

## Why Do People Obey? Exploring the Dispositional Variables in Organizational Obedience

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The present study was carried out on 150 employees; males (n=75) and females (n=75), with the age range of 34-64 (M=40.88 age), (SD=5.37); early middle age (34-44) and late middle age (45-64) across Punjabi University, Patiala with the aim of understanding the obedience behaviour among them. The present study aimed to ferret out the association between personality, locus of control and obedience. They were administered Big Five Factor questionnaire (Goldberg, 1993), Locus of Control by Rotter and Organizational Obedience Scale by Çapan, Uzunçarşılı. The above questionnaires were translated into native language Punjabi and were certified and validated by the experts. The obtained data was analysed with the latest version IBM SPSS 29. The data collected was analysed with descriptive analysis, Product moment correlation, Regression, and t- test (independent t- test). Findings revealed that internal locus of control was negatively associated with destructive obedience. Individuals with specific personality traits, such as agreeableness and conscientiousness, had a positive correlation with destructive obedience, where initially these attributes are viewed favourably by society, but under the wrong influence, they are more susceptible to being controlled. As far as age is concerned employees of late middle age (45-64) were high on obedience as compared to early middle age. There is gender differences between male and female due to obedience. Males are more obedient as compared to female. Implications of the study are quite high in the field of work sector.

**Keywords:** Obedience, Personality, Locus of control, workplace setting, Behaviour.

“Behaviour that is unthinkable in an individual who is acting on his own may be executed without hesitation when carried out under orders”- *Stanley Milgram*

Words have great power. Words may convey ideas, convey knowledge, convey emotions, motivate people, provide direction, instruct, and more. Our words have an effect on those who are close to us. When giving commands, it's important to utilise the right language to encourage obedience rather than merely come across as impolite. Obedience is one of the most crucial facets of civilization. We see orders everywhere we turn—at work, at home, on the street, and at school. Without obedience, there would only be anarchy and mayhem (Leveillee, 2011).

Obedience is a type of social influence that results from clear instructions given by someone in a position of authority. This study specifically focuses on the fact that obedience behaviour, which is a routine conduct we meet in work situations and displays our reflexive side, and it investigates the kinds of outcomes it creates at the point of whether it is affected or affected by internal. All of us can see orders everywhere, at school, in our home, on the roads, in the workplace. This paper aims to illustrate the risk associated with obedience. It has been found that environmental, individual, and cultural factors influence obedience, as evidenced by the Milgram experiments and other research. Position and prestige were

taken into account when creating factors like the power of authority, people's responsibility, knowledge level, group size in the environment, group consensus, group loyalty, and dimensional expressions. Additionally, the impact of face-to-face communication was taken into consideration (Guandong, 2002; Kađýtçýbapý , 2010; Milgram, 1965).

First, based on aspects such as obedience, the following conclusions can be made: People have little choice but to submit to authority, and over time, they internalise this fact and strengthen it with their emotions. Instead of using implicit language, people can respond by using their internalised ideas and thoughts. Participants in Stanley Milgram's obedience study demonstrated a higher level of obedience with directives from superiors. It is believed that if the authority figures had not prodded and taught the person, they would not have demonstrated the behaviour or activity (Milgram, 1963). It is basically possible to ascribe the rise in disobedient behaviours to teens resolving the conflict between identity and role confusion, which necessitates investigating possibilities, obligations, and roles that are available to the individual.

Based on the early research of Stanley Milgram and his research assistant Alan Elms, Thomas Blass (1991) also examined locus of control and authoritarian personality traits in studies on personality traits associated with obedience. Studies have indicated that individuals possessing an internal locus of control are typically more autonomous and less obedient. Because they take ownership of their actions, those with an internal locus of control, in Rotter's opinion, are more equipped to resist societal pressure to fit in or obey the norms. Some people, referred to as having an external locus of control, place less emphasis on their own activities and believe that external factors, including other people, have a

stronger impact over their acts and the outcomes they experience.

Others have an external locus of control, which means they take less responsibility for their actions and believe that circumstances and other people around them have a greater influence over what they do and what happens to them. Some people have an internal locus of control, which means they take greater responsibility for their actions because they believe they are in control of what they do and what happens to them. When Blass first started out, he thought that individuals who have an external locus of control are more likely to be submissive, while those who have an internal locus of control are more likely to be disruptive. One source that inspired the investigation on obedience is the Brown, Kern, and Morgan (2008) study on the impact of gender differences in obedience, that men and women did not significantly differ in obedience. Their results were supported by other researchers on sex differences in obedience (Blass, 2000). There is no gender difference in obedience (Behr & Belarmino, 2012). Another source that prompted the research is the study by Zimbardo (1973) which indicated that people conform to roles that they expected to play, especially if the stereotypes are well-established. The male guards took on the stereotypical role of becoming mean and aggressive towards the prisoners, they were influenced by pressures to conform to the stereotype of a prison guard (Wren, 1999).

