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Introverted Personality Traits of Leaders and Organization Citizenship Behaviour of Followers: A Moderating Effect of Leader-Member Relationship

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Abstract:

Research on the relationship between personality and leadership supports the notion that individual differences may be the predictors of leadership effectiveness in contemporary organizations. Extant studies stress that each of the Big-Five broad personality dimensions is related to leader criteria. In general, the main differences between effective leaders and less effective ones are that effective leaders describe themselves from their personality traits and the relationship building with followers. However, relatively few studies have tested how and why a leader's personality traits relate to follower behaviors, and if so, the mechanisms through which a leader's personality traits relate to follower behaviors. Accordingly, the main aims of the present study are to examine whether the introverted personality traits of leaders affect the organizational citizenship behavior of followers and to examine the role of leader-member relationship as a moderator in social exchange process in the relationship between leader personality and organizational citizenship behavior of followers. To advance the understanding of these, simple regression analysis and moderator regression were used to test hypotheses in the present study with the sample size of 98 introvert managers as leaders and 196 subordinates as their followers. The study found that there is no positive direct effect of introverted traits of leaders on organizational citizenship behavior of followers. Yet, leader-member relationship moderates the relationship between introverted personality traits of leaders and organizational citizenship behavior of followers. The present study makes several theoretical and managerial contributions to make organizations success.

Keywords: *Introverted personality traits, organizational citizenship behavior, leader-member relationship*

1. Introduction

Research on the relationship between personality traits and leadership supports the notion that different outcomes of individuals may be the predictors of leader behaviors (Hao & Yazdanifard, 2015). Therefore, it is vital for an organization to identify factors of its success which can measure from organizational performances and employee behaviors. Effective leader personality and extra role behavior of followers are two main factors that have been regarded as fundamental for organizational success. Contemporary organizations underline that employees should perform the work tasks and extra role behaviour for the long term survival of the organization (Neuman & Kickul, 1998). This can be defined as Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) a behavior at an individual's discretion that was not directly or explicitly rewarded but that will help the fulfillment of the organization's objectives (Rauf, 2016 as cited in Organ, 1988). Previous studies indicated that each of the Big-Five personality traits namely conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience and emotional stability are related to leader criteria (Kahya & Sahin, 2018). Emphasizing introversion-extroversion as the main trait of big-five model, introverts prefer close relationships as they prefer more close interactions with small groups (Prakash, Singh, & Yadav, 2016) whereas extroverts would like to address large group which results in shallow relationships among members (Hills & Argyle, 2001). Moreover, extroverts are more competitive and mainly focusing for reward achievements whereas introverts are more cooperative and directing to facilitate more relationships.

Yet, it is evident from contemporary organization behaviors that they are struggling to create required OCB among employees due to the work tasks and primary objectives of the organization. And it may not perform well in an environment where stable, unchanging, centralized decision-making, written rules and procedures, and standardization of tasks (DeGroot & Brownlee, 2006). To facilitate OCB employees prefer more cooperativeness, close relationships and friendly working environment. As extroversion-introversion is the main personality trait according to five factor model, behaviors of extrovert leaders will not result in OCB as they are more authoritative and dominant in nature. In contrast, cooperativeness and close interactions of introverts will result in OCB among employees in work places where no studies have been conducted to measure the direct relationship. Hence this study focuses on 'whether introverted personality

traits of leaders influence the OCB of followers?'. This relationship will be more strengthened or weakened due to the relationships among leaders and followers which is evident from contemporary organizational behavior. With this background potential relationships between introverted personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers moderates by leader-member relationship which is not explored in the previous literature and called for more research. The present study makes several contributions to research in this area. In support, it measures the impact of introverted personality traits of leaders on OCB of followers and examines whether the leader-member relationship (LMX) moderates the relationship between introverted personality traits and OCB of followers.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section two briefly reviews the literature pertaining to introverted personality traits of leaders, Organizational citizenship behavior and leader-member relationship. In section three, research method is outlined. Section four presents the study's empirical results. The last section presents a discussion of the research findings, followed by a presentation of the research limitations and direction for future research.

