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Linking HEXACO Personality Traits to Affective Commitment and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour in Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract. This study aimed to assess the connection between HEXACO personality traits (i.e. honesty–humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience) and knowledge sharing behaviour (KSB) of university academic staff. Moreover, based on the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), this study aimed to examine the underlying process through which HEXACO personality traits contribute to academics' KSB by examining mediating role of affective commitment. With a structured questionnaire survey, the data was conveniently collected from 234 full-time university faculty members employed in 20 private universities located in Bangladesh. Structural equation modelling partial least square (SEM-PLS) was utilised to analyse the research model. The results revealed that, with the exception of emotionality, all HEXACO personality traits (i.e. honesty–humility, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience) have positive direct effects on academics' KSB. The study further showed that the effects of honesty–humility, extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness on KSB were significantly mediated by affective commitment. Thus, universities should focus on academics' personality profiles to improve knowledge sharing practices within the institutions. In particular, personality test should be introduced in the selection process of university teachers to identify the candidates with desirable personality traits. The findings

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offer a new understanding of how HEXACO personality traits result in academics' KSB directly as well as via affective commitment.

Keywords: Knowledge sharing behaviour; personality traits; HEXACO personality traits; organisational commitment; affective commitment; higher education institutions.

1. Introduction

In today's knowledge-based economy, organisations view knowledge as the most strategically important resource, largely due to its high immobility and heterogeneity (Turulja and Bajgoric, 2018). Thus, effective knowledge management (KM), which involves the creation, sharing, and application of knowledge, is crucial for attaining an organisation's sustained competitive edge (Sahibzada *et al.*, 2020). Particularly, knowledge sharing (KS), as a key constituent and collaborative aspect of KM, serves as a mechanism for individuals and institutions to generate, present, and disseminate their intellectual knowledge (Abdel Fattah *et al.*, 2021). The act of KS tends to make a substantial contribution to employee and organisational performance (Jamshed, and Majeed, 2019; Son *et al.*, 2020; Swanson *et al.*, 2020) through fostering employees' creativity (Zhang *et al.*, 2018), learning (Kim and Park, 2020; Lin *et al.*, 2020), innovation (Asurakkody and Kim, 2020), problem solving (Carmeli *et al.*, 2013), knowledge creation (Akhavan *et al.*, 2012), knowledge utilisation (Zaim *et al.*, 2019), team effectiveness (Lin *et al.*, 2020), and knowledge management performance (Zaim *et al.*, 2019).

KS holds utmost importance for higher education institutions (HEIs) as they function as knowledge hubs, emphasising their fundamental purpose of generating, utilising, and transmitting knowledge (Al-Kurdi *et al.*, 2020). In the present era, HEIs are confronted with increasing demands for transparency, competitiveness, and quality, compelling them to enhance and disclose their processes of knowledge creation and transfer (Quarchioni *et al.*, 2022). These institutions are now held accountable for their contribution towards cultivating highly skilled and knowledgeable professionals, as well as generating new knowledge to drive innovation and globally competitive economic development (Veer-Ramjeawon and Rowley, 2020). In response to these escalating pressures and responsibilities of HEIs, a significant competitive edge may arise from sharing and harnessing knowledge, skills, and expertise available within their academic communities (Al-Kurdi *et al.*, 2020). Indeed, academic excellence, learning and teaching, collective research work, innovation, and institutional performance all can benefit from KS among the academics in HEIs (Karim, 2020). However, research on academics' KS is limited (Al-Kurdi *et al.*, 2020; Fullwood *et al.*, 2019). Moreover, academics are often found passive and reluctant in sharing knowledge with each other (Chalak *et al.*, 2014; Karim and Majid, 2019; Karim and Majid, 2022; Ramayah *et al.*, 2013), mainly due to their idiosyncratic personalities and individualistic job nature (Al-Kurdi *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, this study seeks to address how to scale up KS among academics in HEIs.

KS comprises of sharing of both explicit and tacit knowledge (Karim and Majid, 2018). Explicit KS involves sharing of codified knowledge, such as reports, documents, policies and procedures or published materials; whereas tacit KS entails sharing of an individual's personal knowledge, such as expertise, experiences, insights, understandings, and intuitions (Lei *et al.*, 2021). Sharing of both tacit and explicit knowledge is essential, since they are complementary to each other (Sánchez *et al.*, 2013). KS in academia is generally affected by organisational, individual, and technological factors (Al-Kurdi *et al.*, 2020). At individual level, a person's motivation on KS is often inherent to his/her personality traits (Rahman *et al.*, 2018; Pei-Lee *et al.*, 2011). Accordingly, a great number of studies explored relationship between personality traits and knowledge sharing behaviour (KSB) across the sectors (e.g. Agyemang *et al.*, 2016; Khan and Zaman, 2020; Obrenovic *et al.*, 2020; Pei-Lee *et al.*, 2011; Pour and Taheri, 2019; Rahman *et al.*, 2018; Rehman *et al.*, 2017). However, these above studies mainly focused on the role of Big Five Personality traits in KS, while the role of HEXACO personality traits remains unexplored. Although Big Five Personality traits are commonly used for assessing human personality, recent evidence suggests that HEXACO traits (honesty–humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience) might be more accurate in describing individual personality (Pletzer, 2021). Therefore, this study proposes and aims to examine the role of HEXACO traits on KSB of academics. Moreover, relying on the argument of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) that personality traits cause behaviour through the mediating constructs such as attitudes (Ajzen, 2020), the study proposes an intervening mechanism in which HEXACO personalities will optimise their KSB through exhibiting greater affective commitment (AC) towards the organisation.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *HEXACO personality traits and knowledge sharing behaviour*