#### **Organizational Obedience:**

One area of study in social psychology is organisational structures in particular. For instance, in employee-based studies of organisational behaviour, identification is less common than adoption and adaptation (Paulsen, 2018). This explanation emphasises how important it is to pay attention to employees obedience behaviours, particularly in light of the

organisation measuring the degree of Obedience instilled in a person by their subservient interactions with various elements, particularly the rapport they build with authority. Regarding whether it will result in blind, damaging or destructive, uncritical, coercive, or illegal outcomes. In short, it is important to analyse the latent structure of the obedience behaviour related to the degree of personal responsibility of the subordinates and the choices they make in the face of the demands of the authority (Passini & Morselli, 2009). Apart from this, no comprehensive measurement study has been found to measure the obedience perception of the employees in terms of environment, authority and group in organizations, and even it has been noticed that there are very few empirical studies explaining the destructive aspect of obedience. From this point of view, obedience behaviour tendency determined by the subordinate-superior relationship in institutions has arisen. At what level is obedience in the corporate field, especially in business life, and at what level should it be maintained? What is the limit of obedience and should it have a limit? What are the positive and negative aspects of obedience? What consequences might an increase in obedience have?

### **Dimensions of Organizational Obedience:**

When personnel in the sphere of organizational conduct adhere to organisational expectations and legal authority, it is said that they are being obedient. Webb (1981) defined it as a deliberate behaviour in which the subject makes minimum claims or takes on minimal responsibility. From another angle, however, it means yielding one's will to the authority and demands of another individual or group, irrespective of their wishes or appeals, as a result of power disparities in little ways such as cooperation, subordination, and

acceptance (Lukes 2005). Globalization and technological advancements have an impact on businesses and their workforces. These developments have altered both the organisational work culture and how those organizations operate. Personality has been seen as a significant factor that plays important role in organizational outcomes. Big five personality helps to measure personality and its relevant contribution at the workplace (Mandeep Kaur & Manpreet, 2014).

### **Crime of Obedience:**

An individual or group deemed to be in a position of authority may be obeyed at the expense of morality, lawfulness, or injury, which is known as the crime of obedience. A leader who guarantees his subordinate's obedience commits a crime of obedience when he makes a decision that is immoral and illegal and carries it out with enthusiasm and willingness (Carstenand & Uhl-Bien, 2013). Actions carried out in response to commands from authority and viewed as unlawful or immoral by the majority of the population are common in many facets of society, according to Kelman and Hamilton (1989). According to a 2013 study by Carstenand and Uhl-Bien, persons may have a tendency to commit the crime of obedience because they believe they are in a position of authority and lack the strength to reject receiving unethical orders. (Javaid, 2020). According to Kelman and Hamilton (1989), actions taken in response to orders from authority and considered illegal or immoral by the majority of the community widely occurs in many aspects of the society. Carstenand and Uhl-Bien (2013) Numerous investigations have demonstrated that the crime of obedience has been committed, demonstrating that common people are capable of committing immoral and unlawful acts in defiance of authority (Kelman & Hamilton, 1989; Hamilton & Sanders, 1999). Employees in both public and private

enterprises that follow managers' directions against any decision or operational activity, even if it is not life-threatening, are regarded as setting an example for the crime of obedience with the outcomes they produce (Hamilton & Sanders, 1999). Psychological adaptations serve to lessen the strain of carrying out immoral commands. This idea sparked interest in the extent of this risk that underlies the hierarchical social structure in organisations. According to this perspective, the unfavourable aspect of obedience serves as a hint for determining the legitimacy of authority demands, which are viewed as a source of social order.

#### **Coercive Obedience:**

This concept of obedience is that in the subordinate-superior relationship, the manager can use the threat of punishment to coerce a subordinate into following instructions or altering their behaviour. It manifests as violent behaviour that is material, psychological, verbal, or physical and has a profound impact on the victim (Çalypkur, 2016). When an authority figure's legitimacy is questioned, some tactics may use mental abuse or physical assault to persuade followers to submit. However, it might not be obvious if this is a genuine option or just a surface-level obligation to comply. Although one individual can influence another's behaviour and provide certain external appearances, no authoritative figure or individual can govern the internal motive of another. For example, an employer may informally make employees who openly object to management decisions feel that they will not receive the expected reward. As a result of fear and pressure, people have to comply. Nonetheless, force is used in an attempt to satiate the need to think or feel. The most crucial point is that no one can make someone else appreciate or believe in them. For instance, a company may subtly provide the impression that workers who publicly disagree with management choices won't get

the benefits they are entitled to. Thus, obsessive obedience helps to explain this. Thus, this can be explained by compulsive obedience. In McMyler's (2016) according to research, there are two senses to obedience in terms of social effect on belief and behaviour. While the second connotation of obedience is to labour that is carried out in compliance with authoritarian commands and does not include coercion, the first term refers to the state of obedience to a forced job.

