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EFFECT OF PERSONALITY TRAITS ON LEADERSHIP STYLES IN MALE ADOLESCENCES OF BOARDING SCHOOL

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Abstract

Present study reports the effect of personality traits (PT) on leadership styles (LS) in male adolescence. The study was conducted on 265 young adolescent of class 8 to 12 from a leading boarding institution of Pakistan. Sample consisted of 12 to 18 years age group. It was hypothesized that neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness PT would significantly predict LS in male adolescents. Non-experimental quantitative design with non-probability convenient sampling was used to draw a sample. The scores on each item of IPIP by Goldberg (1999) and LS by Lewines (1939), were entered in SPSS version 22.0 for Windows. Stepwise regression analysis was carried out for all the variables. The findings revealed that agreeableness, conscientiousness extraversion and openness are the most significant predictor of LS in male adolescence. Openness, on the other hand, was found to be the lowest predictor of leadership. Neuroticism is not found as the indicator of LS among male adolescents. The study findings are beneficial for educational institution for the utilization of PT development, to create good leaders.

Keywords

Personality Traits, Leadership Styles, Adolescents, Boarding School



1. Introduction

What makes an individual a leader? Becoming a leader is never an ascribed status, but it is an achieved status for anyone. And role to fulfill this status is not only assigned by the intelligence factors, but there are many personality factors involved in it. "The term personality has been defined by different investigators as a combination of qualities and characteristics that form a distinctive character that tend to influence behavior in a particular manner" (James & Holsinger, 2004). Examples of personality traits include flexibility, emotional equilibrium, eagerness, impartiality, resourcefulness, and self-assurance. All these are also known as the "Personality trait" which is abbreviated as PT. Similarly, a good leader possesses the personality traits that helps the employees perform their jobs well, communicate with teams easily and cooperate for the completion of tasks at hand (Ghania *et al*, 2016). Basically adolescents are more conscious about their personalities regarding how they look, act, react, talk and influence others, and whether it is in a positive and strong way (Das, 2011). This feedback on their personality traits shapes their personality and their leadership styles in the future. This stage of life is also important in strengthening their healthy personality traits which is important in developing leadership styles in future. Personality traits that have been related with leadership include ambition, conscientiousness, integrity, persistence, and honesty, among others (Diryte *et al*, 2013). Additionally, the Big Five personality factor model is universally accepted and was proposed by Gosling *et al*, (2003).

1.1. Extroversion

Extroversion (also spelled extraversion) is the degree of concern and engagement that one has with the outside world. Sociability and outgoing nature of one's personality, dictates the degree to which an individual may be comfortable interacting with other people.

1.2. Neuroticism

It is sometimes called emotional instability. The personality dimensions of emotional stability have been labeled as neuroticism in some versions of the taxonomy. Emotionally stable leaders are able to handle stress, deal with criticism, and take failures and mistakes in stride; leaders with low emotional stability, on the other hand, are often tense, irritable, anxious, depressed, or lacking in self-confidence (Holsinger, Jr, 2001).

1.3. Openness

This trait influences individuals to have deeper feelings both good and bad. Openness, is also called "intellectance" represents the intellectual curiosity, inquisitiveness, open mindedness and having a learning oriented, mindset. Individuals that have a high degree of openness often also show more imagination, creativity and the willingness to consider new approaches and novel ideas (Brown *et al*, 2006).

1.4. Conscientiousness

The trait makes an individual focused on their aims, repeated action and exhibiting control over traits such as impulsivity. This trait is one of the most extensively studied traits in work environment (Bono & Judge, 2004) as it represents are liable,

accountable, compliant, sober and well organized individual (Brown & Trevino, 2006).

1.5. Agreeableness

The ability to get along with other people is called agreeableness. Compassion, cooperativeness and trust, are the most identified characteristics with agreeableness. It refers to someone who is humble, humane, trusting, kind and supportive (Treviño *et al*, (2003); Brown *et al*, (2005).

1.6. Leadership (LS)

The understanding of the concept is under continuous evolution (Lewis, Goodman and fandt, 2004) and the-number of definitions of a good leader varies with the number of scholars trying to define it (Bass, 1990a; Yukl, 2006). As Yukl also defined leadership as a process to influence others to understand and agree about the actions that need to be taken and how they need to be executed, by this means supporting individuals in accomplishing common objectives (Yukl, 2006). Yukl remarked that actual leadership is essential to empower companies to endure trials and tribulations and allow vital alterations in order to stay competitive. Leadership must be characterized as the individual who shows the capability to consider the one he/she leads" principles, thoughts, and values and convert it into their leadership style thus bringing meaning to the organizational goals (Bryman, 2004; Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994).