The HEXACO model of personality differentiates individuals into six personality domains, namely, "Honesty–Humility (H), Emotionality (E), Extraversion (X), Agreeableness (A), Conscientiousness (C), and Openness to Experience (O)" (Aston *et al.*, 2014, p. 139). This model overlaps with the Big Five model, especially for Extraversion, Conscientiousness, and Openness and defers from the later in the contents of Neuroticism (Emotionality in the HEXACO model) and Agreeableness, and also contains a new domain, i.e. Honesty–Humility (Lee and Ashton, 2020b; Mieda and Oshio, 2021).

Honesty–Humility

Honesty–Humility (HH) is a personality dimension that characterises an individual as fair, honest, sincere, non-materialistic, unselfish, and modest (Guo *et al.*, 2021; Garbe *et al.*, 2020; Wang, *et al.*, 2022). Individuals with this personality type are

usually more cooperative, sincere and supportive to others and are thus more likely to engage in organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) (Wendler *et al.*, 2018). Scholars also discovered a positive link between HH and OCB (Ahmad and Shahid, 2020; Anglim *et al.*, 2018; Bourdage *et al.*, 2018; Oh *et al.*, 2014). KS is considered as a kind of other-serving OCB (Rosendaal and Bijlsma-Frankema, 2015), which seems to be more prevalent among employees with greater HH (Wingate *et al.*, 2019). In general, individuals high on HH tend to be more altruistic and benevolent (Bourdage *et al.*, 2018), which may drive them to share their knowledge voluntarily with co-workers. Thus, we postulate that:

(H1) Honesty–Humility is positively associated with KSB.

Emotionality

Emotionality usually covers the personality aspects of sentimentality, fearfulness, vulnerability, anxiety, and dependence, while low emotionality represents fearlessness, toughness, and detachment (Gilliland *et al.*, 2018; Howard, 2021). Emotionality also encompasses facets such as empathy, attachment and kin altruism (Hilbig *et al.*, 2013; Piatak and Holt, 2020). In general, individuals with emotionality traits tend to experience emotional connections with and empathetic concerns for others and, hence, engage in altruistic behaviour (Brink, 2014). In contrast, individuals with low emotionality tend to feel emotionally detached from co-workers (Ripley, 2019). Moreover, despite inconsistency in some findings (Kuykendall, 2019; Louw *et al.*, 2016; Pletzer *et al.*, 2021), few studies demonstrate that emotionality significantly forecasts other-serving OCB (Kuykendall, 2019; Szabó *et al.*, 2018). KSB is a kind of OCB (Hao *et al.*, 2019). Considering the association of emotionality with altruism and other-serving OCB, it can be inferred that individuals with greater emotionality are more likely to share their knowledge with others. Thus, we assume our second research hypothesis as follows:

(H2) Emotionality is positively associated with KSB.

Extraversion

Individuals with high extraversion are usually expressive, sociable, bold, cheerful, outgoing, and lively (Ashton and Lee, 2007). Since extraverts are more outgoing, sociable, active, confident, assertive, and positive-minded (Allen *et al.*, 2021). Extraverts generally possess greater social skills and motivation for cooperating and exchanging knowledge with others (Gupta, 2008). Moreover, extraverts are more enthusiastic, interactive, friendly, collaborative, and altruistic, and thus are more likely to share knowledge with others (Lv *et al.*, 2022). Previous studies also demonstrate that extraverts tend to be emotionally expressive, sociable and more inclined to KS in the workplace (Abbas *et al.*, 2018; Agyemang *et al.*, 2016; Pour and Taheri, 2019). Therefore, we hypothesise that:

(H3) Extraversion is positively associated with KSB.

Agreeableness

According to HEXACO framework, individuals with high agreeableness tend to be gentle, peaceful, agreeable, and patient, whereas individuals scoring low in agreeableness are likely to be quick-tempered, choleric, stubborn, and quarrelsome (Thielmann *et al.*, 2022). Generally, agreeable individuals are more sensitive and considerate to the need of others (Wang *et al.*, 2021). Moreover, these individuals nourish relationship and working with others, demonstrate helpful and supportive behaviours to others, and thus are more inclined to KS (Farrukh *et al.*, 2020; Zhang *et al.*, 2016). Several studies also discovered a positive association between agreeableness and KS (Farrukh *et al.*, 2020; Opesade and Alade, 2021). We conjecture the following hypothesis:

(H4) Agreeableness is positively associated with KSB.