2. Literature Review

Leader personality which is a part of the leader traits explains a minimum of 31% of the variance in leadership effectiveness at large in an organization context (Derue, Hahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011). The concept of personality has begun to attract a great deal of interest in behavioral ecology and human psychology. Personality differs from person to person (Nettle & Penke, 2010) based on the nature, environment, situation they face and the designation they held in the organization. Moreover, leadership became the core area of most of the organizations to achieve its objectives in a resourceful and operative manner. Besides, leadership leads to more positive outcomes of an organization such as job satisfaction, manage diversified workforce, organizational citizenship behavior and high employee commitment (Voegtlin, Patzer, & Scherer, 2012).

Apart from the studies that have focused on leadership effectiveness (Derue, Hahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011; Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002), several attempts were made to provide evidence on traits and behaviors of leaders (Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). According to Emanuelsson & Lindqvist (2014) extroversion, self-confidence, and courage are the traits that could potentially be linked to great leaders. Moreover, the study illustrated that introverted leaders commonly use a leader-member exchange leadership style leading to both engagement and empowerment which will cause organizational citizenship behavior of followers. Leader traits have a long and controversial history where some literature supports for the extroversion and some into introversion. It is true that extroversion shows the leadership characteristics which shows an outgoing, dominant and talkative personality (Sieff, 2006; Burch, Giles, & Nana, 2010; Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002). Conversely, introverts will also act as leaders in different scenarios through building close relationships and carefully listening to others. Literature on such association reveals that introverted leaders have been brought organization success (Atamanik, 2013; Hudson & Ferguson, 2016; Gio & Yazdanifard, 2015). Therefore, it is very interesting to assess the introverted personalities as leaders. Introverts think carefully and analyzing details before speaking which is a key trait of a leader (Farrell, 2017). As Hautala (2006) introverts support for encouraging behavior and extroverts setting targets and visions for the subordinates which illustrated positive aspects of both introverts and extroverts. Moreover, managers who have more introverted traits be highly effective and efficient, especially when their jobs not required much social interactions (Hudson & Ferguson, 2016). Besides, there are some instances where it is reported that introverts also succeeded in leadership (Gio & Yazdanifard, 2015). According to Farrell (2017) extroverted leaders are better in carrying out the organizational projects where introverted leaders are ideal in the planning process to gain sustainable competitive advantage. Even a very shy person should be able to lead a group to safety if they were being attacked by a rival group, and he was the first to notice the danger (Vugt, 2006). More interestingly, contemporary organizations talk about a leader who has both introverted and extroverted personality traits together which will vary based on the situation. According to Hudson & Ferguson (2016) ambiverts provide the team with the leader who can adjust the mix of the introverted and extroverted personality over time as needed. Out of all the leadership outcomes one of the imperative leadership outcome for an organization is 'organizational citizenship behaviour' which is significant to gain sustainable competitive advantage through human psychological engagement. With little research it is evident that OCB facilitates from team performances, relationships between individuals, leader behaviors and personality traits (Harper, 2015; Neuman & Kickul, 1998; Elanain, 2007). This is a series of voluntary and optional actions that are not part of the person's official duties, but nonetheless done by him/her, and causes improvement in the functions and roles performed by the organization (Shoaeshargh & Dadashi, 2013 as cited in Alotaibi, 2009). However, a little research has carried on to measure the impact of leader personality on OCB of followers (Bernierth, Armenakis, Field, Giles, & Walker, 2008). It is evident that introverted personality type employees will be more likely to show a dutiful character, more likely to be altruism and obvious citizenship virtue compared to extroverted personality type employees (Harper, 2015). However, the need of introversion leadership or extroversion leadership depends on the need on the characteristic or the need of the employee (Farrell, 2017). With the wide spectrum of identification of introverted leaders, it is evident that they are passionate to give the freedom to employees while they are working for the organization which will lead to OCB as it is something discretionary and commitment towards what they do. Moreover, as Emmerik & Euwema (2007) introverted personalities are more sensitive for a good relation with their team leader and extroverts are less influenced by the relation with their leader when it comes to engagement in OCBs. Therefore, the below hypothesis can be developed to investigate the direct effect between the introverted personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers.

- Hypothesis 1: Introverted personality traits of leaders positively affect the OCB of followers.

