The Big Five Personality Traits and Leadership: A Comprehensive Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and leadership styles, specifically authoritative, democratic, facilitative, and situational leadership. The Big Five personality traits include extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. Through an extensive literature review, present study explores how each of these personality traits can impact a leader's decision-making process, communication style, and overall approach to leading a team. Additionally, also examines how different leadership styles can be more effective depending on the specific personality traits of the leader and the needs of the team. The authoritative leadership style is most effective for leaders who are high in extraversion and low in agreeableness, while the democratic leadership style is best suited for leaders who are high in agreeableness and openness. The facilitative leadership style is most effective for leaders who are high in conscientiousness and openness, and the situational leadership style is most effective for leaders who are adaptable and able to adjust their leadership style based on the needs of the team. Overall, the study provides a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and leadership styles, offering insights into how leaders can leverage their unique personality traits to become more effective and successful in their roles.

Keywords: Big-five personality traits, Leadership styles

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a crucial factor in organizational success, and has been the subject of much research in the fields of psychology, business, and management. While many factors contribute to effective leadership, one area of increasing interest is the role of personality traits. In particular, the Big Five Personality Traits (Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism) have been identified as key factors that may influence leadership effectiveness. Personality plays a crucial role in determining a leader's effectiveness, as it influences their decision-making process, communication style, and overall approach to leading a team. For example, leaders who are outgoing, confident, and assertive may be effective in situations where they need to make quick decisions and take charge. Conversely, leaders who are cooperative and empathetic may be effective in situations that require collaboration and relationship-building. Leaders who are organized, reliable, and detail-oriented may be effective in managing complex projects and ensuring high-quality work. Lastly, leaders who are

emotionally stable and resilient may be able to remain calm and level-headed in high-pressure situations. Understanding how personality traits can impact leadership styles can help leaders become more self-aware and adapt their approach to better meet the needs of their team and achieve their goals.

Leadership style refers to the way in which a leader interacts with their team or organization to achieve their goals. There are many different leadership styles, ranging from authoritarian to democratic to situational. Each style has its own strengths and weaknesses, and the most effective leaders are often those who can adapt their style to fit the specific needs of their team and organization. Some of the major leadership styles are: -

1) **Authoritative:** An authoritative leader is someone who takes charge and makes decisions on behalf of the group or organization. They are typically confident, assertive, and decisive, and are often seen as visionary or inspirational. They set clear goals and expectations for their followers, and provide a sense of direction and purpose. However, they may also be perceived as controlling or domineering, and may not always take input from others into account.

2) **Democratic:** A democratic leader is someone who involves their followers in the decision-making process. They seek input and feedback from their team, and use this information to make informed decisions that reflect the needs and perspectives of everyone involved. They are typically seen as collaborative, inclusive, and supportive, and often build strong relationships with their followers. However, the democratic leadership style may be slower or less decisive than other styles, and may not be effective in situations where a quick decision or action is needed.

3) **Facilitative**: A facilitative leader is someone who focuses on helping their team achieve their goals by providing the resources, support, and guidance they need. They aim to empower their followers and help them grow and develop, and may use coaching or mentoring techniques to achieve this. They are typically seen as empathetic, supportive, and encouraging, and may be particularly effective in situations where teamwork and collaboration are important. However, the facilitative leadership style may be less effective in situations where a more directive or authoritative approach is needed.

4) **Situational**: A situational leader is someone who adapts their leadership style to fit the specific needs of the situation or context they are in. They may use a combination of different leadership styles depending on the situation, and may adjust their approach based on factors such as the group's level of experience or the urgency of the task at hand. They are typically flexible, adaptable, and responsive, and may be particularly effective in complex or rapidly changing situations. However, the situational leadership style may be more difficult to implement effectively, as it requires a deep understanding of the context and the ability to quickly adapt to changing circumstances.

Overall, different leadership styles can be effective in different situations, and the most effective leaders are often those who can adapt their style to fit the specific needs of their team and organization. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of different leadership styles can help leaders make more informed decisions about how to lead their team to success.

Personality refers to the unique set of traits, behaviors, and characteristics that define an individual's thoughts, feelings, and actions. These traits are thought to be relatively stable over time and across different situations, and can influence how a person interacts with the world around them. There are many different theories of personality, but one of the most widely recognized is the "Big Five" model, which proposes that personality can be described in terms of five broad dimensions.

