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Personality Traits, Satisfaction with Fairness of Performance-Based Incentive (PBI) System and Research Performance of Teachers in a Public University of Pakistan

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to describe how incentives and personality types are perceived to be having impact on research performance of teachers working in the Public sector universities of Pakistan. Study tested the relationship hypothesis of the personality types as well as expectancy, instrumentality and valence of performance based incentives and their perceived impact on research performance and output. It has also discussed incentive types and their motivational impact on research output. A survey was conducted from 130 faculty members out of total 650 faculty members on the basis of probability sampling technique named as stratified- cum- judgmental sampling technique from one of the major public sector universities of Pakistan named as Punjab University. The instrument comprised measuring various dimensions of three variables personality type, performance based incentives and research performance. The findings are based on an analysis of data by not only using quantitative (SPSS software) but also qualitative research methods (content analysis and interviews).

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is strong desire among all the stakeholders of public universities to diagnose the problems, which are underpinning the university's performance especially their unsatisfactory grading by the local and international organization. In this connection, among other factors, performance related rewards along with personality traits of the teachers working in universities, could have a significant bearing on the teacher's motivation and commitment towards better research performance. For instance the success of a merit pay plan rests on employees' perceptions of the link between pay and performance and on their perceived fairness of the procedures for merit decisions [1]. Several researchers have recognized that it is important to identify what types of teachers are inclined to engage in research activity [2,3]. However, so far there has been no such empirical research available providing detail insight of this issue in the context of Pakistan. Therefore, there was a compelling need to bridge the gap to add value to the public university's performance management system. The research has identified the different personality traits of the faculty, structure of existing Performance based system with regard to transparency and fairness issues, type of research performance measures and standards used. It has also assessed the types of incentives given, level of teacher's satisfaction towards PBI system where financial and non financial incentives are based on performance and its impact on their research performance in particular and departmental and university performance in general. It has also envisaged perceived risks and challenges relating to optimum utilization of PBS system and for improving research performance. That can be used as a basis to formulate practical guidelines and suggestions for decisive management of public universities in Pakistan. Such guidelines is an attempt to provide basis for gearing up the motivation level of teacher staff to the highest and sustainable levels so that desired standards of quality higher education are to be achieved in public sector universities in particular and private universities in general.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Personality Traits

In English, more than 18,000 personality terms have been used [4]. G.W. Allport [5] has defined traits as a structured mental makeup that changes from an individual to individual, and which sets off behavior. Cattell [6] found out that traits should be understood by real world actions not solely under laboratory like setting. Gordon W Allport [7] discussed that during one situation, any given trait may not successfully predict behavior. The major traits like extraversion and neuroticism are supposed to be associated to some basic traits of an individual, which may even be genetically effected [8]. Cattell [9] mainly emphasized on the use of questionnaire items for measuring personality. He cut down the quantum of trait variables to thirty five, and assessed personality through sixteen personality factor questionnaires. Despite the importance of this instrument, new measures were also introduced after it.

Fiske [10] reassessed the Cattell's measuring tool by adding more factors using personality trait terms. This was further discussed in another research [11]. Norman [11] indicated that five alike factors could be got from personality ratings from the subject's peers. Tupes and Christal [12] studied the interdependence of personality traits by giving following five major factors (1) Surgency; (2) Agreeableness; (3) Dependability (4) Emotional stability; and (5) Culture but these are not being adopted.

Cattell [13] discussed the two types of personality traits. One is the "source trait," which is the key factor of personality, and can only be found out by using factor analysis. The other one is "surface trait," which is a mix of more than one source trait. Costa and McCrae [14] developed personality factors measuring toll that includes five factors: Neuroticism; Extraversion; Openness; Agreeableness; and Conscientiousness. The original research was Cattle's 16 personality factors, extracted to the three domains of Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Openness [15]. This was the original model called the NEO.

