

## Relationship between Type of Personality and Leadership Style in Urban Health Care Centers of Iran University of Medical Sciences (IUMS)

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### ABSTRACT

Today, the serious issues of personnel management and leadership in the health sector, due to the effects on staff satisfaction and efficiency, the aim of this study was to determine the relationship between leadership style and type of personality. This study was cross-sectional in nature. The research population was composed of healthcare centers directors of IUMS. The data were collected by Likert Leadership style as well as Costa and McCrae Big Five Personality Traits Questionnaires and analyzed by SPSS software.

Findings indicated that all managers held doctoral degrees and the oldest age groups were from 35 to 40. The dominant leadership style and type of personality were consultative (68 percent); participation, conservation and consistent (76 percent) respectively. Although there was no significant relationship between type of personality and leadership style ( $p = 0.07$ ), further studies are needed to explore the relationship between the two variables.

**Keywords:** Relationship, Leadership style, Type of Personality, Urban Healthcare Centers, Five-Factor Model

### INTRODUCTION

Knowledge management, especially leadership is the subject which has been accompanied by human social life and even long before it, so that some consider it as the sole determinant of change and some introduce it as the key for progress and development of communities and organizations in recent century [1]. Leadership is the process of influencing and supporting others in order to motivate them to achieve their goals [2]. Leadership as a process means using influence without force to direct and coordinate activities of the 'employees' in order to realize a goal [3].

Unlike classic theories which considered innate characteristics as effective in success of leadership, recently leadership behavior is emphasized, that is, successful leadership depends on appropriate behavior, skills, and performance of the leader, rather than on his personal traits [4]. One of the main elements of leadership is the style of the leader. Leaders complete their style over the time through experience and education [5]. It should be noted perception of individuals and groups about leader's behavior plays a determining role in establishing healthy and constructive relationships among them [6]. The leader who is not aware of his leadership style influence on others may face difficult factors and situations. Leader may think that his present leadership style is useful for creating trust, confidence and compatibility in the employees, while his subordinates it as deceptive and a means to achieve personal goals of the leader. In order to diminish such differences, the leader should be aware of his style [4].

Personality is one of the effective factors in developing personal differences and it includes a collection of one's traits and characteristics which can be used for comparison with other persons [3]. Nations leading in industrial and scientific development since early twentieth century found that today

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organizations cannot be run by traditional methods [7]. Today role of the manager as a leader has become so important that in all areas it is attempted to find individuals with necessary abilities for leadership, because ability of the leadership effectively is one of the keys for effectiveness of the manager [8]. After World War II, various studies have been conducted for determining effective and optimal patterns or methods of leadership [9].

Findings by Gizlie showed some personality traits are related to effective leadership to some extent. For example, innovation and initiative and independent action are related to organizational level of leadership. That is, the higher is level of the person in the organization, these traits are more effective [4]. Medical health centers are considered as one of the major institutions of medical and health service providers. They act as an industrial unit and play significant role in producing a product known as mental and physical health of individuals. They act for preserving, restoring and promoting mental and physical health, performing medical and educational research studies and training skilled forces for health sector. Thus, considering important issue of personnel management and leadership in this great and important institution, paying attention to various dimensions of the manager's personality and his preferred leadership style seems necessary, especially due to its effects on personnel satisfaction in one hand, and its effect on output of this institution (health), on the other hand [5].

A plethora of studies have been conducted on the relationship between leadership style and personality traits of managers. However, few studies have used Likert and Costa and McCrae Big Five Personality Traits Questionnaires to determine the relationship between the two variables.

## **METHODS**

It is an applied work in terms of purpose and it is a correlation study in terms of research method. Current research is of cross-sectional type in nature. Research population includes 25 managers of urban medical health centers of Iran University of Medical Sciences (IUMS). No sampling was carried out.

Two questionnaires were used as data collection tools. In order to investigate leadership style of managers, the questionnaire by Renesis Likert (1967) was used including 18 items with four indexes: autocratic exploitative, benevolent authoritarian, consultative and participative [10]. Also, in order to determine type of personality, Big Five Personality Traits Questionnaire by Costa and McCrae (1987) were used. It includes 44 items with five indexes: Incentives and stimuli (8 items), consistency and participation and leadership (9 items), task and target orientation (9 items), nervousness and irritability (8 items), and the creativity and boldness (10 items).

In relation with reliability of questionnaires, firstly technical validity was determined for two questionnaires. That is, questionnaires were translated into Persian by the translator and then it was retranslated to original language by another independent translator. Prior to distribution, questionnaires were reviewed by the professors and experts in management and psychology field so that ambiguities are resolved. In order to determine stability or validity of the questionnaires, test – retest method was applied. That is, questionnaires were given to 15 individuals with features of the research sample in two times for 20 days as interval. Following measuring correlation between answers, stability or validity of the tool was supported with correlation coefficient as  $r = 85$  percent for leadership style questionnaire and correlation coefficient as  $r = 70$  percent in personality type questioner. Scoring in leadership style questionnaire is as follows: four options are provided in each item and options include "none", "somehow", "noticeable", "perfect" each with 1 score. Sum of scores in each column are summed at the end and the column with highest score is the dominant leadership style. In personality type questionnaire, items include 5 options with following scoring way: strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, somehow agree = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1. In each dimension, scores are summed and averaged. Higher average showed dominant type of personality.

Data collected from questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS 15 statistical software at descriptive statistics level (frequency and percentage) and inferential statistics level (chi-square and Spearman Rho). In order to observe ethical considerations, research purpose was described and confidentiality of information was assured.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research findings regarding demographic characteristics of managers showed 25 managers participating in the study, all had PhD degree. 36 percent of them were at age range of 36 – 40 years. The youngest manager was 26 and oldest manager was 53.

