The Effects of Personality and Communication Skill on Employee Job Performance at Multi-national Companies in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Mai Ngoc Khuong, Le Thi My Linh, Nguyen Quan Toan, and Nguyen Thi Minh Phuong

Abstract—The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of five personality traits and communication skill on job performance of employees in multinational companies. Quantitative approach was applied with structured questionnaires directly delivered to 300 staffs of multinational companies (MNCs) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The study found that openness, neuroticism, conscientiousness, and communication skill directly affected employee job performance while agreeableness, extraversion, neuroticism, and conscientiousness indirectly affected job performance through the mediation of communication skill.

Index Terms—Openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, communication skill, job performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has changed the face of the world, especially with the appearance of many MNCs. In that context, Vietnam ranked number three among twenty frontier markets that MNCs were most interested in [1]. By 15/12/2013, 98 countries and territories had invested in Vietnam with $213.6 billion of the total registered investment capital [2]. Until 31/12/2013, there have been 9093 enterprises with FDI throughout Vietnam [3]. This new trend has brought the country both opportunities and challenges. With the policy to localize staffs in order to enter the market better, MNCs operating in Vietnam has provided a lot of jobs for local working professionals. However, due to the densely population with around 77.5% of people in working ages [3], Vietnamese job market is getting more intense. Therefore, so as to maintain one's position at work or to be able to have a good job, a candidate is nowadays required to have more skills which are not only hard skills such as deep knowledge about certain working fields but also soft skills known as communication skill, presentation skill, etc. This becomes a prerequisite, especially when recruiters are big worldwide-known MNCs. Among various types of soft skills, communication skill is considered one of the most important skills at work [4]. This can explain the fact that there have been many institutes, centers and even universities offering courses relating to communication at the workplace. Some common subjects can be mentioned such as Business Communication, Business Etiquette, and Active Listening. It is believed that communication skill can affect someone's job performance thanks to its close relation with the productive mood. The lack of effective communication skills creates conflicts, which can affect the overall performance of each individual as well as the whole team [5]. It is noted that communication skill is affected by many factors which can be external communicating environment [6] and internal motivation of the person himself. Regarding internal factor, communicator's personality is believed to play an essential role in shaping their communication styles because people themselves would be the ones who directly fulfill communicating tasks. Although most of MNCs' workers and management levels today realize the importance of communication, many don't know what specific skills they lack of, what skills need more attention and how strong these skills can influence their job performance. In addition, very little research has been found on the topic of the relationship between one's personality and their communication skill. Therefore, further studies should be done to help people know how communication skill is affected by their personality so that they can adjust themselves to achieve better performance at work.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Communication Skill

Communication is just as important as nutrition or health [7]. Interpersonal communication helps people meet these needs and their other goals through specific messages [8]. In addition, everybody will feel lost and lonely without communication [5]. Communication skills top the list of skills that employers seek for in one candidate [4]. It itself is a multidimensional term. Different reports have different ways to divide this term into sub-groups. This paper approached verbal, non-verbal and para-verbal communication as three most popular categories of communication according to available research in this area.

Verbal communication: Verbal communication is defined as "express your thoughts out loud; speaking" [9]. As the skill strongly relates to spoken abilities, actual words or languages play an essential role to create this communication type [10]. Items of verbal communication in *5 Cs communication* consist of clear, concise, consistent, credible, and courteous [9].

Similarly, being courteous, establishing trust, asking appropriate question, do not interrupt and choose your words carefully are also factors of verbal communication based on the article of California WIC Training Manual 2010 [11].

The authors are with the School of Business, International University, VNU-HCM, Vietnam (e-mail: mnkhuong@hcmiu.edu.vn, windy.linh@gmail.com, nguyentoan146148@gmail.com, minhphuong16@yahoo.com).

The 5 Cs is more detailed and can cover almost every aspects of verbal communication process; however, as this paper focuses on the way people communicate rather than results of following up conversations, "credible" and "consistent" factors were eliminated.