Conscientiousness

Being organised, careful, disciplined, diligent, and precise are the key attributes of individuals with conscientiousness (Lee and Ashton, 2020a). Conscientious individuals are usually more responsible, devoted, reliable, and cooperative and thus are more active in exhibiting extra-role behaviours, leading them to share their knowledge with others (Khan and Zaman, 2020). Moreover, since they tend to be dutiful and responsible, they share knowledge to keep work activities going well or to resolve work problems (Cui, 2017). A substantial association between conscientiousness and KS was explored in few early studies (Harb *et al.*, 2021; Hamza, *et al.*, 2023; Obrenovic *et al.*, 2022). Considering the characteristics of agreeableness and previous study findings, we postulate the fifth research hypothesis:

(H5) Conscientiousness is positively associated with KSB.

Openness to experience

Individuals with openness to experience tend to be unconventional, creative, intellectual, innovative, and ironic (Lee and Ashton, 2020a). Individuals with greater openness are receptive to new knowledge and information, making them more capable of acquiring and sharing knowledge (Matzler *et al.*, 2008). They can swiftly accept knowledge from others and expedite the rate at which knowledge is shared (Zhang *et al.*, 2019). Few previous studies also discovered a significant and strong relationship of openness to experience with KS (Farrukh *et al.*, 2020; Shaukat *et al.*, 2023). Thus, the following hypothesis is postulated:

(H6) Openness to experience is positively associated with KSB.

2.2. *Role of affective commitment as a mediator*

Personality traits should have strong association with employees' attitudes such as organisational commitment (Albrecht and Marty, 2020). Being honest, reliable and sincere, *HH individuals* tend to be more acceptable to co-workers, uphold moral principles, and value their loyalty to the organisation (Alagan and Shanker, 2022). Moreover, HH inversely relates with turnover intention (Szabó *et al.*, 2021), indicating their greater loyalty to organisation. *Emotionality* excludes hostility and embraces sentimentality (Breevaart and de Vries, 2021) which make emotional individuals feel strong emotional attachments with and empathic concern for others (Ashton *et al.*, 2014) and thus may facilitate their emotional bond with the workplace. A strong sense of responsibility, punctuality, and hard-work of *conscientious individuals* should result in a greater attachment with their organisation (Barza and Galanakis, 2022). Loyalty, trustfulness and compliance tendencies of *agreeable people* should help them develop and maintain harmonious and positive connection with other organisation members, thereby resulting in a pleasant work environment and reinforcing their bond with the organisation (Choi *et al.*, 2015). Being active, enthusiastic and social, *extroverts* are more likely to develop identification and attachment with their organisation (Korankye *et al.*, 2021). Although the conceptual connection between being *openness to experience* and organisational commitment is little established (Albrecht and Marty, 2020), few studies explored a positive association between openness to experience and affective commitment (Khiavi *et al.*, 2016; Syed *et al.*, 2015). Generally, individuals with high openness have greater understanding of workplace's complex tasks and social dynamics, and thus are more adaptable to the working context (Young *et al.*, 2018), which may contribute to their bond with the organisation. Therefore, HEXACO personalities are assumed to have a favourable effect on academics' AC. Affectively committed academics, in turn, are likely to actively engage in desired behaviours like KSB. Since AC demonstrates an employees' positive orientation toward and attachment with the workplace, they tend to skilfully perform activities that support their organisation and co-workers, and thus share their knowledge with co-workers for the purpose of assisting them in completing their tasks more quickly and effectively (Lombardi *et al.*, 2019). Likewise, a positive link between AC and KSB is clearly indicated in many recent studies (Naeem *et al.*, 2019; Lombardi *et al.*, 2019; Luo *et al.*, 2021; Ficapal-Cusí *et al.*, 2020).

Moreover, the TPB postulates that personality traits as background factors influence attitudes (i.e. proximal factors/immediate antecedents of behaviour) which in turn elicit a particular kind of behaviour (Ajzen, 2020; Maasberg *et al.*, 2015). Accordingly, it is assumed that HEXACO personality traits which represent favourable background factors will contribute to AC (i.e. desirable attitude), which may subsequently inspire the individuals to engage in desired behaviour such as KSB. Accordingly, the study assumes the following hypotheses:

(H7) AC mediates between honesty–humility and KSB.