The term personality is defined as the relatively fixed prototype of behaviors and stable psychological conditions that depicts changes in individual's behavioral tendencies [16]. An empirical support for an association between personality and the degree of satisfaction with PBI's and research performance is somewhat scarce. Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz and Knafo [17] discussed a strong positive association between the personality trait of agreeableness and the value of benevolence considered as a dimension of trust. The Five Factor model (FFM) suggests a brief and simple way of explaining all possible factors for measuring personality traits [18]. It is now dominantly used by researchers measuring personalities [19,20]. The five dimensions comprise conscientiousness, extraversion, openness to experience, emotional stability, and agreeableness [21]. Samuels et al. [22] provided brief description of traits as follows;

2.1.1 Conscientiousness

This shows attributes like to be responsible, hardworking and dependable and on the other side to be irresponsible, careless and not dependable.

2.1.2 Agreeableness

It includes the tendency to be getting along with other people. The other side indicates to be rigid and not flexible.

2.1.3 Emotional stability

This trait points out how much control an individual has on his/her emotions. He/she can be good and poor in controlling his/her emotions.

2.1.4 Openness to experience or creativity

It is one of the key trait which shows to what degree a person is like to experience new things or the person is poor in imagination and creativity.

2.1.5 Extraversion

The fifth trait is about the introvert and extrovert behavior of a person.

2.2 Faculty and Performance Based Compensation System

Shifting faculty compensation to a performance-based system serves as an influential tool to understand the difference between compensating for time given and compensating

for work performed [23]. In addition to it, teachers responded according to theories of economics, as teachers behave positively when given more rewards in terms of money on number of research published but negatively when financial benefits are not there [24]. Hussain, Ahmad, and Rajput [25] described that extrinsic rewards are primary motivators for job satisfaction of teaching faculty.

Faculty members are financially rewarded for enhancing institutional prestige. One consequence according to economic theory is that faculty members will spend more time on prestige enhancing research outputs. Since spending more time on teaching (or other activities) has no effect on salary even in comprehensive universities or liberal arts colleges, faculty members, according to the same economic reasoning, can no longer be expected to exert high efforts on these other activities including teaching, advising or community services [26].

Performance related rewards rely on both objective measures like sales and subjective measure like contribution by the staff. Output in some jobs is not possible to be gauged through objective performance indicators as combined output and some job descriptions are not able to be measured tangibly [27]. Results suggest that monetary and affiliative rewards have different effects: affiliative rewards clearly have beneficial effects, whereas the picture for monetary rewards is more nuanced than typically assumed in literature [28]. Workers are the human resource of a firm. In case they are motivated and satisfied they will perform positively [29]. Performance rewards help institutions to show their employees what is really required from them by allocating pay based on their performance in relevant fields. An employee often thinks that performance pay supports the association between their efforts and the compensation they get [30]. Heneman [31] stated about the features of performance reward. It has two elements: (1) yearly performance assessment of workers productivity; and (2) associating compensation raises subject to results of performance assessment. Academic and research performance impact compensation appropriation for teachers who have extra-ordinary documented research output [32].

2.2.1 Tenure track system

Hohm and Shore (1998) stated that Tenure results in high standards for teaching and

research. Institutions without tenure are not considered "real" universities. Tenure allows faculty to become involved in university governance. Public universities are helping in educating people and boosting economic growth by financing higher education [33]. Tenure-track teaching staff appears to be not having bad impact on learning and longer times-to-degree as compared to non tenure teachers [34]. The economic and social costs of the tenure system are outweighed by the fact that tenure is vital to academic freedom. Brown and Kurland [35] discussed the types of tenure which are of two types one is term tenure and other is interruptible tenure. The "term tenure" meant for replacing long term appointments say five or seven years with no assurance of continuation. Tenure means indefinite employment terminable only for cause (or for certain specified constraints such as financial pressure). Term tenure is not tenure, and does little to protect academic freedom. Moreover, reappointment decision-making under term tenure is burdensome. Where "interruptible" tenure meant a system that maintains to give tenure and at intervals of five or possibly ten years while conducting a periodic performance review of the tenured professors. In the university, the critical decisions are to be made especially who will advance in the ranks [36]. So not agreeing on individual promotion and tenure cases may generate kind of conflict an academic unit can experience [37].