1.6.1. Leadership Styles (LS)

While dealing with followers, the LS are the repeated patterns of behavior that leader"s exhibit. Researchers seem to agree that if one best style of leadership could

be determined; this would make training of effective more easy (Gates, R. M. 2016).

1.6.2. Situational-leadership Style

There is a need for building emotional bonds with the team members, if a leader has to use the situational style of leadership (Goleman, 2000) they have to show high levels of EI, showing a balance between too emotional and not emotional enough leaders, cannot be overstated (Cangemi *et al*, 2012). This comprises of having the capability to read verbal and non-verbal language cues and to relay messages using both these avenues (Cangemi *et al*, 2012).

1.6.3. Democratic Leadership Style

The hallmark of this style is that the leader has an open door policy and is willing to hear the feedback and concerns of the team members, resulting in the feeling of importance of one in the whole, even though this can result in some wastage of time resource through long meetings, where unanimity remains intangible.

1.6.4. Facilitative Leadership Style

This is an emerging leadership paradigm, making its way into an increasing number of organizations, governments and institutions. Facilitative Leadership is a people centered, quality and results driven process of developing and supporting a culture in the workplace that facilitates goal achievement through effective relational processes (Hersey & Blanchars, 1969; Rizvi 2016).

1.6.5. Authoritative LS

It is about leadership who first takes decisions and

sometimes may discuss with their group members too. Their first priority is to take decisions and implement decisions with team members (Hersey and Blanchard's 1969, Rizvi 2016). Personality traits (PT) and leadership (LS) have also been studied extensively. Concepts like optimism, self-efficacy and self-esteem have been highlighted as crucial ingredients for LS (Avolio & Luthans 2006, Goleman *et al* 2002). Self-awareness has been identified as an important attribute of leaders" (Avolio, 2006). An individual's thoughts, feelings and behavior towards others, are significantly impacted by their PT. Extraversion and introversion, are the two sides of the same key PTs, that dictate how people communicate with others in different settings and develop relationships with others (Alkahtani *et al* 2011). People from different backgrounds exhibit varying values, attitudes and norms. Their cultural heritages are reflected in their PT. While some individuals display stronger personalities and are able to influence the personalities of others, these individuals can prove to be leaders. Indeed, many researchers have conducted studies so as to understand the relationship between personality and human behaviors (Dole & Schroeder, 2001). A study was carried out in 2016 at the University of Kocaeli to assess the "Role of Personality in Leadership, Five Factor Personality Traits and Ethical Leadership". The study was aimed to find the link between five factor personality traits and leadership. The research findings exposed that Neuroticism has an off-putting effect on ethical leadership. Another

research by Samantha Easley, 2019, has shown that the personality traits of a persona are associated and contributed towards, improved responses to any particular LS. The study looks at undergraduate students, and compared their PTs to their preferred LS. It was found that young adults with PTs of Openness and Extraversion showed more preference towards transformational leadership style. Whereas, the similar group with PTs of Conscientiousness and Neuroticism, showed preference towards Autocratic leadership style. (Samantha Easley, 2019).

1.7. Objective

To find out the best predictors of leadership effectiveness from different personality traits and emotional intelligence

2. Hypothesis

Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness will be predictors of leadership.

3. Methodology

The research aims to find the PTs that were the best predictors of leadership in male adolescents" from Pakistan. Sample of the study consisted on 265 young adolescences students of class 8 to 12, aged 12-18 years. Non experimental Quantitative design with Non-Probability Convenient sampling was used to draw a sample. The scores on each item of IPIP by Goldberg, 1999 and LS by Lewines (1939), were entered in SPSS version 22.0 for Windows. Stepwise regression analysis was carried out for

all the variables.

5. Results and Discussion

Table 1 Stepwise Regression Results for Leadership and Personality Factors

| | Variable | B | 95% C.I | | SEB | B | R2 | ΔR2 |
|-------|-------------------|---------|---------|-------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| | | | LL | UL | | | | |
| Step1 | Constant | 2.52*** | 1.19 | 3.86 | .68 | | .20 | .20*** |
| Step2 | Agreeableness | .14*** | .109 | .178 | .02 | .45 | .30 | .09*** |
| | Constant | .112*** | - | 2.093 | .72 | | | |
| Step3 | Agreeableness | .08 | .077 | .147 | .02 | .34 | .33 | .05*** |
| | Conscientiousness | -.02 | .05 | .11 | .01 | .31 | | |
| | Constant | -.02 | - | 1.39 | .71 | | | |
| Step4 | Agreeableness | .08 | .044 | .12 | .02 | .26 | .35 | .02*** |
| | Conscientiousness | .08 | .06 | .10 | .01 | .23 | | |
| | Extraversion | .06 | .03 | .09 | .01 | .24 | | |
| | Constant | -.87 | - | .77 | .77 | | | |
| | Openness | .05 | .05 | .02 | .02 | .15 | | |

