

Exploring the Relationship Between Personality and Preferred Leadership

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We explore the relationship between the Big Five personality indicators of employees and their respective preferred leadership style of management. We sampled employees in a city in the Midwest USA. The results include a profile of personality traits and how those traits relate to preferred leadership styles. We borrowed the Big Five and measures of three models of leadership: Participative, Autocratic, and Laissez-Faire. The results show people who are extroverted also prefer a participative style leader, those who are open to new experience do not prefer an autocratic style leader, and female employees prefer laissez-faire leadership style.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is about influencing, motivating, and enabling others to make the organization effective and successful (Brannback, Carsrud, Renko, & Tarabishy, 2015). Leadership is important for any organization as leaders are the ones who create vision and motivate others to pursue that vision. Personalities may also indicate how well a prospective employee may fit with a particular type of leadership style or manager (Bennoliel and Somech, 2014). Without effective leadership, an organization may lose direction or competitiveness (Hayton, Hodgkinson, Koryak, Mole, & Ucbasaran, 2015).

For this study, we review various leadership styles and explore which ones are preferred from the perspective of employees. We explore which leadership styles are preferred based on the personality of the subordinate including extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. We borrowed the measures of three models of leadership: Laissez-Faire, Autocratic, and Participative. Laissez faire is a hands off approach (Cilliers, Deventer, & Eeden, 2008), while autocratic leaders give direction and tell employees exactly what to do and how to do it (Hughes & Pride, 2013). Participative leaders ask for suggestions from employees when making decisions (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). We explore what employees like to see in their leaders based on the followers' personality traits. We sought to answer the following questions:

- Which personality traits of employees are related to their preferred leadership style in their ideal manager?
- Which leadership style is most preferred across all personality types of employees?
- Does an employees' personality relate to his/ her preferred leadership style?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership

Leadership is the ability to motivate a group to achieve a vision and a goal (Chaudhry & Javed, 2012). A distinction should be made between management and leadership to understand their functions within an organization (Chemers, 2014). Some have contrasted leadership and management characteristics (Naylor, 1999). *Management* is the process of coordinating people and other resources to achieve the goals of an organization that may include using coercive tactics to manipulate or change employee behavior (Hughes & Pride, 2013). Management, as suggested by Naylor (1999), is said to be 'head' based and includes descriptors such as being analytical and authoritative. *Leadership* involves attaining voluntary cooperation from those who follow said leaders (Hughes & Pride, 2013). According to Naylor (1999), an effective leader is a product of the 'heart' and includes such descriptors as being passionate, inspiring, courageous, and imaginative.

According to McShane and Von Glinow (2013), leadership has two parts: The first part is motivation and influence, where leaders use communication, rewards, and resources to achieve goals. The second part of leadership is enabling employees to achieve objectives through the allocation of resources and the altering of communication. There are also two distinctions of leadership one of which is formal where leaders have legitimate power bestowed upon them by their position (Hughes & Pride, 2013); while the other distinction is informal which involves leaders exerting influence when they have no actual authority (Hughes & Pride, 2013). Leaders have personal power such as passion, creativity, or innovation that help them to accomplish the two parts of leadership.

The study of leadership as a topic has existed since the beginning of the 19th century (Leikas, Lonnqvist, Nisinen, & Verkasalo, 2013). History is shaped by the forces of great leadership that gave rise to the trait theory of leadership (Bono, Elies, Judge, & Werner, 2002). Bader, Kemp, and Zaccaro (2004) defined trait leadership as the integrated patterns of personal characteristics that show the differences among individuals and motivate effective leading. The effectiveness of a leader reflects how much a leader has influence on individual or group performance (Derue, Nahrgang, Humphrey, & Wellman, 2011). Leadership is important because in a competitive environment, it is needed to help an organization achieve its goals and an organization may have difficulty and lose direction without it (Chemers, 2014).

Leadership itself is an enormous topic and one of the most researched and discussed topics in the field of organizational behavior (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). Thousands of studies have been conducted on the leadership phenomenon (Gould, 2016). If one were to type the word leader or leadership into Google, they would get a return of over 724 million web pages (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). There are also 173,000 journal articles and books that have the word *leadership* in the title as well as over 55,000 printed leadership books (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). Leadership is a huge topic and the definition is still be debated.