Organizational performance can be enhanced through significant contribution in the area of research, teaching and administration by able tenure and non tenured faculty. Age factor led to satisfaction with performance based compensation system [38]. Gender type is related to satisfaction with performance based compensation system [39]. Perceived impact of supporting environment led towards satisfaction with performance based compensation system is related with the performance based system of compensation [40,41,42].

2.2.2 Pakistan's experience

Developing human capital through initiating tenure track system by Higher Education Commission (HEC) in Pakistan in 2002 was a challenging and cumbersome job. By providing funds and support in increasing the number of PhD's in Pakistan, HEC has helped in creating knowledge based economy by developing human capital. It is evident from the literature that number of PhD's produced in last ten years

is almost double as compared to those produced during previous fifty years and research output has also increased [43].

Human resource development within the higher education reform process is serving dual objective of enhancing organizational effectiveness along with improving the qualification level of university teachers [43]. On the basis of the literature studies so far, it is strongly stated that understanding teachers' personality traits and performance pay help in increasing the research output and productivity at both individual and group level. Monetary and non monetary types of rewards supports in aligning the worker's goal with that of group and organizational goals.

Still, there is a need to ascertain the application of such behavioral display by using mechanism of compensation based on productivity in the work environment of Pakistan with particular reference to TTS offered in public universities of Pakistan and how it has contributed towards the research output and economic growth in Pakistan.

2.3 Satisfaction with Transparency and Fairness of Performance Based Compensation System

Performance based salaries are the salaries connected to the attaining pre defined goals which are directed to motivate employees in order to be at higher level of performance. Therefore, a precisely defined [44,45,46,47], properly implemented [48,49,50,51] and transparent PBC [52,53] increases faculty satisfaction level with such system and subsequently leads towards higher faculty motivation [52,54,55,56,57] and commitment to achieve the desired performance.

2.3.1 Perceived teaching and research performance

Performance is meant both behavior and result. Behaviors emanate from the performer and transform performance from abstraction to action. Same applies to university teachers, whose performance may be measured in terms of their academic, research and administrative contribution made against predetermined standards. It is stated that a higher level of teachers' satisfaction with Performance related rewards (PRR) system is likely to attract in higher degree of teacher performance particularly research performance [58,59,60,61,62].

Research performance of teaching staff may be assessed in terms of research output, research contribution, research funding/grants, research recognition, scholar enrollment. Keeping in view the teacher performance measures in general and research performance measures in particular as described in the preceding paragraphs, the basis of standard setting is mutually decided, which to the extent possible are expected to be realistic and achievable.

2.4 Big Five Traits, Satisfaction with Transparency and Fairness of PBI System and Research Performance

Herzberg [63] presented the Two-factor theory. Job satisfaction is the opposite of no satisfaction, such as workers are not satisfied with their working environment or satisfaction with both intrinsic and extrinsic type of compensation. It is stated that it is not necessary that satisfaction with job and performance can be got on account of providing congenial working environment only. Same is applicable in case of satisfaction with performance based compensation system and research performance. Researchers also pointed out three features of satisfaction at work place, first is that this kind of satisfaction indicates an important product of our culture, secondly, it might be an alarming tool of managerial issues and lastly, It can give corporations/institutions or administration a valuable dimension to measure. So researcher believes that personality types are linked to job satisfaction and job performance as confirmed by Fisher and Hanna research also [64]. In Weitz [65] study, he concluded that the an individual who is unsatisfied with their compensation is subsequently becomes not only unsatisfied but also this thing drive towards poor job outcomes. Staw, Bell, and Clausen [66] however revealed that the person who holds a positive emotion and keeps it for a long time has positive job satisfaction and shows productivity. Staw and Ross [67] also discovered that different timing and work conditions influenced job satisfaction and job performance.

