3. Therefore, there is a positive relationship between Extraversion and ethical behaviour of employees ($\beta = 0.392$, $p < .000$).

H4 = There would be a positive and significant relationship between agreeable and ethical behaviour of employees. Since p-value is lower than 0.000, there is sufficient evidence to support H4. Therefore, there is a positive relationship between agreeable and ethical behaviour of employees ($\beta = 0.245$, $p < .000$).

H5 = There would be a negative and significant relationship between Neuroticism and ethical behaviour of employees. Even though p-value is lower than 0.05, there is sufficient evidence to not support H5 as there is a positive relationship between Neuroticism and ethical behaviour of employees, which contradicts with H5 ($\beta = 0.245$, $p < .000$).

Table 5: Hypotheses Testing Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Results
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.177	.106		1.675	.096	
	O	.371	.054	.420	6.815	.000	Supported
	C	.150	.050	.167	3.029	.003	Supported
	E	-.410	.058	.392	-7.046	.000	Supported
	A	.330	.073	.245	4.539	.000	Supported
	N	.517	.105	.390	4.906	.000	Not Supported

Openness to Experience (O), Conscientiousness (C), Extraversion (E), Agreeable (A), Neuroticism (N), Ethical Behaviour of Employees (EB)

Additionally, based on the results of the standardized beta coefficients, we can conclude that the strongest variable to influence employees' ethical behaviour would be the Openness to Experience (β = 0.420), followed by Extraversion (β = 0.392), Agreeable (β = 0.245), and Conscientiousness (β = 0.167).

DISCUSSION

The main goal of this study was to better understand the relationship between personality and employees' ethical behaviour. Studies on the significant link between personality traits and ethical behaviour of employees in Malaysia are still scarce.

This finding both supports and also contradicts with the findings by Anwar and Shah (2018), Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009), and Kalshoven (2010) on ethical behaviour. In their study, Kalshoven et al. (2011) found that only Conscientiousness and Extraversion were related to the ethical construct. However, traits such as Openness to Experience and Agreeableness were unrelated to the ethical construct. Additionally, Brown and Trevino (2006) also did not support the relationships between ethical leadership and Openness to Experience or Extroversion, which also contradicts with the findings of this study. According to their research, such personality trait factors are more related to such qualities, which are not part of the ethical construct. In contrast, results on the association between Agreeableness and ethical behaviour in this study can be

estimated as Brown et al. (2005) explored those individuals that are of nature having the Agreeableness quality and are more concerned about the appropriate and benevolent treatment of people. These behaviours are essential to develop ethical behaviour among individuals working in organizations (Brown et al., 2005; Brown & Trevino, 2006).

Anwar and Shah (2018), and Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009), on the other hand, found a negative relationship between Neuroticism and ethical behaviour, which also contradicts with the findings in this study while observing a positive relationship between Conscientiousness and ethical behaviour. Nevertheless, the associations between Conscientiousness and ethical behaviour are supported in this study. Additionally, Conscientiousness personality trait is required to be perceived as an individual has ethical behaviour (Bono & Judge, 2004). On the contrary, Bormann (2013) found a positive and significant relationship between ethical leadership and Extraversion. More studies on how people with Neuroticism personality traits can ensure a high ethical behaviour in the hospitality industry should be done to further explore this relationship. We speculate that perhaps for employees, Neuroticism might offer considerable power in predicting and explaining ethical behaviour in the initial stage prior to the actual ethical experiences.

Perhaps, the most plausible explanation on the contrary results of this study with previous studies at this stage would probably be personality traits that influence ethical behaviour are different between employees' and leaders and also between public and private sectors. Further research should be done to conclude this argument.

As expected, Conscientiousness was positively related to ethical behaviour. A person who is thoughtful of others and have others' interest in mind rather than themselves end up being perceived as ethical. On the other hand, a person who is shy and unstable is likely to be perceived as unethical because his or her behaviour cannot be predicted.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research was conducted to find out the relationship between personality traits and ethical behaviour of the employees in The Ritz-

Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur. The personality traits include five different variables consisting of Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeable, and Neuroticism. According to the results, most of the independent variables (Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, and Agreeable) significantly influence the ethical behaviour of the employees in The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Kuala Lumpur.