What makes a good leader is controversial and has been argued since the concept of leadership has existed (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). Husain, Salfi, and Virk (2014) said that a good leader needs high levels of knowledge, soft skills, time management, high experience and personal qualities. Naylor (1999) suggests that an effective leader is a visionary, creative, inspiring, innovative, imaginative, experimental person (as cited in Amanchukwul, Ololube, & Stanley, 2015). Bhatti, Maitlo, Hashmi, Shaikh, & Shaikh (2012) suggest an effective leader can lead his/her employees to the destination that the whole group has previously chosen. It took 54 leadership experts from 38 countries to come up with a definition for leadership. This group's effort produced the following definition: leadership is about influencing, motivating, and enabling others to contribute towards the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013).

Perception is one of the most influential psychological processes in social interaction and we see different people behaving in different ways depending on our perception of the situation (Leikas et al., 2013). Although a particular type of leader may not be identified as more effective than another, leadership experts have created competencies over the last two decades that could identify someone as having great leadership potential (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). The first of these competencies is *personality*. While all five personality traits in the Big Five play a role within leadership, extroversion and conscientiousness have been shown to be the biggest indicators of effective leaders (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). Another competency is *self-concept* which is having and knowing one's own self-beliefs and having a positive self-evaluation (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). Other competencies include *drive* which is defined as one's inner motivation to accomplish; *integrity* which is defined as being truthful and doing deeds that one knows are right; *leadership motivation* which is defined as the use of social power to accomplish positive outcomes for the organization; *knowledge of the business* includes practical and logical intelligence; and *emotional intelligence* (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). While these traits show effectiveness in leadership as well as potential for leadership, leadership is far too complex of a topic to have universal traits that apply to every situation (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013).

Kozak and Uca (2008) find leadership *style* plays an important role in organizations because it can enhance a positive working environment and increase service performance (as cited in Kara, Lee, Sirgy, & Uysal, 2013). Bass and Avolio (1993) suggest leadership styles might affect subordinates' performance (as cited in Griffin & Hu, 2013). There are several types of leadership styles. Each type of leadership style is important depending on organizational culture and the leader him/herself. For parsimony, we selected three leadership styles: autocratic, laissez-faire, and participative. We aim to explore the relationship that employees' personality as a follower has with the style of leadership they would like to see exhibited in their leader.

Autocratic Leadership

Murigi (2013) said autocratic leadership involves the application of punishment, task-orientation, commands, and close supervision. An autocratic leader makes decisions confidently with little concern about employee opinions (Hughes & Pride, 2013). Employees are told exactly what is expected from them and given specific guidelines, rules, and regulations on how to achieve their tasks (Hughes & Pride, 2013). Autocratic leaders will be most useful in situations requiring quick decision-making. Effective autocratic leaders are strong and knowledgeable in their companies' information and are useful when group organization and focus is needed. Autocratic leadership seems to be effective in crisis and in emergency or risky situations (Belias & Koustelios, 2014). Autocratic leadership style can fail if followers are more knowledgeable than the leader, which can create an employee perception of the leader being pompous (Goleman, 1995).

Laissez-faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership style is often defined as a 'hands-off' style with the least amount of control and a lot of freedom (Kassim, Nasharudin, & Tarsik, 2014). While autocratic leadership is very controlling, laissez-faire tends to take the opposite approach. Laissez-faire leadership has the appearance of being simple and easy-going between leaders and subordinates. Laissez-faire, as the name implies, is

the avoidance or absence of leadership (Einarsen, Glaso, Hetland, & Skogstad, 2014). Laissez-faire leadership style involves leaving employees to their own will and relies on them having self-direction (Hughes & Pride, 2013).

A laissez-faire leader shows little concern and responsibility for the results of his or her projects (Muenjohn, 2015). A laissez-faire leader affords others with the proper tools and resources needed and then backs off, giving only slight guidance and direction while letting members have the freedom to make decisions. This leadership method can be effective if the group members are highly skilled, experienced, motivated, and capable of working on their own (Mujtaba, Razzaq, & Zareen, 2015). However, this style is not the best in other situations such as when the group does not have the appropriate experience or knowledge needed to finish the tasks or make decisions (Mujtaba, Razzaq, & Zareen, 2015). Additionally, some employees are not as good at setting their own deadlines or managing their own projects. Some people in the group may also lack the motivation needed to get certain tasks done on time. Without that extra push from the leader, deadlines may be missed. Giving people freedom to make their own decisions creates confidence but there is a fine line between giving plenty of freedom and giving too much slack (Holzer, Kaudela-Baum, & Kocher, 2013). Laissez-faire leadership style is neither good nor bad. If employees are capable, confident and motivated, it fits and can work well. If employees lack ability, knowledge, or confidence, it can backfire (Gaiter, 2013).