2.4.1 Conscientiousness

Organ and Lingl [68] discussed that Conscientiousness is to be associated with not satisfied at work place as it shows the tendency to involve oneself into normal job duties and subsequently more probability of getting satisfactory extrinsic and intrinsic types of compensation like pay, promotions, sense of appreciation, sense of personal achievements.

Literature of human welfare also proposed a strong and direct link between Conscientiousness and job satisfaction [69]. It is also suggested that Conscientiousness as one of the element of personality traits, indicates persistent link to all job performance standards for all types of occupations and professions [70]. Moreover, one of the research also stated that conscientiousness is a better indicator to observe growth in performance and productivity [71].

2.4.2 Agreeableness

It is stated by different research that Agreeableness another important variable for measuring the personality should be associated to happiness as agreeable personalities have more commitment and drive to attain interpersonal understanding, which appears to greater levels of well-being. Undoubtedly, they stated that presuming these same public drivers are present in the job, then the same procedure would be followed with regard to job satisfaction and performance [72,73]. Organ and Lingl [74] were of the view that Agreeableness another important trait of personality is engaging oneself with others in pleasant and satisfying relationships. Both Openness and Agreeableness traits are considered as true predictors of training proficiency [75]. One of the feature of agreeableness is to be straightforward, it is stated in a study that to be less straightforward is linked to the capability of getting adapt to changing working environment and most importantly achieving job related objectives and goals [76].

2.4.3 Emotional stability/neuroticism

It is argued that neurotic individuals due to their negative mentality do face considerably bad life time experiences than any other body [77] partially, as they put themselves into conditions that promote adverse impacts [78]. To the degree that similar circumstances occur on or with regard to the job, they would cause poor job satisfaction and subsequently job performance. It is evident from research that two important traits of personalities first is Conscientiousness and other one is Emotional Stability both are better indicators for various types of occupations and professions [79]. Similarly another research found that that low score on Neuroticism (More emotional stability) and good score on the trait of Extraversion also helps to measure higher level of job performance [80]. The sum total of

neuroticism is low emotional stability and varying ill emotions [81].

2.4.4 Openness to experience

Another well discussed trait of personality is Openness to Experience which is referred as technical and imaginative creativity [82] deviating thoughts, less inclination toward religious beliefs, and more political open-mindedness [83]. These mental constructs and thoughts appear to be not linked to satisfaction at work place. DeNeve and Cooper [84] also stated that this particular trait work on two different extremes where a person can feel well or worse. Both Openness and Agreeableness traits are considered as true assessors of training proficiency [85]. It is found that association between personality characteristics and the performance with respect to the this trait is very weak except for some professions where work is like investigating and exploring new things which are lesser in number [86]. In our scenario, TTS and non tenured faculty need to be engaged in research development activities for which departmental heads have to explore and design new ways to monitor the activities of their department effectively.

2.4.5 Extraversion

As discussed Neuroticism is linked to the experience of negative life events, extraversion trait of personality includes scores, higher score on this scale shows tendency to be extrovert and it depends on experiencing level of positive emotions [87]. It is argued that extraverts like to be more social than introverts and they found getting rewards on account of this likeliness of their social behavior [88]. Similarly another research found that that low score on Neuroticism (More emotional stability) and good score on the trait of Extraversion also help to measure higher level of job performance [89]. Extraversion trait can be measured through following dimensions, positive emotionality, the discrete emotions of interest, enjoyment, and shyness Izard et al. [90].