#### **Blind Obedience:**

Four distinct forms of obedience can be categorised as "blind obedience" when taking into account the underlying motivations for obeying: (1) obedience from a person who does not question whether obedience is ethically right or wrong (2) respectful obedience to the ruler (3) the obedience of the individual who is unaware of the many conditions of the situation constituting a particular authority and (4) quick, instant, or unquestioning obedience. Unconsciously acting is a kind of behaviour that keeps someone from growing as a person, thinking for themselves, and coming up with fresh ideas. It's a behaviour that keeps people from objecting in inappropriate circumstances and is also referred to as "losing one's sense of authority" (Özkan & Polat, 2017). It can be stated that docile people obey without being forced or coerced. Apart from any pressure or coercion, it can be said that compliant people obey without questioning in accordance with orders and instructions (Hauerwas & Pinches, 1997). Hauerwas and Pinches (1997) declare that in regard to the instructions provided by the person who, in the context of a significant duty, does not effectively exercise her authority by using force, they are result of blind obedience. On the other hand, regarding the obedience tendency of children, Benjamin and Simpson (2009) reviewed the studies of Isaacs (1930), Norsworthy and Whitley (1933), Symonds

(1934), and Teagarden (1940) and concluded that although blind obedience has been shown to be the most significant component of most people's traits, some psychologists and child care specialists caution against it. They said it's better to teach kids how to obey than to make them do it against their will. They mentioned that it is important to advise children on how to obey, rather than forcing them to obey. Yet, it is stated that the only obligation of young children who are adults today is the secret obedience (Hall, 1904). Blind loyalty and total defiance of authority are uncommon in contemporary civilizations that have evolved and become more democratic throughout time.

#### **Destructive Obedience:**

Obedience can also involve delegating our ability to make decisions to others, regardless of whether it is a learnt behaviour or an inherited feature. It follows that when faced with authority figures, we often resort to mental models that allow us to absolve ourselves of accountability for our actions (Werhane et al., 2013). In the same way that participants in the Milgram experiment had no idea or reason to defy authority, it is said that there is no authority or preventive rules to prevent undesirable behaviours. Characteristics like discipline, deference to authority, and loyalty seem innocent and are actually highly valuable, yet business scandals show how detrimental these traits can be when misused. In case the orders given constitute an element of crime, this situation causes the crime of obedience to be committed. Organisations and societies require certain ideal traits to survive, like discipline, loyalty, and adherence to rules and instructions. However, these traits can also pose a major risk. Such commercial scandals make this fact very clear. To draw conclusions, it is important to stress that following instructions is a crime in and of itself, leading to the commission of the crime of

obedience. However, the effects of these activities point to the harmful side of obedience and indicate how receptive people are to following authority figures' instructions, even when they go against their moral convictions or own will (Cassell, 2005).

#### **Unquestioned Obedience:**

Being in a state of unquestioning acceptance is acting without considering the how or why of one's actions, and accepting all consequences. In the corporate sector, the term unquestioning is commonly used to describe the act of reflecting behaviour with careful consideration. It is noted that the idea of authority is categorised in accordance with the traits of managers and leaders in the modern era, with some leadership styles being included in particular studies in terms of unquestioned expectation. They insist on exclusivity, personal information, and complete submission (O'Connor et al., 1995). They misuse their autocracy because they have this expectation. Managers are now required to guide both employees and workers. Today, managers are expected to lead both workers and employees. More so, in institutions that act according to authority, there is an expectation that the managers representing the authority will obey directives from their subordinates without question. (Maccoby, 2000).

**Big Five Personality Dimension:** Characteristics that are comparatively permanent in nature include thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. The majority of psychologists who have studied personality have concluded that it has multiple aspects (McCrae & Costa, 1997). The Big Five, also known as the Five-Factor Model (FFM; Pervin, 1994), are five key factors that have come to be used by numerous scientists to describe personality during the past few decades. Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness are the Big Five

personality qualities. The Big Five are still the most widely accepted theory of personality, despite some writers challenging it (Pervin, 1994, for example). The personality characteristics came about as a consequence of decades of research (Pytlik-Zillig, Hemenover, & Dienstbier, 2002). Because it condenses a vast range of personality qualities into a more digestible and compact structure, the Big Five are recommended to support personality research (McCrae & Costa, 1987). In cross-cultural samples, the Big Five dimensions have also been shown to be a reliable and representative model of personality (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

#### **Dispositional Variables and Obedience:**

Is there a relationship between a person's personality and their propensity for obedience? Ashton Caroline Southard (2014) from Oakland University using Stanley Milgram paradigm (Milgram, 1963, 1974) investigate the potential contribution of personality variations to the likelihood of destructive obedience to authority. Psychologists have examined many personality traits which they believe can be measured reliably and it is believed that some of these may be connected with being more likely to be obedient or defiant.