68 percent of managers had consultative style of leadership with frequency of 17. Exploitative authoritative, benevolent authoritative styles (each with 3 ones, 12 percent) had highest frequency after consultative style of leadership. Also, participative leadership style with 8 percent (n = 2) was in the next rank (Table 1).

**Table1.** Frequency Distribution of Leadership Styles In Managers under Study

| Leadership Style           | Frequency | Percentage | Net percent | Cumulative percentage |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Exploitative Authoritative | 3         | 12         | 12          | 12                    |
| Benevolent Authoritative   | 3         | 12         | 12          | 24                    |
| Consultative               | 17        | 68         | 68          | 92                    |
| Participative              | 2         | 8          | 8           | 100                   |
| Total                      | 25        | 100        | 100         |                       |

Table 2 indicates frequency of personality types of managers. Highest frequency (76%) goes for managers with participation and consistency personality type and lowest frequency (4%) goes for those who were task and target oriented (Table 2).

**Table2.** Frequency of Personality Type in Managers under Study

| Type Of Personality         | Frequency | Percentage | Net percent | Cumulative percentage |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Incentives & Stimuli        | 2         | 8          | 8           | 8                     |
| Consistency & Participation | 19        | 76         | 76          | 84                    |
| Task & Target Orientation   | 1         | 4          | 4           | 88                    |
| Creativity And Boldness     | 3         | 12         | 12          | 100                   |

According to data in Table 3, managers with consistency and participation as personality type used consultative leadership style most (n = 14). In incentive and stimuli personality trait, Exploitative authoritative and participative leadership style was used most.

As observed in Table 3, dominant leadership style in three personality types (68%) of managers was consultative and participative leadership style was observed in only 8 percent o managers with incentive and stimuli and participation and consistency personality types.

Then, relationship between personality type and leadership style was calculated using chi-square test. Considering P = 0.07, relationship between two variables was close to statistical significance level.

**Table3.** Frequency Distribution of Managers' Leadership Style in Terms of Personality Type

| Personality Type                      | Leadership style           |                          |              |               | Frequency (number) | Frequency Percent Of Personality Type |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                                       | Exploitative Authoritative | Benevolent Authoritative | Consultative | Participative |                    |                                       |
| Incentives & Stimuli                  | 1                          | 0                        | 0            | 1             | 2                  | 8                                     |
| Consistency & Participation           | 1                          | 3                        | 14           | 1             | 19                 | 76                                    |
| Task & Target Orientation             | 0                          | 0                        | 1            | 0             | 1                  | 4                                     |
| Creativity And Boldness               | 1                          | 0                        | 2            | 0             | 3                  | 12                                    |
| Total                                 | 3                          | 3                        | 17           | 2             | 25                 | 100                                   |
| Frequency Percent of Leadership Style | 12                         | 12                       | 68           | 8             |                    | 100                                   |

### Discussion on Leadership Style

Results obtained from research showed there is no significant relationship between leadership style and personality trait (P = 0.07).Also, dominant leadership style in the managers was participative style. Seyed javadi (2004) in his work entitled Leadership Style and Organizational Maturity in

Ardabil Hospitals showed in the hospitals under study, authoritative leadership style had highest frequency and found there is no significant relationship between variables of organizational maturity and educational level of employees ( $P > 0.05$ ) [12], which is consistent with current work in terms finding and methodology. Also, Taghinasab (2005) studied leadership style of manager and organizational health in male schools in RobatKarim and found there is significant relationship between leadership style of principals in schools and their organizational health at technical, institutional and administrative levels ( $P = 0.01$ ) [13], which is consistent in terms of research method. Allis (1991) studied the best leadership methods applied in intensive care nurses in Southeastern America and found inverse significant relationship between satisfaction of nurses and observation style [14], which is consistent with current work in terms of methodology.

### **Discussion on Type of Personality**

Considering related studies, dominant type of personality in this research is participation and consistency. Antonioni (1998) in his work entitled Relationship between Big 5 Personality Factors and Conflict Management Style studied relationship between dimensions of personality type, which was determined by five-factor model, and inter-organizational conflict management. He found that task and target oriented, incentive and stimuli, creativity and boldness, consistent and participation personality types have positive relationship with competitive approach and there is negative relationship between participation and consistency and nervousness and irritability types and violence approach, which is consistent with current research in terms of methodology.

Chet Robie, Douglas j. Brown and Pal Blay (2005) in their work entitled Big Five-Factor in USA and Japan [16] studied the question that if personality traits of big five-factor model act differently in different countries. According to research findings, scores of different dimensions of five-factor model were higher in American managers than Japanese managers. Common case in both samples was personality type of incentive and stimuli had significant relationship with occupational performance and personality type of task and target orientation had least relationship with this variable which is consistent with the current research in terms of methodology. Bozionelos (2004) in his work entitled The Big Five of Personality and Work Involvement studied 279 white collar employees with secretary and administrative management positions in order to determine relationship between type of personality and organizational and occupational change. He found the different dimensions of personality type as introduced in big five-factor model influence organizational and occupational change, which is consistent with current research in terms of methodology.

### **CONCLUSION**

Considering the complexity of medical and health organizations in terms of variety, number of services, commitment toward public health as well as great costs of health sector and significant of personality in developing personal differences, leadership theories indicate that some personality traits are related to effective leadership. Thus, that seems paying attention to personality traits of individuals as an influential variable is necessary, but not sufficient for selecting managers at levels where leadership characteristics are required.

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