

## **Personal Qualities Towards Organisational Performance for Library 4.0 among Academic Librarians in Malaysia**

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**Abstract.** Personal qualities can be defined as personal attributes, values, traits and attitudes in oneself. In this study, personal qualities refer to ten qualities dimension of librarians which are achiever, able to take control, self-awareness, innovative, risk taker, open minded, responsibility, sociability, courtesy and ambitious. A questionnaire was used as the main instrument in gathering data and a total of 634 respondents were involved in this survey. A survey instrument with a seven-point interval scale was built around ten personal quality variables. Only 240 (37.85%) of the questionnaires were returned and usable for further analysis. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and Linear Regression were used in the analysis of data using SPSS version 27.0 software. The test was used to analyse the relationships between the constructs. The results of the study revealed a positive and strong relationship between personal qualities and organisational performance.

**Keywords:** Personal qualities. organisational performance, library 4.0, academic librarians, library management.

### **1 Introduction**

Over the past 10 years, much concerned on Library 3.0 has been expressed by librarians. According to Rutledge's research (2020), soft skills are just as crucial as hard talents, if not more so. She discovered that the women in her study were more successful in managerial roles because of their collaborative attitude and emotional intelligence. Creelman (2016) argues that managers should be able to effectively coach their staff. As a result of new technology's advancement of digital technologies all around the globe, the development stage in most libraries can be seen and practiced by librarians in just a short ztime. The impact from external sources will influence the libraries to a greater change. In this context, the transformation of libraries relies on Web-based

services. Thus, librarians are equipped with the required personal qualities in their working organisations. The rapid changes in the information industry have called for a fresh look of present and future academic librarians. Academic librarians in Malaysia are the focus in this research. However, these studies were based mainly on library and information settings.

It's not easy to foresee the future. However, by looking at the current state of academic libraries, test is needed to measure the accuracy of previous projections to some extent. The first step in determining the abilities and personal attributes that will be required from librarians is to understand the direction in which they are evolving. Personal qualities can be defined as personal attributes, values, traits and attitudes (Goulding et al., 1999a). In the literature, words such as personal traits, personal attributes, non-cognitive qualities, personal characteristics and non-academic elements are frequently interchanged. In this study, personal qualities refers to ten qualities dimension of librarians which are achiever, able to take control, self-awareness, innovative, risk taker, open minded, responsibility, sociability, courtesy and ambitious. Hall-Ellis and Grealy (2013) point out, there is no uniformity of competency list. Similarly, Allner (2008) emphasises the necessity and stating that a librarian cannot fulfil all the tasks by individually.

Exhaustive implementation of Library 4.0 practice across diverse areas of library operations and supported by IT systems to enable quick decision making for better productivity and quality (Plinta, 2016). Library 4.0 must include not only software-based approaches but also technological environment development such as makerspace, Google Glass, context aware technology, digitalisation of contents, big data, cloud computing and augmented reality (Noh, 2015). Changes in the environment will constantly occur, and these changes will have an impact on librarians' roles, career opportunities, self-image, motivation, and even survival (Hashim & Mokhtar, 2012). Knowledge, skills, and talents that contribute to the career of information professionals and librarians are referred to personal qualities. It is necessary to do a job or task successfully. From the start, a slightly increase of attention to define the outline of personal qualities made by the key professional library and library organisation. It is critical in defining capabilities and personal qualities as roles, identifying training and development opportunities, and evaluating performance. Library and Information Science (LIS) hopes to improve its condition and serve the public interest by examine its initial aims, functions, and activities, as well as plan for future developments.

## **2 Literature Review**

Personality, according to Feist (1994), is "a broad concept referring to all those generally permanent features, dispositions, or characteristics within an individual that give that person's behaviour some consistency." Cloninger (1996:3) defined personality as "the underlying reasons of individual behaviour and experience within the person." Other reveals that personality is a combination of a person's behaviour, thoughts, emotions, and motivations when interacting with others (Goulding et al., 1999b). Personal qualities allow us to make comparisons between people (Cloninger, 1996). In

1961, Allport (1961a) revised nearly 50 personality definitions. In a dictionary study of personality, he identified 17,953 feature names. Allport emphasised that personality qualities exist in a person can help explain the uniformity of that person's behaviour. Allport refers to the personality dimensions that everyone shares more or less but almost everyone shares.

