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Predicting Emotional Exhaustion Through Compulsory Citizenship: Moderating Role of Proactive Personality

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ABSTRACT

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Received 20 April 2024 Revised 05 December 2024 Accepted 26 January 2025 Published Online 01 March 2025 The core aim of the current study is to examine the relationship between compulsory citizenship behavior and emotional exhaustion. It also covers the boundary condition of proactive personality. Data for the current study were collected from banking and IT employees in Pakistan, using a convenience sampling technique. In total, 278 filled responses were found suitable and used for analysis. The findings of the study reveal that compulsory citizenship behavior is positively related to emotional exhaustion, while proactive personality dampens this relationship. Implications and future directions of the study are also discussed.

Keywords:

Compulsory citizenship behavior, Emotional exhaustion, Pakistan, Proactive personality.

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1. Introduction

Human resources have long been regarded as an organization's most valuable asset due to their ability to influence organizational performance. Furthermore, their value arises from their capacity to provide organizations with a competitive edge by enabling them to achieve their organizational objectives (Ahmed & Islam, 2021). To attain these objectives, employees have to work beyond their formal roles, which is referred to as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Lestari et al., 2023). OCB leads to numerous organizational level outcomes, including enhanced productivity, decreased costs, customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, improved market performance, and innovation (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 2009; Santos et al., 2024).

Given the importance of OCB, managers frequently require it from their staff, which turns voluntary behavior into a more demanded behavior (Bolino et al., 2013; Ali Nisar et al., 2024). This has led to the concept of compulsory citizenship behavior (CCB), defined as employees' engagement in behaviors that are imposed by the organizational social structure and are not voluntary in nature (Vigoda-Gadot, 2006). The evidence in the literature suggest that it is common to require workers to perform tasks outside of their formal job duties (Ahmadian et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2017). However, how CCB influences workplace is an area that needs to be investigated further (Ahmadian et al., 2017; He et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2017; Ali Nisar et al., 2024).

Considering the aforementioned calls, the present study can be positioned in relation to the literature in the following ways. First, this study examines the emotional outcomes of CCB. Conversely, earlier studies (e.g., He et al., 2018; He et al., 2019; He et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2017; Shu et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2018; Yildiz et al., 2023) concentrated on the negative impacts of CCB on workers' attitudes and behaviors, while ignoring the emotional outcomes of CCB. The importance of emotional outcomes cannot be overlooked because emotional states influence behavioral and attitude outcomes. According to Qin and Zhang (2024), empirical literature focusing on emotional outcomes is scant. Therefore, the primary goal of this study is to investigate how CCB influences emotional exhaustion, a negative emotional state in which an employee feels emotionally drained due to work.

Additionally, this study attempts to propose and, empirically, investigate the boundary condition that is expected to lessen the effects of CCB on employees' outcomes. CCB arises when supervisors assign tasks that are not directly part of one's job but are nevertheless essential. However, conditional factors may reduce the impact of CCB. For instance, He et al. (2019), and Peng and Zhao (2012) found that the organizational level interventions can reduce the negative impact of CCB on employee outcomes.

While considering other factors that may influence the outcomes of CCB, He et al. (2020) noted that individual factors can also influence various outcomes of CCB. One such factor is individual personality, as it provides us a lens through which we see the things around us. It also determines how one translates various organizational-level activities (Chen et al., 2023). Therefore, the current study considers the role of proactive personality as boundary condition between CCB and employees' emotional exhaustion. Here, we propose that individuals who are naturally proactive—that is, who foresee issues and prepare ahead of time—tend to be less affected by CCB. Proactive employees manage their work and personal life affairs effectively, even after taking on additional responsibilities, and they prepare for unanticipated and undesirable events. This ability reduces the negative feelings about CCB, allowing them to bounce back from workplace burdens. However, until now, the moderating role of proactive personality between CCB and emotional exhaustion has largely been overlooked.