The Big Five Personality traits are broad dimensions of personality that have been widely studied and validated in psychological research. They represent the core traits that are thought to underlie individual differences in personality, and have been linked to a range of important outcomes in both personal and professional contexts. In recent years, there has been growing interest in understanding the role of the Big Five traits in leadership, and how they may impact leadership styles, behaviors, and outcomes.

Here are brief explanations of the Big Five personality traits:

1. **Openness to experience:** This trait reflects a person's inclination toward creativity, imagination, and intellectual curiosity. People high in openness tend to be open-minded, willing to consider new ideas and perspectives, and enjoy exploring new experiences and concepts. They tend to be more flexible and adaptable to change, and are often interested in pursuing a wide range of interests and activities.

2. **Conscientiousness**: This trait refers to a person's tendency to be organized, responsible, and dependable. People high in conscientiousness tend to be reliable, efficient, and focused on achieving their goals. They tend to be self-disciplined, diligent, and motivated to succeed, and are often considered to be highly competent and effective in their work.

3. **Extraversion**: This trait reflects a person's level of sociability, assertiveness, and positive emotionality. People high in extraversion tend to be outgoing, talkative, and energetic, and enjoy being around others. They tend to be confident, assertive, and comfortable in social situations, and often seek out opportunities to interact with others

4. **Agreeableness**: This trait refers to a person's tendency to be cooperative, empathetic, and compassionate. People high in agreeableness tend to be kind, considerate, and supportive of others, and value harmony and positive relationships. They tend to be good at working with others, resolving conflicts, and maintaining positive relationships.

5. **Neuroticism**: This trait reflects a person's level of emotional instability, anxiety, and negative emotionality. People high in neuroticism tend to be prone to worry, stress, and negative emotions, and may experience more intense emotional reactions to stressors or setbacks. They may be more likely to experience depression, anxiety, or other emotional disorders.

Overall, the Big Five personality traits provide a comprehensive framework for understanding individual differences in personality, and have been linked to a wide range of important outcomes in both personal and professional contexts. By measuring and understanding these traits, individuals and organizations can gain valuable insights into their strengths and weaknesses, and make more informed decisions about how to optimize their performance and outcomes.

AIM

To examine the relationship between Big Five personality traits and leadership effectiveness, focusing on how these traits impact leadership behaviors.

HYPOTHESIS

1. It is expected that there will be a positive relationship between the Big-Five Personality traits and Leadership styles.

2. It is expected that there will be a mean difference between the Big-Five Personality traits and Leadership styles.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Suresh et al (2014) did research that indicated that leaders who exhibit a preference for Thinking and Feeling (TF) in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) are more inclined towards the S1 leadership style. Having knowledge of a leader's MBTI preferences can assist them in adapting their leadership approach to align with the readiness levels of their subordinates. The study further highlighted the importance of the remaining MBTI preferences (EI, SN, and JP). In essence, comprehending a leader's MBTI preferences can be advantageous in facilitating effective leadership.

Giltinane et al (2013) gave a study was to examine the connection between power style, personality dimensions, and leadership style. Data was collected from 300 managers in six selected companies through a questionnaire. The findings reveal that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and expert power as well as referent power. Conversely, there is a negative correlation between transformational leadership style and legitimate power, coercive power, and reward power. Furthermore, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience exhibit a positive correlation with transformational leadership style. The study indicates that expert power, conscientiousness, and coercive power serve as predictors of transformational leadership, while reward power predicts transactional leadership.

Yahaya et al. (2012) gave a study that examined how leadership style, subordinate personality, and task type interact to affect group performance and satisfaction with supervision. Three types of leaders were selected based on their levels of human relations and task orientation. Each leader worked with subordinates of high and low dogmatism on tasks of varying difficulty and ambiguity. Results showed that there were significant interaction effects on group performance, particularly for difficult-ambiguous tasks. Subordinates were more satisfied with leadership behavior that had a high human relations orientation, regardless of their personality.

Weed et al. (2023) gave a study whose objective is to tackle the inconsistent findings in existing literature regarding the connection between leadership styles and personality traits. While there is a wealth of research on personality traits, there is a dearth of comprehensive representation of leadership styles, leading to a gap in establishing a coherent relationship between leadership and personality. To bridge this gap, the study classifies 39 leadership styles into five representative styles based on shared characteristics and theoretical foundations. The aim is to examine the association between each of these five representative styles and the five dimensions of the Big Five personality model.