Non-verbal communication: This form of communication is the transmitting information process without using any actual words. Look, a gesture, facial expression, touch and body positioning are some elements of this group [10]. Similarly, another paper suggested that maintain eye contact, present pleasant facial expressions, gesture appropriately, maintain good posture, keep your distance are key items of non-verbal communication [9]. In fact, distance between two communicators should be ignored because most of people can automatically adjust their personal space to the opposite unless on purpose cases. In addition, appearance is also important because a well-groomed person is often impressed colleagues and prospective managers [12]. In short, components of nonverbal communication can be listed as maintaining eye contact, present pleasant facial expression, maintain appropriate posture and gesture and overall appearance caring.

Para-verbal communication: Para-verbal communication is referred as the "vocal part of speech, excluding the actual words one uses" and 15% of the message communicated is under Para-verbal form [13]. "Para-verbal communication can be described as the attributes that 'dress' the words" [10]. The items of Para-verbal communication that are most concerned by researchers are: Voice tone, Rate of speech, Cadence/rhythm of voice ("A fall of the voice in reading or speaking, especially at the end of a sentence" [14]), Volume, Inflection (the raising up and down of one's voice) [15]. Cadence and Inflection factors are the fact much more complicated to observe than other factor, due to the lack of time and capacity, the author chose voice tone, rate of speech and volume – those skills can be evaluated more correctly with participants' answers – as three basics in Para-verbal communication.

B. Big Five Personality Traits

Because human personality is the start of many things in life, for a long time, a lot of researchers have tried to conceptualize the construct in different levels [16]. At the beginning, researchers found it difficult in the field of personality assessment. Many had thought about all the possible scales in specific categories of the area. However, no any single researcher or theory could come up with such an integration. After a long time absorbing the knowledge on the related topic from previous researchers, the most commonly accepted labels of those five factors finally include extraversion (the degree that individuals are gregarious, assertive, and sociable versus reserved, timid, and quiet), agreeableness (the degree to which individuals are cooperative, warm, and agreeable versus cold, disagreeable, and antagonistic), conscientiousness (extent to which individuals are hardworking, organized, dependable, and persevering versus lazy, disorganized, and unreliable), neuroticism (the degree to which the individual is insecure, anxious, depressed, and emotional versus calm,

self-confident, and cool), openness (individuals who are creative, curious, and cultured versus practical with narrow interests) [17]. Those factors then become well-known as "Big Five" [16]. Many researchers agreed that the Big Five dimensions covered all the facets of personalities [16]. The work of following researchers was to figure out how to measure factors of Big Five Theory. Because short measurement scales face the problem of decreasing reliability and validity when there are very few items, it is believed that the BFI-K of Rammstedt and John with 21 items is the most suitable one to assess factors of Big Five due to its "sufficient reliability coefficients and factorial validity" as tested in previous studies [18].

C. Job Performance

Job performance is a widely used construct that has got a lot of attention from many researchers until now. Its definition can be varied from a simple one like "all the behaviors employees engage in while at work" [19] to a more complicated statement. In order to define dimensions of job performance, historically, there are three most common methods: a function of outcomes; a function of behavior and as a function of personal traits. Due to its complexity in analyzing person traits, job performance in term of a function of outcome and behavior is preferred in most of the studies.

To determine the measurement of job performance, there are two different ways of thought. The first group argues that job performance is created by all the various activities of one person at work, even when they are just non-job-specific tasks. Belonging to this group, an influential model including eight dimensions to measure job performance was developed [19]:

1) Job-specific task proficiency: behavior related to core tasks of the job;
2) Non-job-specific task proficiency: general work behavior;
3) Written and oral communication task proficiency;
4) Demonstrating effort: level of commitment to core tasks;
5) Maintaining personal discipline;
6) Facilitating peer and team performance;
7) Supervision/Leadership;
8) Management/Administration.

Unlike the first viewpoint, the other group says that job performance should be measured by the final results of the day and this is more important to an employer than the activities leading to those results [19].

Both points of view have its own advantages and disadvantages [19]. However, this study based on the first method to analyze employees' job performance with eight measurement scales as those detailed items can reflect the effects of employees' activities during the day as well as communication skills about which are the purposes of the study.