#### **Openness:**

According to the OCEAN model, those who score highly on the attribute Openness tend to have a wide range of interests. They are enthralled with the world and other people, eager to learn new things, and enjoy new experiences. It's uncertain how individual variations in openness would affect Obedience under the Milgram model. People who score highly on this dimension have been observed to be open to new experiences and quickly adapt to shifting circumstances (Terraccinao et al., 2003). As such, it is possible that they will perceive their role as

the session's teacher as novel and adjust accordingly to meet the demands of that role.

#### **Conscientiousness:**

Individuals with high conscientiousness trait scores exhibit goal-directed action, impulsive control, and attentiveness. People that are highly conscientious are usually organised and detail-oriented. They plan ahead, think about how their activities affect other people, and meet deadlines. These people are also self-disciplined, meticulous, and well-organized.

#### **Extroversion:**

Elevated levels of talkativeness, assertiveness, sociability, and emotional expressiveness are characteristics of the extroverted personality type. Extraverted individuals frequently exhibit gregariousness and excitement in social situations. Past research indicates that there is no connection between extraversion and obedience (Bocchiaro & Zimbardo, 2010; Miranda et al., 1981). Nevertheless, these studies' sample size were on the modest side. Therefore, it is conceivable that individual differences in extraversion may be associated to degrees of destructive obedience under the Milgram paradigm provided a large enough sample is used to enable the researchers to uncover such variations. Furthermore, because extraversion and assertiveness have been connected, extraverted people may be more likely to express themselves and disobey the experimenter's orders to continue the session (McCrae & Costa, 1987, 1997).

#### **Neuroticism:**

The characteristic of personality Anxiety, Anger, sadness, and emotional instability are characteristics of neuroticism. Anxiety, irritability, depression, and mood swings are prevalent conditions among neurotic people. Individuals that score low on this personality trait are typically more emotionally stable and resilient. Lastly, people with the

agreeableness attribute exhibit prosocial activities and traits including trust, compassion, love, and tenderness. People with high neuroticism are likely to have negative affect during the study, according to Zeigler-Hill et al. (2013), but they may not believe they are capable of resisting the experimenter's authority due to their predisposition for anxiety, insecurity, and embarrassment (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

### **Agreeableness:**

People with high agreeableness scores tend to be more cooperative, whereas those with low scores are more likely to be competitive and manipulative. The results show a relationship between obedience and characteristics on the OCEAN scale, like conscientiousness and agreeableness, which are initially seen positively by society but are more susceptible to manipulation in the wrong setting.

### **Locus of control and Obedience:**

Rotter (1966) has shown via his studies that incentives and retaliation constantly shape most human behaviour and that our actions are what really drive our behaviour. Our beliefs and behaviours have an impact on our behaviour. "A belief about whether the outcomes of our actions are contingent on what we do (internal control orientation) or on events outside our personal control (external control orientation)," states psychologist Philip in his 1985 book *Psychology and Life*, referring to a locus of control orientation. Strong internal loci of control individuals rely on accepting accountability for everything that happens in their surroundings, according to Rotter (1966). These folks asserted that their success or failure is solely determined by their efforts. These people claimed that their efforts alone determine whether they succeed or fail. On the other hand, people who have a larger external locus of control fully attribute their success or failure to luck or other

circumstances. Rotter (1966) has conducted extensive research on topics pertaining to individuals' understanding of locus of control. Research has shown that those with an internal locus of control tend to be less obedient and more independent. Because they take ownership of their actions, those with an internal locus of control, in Rotter's opinion, are more equipped to resist societal pressure to fit in or obey the norms.

### **Objectives**

To study the relationship of Dispositional Variables with Obedience among employees.

1. To study the role of Personality among employees on the basis of Obedience.
2. To study the role of Locus of Control among employees on the basis of obedience.
3. To assess the predictive value of OCEAN model in obedience
4. To examine the role of Obedience among employees on the basis of age range
5. To study the role of gender differences among employees on the basis of Obedience.

### **Hypotheses:**

H1a: Conscientiousness and Agreeableness would be positively associated with obedience among employees.

H1b: Openness to experience, Extraversion, Neuroticism would be negatively correlated with Obedience among employees.

H2a: Internal Locus of control would be negatively associated with obedience among employees

H2b: External locus of control would be positively associated with obedience among employees

- H2c: Openness to experience, Extraversion, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness would significantly predict obedience among employees.
- H3: There would be no significant age differences in early middle age or later middle age related to obedience
- H4: There would be no significant gender differences between male and female related to obedience

## Method

### Participants

A correlational research design, was adopted for the study to gain a detailed understanding of the phenomenon of obedience prevalent among employees with the help of locus of control and personality. A total of 150 participants with the age range of 34-64 (M=40.88 age), (SD=5.37); 35-44 years (early middle age) and 45-64 years (late middle age) were gathered from non teaching staff of Punjabi University, Patiala. Out of the total sample 75 were male participants, and 75 were female participants.