Hassan1 et al. (2016) gave a study whose objective is to reconcile the conflicting findings in existing literature concerning the correlation between leadership styles and personality traits. While extensive research has been conducted on personality traits, there is a shortage of comprehensive leadership styles that accurately represent the diverse range of leadership approaches. This gap hinders the establishment of a coherent relationship between leadership and personality. To address this issue, the study organizes 39 leadership styles into five representative categories based on shared characteristics and theoretical frameworks. The aim is to investigate the association between each of these five representative styles and the dimensions of the widely recognized Big Five personality model.

Saad et al. (2016) gave a study whose objective is to delve deeper into the correlation between leadership styles, personality traits, and employee communication with regards to employee engagement. Additionally, the study aims to examine how an employee's position or role within the organization, as well as their length of service, affect their level of engagement.

Bertsch et al. (2017) gave a study that explores the correlation between employees' Big Five personality traits and their preferred leadership style. The participants in the study are employees residing in a city located in the Midwest region of the USA. The study utilizes the Big Five personality model and three leadership models: Participative, Autocratic, and Laissez-Faire. The findings indicate that employees who are extroverted tend to favor a participative style leader, while those who are open to new experiences do not show a preference for an autocratic style leader. Additionally, female employees tend to prefer the laissez-faire leadership style.

Maisarah et al. (2015) - In the current volatile economic landscape, organizations depend on dedicated and proactive employees to excel and stay competitive. Job performance plays a vital role in attaining organizational objectives, and effective leadership greatly influences how leaders engage with their employees. Having a comprehension of individual personalities can assist leaders in enhancing their effectiveness and, in turn, bolster job performance. This study discovered a noteworthy correlation between a leader's personality traits and the job performance of their employees.

Marshall et al. (2012) - This study examines how personality traits and leader behaviors influence teacher self-leadership in vocational education and training settings. The research involved surveying 418 teachers from an Australian college specializing in vocational education and training. The findings indicated that both generalized self-efficacy and conscientiousness have a positive impact on teacher self-leadership. Additionally, transformational leader behaviors were found to have a positive but comparatively lesser effect on teacher self-leadership. The results suggest that improving teachers' self-efficacy can enhance their self-management abilities, increase intrinsic motivation, and promote positive thinking patterns. Furthermore, training in transformational leader behaviors, such as fostering a shared vision, setting high expectations, showing individualized consideration, and stimulating intellectual growth, can facilitate teacher self-leadership in vocational colleges.

Bernadette et al. (2018) the study aimed to explore the connection between the Big Five personality traits and authentic leadership, as well as determine which combination of the Big Five traits best predicted authentic leadership. A quantitative approach was employed, and 55 adult participants from various corporations were recruited for the study. The participants evaluated their leaders using an Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, the NEO Five-Factor Inventory-3, and a demographic questionnaire. The findings revealed that the Big Five personality model accounted for a substantial portion of the variation in authentic leadership. Specifically, conscientiousness exhibited a positive correlation with authentic leadership, while neuroticism displayed an inverse correlation. These two traits emerged as the most influential predictors of authentic leadership. On the other hand, extraversion and openness-to-experience did not significantly predict authentic leadership. Agreeableness exhibited a weak inverse relationship with authentic leadership.

Grijalva et al. (2014) This study expands upon a prior meta-analysis that examined the connection between narcissism and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). By incorporating additional data, this study reaffirms that narcissism remains the most significant predictor of CWB, even after controlling for the Big Five personality traits. The previous study's suggestion of cross-cultural moderation was primarily based on data from Bangladesh, whereas the current study validates that the association between narcissism and CWB is weakened in ingroup collectivist cultures. Furthermore, the study highlights that the strength of the relationship varies between published and unpublished studies, suggesting potential publication bias. Additionally, the study proposes that different facets of narcissism exhibit distinct relationships with CWB, with one facet positively related to CWB and another facet displaying a negative relationship.

Ermery et al. (2013) This study investigated the influence of the Big Five personality traits on leadership emergence within a leaderless group. The research involved observing forty-one students participating in a three-month study abroad program, and their perceptions of leadership were assessed three times. The findings indicated that individuals with higher levels of extraversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness were more likely to be chosen as leaders. Moreover, agreeable individuals were more likely to emerge as leaders who focused on building relationships. In terms of followership, individuals with greater conscientiousness were more inclined to follow task-oriented leaders, while those who were less open, more agreeable, and more neurotic were less likely to follow relationship-oriented leaders. Interestingly, both task- and relationship-oriented leaders tended to be nominated by individuals with differing levels of agreeableness, while relationship-oriented leaders tended to be chosen by individuals with similar levels of openness to experience.