The above literature review identified five dimensions of personality as neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversions, and openness. Those five variables are accompanied by communication skill and job performance, from which a conceptual framework is established. The relationships among variables are tested by these following hypothesises:

1) $H_{1.1}$: Extraversion positively affects employee communication skill.
2) $H_{1.2}$: Openness positively affects employee communication skill.
3) $H_{1.3}$: Conscientiousness positively affects employee communication skill.
4) $H_{1.4}$: Agreeableness positively affects employee communication skill.
5) $H_{1.5}$: Neuroticism negatively affects employee communication skill.
6) $H_{2.1}$: Extraversion positively affects employee job performance.
7) $H_{2.2}$: Openness positively affects employee job performance.
8) $H_{2.3}$: Conscientiousness positively affects employee job performance.
9) $H_{2.4}$: Agreeableness positively affects employee job performance.
10) $H_{2.5}$: Neuroticism negatively affects employee job performance.
11) H_3: Employee communication skill positively affects employee job performance.
12) $H_{4.1}$: The effect of extraversion on employee job performance is significantly mediated by employee communication skill.
13) $H_{4.2}$: The effect of Openness on employee job performance is significantly mediated by employee communication skill.
14) $H_{4.3}$: The effect of Conscientiousness on employee job performance is significantly mediated by employee communication skill.
15) $H_{4.4}$: The effect of Agreeableness on employee job performance is significantly mediated by employee communication skill.
16) $H_{4.5}$: The effect of Neuroticism on employee job performance is significantly mediated by employee communication skill.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design and Data Collection

This study was designed to test the effects of personality traits and communication skill on job performance of employees at MNCs in Ho Chi Minh city. Quantitative method was considered the most suitable method with the support of primary data gathered from 300 surveys delievered to working professionals at MNCs throughout Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam at the author's best convenience (Convenience sampling technique).

B. Explanatory Factor Analysis

A self-designed questionnaire was created to help the author gather primary data from respondents in this project. The questionnaire was divided into four main part: data about Job performance, communication skill, personality traits and demographic information of the participants. Job performance is masured based on the eight dimensions discussed in literature review section, communication skill is measure with 10 most common items (clear statements, concise statements, courteous statements, maintain eye contact, show pleasant facial expressions, maintain appropriate posture and gesture, maintain appropriate appearance, voice tone of the speaker, speed of the speech, volume of the speech). Finally, five personality traits are evaluated based on 21 items in the scale mentioned in Literature Review section. Likerst scale from (1 = strongly disagree) to (5=strongly agree) was used in the questionnaire.

To filter elements with high validity in a scale, an EFA test is conducted. After running the test, 21 items of personality traits (independent variable) were reduced to 16 and divided into five groups which were renamed as CONS (Conscientiousness), EXTRA (Extraversions), NEURO (Neuroticism), OPEN (Openness), and AGRE (Agreeableness) as shown in Table I. The KMO index was .678 for the group of independent variables. For the dependent variables (communication skill and job performance), the final result of the EFA test showed that 18 items of the two groups were reduced to nine items and still belonged to two categories which were then renamed as COMSKI(Communication skill) and JOBPER (Job performance). Their KMO was .768.

TABLE I: THE SUMMARY OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Given Names	Number of Items	Alpha
Agreeableness (AGRE)	4	.800
Openness (OPEN)	4	.730
Neuroticism (NEURO)	3	.765
Conscientiousness (CONS)	3	.681
Extraversions (EXTRA)	2	.798

After the EFA tests were conducted, a reliably test was applied in order to check one more time the level of internal consistency of items in one scale. With dependent variables, COMSKI had Cronbach's alpha value of .745 while Cronbach's alpha value of JOBPER was .703, as shown in Table II.

TABLE II: THE SUMMARY OF DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Given Names	Number of Items	Alpha
Communication Skill (COMSKI)	5	.745
Job Performance (JOPER)	4	.703

IV. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS RESULTS

A. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Companies that have the most surveyed employees are BigC corporation, Cdiscount.vn, ANZ, Intel, PepsiCo and Unilever. The operating sectors of surveyed companies are different from Manufacturer, Investment, Service, Distribution to Commerce and also other fields that are not listed. Service and Manufacturer Sector have the biggest number of respondents with 34.3% and 34% respectively. There are some participants working in Commerce and Sales Industry with 17.7% out of the total percentage. Investment and Distribution Group provided the lowest number of participants with only 1.3% and 2.7% accordingly.