Participative Leadership

Participative leadership is when a leader consults with subordinates and asks for suggestions from employees that are then taken into consideration when making decisions (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). Participative leadership includes three classifications: consultative, consensus, and democratic (Hughes & Pride, 2013). Consultative leaders discuss issues with their subordinates but retain final authority; consensus leaders seek employee input and make final decisions based on that input; and, democratic leaders give final authority to the group (Hughes & Pride, 2013).

Leadership Style Summary

In summary, we have chosen the three different leadership styles – laissez-faire, autocratic, and participative – to explore which styles tend to be more preferred by employees. Laissez-faire is implied as the avoidance or absence of leadership that leaves employees to act on their own and relies on them having self-direction and competence (Hughes & Pride, 2013). Autocratic leaders make decisions confidently, with little concern about employees' opinions (Hughes & Pride, 2013). Participative leadership style is where all members of a team are involved in identifying essential goals and developing strategies to reach the goals (Hughes & Pride, 2013).

Personality Traits and the Big Five

People differentiate from each other in many aspects with personality being one of those aspects. We include a personality assessment to explore how it relates to employee's preference of various leadership styles. The personality types we measure are extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to new experience, which are commonly called The Big Five. *Extroversion* is the trait of being outgoing, talkative, sociable and assertive (Daft, 2013). *Agreeableness* reflects being trusting, helpful, good-natured, considerate, tolerant, selfless, generous, and flexible (Daft, 2013). *Neuroticism* is the trait of being anxious, insecure, self-conscious, depressed, and temperamental (Daft, 2013). *Openness to new experience* refers to the extent to which people are imaginative, creative, unconventional, curious, nonconforming, autonomous, and aesthetically perceptive (Daft, 2013). *Conscientiousness* describes how dependable, careful, and self-disciplined someone is (Daft, 2013). Table 1 illustrates various words associated with each trait in the Big Five (Revelle & Wilt, 2008). Any descriptor with a (-) in front of it is said to be a descriptor that is on the opposite spectrum for the trait.

TABLE 1
BIG FIVE DESCRIPTORS

Extroversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness to new experience
Talkative	Sympathetic	Organized	Tense	Wild Interests
Assertive	Kind	Thorough	Anxious	Imaginative
Active	Appreciative	Plans	Nervous	Intelligent
Energetic	Affectionate	Efficient	Moody	Original
Talker	Anxious to please	(-)Distrustful	Coward	Ironical
Chatty	Flatterer	(-)Careless	Grumbler	(-)Commonplace
Boastful	(-)Cold	(-)Disorderly	Mean	(-)Simple
(-)Quiet	(-)Unfriendly	(-)Frivolous	Unseasonable	(-)Shallow
(-)Reserved	(-)Quarrelsome	(-)Irresponsible	Feckless	(-)Unintelligent
(-)Shy	(-)Hard(-)headed	(-)Hostile	(-)Stable	(-)Stupid
(-)Silent	(-)Unpleasant	(-)Shameless	(-)Calm	(-)Superstitious
(-)Arrogant	(-)Outcast	(-)Avaricious	(-)Contented	(-)Boor
(-)Garrulous	(-)Offensive	(-)Reckless	(-)Unemotional	(-)Gross

The Big Five itself was derived from a factor analysis of English adjectives that were taken from a dictionary by Warren Norman (Revelle & Wilt, 2008). Donuahue, John, and Kentle (1991) indicated the Big Five we know today was constructed in the late 1980's as a relatively short survey instrument that reflected personality traits. Goldberg (1990) said a five-factor personality model can be used to describe the most salient aspect of personality (as cited in Bono et al., 2002). Costa and McCrae (1988) suggest the five-factor structure has been recaptured through analysis of trait adjectives in various languages, and evidence indicates that the Big Five itself is heritable and stable over time (as cited in Bono et al., 2002). The Big Five traits are relevant in many aspects of life such as subjective wellbeing (Soto, 2015).

We set out to explore the relationship between the personality of a follower compared to their preferred leadership style exhibited in their leader. We continue our review of the connection between personality and leadership style.