### Measures

*Locus of control* (Rotter, 1966) The locus of control measures an individual' level of internal-external control in other words, the degree to which the individual interprets events as being a result of their own actions or external factors. This scale is a forced-choice instrument, which consists of 29 pairs of statements, 23 of which are scored. There are 6 filler item that are not scored. The split half reliability of the scale is between 0.65 and 0.79

*Big five inventory* (Goldberg, 1993) 44- item inventory that measures an individual on the big five factors of personality Each of the factors is then further divided into personality facets. In addition, BFI also shows high convergent validity with other self-report

scales and with peer ratings of the Big Five. Previous tested reliability of the BFI was typically ranged from 0.79 to 0.88 .

*Organizational Obedience scale* (Çapan, Uzunçarþýlý 2022). This scale was applied to the employees of small and medium-sized enterprises operator. 7-Point rating scale with appropriate Cronbach'alpha of blind obedience is .79, Cronbach'alpha of destructive obedience is .78. Five sub-dimensions obtained by the Organizational Obedience scale: Blind Obedience, Destructive Obedience, Unquestioned Obedience, Crime Obedience, Coercive Obedience.

### Procedure

On the basis of self-report method the participants were asked to evaluate themselves and respond on their own to the Obedience questionnaire and socio-demographic form given to them in the form of questionnaire were selected on the basis of purposive sampling. It was made clear to the participants that their participation was voluntary and without any compensation, but it was also explained to them that their participation could make an important contribution to the research of the topic discussed in this framework. 54 questionnaires were dropped due to incomplete responses, social desirable answers, response bias. Apart from this some employees who did not return the questionnaires. 8 females were excluded as they were undergoing treatment related to anxiety and depression. 98 questionnaires in complete form were further statistically analysed. Ethical considerations laid down by APA (2010) were kept in mind throughout data collection.

## Results and Discussion

The current study aimed to examine the possible role of dispositional variables in obedience. Although previous research

regarding the association between personality and obedience has failed to find significant associations, it remains that some individuals are obedient and others are not. Several pieces of literature explore similar questions of certain personality factors

interacting with obedience rates, (Blass 1991, Blass 1995, Burger 2009, Elms & Milgram 1966, Larsen et al. 1972). Therefore, the present study investigated a range of personality traits that could possibly be associated with obedience.

Table 1. Correlation matrix among openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, Internal Locus of Control, External Locus of Control, Total Obedience, Blind Obedience, Destructive, Unquestioned, Crime, Coercive Obedience

	O	C	E	A	N	I	E	T	B	D	U	Cr	Co
O	1.00												
C	-.194*	1.00											
E	.135	.076	1.00										
A	-.286**	.616**	-.255**	1.00									
N	.124	-.175*	-.165	-.081	1.00								
I	.000	-.037	.142	.028	-.509**	1.00							
E	-.305**	.031	-.337**	-.002	.463**	-.654	1.00						
T	.147	-.036	.195*	.105	-.097	.158	-.202*	1.00					
B	-.095	.042	.063	.288**	-.038	.164	-.154	.731**	1.00				
D	.099	.302**	-.039	.242**	.141	.202*	.051	.586**	.300**	1.00			
U	.140	-.253**	.352**	-.329**	-.013	-.120	-.123	.423**	.142	.224*	1.00		
Cr	.107	-.285	.186*	-.150	-.142	.254	-.041	.295**	.068	-.269**	-.113	1.00	
Co	-.028	.045	-.294**	.131	.029	.029	.036	.168*	.314**	.120	-.292**	-.093	1.00

Table 2 Pearson –Correlation values between Obedience, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness

Dimension of obedience	Conscientiousness	Agreeableness
Total obedience	-0.03	0.105
Blind obedience	0.04	.28**
Destructive obedience	.30**	.24*
Unquestioned obedience	-.25**	-.32**
Crime obedience	-.28**	-0.15
Coercive obedience	0.04	0.13

N=98 \*\*p<0.01 \*p<0.05

It was conjectured that “Conscientiousness and Agreeableness

would be positively associated with obedience among employees”. Results revealed that conscientiousness (r=-0.03) is not

significantly correlated with total obedience but positively correlated with destructive obedience ( $r = .302^{**}$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and negatively correlated with crime ( $r = -.28^{**}$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and unquestioned obedience ( $r = -.253^{**}$ ,  $p < .001$ ) but not significantly correlated with other dimension i.e blind and coercive obedience (Table.no.1). (Bocchiaro & Zimbardo, 2010) had also researched on obedience research findings showed that there is no association between Conscientiousness and Obedience. This study supports our present findings that there is no relationship between Obedience and Conscientiousness.