Among 300 qualified participants from more than 35 MNCs in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, 54% of them are male and 46% are female. This is a good ration between two

genders because the different percentage is small (8%), therefore, there would be no bias in the answers of the surveyed people. In term of age, five age groups were listed in the questionnaires in which staffs aged from 18-25 years old accounts for the highest percentage with 50.3% followed by 25-35 years old group with 40.3%. People aged from 35-45 and 45-55 years old account for 5.7% and 3.0% respectively. The group with the fewest respondents is over 55 years old group with only 2 people accounting for only 0.7%. Although staffs of MNCs are mostly young, they have achieved good education levels when the report shows that 68.3% of them have university degree and 14% are postgraduate while only 2% and 2.3% of them graduated from High School and Vocational School accordingly. Since most of the surveyed people belong to young age groups, a majority of them have single marital status (85%). Only 15% of the respondents are married. About seniority, people who have worked for 1-4 years account for the highest percentage with 42%, the second biggest percentage belongs to group of people with 4-7 years of working experience. The group of over-10-year experience has the lowest population (7.7%).

B. Correlations between Independent and Dependent Variables

TABLE III: Correlation Coefficients between Variables

	JOPER	1	2	3	4	5
1. AGRE	-.049	1.000				
2. OPEN	.306*	.301*	1.000			
3. NEURO	-.209*	-.107*	-.132*	1.000		
4. CONS	.325*	-.030	.134*	-.142*	1.000	
5. EXTRA	.133*	.213*	.030	-.059	.170*	1.000
6. COMSKI	.183*	.193*	.127*	-.205*	.236*	.253*
Mean	**3.66**	**3.36**	**3.37**	**2.90**	**3.54**	**4.13**
SD	**.599**	**.847**	**.672**	**.816**	**.757**	**.634**

*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level

Correlation coefficients between independent variables and dependent ones are illustrated in table III. From the table, all the correlation coefficients among independent factors were less than .7 (the highest correlation coefficient was between EXTRA and AGRE with the value of .213). This indicates that there was no excessive correlation between five personality factors. Also from the table, some conclusions can be made. Firstly, COMSKI has weakly positive correlation with AGRE (r=.193, p<.05), OPEN (r=.127, p<.05), CONS (r=.236, p<.05) and EXTRA (r=.253, p<.05), which meant that an increase in these personality trait would lead to a better communication skill. Secondly, COMSKI had a weakly negative correlation with NEURO when r = -.205 and p=.000< .05 were shown. This implied that the more people felt stressed and depressed, the weaker their communication skill was. Between the independent variables and job performance, JOBPER had positive correlation coefficients with OPEN (r=.306, p<.05), CONS (r=.325, p<.05) and EXTRA (r=.133, p<.05). Whereas OPEN and CONS had an a little stronger relationship with JOPER, EXTRA had a weaker relationship with the dependent variable. In addition, JOPER had a weak-average negative correlation with NEURO when r=-.209 and Significance level p=.000<.05 were shown. Finally, AGRE (p=.394,

which was greater than .05) did not reach statistical significance and therefore showed no relationship with JOPER.

C. Direct effects on Communication Skill

Hypothesis 1 was tested with the results shown on the standardized coefficients in table IV, COMSKI was directly affected by four variables of personality traits which were AGRE with (β=.142, p<.05), NEURO with (β=-.144, p<.05) CONS with (β=.179, p<.05), and EXTRA with (β=.182, p<.05). This revealed that extraversion made the strongest contribution to explaining the outcome of communication skill. The significant index indicated that, OPEN failed to achieve statistical significance in order to have effect on COMSKI with p = .172 which was greater than .05.

Adjusted R Square was checked with the value of 0.140. This means that the model with 5 Independent variables (CONS, EXTRA, NEURO, AGRE, OPEN) could explain 14% of variance of dependent variable (COMSKI).

D. Direct effects on Job Performance

Hypothesis 2 was tested by conducting multiple regression analysis. The Significant index indicated that, AGRE and EXTRA failed to achieve statistical significance in order to have effect on JOBPER with Sig. was equal to .117 > .05 and .091 > .05, respectively. With the Sig. value less than .05, three independent variables OPEN, NEURO, CONS directly affected JOPER. Openness and Conscientiousness had the most positive important influences to job performance with the same standardized Beta (β) value at .253 and significant level was .000 (p<.05). Variable NEURO had a directly negative effect on job performance with its β=-.143 and p=.008<.05. The Adjusted R Square has the value of .260. This means that the model with 5 Independent variables could explain 26% of variance of dependent variable (JOPER).