Our study model is supported by the fact that CCB can work well in South Asia (Pakistan), a region known for its high levels of traditionalism, collectivism, and power distance (Ahmed & Islam, 2021; Rana et al., 2021), as well as its tendency to shun uncertainty (De Clercq et al., 2021; Hofstede et al., 2010). Employees are encouraged to work outside of their official jobs in such a setting (Chen et al., 2023; He et al., 2019). Additionally, managers in these cultures often place a high value on outputs, low costs, and material gains. As a result, work roles may lack clear boundaries, which encourages employees to engage in desired extra-role behaviors and fosters negative workplace attitudes (Chen et al., 2023; Mishra, 2015).

This research endeavor makes some important and valuable contributions. The foremost is considering the emotional outcomes of CCB, which is an important determinant of employees' attitude

and behavior. Furthermore, it covers the boundary condition of proactive personality which is expected to dampen the effects of CCB. This study employs Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) (Hobfoll, 1989; 2001) to propose and, empirically, investigate the aforementioned relationship. Furthermore, this study covers the sample from a South Asian country (Pakistan), where CCB presence seems logical and organic. The current job conditions also require employees to work beyond their official roles to secure their positions (Khan & Ullah, 2021; Rasheed et al., 2021). This makes it difficult for employees to eliminate unnecessary job demands.

2. Theory and Hypotheses Development

2.1. Compulsory Citizenship Behavior and Emotional Exhaustion

Workers frequently have to fulfill the responsibilities of both holding a job and participating in the organization. The former pertains to the formal duties one must perform as part of their job, while the latter is related to one's activities outside of formal jobs (Welbourne et al., 1998). Employees feel pressured to accomplish both tasks because their success in meeting these obligations impacts their performance evaluations (Perlow, 1998; Podsakoff et al., 2009). When workers must balance the demands of their jobs with their limited resources, such as time and energy, they experience role overload (Duxbury & Halinski, 2018). As a result, employees often work overtime, bring work home, or sacrifice personal time to attend meetings in order to fulfill job requirements.

Another situation where workers are forced to perform tasks outside of their official roles is through compulsory citizenship behavior (CCB). CCB is expected to influence employees at emotional level (Van Daalen et al., 2009). According to Bolino and Turnley (2005), the emotional loss occurs due to the excessive job demands and exhaustion of resources. The current study also assumes the destructive effects of CCB on emotional exhaustion, using the COR perspective.

According to COR (Conservation of Resources) theory, one strives to increase, protect and safeguard resources. The resources may be of any type (physical, financial, and social etc.). When an individual perceives a loss or threat of loss to their resources, they tend to feel about the resources that have been lost or those that remain (Hobfoll, 1989). Furthermore, when one perceives that the lost resources are compensated by other resources, the level of stress reduces. This could be explained by the fact that when workers must sacrifice their personal resources (i.e., time and energy) to work for a cause that offers them no additional advantages (e.g., CCB), they experience a depletion of personal resources (Chen & Yu, 2013). Based on these lines, we propose that CCB (demand for extra work) is considered a threat to personal resources (e.g., time and energy devoted for family) and may create stressful conditions (e.g., emotional exhaustion).

The association between CCB and emotional exhaustion can also be inferred from an alternative perspective. The incapacity of employees to distinguish between CCB and OCB frequently leads to job ambiguity (Tepper et al., 2001). Therefore, they need more resources to understand their roles and the meanings behind them, which leads to increased job pressure (Amiruddin, 2019). As a result, they lose their energy and find it difficult to do multiple tasks, which leads to emotional exhaustion from work (Chen et al., 2023; Ford et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2017). The increase in emotional exhaustion also seems logical since, due to higher job demands (CCB), employees have to sacrifice their time and energies (personal resources) (Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006; Van Daalen et al., 2009). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Compulsory citizenship behavior is positively related to emotional exhaustion

2.2. Moderating Role of Proactive Personality

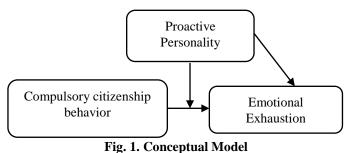
This study raises the possibility that conditional variables could moderate the relationship between CCB and its outcomes, either positively or negatively. The same hypothesis has received empirical support from earlier studies. For instance, He et al. (2020) discovered that negative affectivity exacerbates the detrimental effects of CCB. He et al. (2022) have also argued that the reward system is an organizational component that may help mitigate the negative effects of CCB. Similarly, both organizational and individual traits can reduce or limit the effects of CCB. Chi et al. (2024), observed that the organizational component of leader-member exchange quality and the personality trait of extraversion may both be utilized to mitigate the effects of CCB. According to the empirical literature,

personal variables are more significant in terms of value than organizational ones regarding the negative effects of CCB (Chaudhary et al., 2023; Chi et al., 2024). Accordingly, proactive personality traits—characteristics at the individual level—may mitigate the negative effects of CCB.