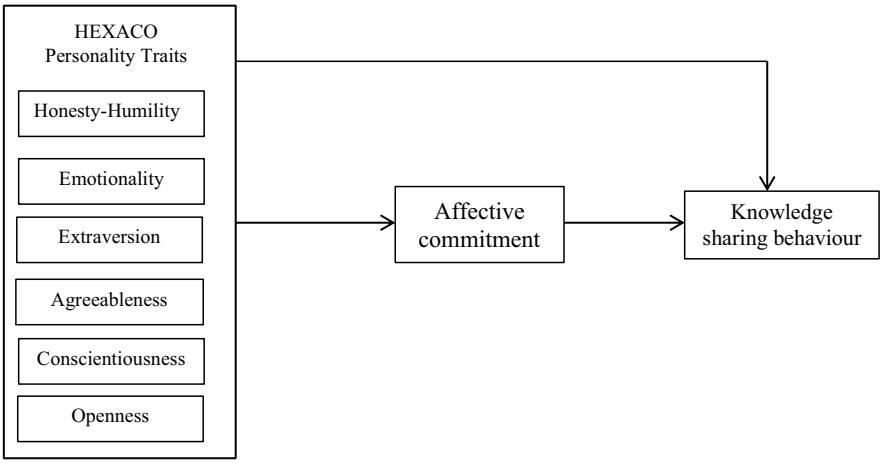


Fig. 1. Proposed research framework.

(H8) AC mediates between emotionality and KSB.

(H9) AC mediates extraversion between and KSB.

(H10) AC mediates between agreeableness and KSB.

(H11) AC mediates between conscientiousness and KSB.

(H12) AC mediates between openness to experience and KSB.

Accordingly, the proposed research model is presented in Fig. 1.

3. Methodology

3.1. *Participants*

The study targeted all academic staff serving in the private universities located in Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh. After obtaining authorisation from the concerned universities, an electronic survey with a structured questionnaire was conducted from September 2022 to February 2023 to gather data from the respondents. Each questionnaire provided to the participants contained a forwarding note explaining the study's objectives, instructions, and a request to complete the survey within four weeks. The survey respondents were assured of their privacy and anonymity and were fully informed of the research's purpose. Moreover, all individuals who participated in the study did so voluntarily and had the option to decline participation. Additionally, the Biosafety, Biosecurity and Ethical Committee of Jahangirnagar University provided approval for the study. A distribution of 700 questionnaires to the academic staff of 20 universities resulted in obtaining 234 valid responses with a response rate of 33.43%.

In terms of the characteristics of the participants, six different demographic factors were collected. Regarding age, 39.7% of the academic staff were 30 years or younger and 49.1% fell into the 31–40 age range, whereas smaller percentages, i.e. 8.5% and 2.6% fell into the 41–50 and above 50 ranges, respectively. The gender breakdown was 67.5% male and 32.5% female, while the majority of participants (80.8%) were married and the rest (19.2%) were unmarried. Most of the attendees were lecturers (44.9%) followed by a decreasing trend in other categories, such as assistant professors (37.2%), associate professors (14.1), and professors (3.8%). When it came to education, 76.9% of participants had obtained a master's degree, with smaller percentages having earned a PhD (18.8%), an MPhil (2.6%) and bachelor's degree (1.7%). Experience as a university teacher ranged from less than 5 years (45.7%) to 6–10 years (40.6%), 11–15 years (8.1%) and 16 years and above (5.6%).

3.2. *Measures*

In order to quantify the various variables, the researchers in this study employed five-point Likert scales, where participants rated their responses on a scale from 1, indicating "strongly disagree", to 5, indicating "strongly agree". The measurement of HEXACO personality traits involved 20 items, with each personality category being assessed using 4 items adapted from the work of Schumacher and Zettler (2019). To assess KSB, the researchers used 5 items that were outlined by Huang (2009). Finally, the researchers measured AC with a six-item measure taking from the study of Vandenberghe and Bentein (2009).

3.3. *Data analysis techniques*

The research utilised SPSS version 25 to assess descriptive statistics and perform corrections, while employing PLS-SEM to analyse the associations between the variables of the study. The PLS-SEM is a variance-based structural equation modelling method which has increasingly been popular in quantitative research within social sciences, including management and organisational studies (Legate *et al.*, 2023). Moreover, there has been a notable uptick in the utilisation of this analytic tool in higher education research, particularly in studies aimed at providing explanations and making predictions (Ghasemy *et al.*, 2020). In addition, this tool enables researchers to estimate complex models with many constructs and structural paths, without the requirement of data normality, and large sample size (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Since the data of the study were not found to be normal and the sample size is relatively small, this study decides to use PLS-SEM to analyse the research model.

4. Results

4.1. *Descriptive statistics and correlation*

Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics for our study's variables. In accordance with the findings, there exists a significant positive correlation among HEXACO personality traits, AC, and KSB.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and correlation of scales.