Greenberg and Baron, Tokar and Subich [91,92] found that role of an individual personality are significant in determining the job satisfaction. Different researches also stated that demographic variables like age are also associated with job satisfaction and performance [93]. Gender variable also found to be moderately related to job satisfaction [94]. It is

also concluded that job satisfaction and job performance are directly and strongly associated with each other [95].

Given that teachers with different personalities have a tendencies to perform in a unique way [96] with respect to higher education sector along with the significant utilization "Big Five" in research [97] the following hypotheses are presented for four of the five broad dimensions of personality:

- H1-H4. There is a relationship between teacher personality traits of agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion and emotional stability and his/her satisfaction with transparency and fairness of PBI's.
- H5-H8. There is a relationship between teacher personality traits of agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion and emotional stability and his/her satisfaction with research performance.
- H9. There is a positive association between satisfaction with transparency and fairness Of PBI's and satisfaction with research performance Fig. 1.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a triangulated one shot study done via personally administered questionnaire. A detailed demographic sheet was used to collect information from the teachers, (supplementary 1) Regression and correlation analysis were used along with other scientific test techniques. Sampling was done by taking 130 teachers having more than one year of experience with the existing institution and also working as a full time teacher. 90 questionnaires were got filled and subsequently 76 were found suitable for analyzing data hence the response rate was around 59%. More than 60% of respondents were having experience less than or up to 15 years. More than 72% of teachers were having M.phil/MS or PhD degree. Majority of the respondents (54%) were Lecturer. The questionnaire was having four sections. Section one was measuring demographic information of the respondent. Section two was requesting information regarding organizational setup and respondents understanding and perception regarding its vision, mission, administration/management style and human resource management practices. Section three consisting of questions regarding teacher's personality

traits, perceptions of faculty members regarding the availability, types and transparency and fairness issue of PRR system according to a five point Likert scale. Section four was measuring research performance.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The sampling size, response rate and demographic data analysis are provided in the Fig. 2, Tables 1 and 2. The value of Cronbach's alpha test that is used to check the reliability of the instruments is given in Table 3, which is really good. In Table 4 Gamma test value shows that results are significant. The value of the test .460

shows strong relationship between the variable of interests. Table 5 shows acceptable relationship between the transparency and fairness of PBI's and research performance. The Table 6 indicates correlation between different Neuroticism, Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Openness to experience, Agreeableness, transparency and fairness of PBI, and Research Performance dimensions of both the variables (including within the same variable). The correlation of surgency, conscientiousness, adjustment, openness to experience and agreeableness with research performance are .749, .715, .700, .676 and .644 respectively.