E. Communication Skill and Job Performance

In order to investigate the relationship between two dependent variables; COMSKI and JOPER, a simple linear regression was conducted with the aim to see the effects of COMSKI on JOPER. It was shown in Table IV that COMSKI had a weakly positive relationship with JOPER with Beta value of .183 and sig.=.001<.05. This explained that an increase in COMSKI would lead to a small increase in JOPER. The relationship between two dependent factors was supported by H3.
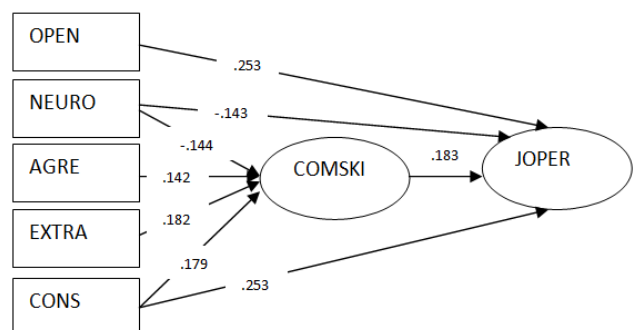

Fig. 1. coefficients of JOPER model.

F. Indirect Effects on Job Performance

To test Hypothesis 4, indirect effects on job performance of one variable was calculated by multiplying the Beta coefficient for direct effects among involving items. As a result, EXTRA had the strongest indirect effect on the JOPER through COMSKI with β=.033 (.182 multiplied by.183), followed by the CONS with β=.033 (.179 multiplied by .183) and AGRE with β=.026 (.142 multiplied by .183). NEURO had a negative indirect effect of JOPER with β=-.026 (-.144 multiplied by .183).

TABLE IV: SUMMARY OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS ON JOBPER

Variables	Causal Effects		
	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	Total
EXTRA	----	.033	.033
OPEN	.253	----	.253
CONS	.253	.033	.286
AGRE	----	.026	.026
NEURO	-.143	-.026	-.169
COMSKI	.183	----	.183
Total	**.546**	**.066**	**.612**

V. DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Discussions

From the above statistical results, NEURO, AGRE, EXTRA and CONS has direct effects on COMSKI while OPEN does not. Among four independent variables that have direct impacts on communication skill, extraversion trait has the strongest contribution. This result is matched with the reality and can be clearly explained by the nature of the trait itself that people with this trait tend to be social, talkative and assertive [16] so they will find it easy to communicate with others.

The variable that has the second strongest positive influence on communication skill is conscientiousness. This result can be predictable when people with conscientiousness tend to act in a thoughtful and goal-driven way so when they communicate with other people. From their personality, they would consider the most appropriate content to say as well as the most suitable attitudes to behave, so that may be the reason why conscientiousness plays an important role in shaping someone's communication skill.

The last factor that has positive effect on communication skill is agreeableness trait. Relationship-building skill which also covers communication skill was said to be related to this trait [5]. It is reasonable with this conclusion because those who have agreeableness trait are very flexible, tolerant as well as cooperative and trusting [5]. They can get along well and create a comfortable atmosphere in conversations.

Neuroticism also affects on communication skill but in a negative way. The characteristics of the trait may explain why we have this result. Anxiety, worries, depression and emotional instability are often seen in people with neuroticism trait [5]. And as a matter of fact, no one will feel happy and inspired when talking to insecure people. Moreover, with this trait, people will often feel unconfident in proposing, asking and even answering questions, which affects a lot the positive outcome of any conversations. We can predict the fact that the more people feel unsatisfied and unconfident, the less they can control their body, their mind as well as their saying so they tend to avoid seeing others for advice and friendship [20].

Last but not least, the research showed that there is no relationship between openness and communication skill. This is out of our initial expectation as the author thought that people with this trait would be more sensitive when involving in intercultural problems and communication. The tendency to be imaginative, artistically sensitive, and intellectual is the description of openness [5]. Interestingly, the relation was found positive in another investigation [5]. Contradictory results were found in different studies; therefore, there needs to have further study on this term. In the other hand, we can say that this result is flexible and can be different with different individuals depending on how this trait is combined with other ones. In fact, it seems that people with artistic and creative minds are sometimes not realistic, and this may affect the outcome of their communication with other people; however, many same type people are still sociable, so they can still totally have good communication skill. That seems to be the reason why results about this factor are quite different in various projects.