The technology advancement and changes at workplace has an impact on personal skills set (Russell, 2003). A highly skilled workforce using new technology is needed for the future generation of jobs. Works today are distinguished by a shift in production from low-value to high-value output, increased workforce imitating, information management and major reorganisation (Rojewski, 2002). The constant changes in the workplace, the nature of the work itself, and the advancement of technology will undoubtedly call for a workforce with advanced knowledge in the relevant fields, high skills, and good attitudes. The development of new technology transforms the way work is done and results in a change in the workforce demand from one of low skill to one of high competence (K-Worker). High technical skill levels and interpersonal skills are required in the modern job.

The ability of leaders to create a cooperative working environment and lead a team is critical to organisational performance. In order to provide solutions to situations that need to be resolved as professionally as feasible, effective results demand emotional engagement and empathy from participants in terms of actions performed within a team. The degree to which an organisation can effectively place itself on the business market using some informational, financial, and human resources is referred to as organisational performance. Organisational effectiveness is mainly determined by how well it adjusts to changes in the external environment. In the literature, performance is defined as "the degree to which an organisation, as a social system, fulfils its objectives given particular resources and means" (Horga, 2012, p.24).

SCANS's approach is suitable for any organisation in their preparation of producing students to have employability skills to work in industry. SCANS (2001) emphasised that skills and effectiveness are also a part of the measures taken to ensure students to master the criteria required by employers in order to produce high profile workers in various fields and careers. Employability skill is often defined as a preparation for graduates to successfully get jobs and to develop in their careers (Fugate et al., 2004). Employability skills are also known as transferable core skill groups that represent essential functional and enabling knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by the 21st century workplace (SCANS, 1991a) and industrial employers agree that to be outstanding in their field, employability is an important skill to be acquired by their employees. Employers are looking for graduates who have skills in three major areas: 1) strong academic and thinking skills; 2) strong technical skills in the field in which they work; and 3) employability skills such as the ability to work in teams and communicate effectively

### 3 Methodology

The descriptive research with quantitative method is used to collect the data. The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between librarian's personal qualities and organisational performance. Accordingly, the following hypothesis were tested:

- H1: Personal Qualities significantly related with Satisfaction
- H2: Personal Qualities significantly related with Accomplishment.
- H3: Personal Qualities significantly related with Innovation.

Questionnaires in google form were sent by email to selected librarians at 20 public university libraries in Malaysia. The respondents are an academic librarian from grades S41, S44, S48, S52, S54 and JUSA C. A seven-item Likert scale was used to answer the questions. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and Linear Regression were used in the analysis of data using SPSS version 27.0 software.

### 4 Findings

#### 4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 1: Demographic Profile

		Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Gender	Male	68	28.3%
	Female	172	71.7%
2. Age of Working Experience	<24	1	0.4%
	6-10	38	15.8%
	11-15	94	39.2%
	16-20	61	25.4%
	21-25	26	10.8%
	26-30	11	4.6%
	55-59 years old	9	3.8%
3. Grade	S41	42	17.5%
	S44	147	61.3%
	S48	32	13.3%
	S52	14	5.8%
	S54	4	1.7%
	JUSA C, B, A	1	0.4%
4. Highest Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	95	39.6%
	Master's Degree	141	58.8%
	Doctorate Degree	3	1.3%

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents. Out of the 240 respondents, 68 were females and 172 were males. The age category of 35-39 years, 80 people (33.3%), is the highest compared to other age categories and less than 24 years old are the lowest as many as 1 people (0.4%). Meanwhile, 174 of the respondents are from grade S44 and the minority is from grade JUSA., 1. For highest education level, 58.8% are master's degree and the lowest percentage is 1.3% which is doctorate degree.

#### 4.2 Relationship between personal qualities and organisational performance

To investigate whether personal qualities are significantly related with organisational performance which consisting of satisfaction, accomplishment and innovation, correlation analyses were performed. Subsequently, bivariate linear regression analyses were separately executed between each of the aforementioned variables as to examine the strength of the relationship. The results of the correlation analyses are displayed in Table 2. The values of Pearson's  $r$  range from  $r = 0.587$  to  $r = 0.784$ , suggesting that moderate and strong correlation but significant relationships, exist. The lowest correlation value  $r = 0.587$ , is between personal qualities and innovation, while the highest correlation value,  $r = 0.784$ , is between user personal qualities and satisfaction.