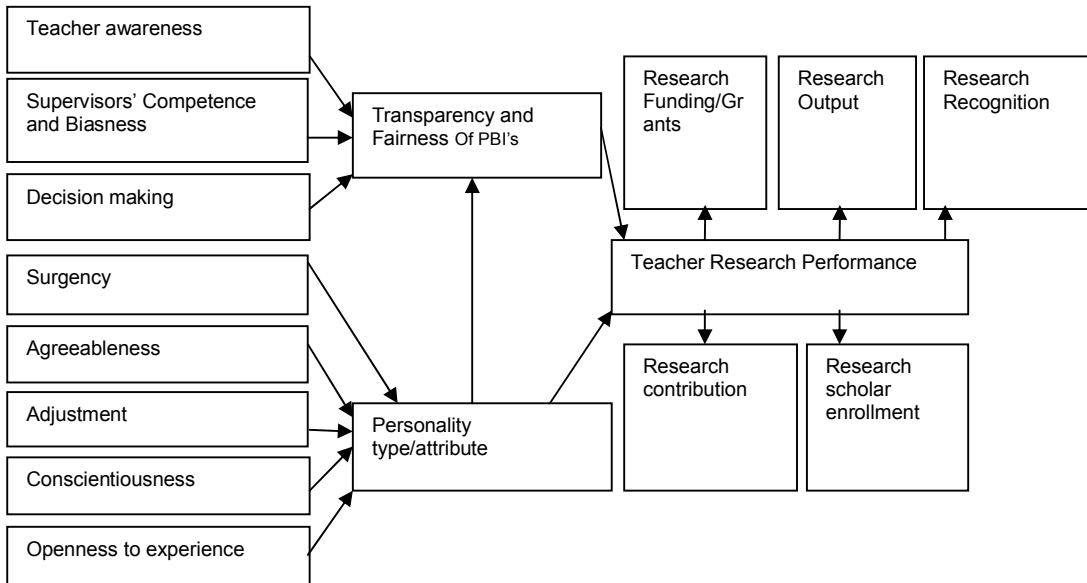


Fig. 1. Theoretical framework

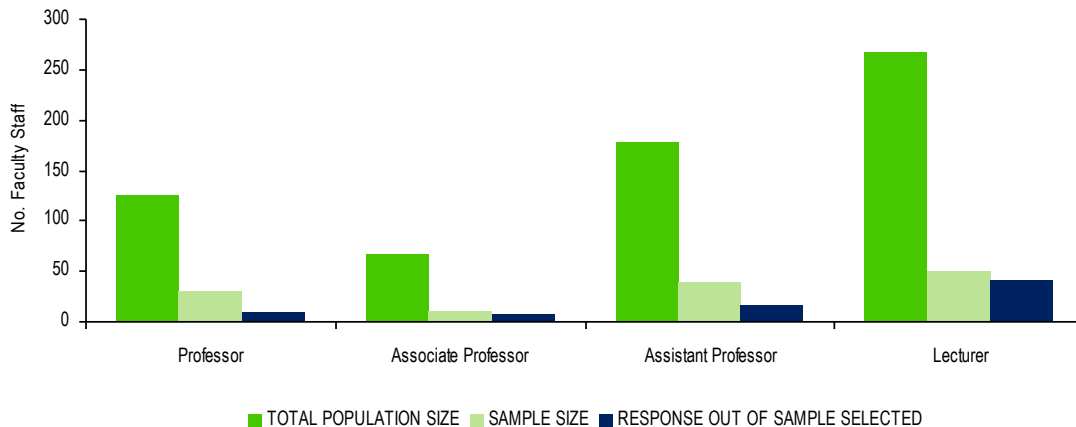


Fig. 2. Population, sample and response analysis

Table 1. Faculty demographic analysis – experience

Experience (years)	Professors		Associate professor		Assistant professors		Lecturer		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
0-5	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	17	41%	17	22%
5-10	0	0%	0	0%	2	12%	14	34%	16	21%
10-15	0	0%	0	13%	7	41%	7	17%	15	20%
15-20	1	0%	0	0%	5	29%	2	5%	7	9%
20 and above	10	100%	7	88%	3	18%	1	2%	21	28%
Total	11	100%	7	100%	17	100%	41	100%	76	100%

The correlation of surgency, conscientiousness, adjustment, openness to experience and agreeableness with transparency and fairness of PBI's are .40, .346, .345, .326 and .313 respectively. The proposition of satisfaction transparency and fairness with PBI's are strongly correlated with perceived research performance registering a value of 0.595. Results of this study suggest that the five-factor model is good for assessing the satisfaction level of faculty with transparency of performance based compensation system and particularly with research job performance. In particular, the traits of Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Conscientiousness displayed moderate correlations with research job satisfaction and satisfaction with fairness of compensation system based on performance as TTS.

In Table 7, types of incentives at Punjab University are given where 63% of the respondents are of the view that they are getting combination of both financial and non financial incentives. In addition to that types of financial and non-financial incentives available to respondents in terms of percentage are presented graphically in Figs. 3 and 4. That is showing the extent and types of incentives given in one of the largest and oldest university of Pakistan. Key risks and challenges are

presented in Fig. 5; it has been observed that greatest risk faced by the performance based incentive system is lack of vision and strategic direction, followed by lack of transparency and teacher involvement in the process. Similarly vague or ambiguous policies and procedures and lack of funding and resources have also been identified as threats to existing PBI system. So, to improve the performance based incentive system, the Human Resource and Performance Reward Committees of the University must review the situation afresh and take necessary steps to mitigate these risks and challenges.