Personality of Leaders and Leadership Styles

Leadership is possibly the most investigated variable that has a potential impact on employee performance (Prahbu & Pradeep, 2011). Effective leader's behaviors facilitate the attainment of the followers' desires which, in turn, results in effective performance. Leadership itself should be measured in terms of team, group, or organizational effectiveness but is commonly measured by supervisor, peer, or subordinate (Bono et al., 2002).

Judge and Werner (2002) studied how personality affected a leaders' effectiveness. A meta-analysis has shown that the Big Five personality traits have a multiple correlation of 0.39 with leadership effectiveness (Hendricks & Payne, 2007). The study of Judge and Werner (2002) is important because individuals with specific personality attributes and a similar work environment may desire the same type of leader (Day, 2014). Low neuroticism is predicative of leadership and Judge and Werner (2002) hypothesized that neuroticism would be negatively related to leadership effectiveness (Bono et al., 2002). Extroversion has been shown to be positively related to leadership in five studies, negatively related in three, and was found to have no correlation in four studies (Bono et al., 2002). Leaders high in extroversion have shown to be more active, assertive, energetic, and willing to speak their mind so extroversion was predicted to have a positive relation to leadership effectiveness (Bono et al., 2002). Within the descriptors for openness to new experience, creativity appears to be an important skill of effective leaders and research supports that connection (Bono et al., 2002). Bono et al. (2002) said leaders

do not tend to be excessively modest and predicted that agreeableness would be negatively related to leadership. Because conscientious individuals have more tenacity and persistence, Judge and Werner (2002) predicts that conscientious individuals will be more effective leaders (as cited in Bono et al., 2002). The results of Judge and Werner's experiment (2002) showed that extroversion has the strongest correlation to leadership effectiveness at $r = 0.31$. Conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to new experience showed correlations of $r=0.28$, $r=-0.24$, and $r=0.24$ respectively. Agreeableness had the weakest correlation of $r=0.08$ (Bono et al., 2002).

Personality of Employees and Leadership Styles

Ash and Steven (2001) measured personality traits and found out how those traits correlated to different systems of organizational leadership. An important element of organizational culture is first-line management and employee fit (Ash & Steven, 2001). Ash and Steven (2001) wanted to find out how employees fit in an organization based on their personalities and how well those correlated with management styles. The management styles that were used were exploitative authoritative, benevolent authoritative, consultative, and participative authoritative (Ash & Steven, 2001). The exploitative authoritative style is where orders are issued from the top and the decisions are imposed on employees without discussion (Ofei, Okoe, & Puni, 2014). In the benevolent authoritative style, orders are issued but subordinates may be able to comment (Gallo & Gonos, 2013). In the consultative style, goals are set or orders are issued after discussion with subordinates in relation to problems and planned actions (Kwok, 2014). The participative style allows goals to be established by way of group participation (Iguisi, 2016).

While Ash and Steven (2001) did not use the same terminology for the defined leadership styles as our study employs, it did use the Big Five personality test. Ash and Steven (2001) described agreeableness as one who is agreeable, fundamentally altruistic, sympathetic, and eager to help others. Conversely, one who is not agreeable would be antagonistic, egocentric, skeptical of others, and competitive. One who scores high on being open to new experience would have intellectual curiosity, preference for variety, and would be curious about inner and outer worlds while those scoring low in being open to new experiences would be conventional, conservative, and would prefer the familiar over the novel (Ash & Steven, 2001). Extroversion was described as being sociable, gregarious, assertive, talkative, and active, while introverts are reserved, and independent (Ash & Steven, 2001).

Ash and Stevens (2001) did not use conscientiousness nor neuroticism. Conscientiousness has been predictive of performance in groups (Barrick & Mount, 1991) and reflects dependability and responsibility (Ash & Steven, 2001). Neuroticism is the degree of a persons' emotional stability. Ash and Steven (2001) have stated on both these personality traits that there is nothing in the literature that says strength in either dimension in individuals will differentiate among preferences for manager-subordinate relationships in managerial jobs.

Based on our literature review, many have hypothesized that significant relationships would exist between leadership styles and employees. To that end, we intend to measure the Big Five and three leadership styles to answer our research questions by exploring the relationship between the Big Five indicators of employees and their respective preferred leadership style of management.