It was hypothesized that "Agreeableness would be positively associated with Obedience" such that higher levels of agreeableness would be associated with greater obedience. Present finding is contrary to the formulated hypothesis present findings show that agreeableness ( $r = 0.10$ ) is not significantly correlated with total obedience, crime and coercive dimension of obedience although it was positively correlated with other dimensions of Obedience; Destructive Obedience ( $r = .24^*$ ,  $p < .005$ ) and Blind Obedience ( $r = .28^{**}$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and negatively correlated with Unquestioned Obedience ( $r = -.32^{**}$ ,  $p < .001$ , Table. No.2). Present findings got support of research conducted by Ashton Caroline (2015) which indicated that agreeableness was not statistically significant with obedience. In addition a study conducted on obedience by Bocchiaro & Zimbardo (2010) It was hypothesized that participants' decisions to obey or disobey the Experimenter would be primarily determined by the situation rather the personality traits. Thus, the authors expected no relationship between dimensions of Personality and obedience rate. Additionally, there were no statistically significant differences between participants who obeyed and those who disobeyed on measures of personality. This could explain why previous research, as well as the current

study, has failed to find consistent relationships between personality and obedience. If the tendency to obey authority figures is indeed a unique feature of personality, it may be represented by a combination of the characteristics of authoritarianism and involuntary subordination. It is also possible that personality simply has no influence on individuals' tendencies toward obedience. This may be the reason that research examining the role of personality in obedience has failed to produce meaningful associations. As previously mentioned, Milgram's obedience research has long been used as evidence for the power of a situation to overwhelm personality features (e.g., Milgram, 1963 Benjamin & Simpson, 2009; Blass, 86 2009; Twenge, 2009). On the contrary there are some studies According to McCrae(1987) then individual differences in conscientiousness may be associated with levels of obedience. If individuals high in conscientiousness do adhere to a moral code, this may lead these individuals to be less likely to obey an experimenter. Jacky JoonHyung Hwang(2023) Results show that people with specific OCEAN scale traits, such as agreeableness and conscientiousness, have a correlation with obedience, where initially these attributes are viewed favourably by society, but under the wrong influence, they are more susceptible to being controlled. (Bergeman et al., 1993).

In continuation with other components of personality it was hypothesized that "*Neuroticism would be negatively associated with Obedience*", higher levels of neuroticism would be negatively associated with obedience. Present finding is contrary to the formulated hypothesis i.e neuroticism did not significantly associated with total obedience ( $r = -0.097$ ). This finding gets support from previous research finding (Laurent Begue, Beauvois et al; 2015) . Neuroticism trait of the OCEAN scale, does

not significantly correlate with levels of obedience. Neuroticism appears to be particularly important for guiding responses to an array of social threats such as criticism, failure, and rejection (Denissen & Penke, 2008; Matthews, 2004). Neuroticism has also been shown to be associated with factors related to obedience such as involuntary subordination (Sturman, 2011; Sturman & Mongrain, 2008). Individuals with high levels of neuroticism are also likely to want to avoid uncertainty so they may be more likely than other individuals to adhere to rules (Allik & McCrae, 2004), avoid risks (Maner et al., 2007), and comply with various forms of social pressure (Drake, 2010). Taken together, these findings suggest that neuroticism may influence the responses of individuals to the sort of obedience pressure exerted by the experimenter in our study. That is, we expect individuals with higher levels of neuroticism to be more likely to obey the commands of the experimenter because of their concerns about the social implications of failing to comply with the demands of an authority figure (e.g., experiencing disapproval or social defeat).

Table 3. Correlation values between Openness to Experience, Neuroticism, Extraversion

Dimension of obedience	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness to experience
Total obedience	-0.097	.195*	0.147
Blind obedience	-0.038	0.063	-0.095
Destructive obedience	0.141	-0.039	0.099
Unquestioned obedience	-0.013	.352**	0.140
Crime obedience	-0.142	.186*	0.107
Coercive obedience	0.029	-.294**	-0.028

N=98 \*\*p<0.01 \*p<0.05

Another component of personality openness to experience; it was conjectured that “*Openness to Experience would be negatively associated with Obedience*”. The findings showed that there is no significant correlation between openness to experience and total obedience (table no 3). Present findings got support of research conducted by Ashton Caroline (2015). Results revealed that the odds ratio .64 for Openness to experience was not statistically significant ( $p = .72$ ), indicating that openness did not predict obedience.

It was conjectured that “*Extraversion would be negatively associated with Obedience*” such that higher levels of extraversion would be negatively associated with obedience. Results revealed that there is significant positive correlation between Extraversion and total obedience ( $r=.195^*$   $p<0.05$ ) but significantly positively associated with unquestioned obedience ( $r=.352^{**}$   $p<0.01$ ) and negatively associated with coercive obedience ( $r=-.294^{**}$   $p<0.01$ ). According to Begue et al., (2015) the data collected, the study showed how 3 traits of the OCEAN scale, extroversion, openness and neuroticism does not significantly correlate with levels of obedience. Zimbardo, (1973) wanted to find whether the brutality reported among guards in American prisons was due to the sadistic personalities of the guards (dispositional) or due to the prison environment (situational). The findings support the situational explanation of behaviour rather than the dispositional one. It is also possible that personality simply has no influence on individuals’ tendencies toward obedience. If personality plays no role in obedience, then future research may benefit from examining factors other than the individual differences of participants such as situational factors.