Table 2. Faculties demographic analysis – qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
PhD	29	37%
M.Phil/MS	26	35%
Masters	22	28%
Total	77	100%

Table 3. Reliability analysis – scale (alpha)

Reliability coefficients	
No. of cases = 76	No. of Items = 63
Alpha = .850	

Table 4. Gamma test–satisfaction with PBIs and teacher performance

		Value	Asymp. Std. error	Approx. Tb	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by ordinal	Gamma	0.460	0.069	6.590	0.000
N of valid cases		76			

Table 5. Symmetric measures – transparency and fairness Incentives and teacher performance in research

		Value	Asymp. Std. error	Approx. T	Approx. sig.
Ordinal by ordinal	Gamma	.252	.087	2.867	.004
N of valid cases		76			

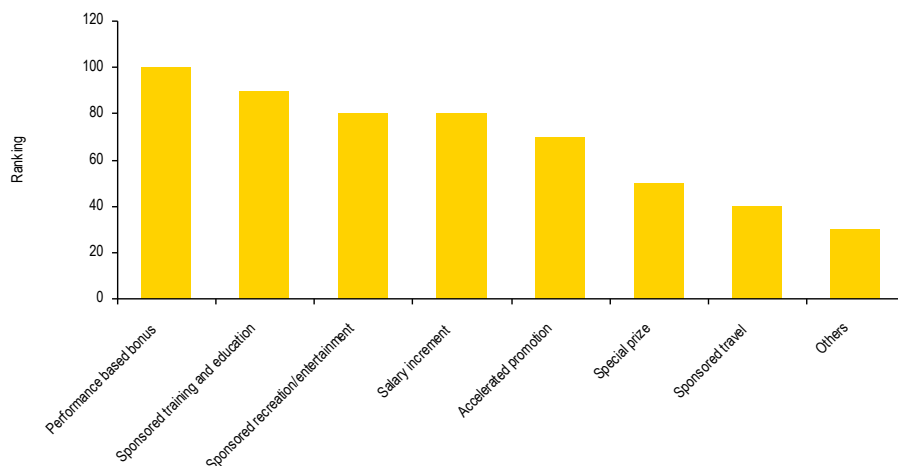


Fig. 3. Financial benefits

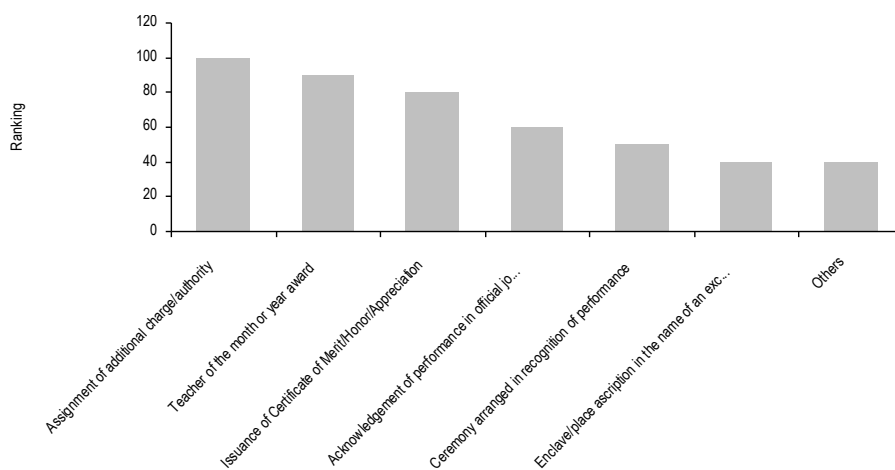


Fig. 4. Non-financial benefits (in percentage)