SL	Latent Variables	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Honesty–Humility	3.384	0.670	—							
2.	Emotionality	3.287	0.519	0.154*							
3.	Extraversion	3.569	0.692	0.353**	0.132*						
4.	Agreeableness	3.559	0.628	0.088	0.099	0.230**					
5.	Conscientiousness	3.449	0.645	0.094	0.211**	0.015	0.155*				
6.	Openness	3.614	0.613	0.079	0.121	0.106	0.164*	0.007			
7.	AC	3.634	0.522	0.449**	0.244**	0.433**	0.283**	0.332**	0.111		
8.	KSB	3.807	0.608	0.413**	0.167*	0.423**	0.372**	0.257**	0.208**	0.559**	—

Notes: S.D. = standard deviation; AC = affective commitment; KSB = knowledge sharing behaviour; * and ** denote significance of the correlations at 5% and 1% (2-tailed).

Table 2. VIFs from a full collinearity test.

Constructs	VIF Values
A	1.093
AC	1.152
C	1.123
E	1.109
HH	1.404
KSB	1.480
O	1.063
Random	—
X	1.425

Notes: A = agreeableness, AC = affective commitment, C = conscientiousness, E = emotionality, HH = honesty–humility, KSB = knowledge sharing behaviour, O = openness, X = extraversion.

4.2. *Common method bias*

The research tackled the concerns related to common method variance (CMV) in the following manner: (1) a pre-emptive approach was employed, guaranteeing the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents to elicit honest responses (Fu *et al.*, 2022); (2) By utilising Harman's single-factor test, the study found that no factor explained over 22.138% of the variance; and (3) The study employed a full collinearity test to assess CMV, which is considered a superior and cautious method (Kock, 2015). The test evaluated both vertical (predictor–predictor) and horizontal (predictor–criterion) collinearity among the variables. The results in Table 2 showed that all VIFs for the predictor and criterion variables were less than the threshold of 3.3 (Kock, 2015), thus confirming the absence of any collinearity issue in the study's dataset.

Table 3. CMV testing with measured marker.

	Affective Commitment				Knowledge Sharing Behaviour			
Constructs	β without marker	β with marker	R^2 without marker	R^2 with marker	β without marker	β with marker	R^2 without marker	R^2 with marker
Agreeableness	0.137	0.149	0.421	0.428	0.184	0181	0.457	0.470
AC	—	—			0.343	0.344		
Conscientiousness	0.187	0.176			0.123	0.127		
Emotionality	0.056	0.050			0.009	0.006		
Honesty–humility	0.302	0.311			0.166	0.154		
KSB	—	—			—	—		
Openness	0.025	0.024			0.112	0.118		
Extraversion	0.347	0.338			0.135	0.134		

Finally, our investigation employed the measured latent marker variable (MLMV) technique, as described by Chin *et al.* (2013), to detect any potential CMV. A totally unrelated variable (i.e. facility aesthetics) with 4 items from the work of Ariffin *et al.* (2013) was used as our measured marker variable. We compared the β and R^2 values of the study's variables before and after the inclusion of the marker variable to ensure that any differences were not significant. We found that there were no substantial discrepancies in the R^2 and β values with and without the measured marker variable, as shown in Table 3, suggesting that CMV did not influence our dataset.

4.3. *Assessment of the measurement model*

PLS-SEM was utilised in the study, with the initial phase focused on evaluating the measurement model and the subsequent phase focused on assessing the structural model. The evaluation of the measurement model in the study encompassed measuring multiple elements relating to reliability and validity of the variables, as shown in Table 4. After elimination of a single item (AC6) due to poor loading (i.e. 0.326), all individual items surpassed the recommended 0.70 level, except 3 items (E2, E3, AC5) which exceeded the acceptable 0.6 thresholds for item reliability. Internal consistency was confirmed for all variables in the study, as evidenced by Cronbach's α, rho_A and CR values ranging from 0.766 to 0.899, 0.795 to 0.932 and 0.846 to 0.930, respectively. Convergent validity was also confirmed, as all constructs exceeded the AVE threshold of 0.5 (AVE values ranged from 0.551 to 0.771). Moreover, the study evaluated discriminant validity of the model using the criterion of heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio, as presented in Table 5. Since none of the HTMT values exceeded the suggested value of 0.85, as proposed by Henseler *et al.* (2015), there is no issue of discriminant validity in the study. In addition, the study met the discriminant validity criteria of Fornell–Larcker and cross loadings.

Table 4. Measurement model.