Parmer et al. (2016) In a study of 132 working adults from various organizations in South Texas, the NEO-PI Big Five personality assessment and the Project GLOBE Leadership Questionnaire were used. The study found that participant personality was a predictor of 13 out of 21 dimensions of leadership assessed by the Project GLOBE questionnaire. Agreeableness was the most reliable predictor of attitudes towards leadership.

Veale et al. (2010) Traditionally, supervisors, administrators, and directors of special education have predominantly employed an authoritative leadership style when overseeing their special education staff. However, there is a gradual shift towards collaborative leadership styles, which are gaining traction in this field. These leaders face the responsibility of creating an inclusive culture, fostering positive relationships, and establishing partnerships that contribute to the success of all students with disabilities. Relying solely on a strictly objective management approach may lead to a closed-minded system, resulting in an unpleasant environment that hampers the effectiveness of special education teachers. This article compares and contrasts the collaborative leadership style with the authoritative leadership style within the context of special education personnel in leadership positions. A thorough examination of the existing literature concludes that adopting a more collaborative leadership style is beneficial in enhancing special education outcomes.

Wilt, Joshua Revelle and William (2016) gave an article that talks about personality trait of extraversion, which can be understood as the consistent patterns of affect, behavior, cognition, and

desire over time and space. The chapter takes a four-domain approach, examining how extraversion manifests in these areas of effective functioning. The chapter is organized as follows: firstly, a brief history of the interest in extraversion is presented. Secondly, taximetrics' approaches to measuring extraversion are summarized. Thirdly, the chapter focuses on recent and ongoing research on extraversion, categorized according to the "ABCDs" framework. Finally, directions for future research in this field are proposed.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this study, the most suitable methodology for investigating the relationship between. The Big Five Personality Traits and Leadership Style, as Independent and Dependent variables respectively, was determined to be the survey approach. A Survey is a valuable tool for obtaining information from participants through targeted questioning. The responses obtained from the survey were mainly quantitative in nature.

Data Collection

University students in Delhi NCR were given the Big Five Inventory – 10 (BFI-10) and the Leadership scale questionnaire via Google Forms, along with instructions for using them. There is no set amount of time to attempt either of these scales, so there was no set amount of time. The participants were informed that their results would only be used for research purposes and that they were guaranteed confidentiality. The participants were instructed to be impartial and truthful with this guarantee.

Tools used

The Big Five Inventory-10 (BFI-10) is a widely used self-report measure of the Big Five personality traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. It consists of 10 items, two for each trait, and is designed to be quick and easy to administer.

The Leadership Scale Questionnaire (LSQ) is a self-report measure of leadership behaviors, including authoritative, democratic, facilitative and situational styles. It consists of 16 items and is designed to assess the extent to which leaders engage in these behaviors. The LSQ has been validated in a variety of settings and is widely used in research on leadership effectiveness.

Participants

The study's sample was comprised of individuals who were selected in a non-randomized from various colleges located in the Delhi National Capital Region. To meet the inclusion criteria, participants were required to be enrolled in an undergraduate or post-graduate program at the time of the study. The final sample size consisted of participants, with a slightly higher proportion of females than males.

Procedure

In this study, a set of 26 statements that comprised the scales were administered to the participants who were randomly selected from various colleges and universities in India. Prior to the administration of the scales, informed consent was obtained from each participant, and detailed instructions on how to complete the questionnaire were provided to ensure that each participant had a clear understanding of

the task. Once questionnaires were collected from the participants who had correctly completed the survey, these were subjected to data analysis.

In order to determine the relationship between the variables of personality and leadership, analyses were employed. The data collected from the survey questionnaires were subjected to these analyses, which allowed the researcher to evaluate the nature and strength of the relationship between the variables. The statistical analyses were used to identify any significant correlations that may exist between the big five personality and leadership style among the participants.

Data Analysis

The relationship between the variables was found by applying Spearmen Correlation statistics to the data that had been gathered. In order to establish the relationship between the independent variables (The Big Five Personality Traits) and the dependent variables (Leadership Styles), the collected data were analyzed using Spearmen Correlation.

Description

The present study's sample consisted of adults between the ages of 18 and 25. These adults live in Delhi, India undergraduate and graduate students. They did not engage in risky lifestyle behaviors like smoking, drinking, or drug abuse, and they did not have any significant physical ailments.