Note. CI= confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit***p<. .001

Above table shows the impact of agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion and openness on leadership styles in male adolescents. In step 1 the R2 value of .20 revealed that there is 20% variance in the leadership styles with $F(1, 264) = 65.26, p < .001$. The findings revealed that agreeableness positively predicted leadership styles in male adolescents ($\beta = .45, p < .001$). In step 2 the R2 value of .30 revealed that agreeableness and conscientiousness explained 30% variance in the leadership styles with $F(2, 263) = 65.26, p < .001$. The findings revealed that agreeableness and conscientiousness positively predicted leadership

styles in male adolescents ($\beta = .34$ and $.31, p < .001$). In step 3 the R2 value of .33 revealed that there is 23% variance in the leadership styles with $F(3, 262) = 65.26, p < .001$. The findings revealed that agreeableness, conscientiousness and extraversion positively predicted leadership styles in male adolescents ($\beta = .26, .23$ and $.24, p < .001$). In step 4 the R2 value of .35 revealed that there is 35% variance in the leadership styles with $F(4, 261) = 65.26, p < .001$. The findings revealed that agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion and openness positively predicted leadership styles in male adolescents ($\beta = .21, .27, .23$ and

.15 $p < .001$). The ΔR^2 value of .09 revealed that there is 9% variance between model 1 and model 2 with $\Delta F(1, 263) = 32.38, p < .001$. The ΔR^2 value of .05 revealed that there is 5% variance between model 2 and model 3 with $\Delta F(1, 262) = 18.52, p < .001$. The ΔR^2 value of .02 revealed that there is 2% variance between model 3 and model 4 with $\Delta F(1, 261) = 7.68, p < .001$. The present study aimed to find the effect of PT on leadership styles in male adolescence. The big five personality factors were applied on leadership styles, and step-wise regression model depicted 4 out of 5 factors (Agreeableness, openness, extraversion and conscientiousness with exclusion of neuroticism) as the four major predictors for the development of various LS, in male adolescence. The four strong predictors of LS namely, agreeableness, openness, extraversion and conscientiousness are the strongest predictor of leadership style in male adolescence. This is because of adolescence hood is more tuned and energetic period of life where adolescences are open toward new learning's, ready to modify and willing to accept others. Furthermore, research findings identified that agreeableness positively predicted leadership styles in male adolescents ($\beta = .45, p < .001$). Agreeable friendly) people are better linked, they do like conflict, and in fact they prefer cooperation which means individual have an ability to maintain healthy social relationships. Healthy relationships are a key aspect for a leader (Anonymous, 2021). Conscientiousness was found as the second major strong predictor of leadership style in male young adolescence. This may be because individuals that are more aware of their

surroundings are better equipped to guiding others and cultivating growth in self as well as in other people. The study results also suggested that extroversion is third stronger predictor of LS in young adolescences. Some previous studies also supported this finding and also confirmed that effective leadership is strongly related with the extroversion PT because extroversion is significantly related with the socialization (Costa & McCrae, 1988). A person with extroversion PT are more lively, energetic and enthusiastic so they are more willing to interact with others which boost their personality as effective leader in future. Furthermore, extroversion and openness PT were also identified as predictors of leadership. Followers seem to prefer extroversion and openness personality traits because these PT lead to two-way communication and a better mutual understanding. On the other hand, neuroticism was not found as a predictor of leadership. This finding has been found in various earlier studies. Neuroticism leads to poor adjustment and emotional instability in one's personality and creates hindrance in interacting with the surroundings. People with these traits may restrain his self from the interaction with others and also agree with others opinion.

6. Conclusion and Suggestions

The Present study findings revealed that agreeableness, conscientiousness extraversion and openness are the most significant predictor of leadership style in male adolescence. Study finding also revealed that Agreeableness is the strongest predictor of leadership and openness is

the lowest predictor of leadership. Neuroticism is not found as an indicator of leadership style among male adolescents. Our educational institutes may benefit by focusing on the development of PT, if development of leaders in the goal. One way forward would be using the project and group based task assignments. This will enhance the PT that produces good leaders. Educational institutions are also suggested to arrange events wherein communication is increased within the institution and with other institutes. These events which may be in curricular or extra-curricular arena will develop and enhance the PT which is proven to enhance the development of leaders. As research finding reveals that agreeableness is strongest predictor of LS in adolescence which indicates that effective listening and communication trainings with people from different backgrounds, not only improves young's personality but also improve the socializing skill in this essential period of life. Investments in personality development programs at institutional level are more important than simple focus on higher education, to create the leaders in present time.

Limitation

1. The research is only conducted on male adolescences. Further research is recommended on both genders.
2. Single boarding school system was targeted in the study. Further study may include none boarding schools as well.

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