Communication skill and job performance: It was the author's expectation at the beginning that communication skill will play an important part in job performance of an employee at an MNCs in Ho Chi Minh City. The result discovered that there is a positive relationship between two factors, as also proved in related study. [5] said that job performance can be enhanced if a person has a good interpersonal skill which also includes communication skill. However, in our study, although having positive effect on job performance, communication skill can predict only 3.4% of job performance. This is a small number. So far, there is very little research about this relationship, so we can explain this fact by referencing to the fact. In real, that a person is good at communicating does not mean he or she is good at doing a certain task. That a person can say beautiful things and make opposite people feel lovely does not mean they can do what they say. We have seen many cases in life that people who cannot perform the jobs well but they are so good at speaking, especially in public and presentation. Those people tend to hold management positions in a company while others people with good skills on specific tasks have to work for them and follow their leadership. In addition, in many cases, hard-working people with deep knowledge about specific areas such as engineering or researching tend to be less socialized and do not have effective communication skill. This can be a reasonable explanationforthis matter.

Five personality traits and job performance: Based on the finding discussed above, there are three out of five personality traits that have direct impacts on job performance. They are openness, neuroticism and conscientiousness. Two factors do not affect job performance directly are agreeableness and extraversions. The five factors can predict 19.2% the outcome of job performance.

Among three factors that have direct impact on job performance, openness and conscientiousness provides the same strength for the relationship. Regarding openness factor, [20]'s paper also had the same conclusion when saying that the factor had a positive direct impact on job performance

with 99 percentage of confidence. Our finding becomes more reliable when it was said by [21] that among five personality traits, openness had the strongest correlation with job performance. The other supporting conclusion comes from the research [22] stating that teams with high levels of openness to experience would perform a task relating to innovation better than the other teams. Although receiving a lot of thoughts on the same line, this personality type also got some opposite idea and has been a matter of controversy [22]. It was said that openness to experience was not a good indicator to predict job performance [22]. However, we can see that those researches were conducted with different target groups of participants coming from various working areas that require different working skills, which could be the reason why the results are so different from the most recent ones. For our result, in order to explain why openness to experience can influence job performance in a significant way, we will look at the definition of the trait one more time. People with openness to experience are those who have traits such as imaginative, cultured, curious, original, broad minded, intelligent and artistically sensitive [22]. Their intelligence and willingness to learn new skills and do well in training setting are the key factors that can enhance their job performance [21]. Moreover, because they tend to be artistically sensitive, it is believed that these people often have really creative mind that helps a lot when they perform a specific types of work.

Despite of having the same direct strength as openness to experience on job performance, conscientiousness has the strongest effect on job performing among five factors in term of totally effects including both indirect and direct impacts. It is easy to understand why people with conscientiousness traits have high levels of job performance. That is because they are goal-driven, thoughtful and considerate people who have objectives and are disciplined to fulfill those goals. Such people are hard-working, organized, reliable, and are thought to perform work better than those who are not strong at those traits [23].

Among three variables that have direct impact of job performance, neuroticism should be considered carefully since its correlation with job performance is a negative number expressing the negative relationship between two items. Regarding the fact that neuroticism includes traits such as anxious, depressed, angry, embarrassed, emotional, worried, and insecure [24], we can say that people with a negative view and attitude in their life cannot perform their work well as they seem to spend a lot of time thinking about sadness and dissatisfaction and are therefore distracted, as also cited in one research that people with this trait are less likely to experience new things and are afraid of challenges in work because they tend to see difficulties everywhere [24].