This idea makes sense because proactive individuals tend to make effort to change their environment (Bateman & Crant, 1993). These self-starters have a propensity to predict the future and act effectively in advance. Proactive individuals can prepare for new challenges at work (Seibert et al., 2001) and adapt to changing circumstances (Crant et al., 2016; Fuller Jr & Marler, 2009). Therefore, it is suggested that, in comparison to reactive individuals, these people might not experience work pressures because, by nature, they can adjust to changing and excessive job demands (Bergeron et al., 2014; Erdogan & Bauer, 2005), thereby feeling emotional exhaustion less. According to COR perspective, CCB requires individuals to sacrifice family time and resources for the sake of organizational roles that are not part of their formal jobs. Therefore, they tend to feel loss of personal resources (Hobfoll, 1989; 2001). However, proactive individuals are typically able to balance their family and job roles, reducing work-family conflicts (Xie et al., 2018). According to Premchandran and Privadarshi (2019), these people also tend to do better at home because they take deliberate steps to prioritize their families, never allowing their jobs to interfere with their personal lives. The ability to balance the work-family life creates emotional harmony, leading to the feeling of satisfaction (Premchandran & Priyadarshi, 2019). Therefore, it seems logical to argue that proactive individuals tend to feel less emotional exhaustion, and are less emotionally influenced by CCB. Therefore, the following hypotheses are made (To observe the conceptual model, see Figure 1):

H2: Proactive personality is negatively related to emotional exhaustion.

H3: Proactive personality moderates the relationship between compulsory citizenship behavior and emotional exhaustion, such that the relationship weakens as the level of proactive personality increases.



3. Research Methodology

3.1. Participants and Process

The employees of service businesses (banks and IT firms located in Lahore, Pakistan) that participated in the data collection process completed the questionnaires twice as part of a two-stage (lagged) methodology. According to Bakar and Sulong (2018), and Chen (2020), these companies represent significant economic sectors that support the world economy. Workers in these sectors are held accountable for extra work and tardiness, in addition to their official duties. According to Podsakoff et al. (2012), the time-lagged strategy is suggested due to its advantages and capacity to prevent common method biases. Since the population and sampling frame of the study was not available or feasible to calculate, a rule of thumb method i.e., a ratio of items to 20, was used to establish the study's sample size (Costello & Osborne, 2005).

According to Islam et al. (2024), this general rule is frequently applied in management and social science studies since it provides a suitable sample size that can meet statistical standards. The sample was selected using convenience sampling technique. Convenience sampling, though a widely used technique of sampling, is prone to some limitations e.g., generalizability and biases. However, Staines (2008) suggests that these limitations can be overcome if multiple independent samples are taken (such as this study which has selected samples from both banking and IT firms). Jager et al. (2017) also suggest that the limitations of convenience sampling technique can be reduced by using homogenous samples. Since the current study followed the guidelines of both Jager et al. (2017) and Staines (2008), it is expected that biases are reduced. The researcher distributed 480 (24×20) questionnaires at time-1, with only 413 employees returning them. The respondents were contacted again after a suitable lag period of six weeks. This time, 354 employees reported to work (time-2), and 278 of them completed the questionnaire in its entirety. The sample was predominantly composed of individuals with an average age of 27.8 years, less than 10 years of work experience (n = 245), a university degree (n = 220), and male respondents (n = 209).

3.2. Measures

Emotional Exhaustion: Emotional exhaustion was operationalized using the nine-items Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) scale (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). It was assessed using a five-point system, with 1 representing "never," and 5 representing "always." This term is one of the most frequently used in management literature (Lee & Ashforth, 1996).