Constructs	Items	SL	α	rho_A	CR	AVE
Honesty–Humility	HH1	0.785	0.802	0.815	0.871	0.629
	HH2	0.777				
	HH3	0.867				
	HH4	0.736				
Emotionality	E1	0.882	0.766	0.848	0.846	0.583
	E2	0.647				
	E3	0.636				
	E4	0.856				
Extraversion	X1	0.742	0.818	0.833	0.879	0.646
	X2	0.851				
	X3	0.792				
	X4	0.826				
Agreeableness	A1	0.790	0.784	0.795	0.860	0.605
	A2	0.727				
	A3	0.809				
	A4	0.784				
Conscientiousness	C1	0.936	0.899	0.932	0.930	0.771
	C2	0.717				
	C3	0.921				
	C4	0.920				
Openness	O1	0.842	0.791	0.816	0.863	0.613
	O2	0.700				
	O3	0.792				
	O4	0.792				
Affective Commitment	AC1	0.743	0.795	0.807	0.859	0.551
	AC2	0.776				
	AC3	0.821				
	AC4	0.723				
	AC5	0.636				
Knowledge Sharing Behaviour	KSB1	0.804	0.861	0.865	0.900	0.643
	KSB2	0.847				
	KSB3	0.759				
	KSB4	0.803				
	KSB5	0.794				

4.4. *Assessment of the structural model*

The structural modelling was performed with 10,000 bootstrap samples to estimate postulated connections between the exogenous and endogenous variables used in the model. To evaluate the structural model, Hair Jr. *et al.* (2020) recommended assessing it using various issues, including collinearity, path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and hypothesis testing, as presented in Table 6 and Fig. 2.

Table 5. Heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT).

Construct	A	AC	C	E	HH	KSB	O	X
A	—							
AC	0.352	—						
C	0.192	0.299	—					
E	0.131	0.251	0.259	—				
HH	0.197	0.587	0.117	0.197	—			
KSB	0.453	0.690	0.291	0.211	0.496	—		
O	0.210	0.134	0.083	0.179	0.112	0.251	—	
X	0.291	0.605	0.084	0.195	0.438	0.506	0.141	—

Table 6. Outcomes of the structural model.

Direct Hypotheses										
Hs	Paths	β	SE	T values	P values	f^2	Q^2	R^2	BCCI (5%–95%)	Supported
H1	HH → KSB	0.166	0.063	2.650**	0.004	0.04	0.278	0.457	[0.062–0.268]	Yes
H2	E → KSB	0.009	0.053	0.173	0.431	0.00			[–0.089–0.089]	No
H3	X → KSB	0.135	0.057	2.350**	0.009	0.03			[0.040–0.228]	Yes
H4	A → KSB	0.184	0.057	3.247***	0.001	0.05			[0.087–0.272]	Yes
H5	C → KSB	0.123	0.059	2.094*	0.018	0.03			[0.024–0.217]	Yes
H6	O → KSB	0.112	0.053	2.107*	0.018	0.02			[0.017–0.191]	Yes
—	HH → AC	0.302	0.058	5.183***	0.000	0.13	0.217	0.421	[0.203–0.395]	Yes
—	E → AC	0.056	0.055	1.019	0.154	0.01			[–0.043–0.137]	—
—	X → AC	0.347	0.062	5.636***	0.000	0.17			[0.243–0.446]	—
—	A → AC	0.137	0.059	2.340**	0.010	0.03			[0.040–0.234]	—
—	C → AC	0.187	0.049	3.792***	0.000	0.06			[0.109–0.272]	—
—	O → AC	0.025	0.056	0.457	0.324	0.00			[–0.077–0.107]	—
—	AC → KSB	0.343	0.062	5.563***	0.000	0.13			[0.244–0.447]	—
Mediating Hypotheses										
Hs	Paths	β	SE	T values	P values	f^2	Q^2	R^2	BCCI (5%–95%)	Supported
H7	HH → AC → KSB	0.104	0.028	3.647***	0.000				[0.064–0.161]	Yes
H8	E → AC → KSB	0.019	0.019	1.033	0.151				[–0.013–0.047]	No
H9	X → AC → KSB	0.119	0.028	4.282***	0.000				[0.081–0.176]	Yes
H10	A → AC → KSB	0.047	0.022	2.136*	0.016				[0.017–0.090]	Yes
H11	C → AC → KSB	0.064	0.022	2.953**	0.002				[0.035–0.109]	Yes
H12	O → AC → KSB	0.009	0.019	0.453	0.325				[–0.025–0.038]	No

Notes: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$(one-tailed test) based on 10,000 bootstrapping. A = agreeableness, AC = affective commitment, C = conscientiousness, E = emotionality, HH = honesty–humility, KSB = knowledge sharing behaviour, O = openness, X = extraversion, BCCI = bias-corrected confidence intervals.