METHODOLOGY

Research designs are typically classified as exploratory or conclusive (Hair, Babin, Money, & Samouel, 2003; Malhotra, 2007). The primary objective of exploratory research is to provide insight into the problem confronting the researcher (Bertsch, 2009; Girard & Bertsch, 2011). In exploratory designs, the primary research questions may be ambiguous and the researcher seeks to discover new information (Zikmund & Babin, 2007; Littrell & Bertsch, 2013).

Our approach is exploratory in nature as we seek to explore relationships across variables that we have discussed in the literature review and which may not yet be explored nor clearly defined. Our literature review leads us to believe that these relationships are heretofore unresolved and not thoroughly defined within the described context. Further, we seek to discover new information and new relationships;

therefore, we have selected a sample based on convenience, an important aspect of exploratory research (Bertsch, 2012; Zikmund and Babin, 2007). For our research, we use data collection and survey research. Survey research is a research method involving the use of standardized questionnaires or interviews to collect data about people and their preferences, thoughts, and behaviors in a systematic manner (Bhattacharjee, 2012). We gather data through questionnaires given to local employees working in the area. Such sampling is a reasonable and acceptable process in exploratory designs (see, for example, Hair et al., 2003; Malhotra, 2007; Zikmund and Babin, 2007). Our questionnaire included eight constructs including the five personality constructs and three constructs measuring preferred leadership style.

Instrumentation

Our research employed a questionnaire-based survey instrument to collect data. In addition to demographics, our instrument borrowed items from the Global Leadership and Organization Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project led by House (2004). The specific items borrowed from GLOBE measure participative and autocratic leadership styles. We borrowed *tolerance for freedom* items from Stogdill (1948) to measure how much employees prefer to have their leaders be hands off as often laissez-faire is absence or avoidance of leadership (Stogdill, 1948). To measure personality types we use the Big 5 personality measurement. Our questionnaire took approximately 10 minutes to fill out. The complete questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

Sampling and Data Collection

We obtained our sample from employees in a city in the Midwest USA. We handed out our surveys to local business owners and managers to pass on to employees as well as directly to employees to fill out for themselves. For confidentiality purposes, we provided a lock box to each of these establishments for employees to put the questionnaires in after they completed them. Employees under 18 were not surveyed. We employed a 3:1 ratio of respondents to survey items in determining the target sample size as employed by Tande, Laman, Harstad, Ondracek, and Bertsch (2013). Hence our target sample size was 96. In the end, we collected 100 completed surveys.

ANALYSIS

We input the data from our surveys into a statistical program. The age of our participants ranged from 18 and older with a majority of our participants in the 18-24 range. Of our respondents, 52 were male while 48 were female. Broken down by position at their respective place of employment, our sample included 73 employee/team members, 19 shift leader/managers, seven store/general managers, and one business owner. We then conducted tests for significance relative to our research questions. Table 2 illustrates correlations between each dimension in the Big 5 and each of our measured leadership styles. We will discuss Table 2 herein.

TABLE 2
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN BIG FIVE PERSONALITY
TRAITS AND LEADERSHIP STYLES

Leadership Style	Participative	Autocratic	Laissez-faire
Extroversion	r = +0.2123 t-score = 2.151 p-value = 0.034 Significant at p < 0.05	Insignificant	Insignificant
Agreeableness	Insignificant	Insignificant	Insignificant
Conscientiousness	Insignificant	Insignificant	Insignificant
Neuroticism	Insignificant	Insignificant	Insignificant
Openness to new experience	Insignificant	r = -0.4436 t-score = -4.899 p-value = 0.000 Significant at p < 0.001	Insignificant

Extroversion and Leadership Styles

When comparing extroversion to preferred leadership style, we found one significant correlation ($r = +0.2123$; $p < 0.05$) as those who are extroverted also prefer a participative style leader. The study of Judge and Werner (2002) showed that extroversion has the strongest correlation to leadership but we found no significant correlations between extroversion and autocratic or laissez-faire leadership styles.

Agreeableness and Leadership Styles

Bono et al. (2002) predict agreeableness would be negatively related to leadership but we found no significant correlations between agreeableness and our three leadership constructs.

Conscientiousness and Leadership Styles

Bono et al. (2002) predict conscientious individuals will be more effective leaders but we found no significant correlations between our conscientiousness construct and our three leadership constructs.

Neuroticism and Leadership Styles

Bono et al. (2002) showed neuroticism would be negatively related to leadership effectiveness but we found no significant correlations between our neuroticism construct and our three leadership constructs.