No direct impact was found between agreeableness as well as extraversion and job performance in this study. Unlike this result, that of [20] claimed that there existed a direct and positive impact of agreeableness and extraversion on job performance. Also, his view is enhanced by studies of other researchers stating that extraversion and agreeableness are good predictors for job performance [25]. However, this controversy can be explained easily thanks to the difference between natures of various jobs. People with high level of extraversion trait tend to be good at jobs that require social interactions such as sales [25]. Similarly, people with high agreeableness levels can perform better the work that relates to teamwork or customer service due to their co-operative trait in the personality [25]. In our study, two third of the participants came from non-service areas which require not so much work relating to customer service or social interaction but deep knowledge about certain fields; therefore, that could be a reason why we could not find out any direct relationships between extraversion, agreeableness and job performance. Moreover, these traits tend to influence the "interpersonal facilitation component of contextual performance" rather than task performance [23].

B. Recommendation

After analyzed and discussed in previous parts, some implication can be drawn here. The results showed that there were positive direct relationships between openness to experience and conscientiousness to job performance while neuroticism trait had negatively direct effect on the dependent variable. Therefore, firstly, it is important for recruiters to employ candidates that tend to be serious about the job that they are applying, goal-driven, thoughtful (conscientiousness trait) as well as those who are eager to learn new things, willing to be trained for the new job, open to different ideas and cultures (openness to experience trait) while avoiding employees that show negative emotions such as anxious, depressed or worried and unhappy mood (neuroticism trait). Moreover, conscientiousness is the most important criteria in choosing a staff among five personality factors due to its strong impact on job performance.

Secondly, although agreeableness and extraversion showed no significant effect on job performance, as discussed, jobs that relate to customer service or sales can use these traits as one of the criteria to recruit employees, especially when research explores that these two traits have strong positive direct impact of communication skill of one person.

Thirdly, communication skill was directly affected by neuroticism, agreeableness, extraversion and conscientiousness while not impacted by openness. Employers should consider hiring people with high levels of conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness in jobs that need good communication skill to fulfill such as presenters or MC because those traits are positively related to their communication skill. Although openness trait showed no relation with communication skill, if giving the right position, people with this trait can totally perform their work very well due to the trait's positive impact on job performance as discussed earlier. It is suggested to employ open to experience people in careers that require high creativity and sensitiveness towards art and cultures such as architect or marketing personnel. Additionally, neuroticism affects negatively on both job performance and communication skill so not only in work setting but also in daily life, we should get rid of people with such personality because their black look at life will influence other co-workers in a bad way.

Fourthly, a weak relationship between communication skill and job performance gave us a suggestion that managers

of MNCs should not judge abilities of their staffs based on just their ability to communicate well because people with extraversion and agreeableness that are good with communication skill are not always be able to perform their tasks as well as others.

Fifthly, a suggestion should be made for staffs at MNCs in Ho Chi Minh City that if they want to improve their job performance which has a close relation to their career success, they should try to be more goal-driven, disciplined and open to learn new things as well as avoid negative emotions and attitudes such as worrying too much or letting your mind out of control in stress. This suggestion is made based on the research result saying that an increase in conscientiousness trait and openness to experience, and a decrease in neuroticism will lead to an increase in job performance.

Last but not least, for those who want to improve their communication skill, it is important to improve their extraversion and agreeableness traits first as those traits have strong positive effects on communication skill. In order to improve those personality traits, the employees just need to be more disciplined, organized in their work setting, more cooperative to colleagues and show others that they are reliable people. The last point is about neuroticism, to have better communication skill that can enhance interpersonal relationship, a person is supposed to reduce their neuroticism as much as possible by stopping thinking negatively and too seriously about things that are happening in their life.

REFERENCES

[1] D. Keeler. (2014). Nigeria, argentina and Vietnam prove top picks for multinationals. *The Wall Street Journal*. [Online]. Available: http://blogs.wsj.com/frontiers/2014/06/06/nigeria-argentina-and-vietnam-prove-top-picks-for-multinationals/

[2] P. Nakra. (2013). The transformation of Vietnam — Part 2: Foreign direct investment. *International Trade Blog*. [Online]. Available: http://www.shippingsolutions.com/blog/the-transformation-of-vietnam-part-2-foreign-direct-investment

[3] General Statistics Office of Vietnam. (2013). [Online]. Available: http://gso.gov.vn/Default.aspx?tabid=382&ItemID=14002

[4] R. Adler and J. Elmhorst, *Communicating at Work,* ch. 1, pp. 5-8. McGraw Hill Higher Education, 10th Revised edition, May 1, 2010.