As Prakash, Singh, & Yadav, (2016) Introverts prefer to spend time in smaller groups, or one-on-one, and usually like to get to know each other slowly. Further, as Owen, Pappalardo, & Sales (2000) Organizational Citizenship Behaviour may relate

at the smaller work-group, rather than the organization-wide level which facilitates more interactions and relationships. Introverts be more selective and focus on establishing individual affiliative relationship with a few special people around them (Hills & Argyle, 2001). This study further illustrated that introverts experience high level of empathy with few special people with them. Therefore, understanding among introverts will increase which will cause for more commitment towards the organization. High-quality supervisor-subordinate relationships were positively related to a desire to help others and be accepted by them, as well as a positive regard for the organization as a whole (Connell, 2005). Therefore, it is worthwhile to understand how leader-member relationship affects on different personalities of leaders and OCB of followers. Below hypothesis can be developed to measure the moderating effect of leader-member relationship on introverted personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers.

- Hypothesis 2: Relationship between introverted personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers is moderated by Leader-Member relationship.

3. Research Method

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

The sample of this study consisted of 98 introverted leaders and 196 followers of these leaders from various industries in Sri Lanka. Due to having a hierarchical structure and because of the responsibilities of leader-follower dyadic relations in the selected industries are easy to identify and that the leader-follower relationship can be tested reliably, this sample was chosen. The self-administered questionnaires were delivered based on survey strategy to managers to measure introverted personality traits of leaders and subordinates to measure OCB and leader-member relationship.

3.2. Variables and Model

Organizational Citizenship Behavior is the dependent variable of the present study. This was measured using five dimensions: altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness, courtesy and civic virtue using 24-items of OCB measurement scale developed by Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1990). The independent variable introverted personality traits of leaders were measured using NEO PI-R scale of personality developed by Costa & McCrae (1989). This study used one moderator variable; leader-member relationship which was measured using 7-items LMX reported by Scandura and Graen (1984).

3.3. Results and Findings

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations among the study's variables.

	Mean	SD	IEPTL	LMX
IEPTL	3.3022	.21156	-	-
LMX	3.2630	.57482	-0.349**	-
OCB	3.7398	.32797	-0.071	0.498**

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlation Coefficients of Variables** Correlation Is Significant at the 0.01 Level (2-Tailed)

IEPTL- Introverted and Extroverted Personality Traits of Leaders,

OCB- Organizational Citizenship Behavior, LMX- Leader-Member Exchange/Relationship

An examination of correlations revealed a significant association among the variables. Overall, the patterns of the correlations were much deviated from the expected results as the direct effect of independent and dependent variables was not significant in correlation matrix. However, with the LMX moderating effect it became more significant than operating as an independent variable.

The results of the regression used to test the hypotheses are shown in table 2.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	3.237 (4.975)	3.304 (15.503)	3.343 (15.809)
Beta Value	0.082 (0.806)	0.152 (1.448)	0.053 (0.453)
LMX		0.227* (2.167)	0.218* (2.099)
Intro traits X LMX			0.207* (1.860)
R	0.082	0.231	0.295
R ²	0.007	0.054	0.087
Adjusted R ²	-0.004	0.034**	0.058*
R ² change	0.007	0.054	0.087
F change	0.650	2.686	2.990

Table 2: Regression Results for Introverted Personality Traits, OCB and Leader-Member Relationship

Note: T Values Are In Parentheses. * $P \leq 0.1$ ** $P \leq 0.05$ (Two-Tailed),

*** $P \leq 0.01$ (Two-Tailed), Dependent Variable: OCB

As stated previously, Hypothesis1 (H1) was formulated to test the relationship between introverted personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers. The regression result did not support this hypothesis, suggesting therefore that the introverted personality traits of leaders does not have a positive impact on OCB of followers. Hypothesis 2 (a) Relationship between introverted personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers is moderated by Leader-Member relationship supported as suggested. Adjusted R^2 value of 0.034 represents the overall impact of introverted personality traits of leaders with leader-member relationship quality on OCB of followers with the sig. F value of 0.073 which is marginal for $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.01$. The direct relationship with the moderator variable is marginally significant to the overall model. Further, beta value of 0.227 shows a significance level of 0.033 which is significant in 95% confidence level.