Table 2  
Correlation matrix between personal qualities and organisational performance

	Satisfaction	Accomplishment	Innovation
Personal Qualities	0.784**	0.654**	0.587**

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

A further analysis using regression as shown in Table 2 unveiled that personal qualities mode single-handedly determined 62% of the variation of satisfaction,  $R^2 = 0.62$ , with  $F(1,236) = 377.24$  and  $p < 0.001$ . In contrast, personal qualities was found to singularly explain 43% of the variation of Accomplishment,  $R^2 = 0.43$ , with  $F(1,237) = 177.56$  and  $p < 0.001$ . In addition, the analysis also unveiled that personal qualities singularly explaining 34% in the variation of innovation,  $R^2 = 0.34$ , with  $F(1,237) = 124.48$  and  $p < 0.001$ .

All these findings support the three formulated hypotheses:

- H1: Personal Qualities significantly related with Satisfaction
- H2: Personal Qualities significantly related with Accomplishment.
- H3: Personal Qualities significantly related with Innovation.

## 5 Findings

The analysis on relationship used Pearson's correlation coefficient as it determined the relationship between dimensions. There were ten dimensions of personal qualities namely achiever, able to take control, self-awareness, innovative, risk taker, open minded, responsibility, sociability, courtesy and ambitious towards organisational performance for Library 4.0.

From the findings, all the dimensions were correlated with the degree of moderate to strong correlation. These findings were supported by Calantone et. al. (2002), Liao and Wu (2009) Kelly and Todd (2017) and Sacco and Copel (2018). A regression equation was estimated with satisfaction as the dependent variable, and element of personal qualities as the independent variables. The regression equation is statistically significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ), implying that there is an association between satisfaction and any or all of the independent variables. The *r*-square value being 0.784 personal qualities was found to correlate strongly with satisfaction, implying that substantial relationship exist. The findings suggest that higher level of personal qualities would relate to a higher level of satisfaction. Looking at the individual regression coefficient, one finds that only the coefficient of personal qualities are statistically significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ). Hence, this shows that personal qualities significantly related with satisfaction.

Next, a regression equation was estimated with accomplishment as the dependent variable, and element of personal qualities as the independent variables. These findings were supported by Paunonen & Ashton (2001). The regression equation is statistically significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ), implying that there is an association between accomplishment and any or all of the independent variables. The *r*-square value being 0.654 personal qualities was found to correlate strongly with accomplishment, implying that substantial relationship exist. Thus, the effect of element of personal qualities as a whole on accomplishment is strongly correlate. Looking at the individual regression coefficient, one finds that only the coefficient of personal qualities are statistically significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ). Hence, this shows that personal qualities significantly related with accomplishment.

Lastly, a regression equation was estimated with innovation as the dependent variable, and element of personal qualities as the independent variables. These findings were supported by Adam et al. (2006), Duhautois et al. (2018) and Duhautois et al. (2020). The regression equation is statistically significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ), implying that there is an association between innovation and any or all of the independent variables. The *r*-square value being 0.587 means, personal qualities was found to correlate moderately with innovation, implying that substantial relationship exist. Looking at the individual regression coefficient, one finds that only the coefficient of personal qualities are statistically significant at 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ). Hence, this shows that personal qualities significantly related with innovation.

Based on the above finding, this implied that the remaining dependent variable might be explained by other variables and not included in the study. For example, if more factors or variables are added to the model that is useful to explain dependent variable (organisational performance), then more variation can be explained and a better model

for predicting the dependent variables can be produced. The positive and significant relationships of personal qualities and organisational performance improvement measure support the findings by Kumar and Khairuddin (2006) and Hernandez (2003).

## 6 Conclusion

This study has presented the findings on relationship between librarian personal qualities and organisational performance in Malaysian academic libraries. It is evident from the literature examined based on previous studies of Library 4.0 that had produced personal qualities (Kassim, 2004, Tsiligiris & Bowyer, 2021). This study attempts to fill the gap of personal qualities for librarians. The study found that the library environment requires academic librarians to have a mix of “hard” and “soft” skills and knowledge, and personality or personal qualities that are appropriate for the organisations. It also suggests that they should be multi-skilled.

The results of the hypotheses testing also reveal that the requirements of personal qualities are almost similar among public universities libraries in Malaysia. The important finding was, there was a relationship between required personal qualities of academic librarians and the organisational performance. The results also seem to imply that the required personal qualities can be applied across other types of libraries. The explanation for this could be that the organisations are more likely to be information technology, therefore the essential of personal qualities are given comparable weight and have similar criteria. This study is focussing only on public universities libraries in Malaysia and it cannot represent other types of libraries as a whole. While the scope of respondents only concentrates more toward librarians, it is advisable to do a study on support staff in every libraries in Malaysia to see the impact of globalisation in future study.

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