[5] C. R. Klein, "What do we know about interpersonal skills? A meta-analytic, examination of antecedents, outcomes, and the efficacy of training," Doctor dissertation, university of Central Florida Orlando, Florida, USA, 2009.

[6] L. Hulea, "Communication — Organization' work device," *Annals of the University of Petroşani, Economics*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2010, pp. 197-206, University of Petrosani, Romania, 2010.

[7] T. Denisova, "Internal communication problems in a multi-national company: Lamor group," Bachelor'S thesis, International Business, Haaga-Helia University of Business, 2007.

[8] Julie Nolin, "Getting through tough times: Interpersonal communication coping strategies during job loss," Master dissertation, Royal Roads University, Canada, n.d.

[9] Chapter 7: Verbal and written communications. [Online]. Available: http://www.g-w.com/pdf/sampchap/9781619605893_ch07.pdf

[10] A. McEwen and G. Harris, *Communication: Fundamental Skills*, Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2010.

[11] Module B: Communication: Verbal and Nonverbal 2010. California WIC Training Manual. [Online]. Available: http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/wicworks/Documents/Training%20Manual/WIC-Training-TrainingManual-Task-01-Mod-B.pdf

[12] T. Dixon and Martin O'Hara. Communication skills. [Online]. Available: http://cw.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415537902/data/learning/11_Communication%20Skills.pdf

[13] Society of gastroenterology nurses and associates. [Online]. Available: http://www.sgna.org/Portals/0/LearningLink/GI%20Endoscopy%20Unit/Session%2025/Individual_Study_Guide.pdf

[14] Online webster dictionary. [Online]. Available: http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rhythm.

[15] Introduction to communication skills. (2008). [Online]. Available: http://peer.hdwg.org/sites/default/files/1%20IntroductionToCommunicationSkills-CommunicationSkills-Peer_Training.pdf

[16] O. P. John and S. Srivastava, "The big-five trait taxonomy: History, measurement, and theoretical perspectives," University of California at Berkeley. New York: Guilford, 1999.

[17] V. D.Cook, "An investigation of the construct validity of the big five construct of emotional stability in relation to job performance, job satisfaction, and career satisfaction," doctoral dissertations, university of Tennessee – Knoxville, USA, 2005.

[18] A. Kovaleva, C. Beierlein, C. J. Kemper, and B. Rammstedt, "Psychometric properties of the BFI-K: A cross-validation study," *Germany: Time Taylor Academic Journals*, p. 37, 2013.

[19] J. V. Berghe, "Job satisfaction and job performance at the work place," degree's thesis, 2011.

[20] N. Askarian and H. Eslami, "The relationship between personality traits and job performance (Case study: Employees of the ministry of education of Kerman)," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, vol. 5, no. 8, pp. 322-335, 2013.

[21] N. Hashim, W. E. W. Rashid, A. K. Othman, M. I. Hamzah, and F. Sunai, "The effect of personality traitson the relationship between organizational conflict and job performance in telecommunication company," 2012.

[22] L. B. Buchanan, "The impact of big five personality characteristics on group cohesion and group creativity task performance," doctor dissertation, faculty of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia, February 1998.

[23] G. M. Hurtz and J. J. Donovan, "Personality and job performance: The big five revisited," *Journal of Applied Psychology 2000*, vol. 85, no. 6, pp. 869-879, 2000.

[24] J. Ahmad, M. R. Ather, and M. Hussain, "Impact of big five personality traits on job performance (Organizational commitment as a mediator)," presented at International Conference 2014, Portoroz, Slovenia, 25-27 June, 2014.

[25] S. Rothmann and E. P. Coetzer, "The big five personality dimensions and job performance," *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 68-74, 2003.

Mai Ngoc Khuong is a lecturer and researcher of School of Business, International University, VNU-HCM. He has the bachelor degree in tourism and hospitality management, master of science degree in leisure, tourism and environment at Wageningen University, the Netherlands, and PhD degree in development management at School of Public Administration of the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) Bangkok, Thailand.

Le Thi My Linh is a research assistant of School of Business Administration, International University, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh.

Nguyen Quang Toan is an MBA student of School of Business Administration, International University, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh.

Nguyen Thi Minh Phuong is an MBA student of School of Business Administration – Economic University – Ho Chi Minh.