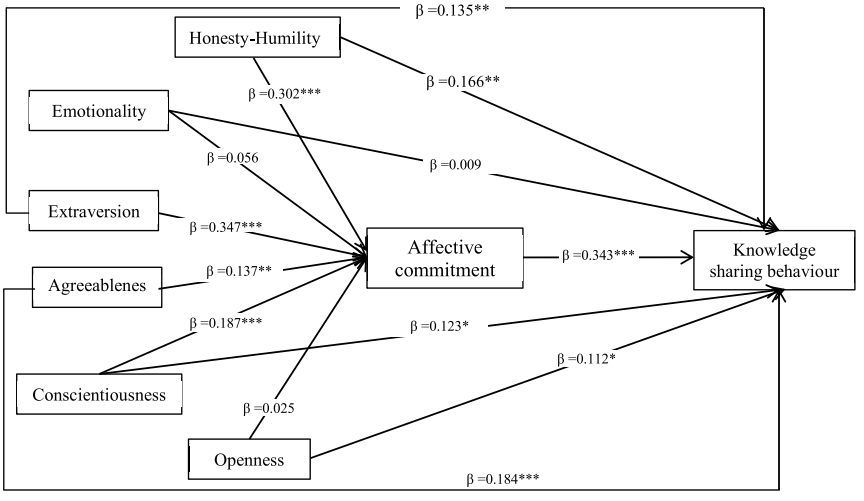


Fig. 2. Output of structural model.

As shown in Table 2, none of the VIF values exceeded 3.3, indicating the non-appearance of multicollinearity, as per Kock's (2015) criterion. The study also evaluated the determination coefficient (R^2) to determine the variance explained by the structural model, where the acceptable value must be greater than 0.10, as suggested by Falk and Miller (1992). The study demonstrates that HEXACO personality traits are responsible for explaining 42.1% of the variance in AC; and these personality traits, along with AC, account for 45.7% of the variance in KSB. According to Chin (1998) criterion, this study demonstrated a moderate R^2 value. The effect sizes were determined using Cohen's f^2, where values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 correspond to small, medium, and large effects, respectively (Cohen, 1988). Moreover, all of the endogenous constructs in Table 6 had Q^2 values (0.278 and 0.217) above 0, which implies that the model's predictive capability is acceptable. According to the study's results based on path coefficients, KSB is significantly influenced by honesty–humility ($\beta = 0.166$, $t = 2.650$, $p < 0.01$), extraversion ($\beta = 0.135$, $t = 2.350$, $p < 0.01$), agreeableness ($\beta = 0.184$, $t = 3.247$, $p < 0.001$), conscientiousness ($\beta = 0.112$, $t = 2.094$, $p < 0.05$), and openness ($\beta = 0.112$, $t = 2.107$, $p < 0.05$), lending support to hypotheses (H1), (H3)–(H6), respectively. However, emotionality ($\beta = 0.009$, $t = 0.173$, $p > 0.05$) failed to significantly affect KSB.

In addition, AC was found to be a significant mediator between honesty–humility and KSB ($\beta = 0.104$, $t = 3.647$, $p < 0.001$), between extraversion and KSB ($\beta = 0.119$, $t = 4.282$, $p < 0.001$), between agreeableness and KSB ($\beta = 0.047$, $t = 2.136$, $p < 0.05$), and between conscientiousness and KSB ($\beta = 0.064$, $t = 2.953$, $p < 0.01$), thereby

supporting the hypotheses (H7), (H9)–(H11), respectively. However, AC did not mediate the link between emotionality and KSB ($\beta = 0.019$, $t = 1.033$, $p > 0.05$), and between openness and KSB ($\beta = 0.009$, $t = 0.453$, $p > 0.05$).

5. Discussion

Most of our hypotheses were supported by the findings of this study. Regarding the direct effect, all HEXACO personality traits except emotionality were found to play a significant role in promoting academics' KSB. Accordingly, the study validates the idea that HHs nature of active cooperation and unselfishness encourages individuals to perform citizenship behaviour and voluntarily share knowledge and information with others. This finding is analogous to that of Ahmad and Shahid (2020), Bourdage *et al.* (2018), and Wingate *et al.* (2019). It is also revealed that individuals who are extroverted in the workplace are naturally inclined to seek out opportunities to interact with others, generate new ideas, and exchange information, as confirmed previously by Abou-Shouk *et al.* (2022), Khan and Zaman (2022), Harb *et al.* (2021). In addition, the cooperative and responsible nature of individuals with conscientious traits leads them to build trustful relationships with others, which fosters reciprocity and thus promotes the sharing of knowledge with peers, as agreed by previous studies (e.g. Hao *et al.*, 2019; Khan and Zaman, 2022; Obrenovic *et al.*, 2022). The study also confirmed that agreeable employees are typically more willing to collaborate and share knowledge with others, aligning with existing research (e.g. Abou-Shouk *et al.*, 2022; Akbar *et al.*, 2023). As found in this study, open academics tend to have a greater inclination towards learning and exploring new things, making them more likely to engage in knowledge-sharing, which is in line with Abou-Shouk *et al.* (2022), Akbar *et al.* (2023), Farrukh *et al.* (2020). Contrary to what we had believed, it has been discovered that emotionality does not have a direct effect on KSB. This outcome was not totally unexpected, given that previous studies on emotionality and OCB have also reported similar findings (Anglim *et al.* 2018; Pletzer, 2021). As argued by Pletzer (2021), fearfulness and anxiety facets of emotionality might undermine its effect on citizenship behaviour.