Table 4 Correlation values between Obedience, Locus of Control

Dimension of obedience	Internal locus of control	External locus of control
Total	0.15	-.20*
Blind	0.16	-0.154
Destructive	-.20*	0.051
Unquestioned	-0.12	-0.123
Crime	.25**	-0.041
Coercive	0.15	0.036

It was conjectured that “*Internal Locus of Control would be negatively correlated with Obedience*”. Findings showed that internal locus of control is not significantly correlated with total obedience ( $r=0.15$ ) and other dimension blind, coercive unquestioned obedience (table no 4) but negatively correlated with destructive obedience ( $r=-.20^*$   $p<0.01$ ) and positively related with crime obedience ( $r=.25^{**}$   $p<0.01$ ). Holland (1967) shows those with a high internal locus of control have a greater resistance to authority. Oliner & Oliner (1998) who had resisted orders, were more likely to have a high internal locus of control. These results appeared to support the idea that a high internal locus of control makes individual less likely to follow orders. Blass (1991) also analysed work on personality elements linked with obedience, based on the early work of Stanley Milgram and his research assistant

Alan Elms, examining Locus of Control personality characteristics. Some people have a Internal Locus of Control, meaning that they take greater responsibility for their actions because they believe they are in control of what they do and what happens to them, while others have a External Locus of Control, meaning that they take less responsibility for their actions and believe that what they do and what happens to them is governed more by the situation and other people around them, circumstances.

It was hypothesized that “*External Locus of Control is positively Correlated with Obedience*”. Finding revealed that External locus of control negatively correlated with obedience ( $r=-.20^*$   $p<0.01$ ) but not significantly correlated with other dimension of obedience (table no 4). Someone with an external LOC believes their behaviour is caused by fate, luck or other external forces. Blass initially believed that people with an internal locus of control are more likely to be defiant, whilst those with an external locus of control are more likely to be obedient. However, the facts on this topic are highly conflicting. However, Blass has re-analysed data collected by Holland (1966) and discovered evidence that Internals are more likely to drop out than externals. Elms & Milgram (1974) found that internal locus of control can lead to more resisting obedience to authority.

Table 5 Summary of the stepwise Multiple Regression analysis for Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Neuroticism as predictor of total obedience (N=98)

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F change	β	T	Sig f change	F change
1	.036a	.001	-.009	.124	-.036	-.353	.725	2.991*
2	.165b	.027	.007	2.527	.204	1.590	.115	
3	.327c	.107	.030	8.358	.306	2.891	.005	
4	.364d	.132	.095	2.750	.168	1.658	.101	
5	.374e	.140	.093	.809	-.090	-.900	.371	

- a. predictors(constant) conscientiousness
- b. predictors:(constant), conscientiousness, agreeableness
- c. predictors:(constant), conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion
- d. predictors:(constant), conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience
- e. predictors:(constant), conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience, neuroticism

\*\*p<0.01 \*p<0.05

It was hypothesized that “*Openness to experience, Extraversion, Neuroticism Conscientiousness and Agreeableness would significantly predict obedience among employees*”. Results revealed that for the ocean model personality variables accounted for 14% of the variances. Although the model as a whole was statistically significant,  $F(5,92)= 2.991, p=.015, **p<0.05$ (Laurent Begue,2014). All of the predictors explain 14% variance between the variables. Additionally coefficients were further assessed to ascertain the influence of each of the factors on the criterion variable total obedience. The result revealed that overall model is significant but individual predictors are not significant, this means that the variables collectively have predictive power but on component level; neuroticism ( $\hat{\alpha}=-.090, t =-.900, p=.371$ ) as a predictor did not significantly predict accurately the model, Openness to experience did not significant predictor of obedience. ( $\hat{\alpha}=.168, t =1.658, p=.101$ ). Table 5 reveals that multiple correlation  $\{R=.036; F \text{ change } (1,96)=.124\}$  and regression coefficient ( $\hat{\alpha}=-.036, t =-.353, p=.725$ ) of Conscientiousness did not emerge as a significant predictor) these values showed that higher level of conscientiousness showed with a decrease in the dependent variable(total obedience). Agreeableness emerged as a non significant

predictor( $\hat{\alpha}=.204, t =1.590, p=.115$ ). On the other hand Extraversion did emerge as a significant predictor( $\hat{\alpha}=.306, t =2.891, p=.005$ ). Ashton Caroline (2015) Findings revealed that OCEAN model failed to produce any meaningful associations with obedience. These traits failed to reach the significance level

Table 6. t-test results regarding the scores obtained from Obedience scale and Age range

Total obedience	Age	N	Mean	Std deviation	t value	Sig
	Early middle	46	93.41	10.670	6.560	<.001
	Later middle	52	105.25	6.374		