Results show that an employee with a high level of Openness to Experience, who is easy to cooperate with and work well with others, highly affects ethical behaviour in the workplace. The ones who are kind and warm hearted while also being considerate to other people tend to be the key factor in order to develop a good ethical behaviour. Extraversion comes second followed by Agreeable and Conscientiousness. Nevertheless, being the first study of its kind in Malaysia's hospitality industry, we do not have any other findings to support our conclusions. In spite of this, our analysis is clear enough, that is, personality traits appear to influence employees' ethical behaviour in organizations.

In a nut shell, human resource practitioners should ensure that they are continuously attracting people with high Openness to Experience, Extraversion, Agreeable, and Conscientiousness. This is plausible since in order to develop themselves and their organizations in terms of ethics, the organizations should attract employees who are open to change, responsive to the needs and goals of others, have high degree of moral obligation, as well as value truth and honesty that can change unethical habits. This may enhance the organizations' chances of "succeeding" in the new environment and subsequently enhance their employees' ethical behaviour. Thus, the pre-employment/induction program should recognize these differences. Proper evaluations should be given to identify the personality types of employees. This will enable organizations to identify the right employees to be employed. Such intervention must also take into consideration the findings from the study, which suggests that there is a need for industry players to strategically focus on employees with Openness to Experience personality traits. Highlighting these aspects may be important when trying to attract the most ethical employees.

FUTURE RESEARCH AND LIMITATIONS

Future research should address the constraint innate in this study. In this way, it is prescribed that future research should survey the connection between the Big Five personality traits and ethical behaviour of employees utilizing Ferrell and Gresham (1985), Hunt and Vitell (1986), and McCrae and Costa (1992) NEO personality inventory. As recently clarified, so as to really quantify individuals' potential in arriving at a more significant level of ethical behaviour, a developed model that covers all the ethical behaviour related to personality traits is required.

Further research is needed regarding the Big 5 personality traits' impact towards ethical behaviour of employees. Endeavours to imitate the Big Five in different countries with local dictionaries have prevailed in certain countries, yet not in others. It is recommended that the same study should be conducted for a bigger population and culture. It should be conducted for the international franchise hotels in Kuala Lumpur so that it can achieve better and accurate results. If possible, the study should also be conducted for the entire hoteliers in Malaysia to achieve genuine findings. This is because, this study was only done in The Ritz-Carlton Kuala Lumpur, thus, the results from the findings may be biased and might not be accurate. Another recommendation is, the researcher can use self-administered questionnaires, where the researcher can distribute the questionnaire and the respondents will answer on the spot. This can ensure the validity of the answers.

We acknowledge that the range of tested personality traits as antecedents of ethical behaviour of employees for the hospitality industry had been very restricted. We posit that by further surveying the Big Five personality traits as antecedents of ethical behaviour of employees, this examination expands the literature and provides necessary information in answering the important questions related to ethical behaviour.

This finding diverged from the era of psychological-deprivation approaches to the study of human resource development. We hope that other researchers will reflect on this importance of the Big Five personality traits that we have highlighted. Future researchers should continue to conduct systematic investigations of this factor in order to better enhance ethical behaviour among employees. We predict that this important work

has the potential to advance the development of culturally informed, empirically-supported interventions for employees' development and organizations' sustainability.

A natural question is whether our findings can be generalized to other employees in other countries. Our contention is that the findings here may be unique to the Malaysian context, and so the answer to this question is no: we cannot generalize our findings to other countries. We recommend that future studies should use more heterogeneous samples, such as employees from other places.

Moreover, ethical behaviour in this study was measured during the employees' tenure in the organization. Therefore, we do not know whether these results would be maintained when they move to another department, branch or company. Research examining ethical behaviour in different settings will go a long way in providing us with a better understanding of this phenomenon. We also believe that future studies should thoroughly explore the temporal changes that occur in employees' behaviour, and studies on the effects of these changes on ethical behaviour are essential.

We postulate that these findings can be developed further to offer new insights into research on ethical behaviour beyond perceiving the Big Five personality traits solely as predictors. Although each of these findings represents an important contribution to the understanding of employees' ethical behaviour, a significant amount of research is still required in order to explicate relational exchanges in this context, given the present competitive context in which they are now immersed. In spite of the limitations of this study, we think the findings from this study are clear enough to suggest that employees' ethical behaviour is influenced by personality traits.

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