Openness to New Experience and Leadership Styles

Comparing openness to new experience to the three preferred leadership styles yielded one significant correlation ($r = -0.4436$, $p < 0.001$) in that those who are open to new experiences do not prefer an autocratic style leader. That is to say that our sample yielded a negative correlation between openness to new experience and autocratic leadership style. We found no significant correlations between our openness to new experience construct and laissez-faire or participative leadership style.

Demographics

Table 3 summarized the results of our analysis across various demographics. We employed two-tailed t-tests assuming heteroscedastic variance as suggested by Tande et. al. (2013). When a finding was significant, we included the mean for each measured group.

TABLE 3
COMPARISON OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND LEADERSHIP STYLES

	Participative	Autocratic	Laissez-faire
Gender	Insignificant	Insignificant	Male = 2.663 Female = 2.854 Significant at $p < 0.05$
Education	Insignificant	Insignificant	Insignificant
Employment position Management vs. employees	Insignificant	Insignificant	Management = 2.825 Employee = 2.565 Significant at $p < 0.05$
Income	Insignificant	Insignificant	Insignificant

Gender and Preferred Leadership Styles

Our literature review did not mention the relation between gender and preferred leadership styles. When comparing gender we found a significant difference at $p < 0.05$ for preference of laissez-faire type leadership. Females preferred laissez-faire style leadership with an average of 2.854 as compared to males with an average of 2.663 at $p < 0.05$. There were no other significant differences found between males and females in preference for autocratic or participative leadership styles.

Education and Preferred Leadership Styles

When comparing education we split the data into two: those with some college or less, and those with a degree. The size of the group with some college or less was 75, and those with a degree totaled 25. Our literature review did not reveal any published research comparing preferred leadership styles by education. Our sample and analysis found no significant difference when comparing these two groups and their preferred leadership style.

Position at Place of Employment and Leadership Styles

For employment position we split our data into two groups, those who were employees and those who were management or higher. This split resulted in 73 employees and 27 management personnel. We found at $p < 0.05$ that employees preferred laissez-faire style leadership with an average of 2.825 compared to management who preferred it less at an average of 2.565. We found no other significant finding between employment position and preferred leadership styles.

Level of Income and Leadership Styles

When comparing level of income and leadership styles, we split our data into two groups. The first group were those making less than \$15,000 a year and the other group were those making more than \$15,000 a year. This resulted in two nearly equally sized groups where 48 participants made less than \$15,000 a year and 52 made more than \$15,000 a year. When comparing these two groups we found no significant findings between level of income and preferred leadership style.

CONCLUSION

Which personality traits of employees are related to their preferred leadership style in their ideal manager?

Personality of employees and their preferred leadership styles have been written about in the literature review. Ash and Steven (2001) found a significant positive relationship with agreeableness and preferred level of participation. Our sample and analysis did not support this; however, the strong correlation between agreeableness and participative leadership style, with a p -value = 0.0627, illustrates a nearly significant relationship. Had we more time to collect additional responses or had we employed a

bootstrapping technique, we may have experienced a significant correlation between agreeableness and participative leadership style. Ash and Steven (2001) also found significant positive relationship between openness to new experience and preferred level of participation. We again did not find any significant correlation between openness to new experience and preferred level of participation, however we did find a nearly significant correlation between these two at $p = 0.0688$. Perhaps with a slightly larger sample, we may have confirmed Ash and Steven's (2001) findings. We found that there is also a significant negative correlation between autocratic leaders and employees rating high on openness to new experience with a p -value < 0.05 . This could be because employees high in openness to new experience prefer to be imaginative and creative (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013) whereas autocratic leaders will tell employees how things will be done and how to do it (Hughes & Pride, 2013). Ash and Steven (2001) also did not find a significant correlation between employees' preference for participation and extroversion, however we found a significantly positive correlation at $p < 0.05$.

Which leadership style is most preferred across all personality types of employees?

We also did not find any data that supported a particular leadership style that is significantly preferred across all personality types of employees. We did find that participative leadership style does seem to have the strongest correlation between extroversion, agreeableness, and openness to new experience.

Does an employees' personality relate to his/ her preferred leadership style?