Further, beta value of 0.207 shows a positive impact with the significance level of .066 which is marginally significance in 95% confidence level. With the interaction effect model became more prominent by showing the adjusted R^2 value of 0.058. Introverted personality traits of leaders and leader-member relationship together affect 5.8% to organizational citizenship behavior of followers. Based on the results, there is a synergistic effect from leader-member relationship moderation variable to introverted personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers. It represents both introverted personality traits of leaders and leader-member relationship quality affect the OCB of followers in the same direction and together they produce a strong relationship than additive effect on the outcome. Further, the interaction effect between introverted personality traits of leaders and leader-member relationship shows a sig. value of 0.066 which is marginally significant with $p < 0.05$.

4. Discussion, Limitations and Avenue for Future Research

This study partially replicates but also extends previous research on the moderating effect of leader-member relationship on the relationship between the personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers. In answering research questions, the present study focuses on personality traits of leaders. The study used introverted and extroverted personality traits of leaders. There was no evidence of a statistically significant effect of introverted and extroverted personality traits together measured from one single study. Nonetheless, there was an impact of individual personality behaviors of leaders on different leadership outcomes (Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). Even though previous research findings show that there is a positive direct effect of introverted personality traits and OCB (Emmerik & Euwema, 2007; Grant, Gino, & Hofma, 2011; Ahmed & Khan, 2016), the present study was not supported with that argument. This is mainly due to the operating environments and the organizational culture of the industries the data were gathered. Majority from information technology industry and they were in the operations department. IT professionals include dependability and the ability to adapt to a changing work environment, such as the need to come in on weekends to address critical systems issues (Long, n.d.). As Leonard (2018) type of the work task affecting on the leadership behaviors of individuals. According to Robertson, Healey, Hodgkins, Flint-Taylor, & Jones (2014) the negative effects of leader personality are mediated via working conditions. The situation is another factor affecting to leader effectiveness and change the leadership role (Sogunro, 1998).

This study not only replicates but also extends previous research on the moderating effect of leader-member relationship on the relationship between introverted traits of leaders and OCB of followers. Similarly, the results of this study are in line with the findings of previous studies (Owen, Pappalardo, & Sales, 2000; Buchanan, 1998; Neuman & Kickul, 1998; Prakash, Singh, & Yadav, 2016; Hills & Argyle, 2001; Asgari, Silong, Ahmad, & Samah, 2008) and indicate that the quality of the leader-member relationship is a significant determinant of a positive direct effect on introverted personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers. First, it provides empirical support for leader-member relationship regarding the tendency of high quality relationship between manager/leader and subordinate/follower to enhance follower organizational citizenship behavior. This enhancement of follower performance is important as previous researches have indicated that introverted personality traits of leaders and leader-member relationship can contribute to effective outcomes of an organization (Bernerth, Armenakis, Feild, Giles, & Walker, 2008; Hautala, 2006).

In conclusion, despite the importance of leadership characteristics in organizations, this research examining the promising mechanisms through which leader personality influences followers' effective performance has been lacking. The present study makes an important contribution by examining how leader personality traits (introverted and extroverted) influence follower attitudes and behaviors by displaying the importance of leader-member relationship. Hence, this study provides a better understanding of how leader personality influences follower organizational citizenship behavior.

Theoretically, the findings of this study provide understandings for two bodies of work. First, the direct effect of personality traits of leaders and OCB of followers was not supported which rationalized from path-goal theory with the support of theory of trait leadership and five factor model of personality. It further, revealed that leader behavior is important for the follower motivation and goal achievement identified by previous research (House & Mitchell, 1975; Malik, Aziz, & Hassan, 2014; Ng, Ang, & Chan, 2008) and will not generate OCB by leader behavior and motivation. Second, the moderating effect of leader-member relationship revealed by this study and previous research (Uusi-Kakkuri & Brandt, 2015; Harris, Harris, & Eplion, 2007) supports the theoretical argument and make contributions to the social exchange theory.

Selection of participants in one industry at a given period of time was a potential limitation of this present study. Nevertheless, future research might consider a longitudinal research design examining perceptions of introverted and extroverted personality traits, OCB and leader-member relationship multiple times over a long period of time. The present study encourages future researchers to carry out the same study again with the change of research design to a qualitative research as respondents have not given the assured answers based on questionnaire method. The researchers would be able to observe and understand reactions of respondents if they can conduct the study through interview method as the

data collection tool. There will be more interesting answers with the close monitoring methods between the researcher and respondent.

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