Results and Discussion

The findings of present study provide a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and leadership styles. Through an extensive literature review, the study has demonstrated that there is a strong correlation between certain personality traits and specific leadership styles. Understanding these relationships can help organizations identify and develop effective leaders, and help leaders become more self-aware and adapt their leadership styles to better meet the needs of their team.

Table 1 Correlation Analysis (N=70)

Sr. No.	Variables	Mean	SD	t	1	2	3	3	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Extraversion	5.471	1.791	25.553	1.016	-.086	-.219		.075	-.103	-.043	.014	-.033	**-.245***	**-.245***
2	Agreeableness	7.171	1.694	35.425		1	**.318****	-.033	**.312****	**.729****	.174	**.347****	.069	.105	.105
3	Conscientiousness	6.186	1.526	33.924			1	-.243*	.183	**.532****	.210	.160	.030	.062	.062
4	Neuroticism	5.829	1.826	26.713				1	-.168	**.307****	-.059	-.164	.150	.038	.038
5	Openness to Experience	8.100	1.695	39.976					1	**.605****	**.254***	.234	.161	**.285***	**.285***
6	Over All Personality	27.286	3.632	62.852						1	**.258***	**.255***	.195	.227	.227
7	Authoritative	8.186	2.108	32.490							1	**.478****	**.423****	**.448****	**.448****
8	Democratic	7.357	1.919	32.078								1	**.283***	**.310****	**.310****
9	Facilitative	8.486	2.744	25.875									1	**.249***	**.249***
10	Situational	8.529	2.165	32.957										1	**1.000****

11	Over All Leadership Stule	8.529	2.165	32.957										1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

One of the key findings of the study is that leaders who score high in extraversion and low in agreeableness may be best suited for an authoritative leadership style. The authoritative style is characterized by a strong, assertive leader who sets clear expectations and makes decisions quickly. Leaders who are high in extraversion tend to be outgoing and confident, making them comfortable with taking charge and making decisions. However, leaders who are low in agreeableness may be less likely to consider the needs of their team members, which can make this leadership style less effective in certain situations.

Conversely, leaders who score high in agreeableness and openness may be more effective with a democratic leadership style. The democratic style is characterized by a collaborative approach, where the leader seeks input from team members and makes decisions based on consensus. Leaders who are high in agreeableness tend to be cooperative and empathetic, making them effective at building relationships and fostering teamwork. Additionally, leaders who are high in openness tend to be creative and open-minded, which can help them identify innovative solutions and adapt to changing circumstances.

Another important finding of present study is that leaders who score high in conscientiousness and openness may be best suited for a facilitative leadership style. The facilitative style is characterized by a leader who provides support and guidance to their team members, and encourages them to take initiative and make decisions on their own. Leaders who are high in conscientiousness tend to be organized and reliable, which can make them effective at managing complex projects and ensuring high-quality work. Additionally, leaders who are high in openness tend to be receptive to new ideas and perspectives, which can help them identify opportunities for improvement and innovation.

Finally, present study has highlighted the importance of situational leadership, where leaders adapt their approach based on the needs of their team and the situation at hand. The situation style requires leaders to be adaptable and flexible, and to be able to switch between different leadership styles as needed. For example, a leader may need to be more authoritarian in a crisis situation, but more democratic in a situation that requires collaboration and consensus-building.

Conclusion

In conclusion, present study has demonstrated that there is a strong relationship between the Big Five personality traits and leadership styles. Leaders who possess certain personality traits may be more effective with certain leadership styles, while situational leadership requires leaders to be adaptable and flexible. Understanding these relationships can help organizations identify and develop effective leaders, and help leaders become more self-aware and adaptable.

Additionally, the findings of present study highlight the importance of considering personality traits when selecting and developing leaders. It is important for organizations to recognize that there is no one-

size-fits-all approach to leadership, and that different situations may require different leadership styles. By considering both personality traits and situational factors, organizations can develop a more nuanced understanding of effective leadership.

Finally, the study provides a foundation for future research on the relationship between personality traits and leadership effectiveness. Further studies can expand upon the findings of this study by exploring other personality traits and leadership styles, and examining how these relationships may differ across different cultures and industries. Overall, the study contributes to understanding of the complex interplay between personality traits and leadership styles, and has practical implications for organizations seeking to develop effective leaders.

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