Apart from personality variables, independent-samples t-test was applied to compare the obedience scores of early middle age and late middle age. It was conjectured that “*there would be no significant age differences in early middle age or later middle age related to obedience*”. There was significant differences in scores of early middle age ( $M= 93.41, SD=10.670$ ) and later middle age ( $M=105.25, SD=6.374$ ). Findings revealed that there is a difference between early middle age and later middle age (t- value, 6.560, sig <0.01, table no. 6). We fail to accept the null hypothesis because there is difference between both the groups. Later middle age are more obedient as compared to early middle age. The plausible reason could be because early middle employees of present era, are well known to advancing technology and curious to find alternative approaches, instead of relying on authorities decision. On the other hand employees of later middle age don’t want to make new efforts in changing themselves, therefore completely follows the orders of higher authorities. Last but not least a stereotypical view would be that young age

group are particularly submissive, with disobedience rising during the rebellious teenage years, then people becoming more obedient as they get older that young people tend to be nuisance and lacking in calmness than older people. Shanab &Yahya(1977) replicated Milgram's study with children and teenagers at the university of Jordan. There is no literature available comparison between early middle age and later middle age.

Table 7. t- test results regarding the scores obtained from Total Obedience according to the gender variable

	Group Statistics t- test				t- value	Sig.
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Total Obedience	Male	49	103.18	8.822	3.487	<0.01
	Female	49	96.20	10.884		

There was significant differences in scores of male (M=103.18,SD=8.822, t- value 3.487, sig<0.01, table no. 7) and female (M=96.20,SD=10.884). It was hypothesized that *there would be no gender differences between male and female* results revealed that obedience significantly differ between male and female. In this case null hypothesis is rejected and alternate is accepted there is a difference between both the groups related to obedience. These finding is contrary in line with previous results finding no sex differences in rates of obedience(Milgram, 1974,Blass,1991; Burger,2009). Shanab and Yahya(1978) there was no gender difference in male and female due to obedience. However, past researchers have been mixed view point on the gender differences. The absence of any sex differences supports the similar findings reported by Milgram (1974) and Shanab and Yahya (1977). However, these differences are at odds with those of the Australian study (Kilham &Mann, 1974), in which it was found

that significantly more males (68%) than females (40%) overobeyed, as well as with the findings reported in the United States study (Sheridan & King, 1972), in which more obedient females (100%) than males (54%) were found. These differences cannot be attributed to any cultural differences since the sex variable had no effect in two widely diverse cultures, such as the Jordanian and American cultures. Burger, J. M.(2009) men and women did not differ in their rates of obedience. Blass(2000) found no evidence of a gender differences. (Aedrielyn G. Pichay, 2014) predicted that there will be a group inclination in obedience, through which individuals who passed by are more likely to obey than the people in group. The result is significant that higher percentage of women compared to men obey the setups (95.31% versus 79.18%). Sifan Yun (2023) concluded that women obey dominance more than men and men obey prestige more than women.

### Implications

These measurable personality traits may aid in relation to work sector in developing tactics for early identification of disobedient or employees that are too compliant. Criminal gangs frequently order its members to commit unlawful and immoral acts. As a type of initiation test to prove their worthiness to join the gang, young members have committed heinous knife and gun crimes on the urging of gang leaders, resulting in some terrible outcomes. If personality traits influence obedience, these can be recognized early on. Individual differences include distinguishing characteristics, such as age, sex, and education. It contains personalities that may be very submissive, Findings on obedience can inform how societal structures and authority figures are perceived and obeyed. This knowledge can guide policies and practices in various institutions like schools, workplaces, and government agencies. Insights into locus of control and personality traits

can be valuable for people will obey or not. Understanding obedience can shed light on ethical behavior and moral decision-making. It can help address issues related to conformity, peer pressure, and individual autonomy. In organizational settings, knowing about obedience and personality traits can aid in effective leadership and management practices. Leaders can leverage this knowledge to foster a positive and productive work environment. This research could influence policies related to individual rights, responsibilities, and freedoms. It might also impact legal systems by providing insights into factors affecting obedience with laws and regulations. Study on obedience, locus of control, and personality traits has far-reaching implications across various aspects of society, including education, governance, ethics, organizational behavior, and individual well-being. It underscores the importance of considering psychological factors in shaping societal structures and policies.

### Conclusion

The current study attempted to examine the role that individual differences in the personality dimensions of the Big Five and locus of control on the obedience. Although some personality dimensions failed to predict overall obedience, the conscientiousness and agreeableness dimension of the Big Five was found to be associated with destructive obedience. As these results are contradictory to previous research finding no association between conscientiousness and obedience (e.g., Bocchiaro & Zimbardo, 2010), this result should be replicated in a larger sample in order to determine whether this association is reliable. Some consider personality to have been be a likely factor of obedience, particularly when one takes into account that personality variables might greatly alter the course of the experimenter-participant interaction; a highly empathetic participant

might embody that personality trait in the form of more frequent and impassioned expressions of concern for the learner than would others. Meanwhile a more assertive participant might have been less likely to shy away from conflict and the choice to disobey than less extraverted participants. Results confirmed that conscientiousness and agreeableness positively associated with destructive obedience. Observing personality traits in multiple scenarios can be more accurate in predicting behaviour.

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