Proactive Personality: Proactive personality was operationalized based on the work of Bateman and Crant (1993), utilizing a 10-item scale developed by Seibert et al. (2001). Items included statements such as, "I am always searching for new methods to enhance my life."

Compulsory Citizenship Behavior: Compulsory citizenship behavior was operationalized using the five-item scale developed by Vigoda-Gadot (2007). This scale is considered suitable for collectivist and power-distant societies (Peng & Zhao, 2012), making its application appropriate in the context of Pakistan. It included questions such as, "This organization's management puts pressure on employees to engage in extra-role work activities beyond their formal job tasks."

3.3. Control Variables

Considering the guidelines suggested in the literature (Chen et al., 2023), employees' educational level, gender, age and qualification were controlled.

4. Findings of the Study

4.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Validity Assessment

Before hypotheses testing, confirmatory factor analysis was used to test the loadings and validity of the measures. Model fitness was assessed using the "Normed Chi-square" ($\chi^2/df \le 3.0$), Comparative Fit Index (CFI ≥ 0.90), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI ≥ 0.90), Root Mean Residual (RMR ≤ 0.08), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA ≤ 0.08), and factor loading (≥ 0.50). The measurement (CFA) model was found acceptably fit (i.e., $\chi^2/df = 244.07/141$, RMR= .024, RMSEA=.039, CFI=.917, GFI = .909). Factor loadings for all the factors were above the threshold (0.660 – 0.879 > 0.50). The Table also represents that all the measures met the discriminant and convergent validity thresholds as the average variance extracted (AVE) was above 0.50 and composite reliability was above 0.70 (Fornell & Larker, 1981).

Table 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Variables	Loading, reliability	and validity	
CCB	0.826 - 0.879	$\alpha = 0.89$, AVE = 0.70, CR = 0.89	
PP	0.660 - 0.724	$\alpha = 0.80$, AVE = 0.53, CR = 0.82	
EE	0.709 - 0.852	$\alpha = 0.83$, AVE = 0.58, CR = 0.72	

AVE=Average Variance Extracted, CR= Composite Reliability, CCB=Compulsory citizenship behavior, PP=Proactive personality, EE= Emotional exhaustion

4.2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

Table 2 presents the results of descriptive statistics, reliability and correlation analysis. The mean score is provided with respect to five-point Likert scale. All of the tabulated values are above 3.5 (rounded to 4, which suggests agreement with the statements), indicating the presence of variables of interest at workplace. The Table also demonstrates that all measures met the reliability threshold value of > 0.70 (Babbie, 1992). The correlation analysis highlights that Compulsory citizenship behavior is positively related to the emotional exhaustion (r=.207; p<0.05), but not related to proactive personality (r=-.014 p>0.05). These results facilitate further data analysis.

Table 2.	Descriptive	Statistics.	Reliability, and	Correlation Matrix

	N=278	Mean (SD)	1	2	3
1	Compulsory citizenship behavior	3.9402 (.507)	-		
2	Proactive personality	3.5621 (.482)	014	-	
3	Emotional exhaustion	3.8439 (.572)	$.207^{*}$.247**	.337**

^{*}p<.05, **p<.001

4.3. Path Analysis and Hypotheses Testing

The results of hypotheses testing are provided in Table 3, which presents the outcomes of Hayes process macros based on guidelines suggested by Preacher et al. (2007). The tabulated values reveal that compulsory citizenship behavior is positively related to emotional exhaustion at 95% confidence interval (H1 is supported). It is also evident that proactive personality negatively influences the emotional exhaustion (β =-.214, p<0.005). The results for moderation analysis are also presented in both Table 3 and Figure 2. The interaction results highlight that proactive personality reduces the effects of CCB on emotional exhaustion (β =-.104, LLCI=0.0652, ULCI=0.2175). The slope for moderation is illustrated in Figure 2, highlighting that the effects of CCB are diminished for individuals with a high proactive personality (thus supporting H3).