In line with TPB (Ajzen, 1991, 2020), the study also confirmed that AC mediates the relationship between four HEXACO personality traits (i.e. honesty–humility, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) and KSB. According to this, personality traits influence attitude towards the employing organisation and consequently active participation in sharing knowledge. However, AC could not significantly mediate emotionality-KSB link. One potential reason is that individuals with high emotionality appear to be less dutiful to their jobs, co-workers, and organisations (Frolova and Mahmood, 2019; Johnson *et al.*, 2011), which may result in poor organisational commitment and citizenship behaviour. Moreover, openness-AC-KSB link has been found insignificant. One conceivable reason is that open individuals prefer switching jobs to gain more experience, variation in life and personal growth, which may undermine their commitment towards organisation (Farrukh *et al.*, 2017).

5.1. *Theoretical and practical implications*

As far as our understanding goes, the current research is the first to explore the impact of HEXACO personality traits on KSB, making a significant theoretical contribution. Moreover, by studying AC as a linking mechanism, this study provides empirical evidence on how HEXACO traits lead to KSB, thus bridging a gap in the literature. In addition, although previous studies linked personality traits with organisational commitment (e.g. Lee *et al.*, 2020), no study was found to associate HEXACO personality traits with organisational commitment including AC. Therefore, this study significantly advances the literature by establishing a connection between HEXACO personality traits and AC. Furthermore, exploring HEXACO personalities within the context of HEIs has emerged as a recent trend, particularly noted in developed countries (e.g. Lee *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, investigating these personalities within the HEIs in developing countries such as Bangladesh promises to yield fresh insights in the literature. Moreover, the research adds to the TPB by demonstrating that personal characteristics are background factors that can predict behaviour through an attitude which is a closer predictor of behaviour (Ajzen, 2020). Regarding practical implications, the results of this study hold important implications for university administrators in terms of aligning their HRM practices and knowledge management. Specifically, the findings offer a more detailed understanding of why hiring and retaining individuals with right personality traits are crucial in shaping their academics' commitment and KSB. Since personality traits are relatively permanent, university administrators should take initiatives to include personality assessment in their faculty selection criteria, as also suggested by Abou-Shouk *et al.* (2022). In addition, academics with HEXACO personalities except emotionality should be prioritised in important positions (such as research coordinators, collaboration researchers, and program coordinators, departmental heads, etc.) where more KS is required. Moreover, the findings support the notion that academics with greater commitment towards their universities are more likely to engage in benevolent behaviours to their co-workers, such as KSB (Naeem *et al.*, 2019). Thus, universities should make an all-out effort towards improving academics' organisational commitment to boost up their KSB. In this case, HEXACO personality traits might be critical in fostering favourable attitudes among academics, including AC.

5.2. *Limitations and future research directions*

Limitations common to research, such as reliance on convenient sampling, a small sample size, and cross-sectional data, also apply to this study. To improve the applicability of the study's results, probability sampling method, a larger sample size, and preferably a longitudinal study design could be utilised. It is often alleged that convenience sampling runs the risk of producing biased estimates and thus may limit generalisability to the broader target population (Raifman *et al.*, 2022). Thus, it is recommended to conduct future studies using probability

sampling methods to enhance generalisability. Indeed, a sample size within the range of 100–200 should be adequate to support path modelling in PLS-SEM (Ng, 2019). Thus, the study's sample size (i.e. 234) is quite enough to produce robust outcomes based on PLS-SEM. However, future studies with a larger sample size can enhance both statistical power and internal validity, thereby expanding the scope of generalisability (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2010). In a longitudinal study, participants are queried at multiple intervals to gauge the consistency of their responses and to observe the evolving patterns or changes over time (Zikmund *et al.*, 2013). Thus, future longitudinal studies will be helpful to measure whether study results are stable over time. Since this study indicates that attitudes (i.e. AC) can successfully serve as a mediator between HEXACO traits and KSB, it would be valuable to explore other intervening attitudinal and motivational factors between HEXACO traits and KSB. Therefore, forthcoming research could enhance the model by incorporating work engagement, job involvement, intrinsic motivation, and autonomous motivation as mediators. Moreover, the study could be conducted in the context of public HEIs, elementary and secondary education institutions, and other knowledge-driven fields. Lastly, expanding the research to various geographic and sectoral contexts (e.g. banking, IT) can enhance the study's practical implications.

6. Conclusion

Although there have been significant efforts towards expanding higher education in Bangladesh, poor quality of education and lack of research are a common phenomenon in most of the universities. Boosting up KS practices among the academics might be an important way of improving research and academic excellence at these institutions. The findings of the study indicate that academic staff possessing HEXACO traits (i.e. honesty–humility, agreeableness, extraversion, and conscientiousness) are prone to displaying greater commitment towards their universities, leading to a higher likelihood of sharing information and knowledge with their colleagues. Moreover, openness directly contributes to KS. Thus, these personality types should be given preference in the recruitment and selection of university academics.

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