We have found only two constructs of personality in the Big Five Personality Test that significantly correlated to preferred leadership style. Extroversion was found to have a significant correlation with a preference in participative leadership at $p < 0.05$. This may be because those who are extroverted are outgoing and enjoy socializing and working with others. Participative leadership involves working together to make decisions with the leader (McShane & Von Glinow, 2013). Our other significant finding was a negative correlation between employees' preference for an autocratic leader and openness to new experience (at $p < 0.001$). We found that employee personality does not affect their preferred leadership style in any other constructs of the Big Five personalities.

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APPENDIX

Leadership and Personality Traits Questionnaire

Circle the answer that best describes your situation.

1. What is your gender? (Circle One)

Male

Female

2. How old are you? (Circle One)

18-24

25-31

32-38

39-45

46-42

43-49

50-56

57-63

64 or older

3. What is the highest level of education you have achieved? (Circle One)

- Some high school, no diploma
- High school graduate or equivalent
- Some college, no degree
- Associates degree
- Bachelor's degree or higher

4. What best describes your position at your place of employment? (Circle One)

- Employee/Team member
- Shift Leader/Manager
- Store/General Manager
- Business Owner

5. What is your level of income? (Circle One)

- Less than 15,000
- 15,000-25,000
- 25,000-30,000
- Higher than 30,000

In the following questions are several behaviors and characteristics that can be used to describe leaders. Using the following scale, input into each blank which number you feel best answers the following questions.

1= This behavior or characteristic **greatly inhibits** a person from being an outstanding leader.

2= This behavior or characteristic **somewhat inhibits** a person from being an outstanding leader.

3= This behavior or characteristic **slightly inhibits** a person from being an outstanding leader.

4= This behavior or characteristic **has no impact** on whether a person is an outstanding leader.

5= This behavior or characteristic **contributes slightly** to a person being an outstanding leader.

6= This behavior or characteristic **contributes somewhat** to a person being an outstanding leader.

7= This behavior or characteristic **contributes greatly** to a person being an outstanding leader.

6. _____ Bossy = Tells subordinates what to do in a commanding way

7. _____ Autocratic = Makes decisions in a Dictatorial way

8. _____ Ruler = Is in charge and does not tolerate disagreement or questioning, gives orders

9. _____ Domineering = Inclined to dominate others

10. _____ Individually-oriented = Concerned with and places high value on preserving individual rather than group needs

11. _____ Non-egalitarian = Believes that all individuals are not equal and only some should have equal rights and privileges

12. _____ Micro-manager = An extremely close supervisor, one who insists on making all decisions

13. _____ Non-delegater = Unwilling or unable to relinquish control of projects or tasks

Read each item carefully and think about an acceptable frequency a leader could engage in the following behaviors listed. Circle the answer that you feel best suits the ideal leader

The Ideal Leader: (A) Always, (B) Often, (C) Occasionally, (D) Seldom or (E) Never

14. Lets group members decide what shall be done and how it shall be done (Circle One)
A B C D E
15. Assigns a task, then closely supervises the members carrying it out (Circle One)
A B C D E
16. Is the leader of the group in name only (Circle One)
A B C D E
17. Pushes for increase production (Circle One)
A B C D E

In the following questions, for each statement, mark how much you agree with on the scale 1-5, where: (1) disagree, (2) slightly disagree, (3) neutral, (4) slightly agree and (5) agree, in the blank next to it.

18. _____ Am the Life of the party
19. _____ Don't talk a lot
- _____ Feel comfortable around people
20. _____ Don't like to draw attention to myself
21. _____ Feel little concern for others

In the following questions, for each statement, mark how much you agree with on the scale 1-5, where: (1) disagree, (2) slightly disagree, (3) neutral, (4) slightly agree and (5) agree, in the blank next to it.

22. _____ Insult people
23. _____ Not interested in other people's problems
24. _____ Take time out for others
25. _____ Am always prepared
26. _____ Pay attention to detail
27. _____ Often forget to put things back in their proper place
28. _____ Follow a schedule
29. _____ Get stressed out easily
30. _____ Worry about things
31. _____ Change my mood a lot
32. _____ Get irritated easily
33. _____ Have a rich vocabulary
34. _____ Have a vivid imagination

In the following questions, for each statement, mark how much you agree with on the scale 1-5, where: (1) disagree, (2) slightly disagree, (3) neutral, (4) slightly agree and (5) agree, in the blank next to it.

35. _____ Am quick to understand things
36. _____ Spend time reflecting on things