Table 3. Summary of Hypotheses Testing

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	В	SE	P	LLCI	ULCI	
Direct effect:						
$CCB \rightarrow EE$.191	0.052	.032	-	-	
Interactional Effects						
PP → EE	214	0.123	.002	-	-	
$CCB \times PP$	104	0.080		0.065	0.218	

CCB=compulsory citizenship behavior, PP=proactive personality, EE=emotional exhaustion

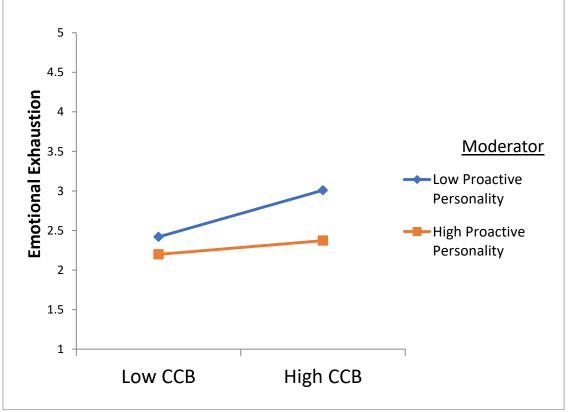


Fig. 2. Slope for Moderation

5. Discussion

Based on the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001), this study examined the moderating role of proactive personality in the relationship between compulsory citizenship behavior and workers' emotional exhaustion. The statistical analysis conducted on the data collected via questionnaires yielded significant findings. The results are noteworthy, as no previous research has established a link between emotional exhaustion and compulsory citizenship behavior (CCB), while the current study identified a positive relationship between these constructs. The outcomes additionally attend to the recommendations for the future put up by Ahmadian et al. (2017), He et al. (2019), Liu et al. (2017), and Ali Nisar et al. (2014), who proposed examining the outcomes of CCB at various levels.

Furthermore, the emotional impacts of CCB are suggested and, empirically, examined in this research (H1); these effects have not received much attention from researchers; however, they still deserve more investigation (e.g., He et al., 2020; Qin & Zhang, 2023). Although the process is established and highlights an important issue, the statistical results support the assertion that compulsory citizenship behavior (CCB) promotes emotional exhaustion; thus, H1 is supported. The results also take into consideration the suggestions put forth by He et al. (2018), and Chen et al. (2023), who investigated how CCB can influence various results. The results support Chen et al.'s (2023) observation that cultural traits may play an important role in the translation process and validate the statements based on the cultural composition of the sample. The findings support the assertions that the presence of CCB is prevalent in power-distance and collectivist cultures. These findings are intriguing, as they demonstrate how employees often struggle to strike a balance between their work and family responsibilities due to excessive job demands (Bragger et al., 2005; Carlson et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2017). The findings also indicate that people experience emotional strain (Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006), which leads to the development of emotional exhaustion (Van Daalen et al., 2009). Individuals frequently struggle to handle these circumstances, as there aren't many opportunities accessible due to intense work pressure.

Proposing and analyzing conditional variables have been another aspect of this investigation. It has also been demonstrated by earlier studies (e.g., Chaudhary et al., 2023; Chi et al., 2024; He et al., 2022; He et al., 2020) that the presence of specific conditional factors can either foster or diminish the effects of CCB. In this regard, studies have suggested and examined the conditional effects of proactive personality, as evidenced by research demonstrating the influence of personality on an individual's perception of CCB (Chaudhary et al., 2023; Chi et al., 2024). The results demonstrated that proactive individuals are more adept at handling CCB (H3 is supported). These results are also corroborated by earlier studies. It has been argued that proactive individuals are usually prepared for unforeseen circumstances and problems (Seibert et al., 2001). These individuals can respond to the demands of their professions (Fuller Jr & Marler, 2009; Crant et al., 2016). Our findings also indicated that these individuals are better family members and are more capable of managing job and personal obligations (Premchandran & Priyadarshi, 2019; Xie et al., 2018). Therefore, the study proposed and, empirically, supported the fact that individuals with proactive personality tend to manage excessive job demands (CCB); they can thrive rather than indulging into negative emotional states (emotional exhaustion).