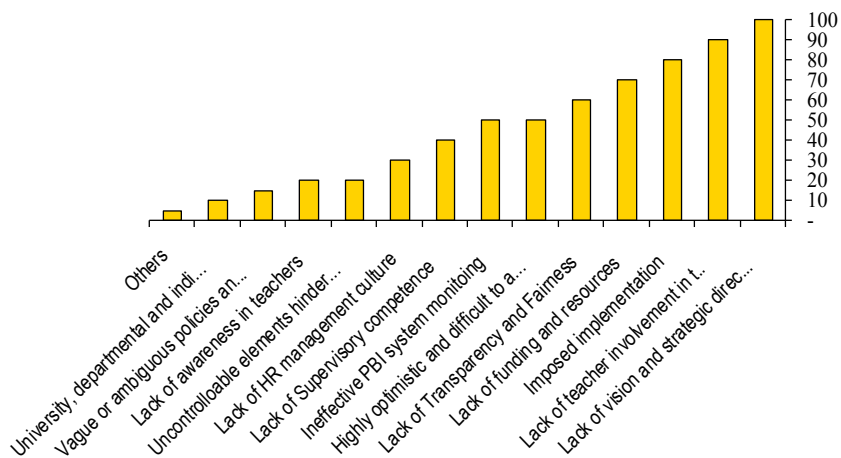


Fig. 5. Ranking of risks and challenges (in percentage)

Table 6. Correlation among personality traits, transparency and fairness of PBI's and teacher research performance

		Research performance	Transparency and fairness of PBI	Surgency	Agreeableness	Adjustment	Conscientiousness	Openness to experience
Research performance	Pearson correlation	1.000	.595	.749	.644	.700	.715	.676
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
transparency and fairness of PBI	Pearson correlation	.595	1.000	.400	.326	.345	.346	.313
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.007	.004	.002	.002	.006
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
Surgency	Pearson correlation	.749	.400	1.000	.832	.812	.846	.838
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
Agreeableness	Pearson correlation	.644	.326	.832	1.000	.599	.709	.892
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.004	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
Adjustment	Pearson correlation	.700	.345	.812	.599	1.000	.987	.855
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.0002	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
Conscientiousness	Pearson correlation	.715	.346	.846	.709	.987	1.000	.927
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
Openness to experience	Pearson correlation	.676	.313	.838	.892	.855	.927	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.0061	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76	76

Table 7. Types of incentives at Punjab University

Position	Financial		Non-financial		Combination of both		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Professors	1	9%	0	0%	10	91%	11	100%
Associate professors	1	14%	2	29%	4	57%	7	100%
Assistant professors	4	24%	2	12%	11	65%	17	100%
Lecturer	3	7%	2	5%	36	88%	41	100%
Total	9	12%	6	8%	48	63%	76	100%

5. CONCLUSION

Surgency, Adjustment and Conscientiousness indicate strong correlations with research performance and satisfaction with transparency and fairness of currently available PBI system in the university. So the role of five-factor model in this context is indeed effective. Better understanding of the personality types is very important for taking significant decisions like recruitment and selection, allocating duties, training, compensation and promotions. The study reveals that higher degree of research performance could be achieved through not only well understanding personality traits but also through a fair and transparent performance based incentive system. Some of the suggestions include (a) better comprehending the personality traits, (b) greater level of representation of different factions of faculty staff in the entire performance based incentive system and related committees, (c) fair and unbiased supervision and decision making, (d) appropriate alignment of PBIs with university and departmental culture and organizational structure, (e) increasing the quantum of financial incentives, and (f) to preempt, mitigate and control key risk and challenges faced by the existing performance based incentive system such as lack of vision and strategic direction, lack of transparency and fairness, lack of teacher involvement in the process.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

It is to mention here that the study was approved by an ethics committee.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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