6. Implications

The research provides theoretical as well as managerial insights. The COR theory is theoretically used to construct this study. The results suggest that compulsory citizenship behavior causes loss of personal resources (time and energy), which, in turn, creates negative outcomes such as emotional exhaustion. The results make sense as followership and acceptance of authority make collectivist and power-distance cultures suitable for these kinds of roles (Rana et al., 2021). Role conflicts and resource loss, occurring in such situations, has a detrimental impact on employees. According to the investigation, employees experience tension and exhaustion when their duties conflict or when they perceive losing resources. The strain does not end here, as individuals must still compromise their familial responsibilities to meet the demands of their compulsory citizenship behavior. These findings demonstrate that the effects of required citizenship behavior extend beyond the workplace and have an impact on personal life as well. For collectivist cultures, where family domains play a significant role in an individual's life, these findings make more sense (Ahmed & Islam, 2021; Rana et al., 2021). These findings seem logical within

Pakistan's collectivist culture, in which people are deeply rooted in family units and often base professional decisions on their family's expectations (Ahmed & Islam, 2021).

This study also provides managers with some helpful insights based on the theoretical implications presented. For managers, the most important lesson is that compulsory citizenship behavior has detrimental effects, including emotional exhaustion. Previous research indicates that emotionally exhausted workers may experience a variety of detrimental effects at work. Thus, the significant lesson for managers in this the study could be that "Keep your employees happy and win forever" rather than "putting too much on their shoulders." Managers need to realize that while mandatory citizenship behavior may yield short-term benefits, it can have long-term detrimental effects on the firm and its operations. The results provide empirical support for a key assertion that employees can ultimately provide a company a competitive edge. Thus, managers should prioritize long-term success over short-term gains and create an environment where employees are not pressured to exceed their required responsibilities. Therefore, the management should structure work such that staff are not overworked. The presence of CCB at work may have some detrimental effects on the organization. Such an environment often results in poor service, which, in turn, diminishes customer loyalty in the service industry (such as banks and IT). Thus, it can be concluded that managers should foster a supportive environment focused on employee well-being, enabling them to thrive and develop.

7. Limitations and Future Directions

Though the current study is based on a rigorous methodology, it has certain limitations. The primary drawback pertains to the time-lagged cross-sectional research design, which is recommended as a solution to mitigate common method biases (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Future research should adopt a multi-wave approach to examine the long-term consequences of citizenship behavior and its effects on work-family balance and the overall emotional outcomes of employees. Additionally, future studies should consider other boundary conditions, such as justice, reward systems, leadership, and learning orientation. When employees believe that they could be compensated for going beyond their formal roles (CCB), they are less likely to see mandatory citizenship behavior negatively. Personal characteristics, such as a positive perspective on the workplace and surroundings (James et al., 2021), may also mitigate the effects of required citizenship behavior. Likewise, employees with a strong learning orientation might not view required civic engagement negatively, therefore their performances might differ.

Future research should focus more on specialized industries where culture-related characteristics may significantly influence practices and management structures, in contrast to the current study, which included respondents from diverse firms. Individuals interpret compulsory activities differently, viewing them as either a blessing or a curse. This variability makes individual personalities, such as those characterized by the dark personality traits, potentially unique. Individuals with dark personality traits (i.e., narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy) prioritize their own growth above all else and strive for success. Future research may find that leadership acts as a moderator as well, because through their motivational role, leaders can alter workers' perspectives about their jobs and persuade them that required CCB is a positive rather than a negative workplace characteristic. According to previous research (Shu et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2018), negative leadership features (such as authoritarian and destructive styles) may cause feelings of required citizenship behavior, whereas the positive aspects of leadership may be investigated as a boundary condition.

8. Conclusion

This study aims to investigate the impact of compulsory citizenship behavior (CCB) on emotional exhaustion and the moderating role of proactive personality, contributing to the literature through the Conservation of Resources Perspective. It provides empirical evidence regarding the role of personality in mitigating the effects of excessive job demands (CCB) on emotional outcomes, specifically emotional exhaustion. From a South Asian perspective, where CCB is influenced by cultural norms and power distance, employees often experience psychological exhaustion; however, their personality traits serve as coping mechanisms.

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