

Personality Traits and Their Influence on Leadership Styles in the UAE Banking Sector

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Abstract: This study explores the influence of personality traits on leadership styles within the UAE banking sector. It specifically examines how traits such as neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness correlate with transformational, transactional, and empowerment leadership styles. Using a convenient sampling method, data were collected from 24 banking leaders through the NEO Personality Inventory and the Birkman Method. Correlation analysis revealed that extraversion ($M = 77.58$, $SD = 13.95$) is significantly positively correlated with transformational leadership ($r = 0.435$, $p = 0.034$), suggesting that more extroverted individuals are more likely to exhibit transformational leadership behaviors. Conversely, agreeableness ($M = 74.00$, $SD = 17.23$) is negatively correlated with empowerment leadership ($r = -0.427$, $p = 0.038$), indicating that higher agreeableness may be linked to lower levels of empowerment leadership. Other personality traits displayed weak or non-significant correlations with the leadership styles assessed. Despite these insights, the study has limitations. The use of a small and convenient sample may affect the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw causal conclusions about the relationships between personality traits and leadership styles. Future research should aim for larger and more diverse samples and consider longitudinal approaches to better understand these dynamics.

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I. INTRODUCTION

➤ Problem Statement

Despite substantial research on leadership styles and their impact on organizational outcomes, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding of how specific personality traits influence the effectiveness of different leadership styles, particularly within the UAE banking sector. Existing studies often fail to explore the relationship between personality traits. This research aims to address this gap by examining how these personality traits correlate with various leadership styles in the UAE banking sector.

➤ Research Questions

- How do personality traits correlate with different leadership styles in the UAE banking sector?

➤ Objectives

- To analyze the relationship between personality traits and leadership styles among leaders in the UAE banking sector.
- To identify which personality traits are significant predictors of leadership effectiveness within the UAE banking sector.

➤ Hypotheses

• Hypothesis 1 (H1):

There is a significant correlation between specific personality traits and leadership styles among leaders in the UAE banking sector.

• Null Hypothesis (H0):

There is no significant correlation between specific personality traits and leadership styles among leaders in the UAE banking sector.

➤ Variables

• Independent Variables:

- ✓ **Personality Traits** (measured using NEO Personality Inventory and Birkman Method):
- ✓ NEO Personality Traits: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness.
- ✓ Birkman Method Traits: Interests, Usual Behavior, Needs, Stress Behavior.

• Dependent Variables:

- ✓ **Leadership Styles:** Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Empowerment Leadership. (based on established leadership style frameworks).

- *Moderating Variables:*

- ✓ Contextual Factors: Organizational culture, team dynamics and sector-specific factors in the UAE banking sector.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

➤ Introduction

Leadership plays a crucial role in organizational success, particularly in dynamic sectors like banking where decision-making and strategic vision are paramount. Despite the substantial body of research on leadership styles and their impact on organizational outcomes, there remains a gap in understanding how specific personality traits influence the effectiveness of these leadership styles. This is especially relevant in the UAE banking sector, which is characterized by rapid growth and cultural diversity.

The NEO Personality Inventory and Birkman Method are widely recognized tools for assessing personality traits and behaviors. The NEO Personality Inventory focuses on the Big Five personality traits such as Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. while the Birkman Method evaluates interests, usual behavior, needs, and stress behavior. Understanding how these traits correlate with various leadership styles could provide valuable insights for improving leadership effectiveness and enhancing organizational performance.

This research aims to bridge the gap by investigating the relationship between personality traits, as measured by these two tools, and leadership styles in the UAE banking sector. By identifying which personality traits are most associated with effective leadership styles, the study seeks to offer practical recommendations for leadership development and talent management in the sector.

➤ Literature Review

Leadership is integral to organizational success, particularly in dynamic sectors such as banking, where strategic decision-making and vision are critical. Despite a substantial body of research on leadership styles and their effects on organizational outcomes, there remains a notable gap in understanding how specific personality traits influence the effectiveness of these leadership styles, particularly within the UAE banking sector. This sector's rapid growth and cultural diversity add layers of complexity that are not fully addressed in existing research. The NEO Personality Inventory and Birkman Method are widely used tools for assessing personality traits and behaviors. The NEO Personality Inventory measures the Big Five traits—Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness—while the Birkman Method evaluates interests, usual behavior, needs, and stress behavior. Understanding how these traits correlate with various leadership styles could offer valuable insights for enhancing leadership effectiveness and organizational performance. This research seeks to fill this gap by examining the relationship between personality traits, as assessed by

these tools, and leadership styles in the UAE banking sector, aiming to provide practical recommendations for leadership development and talent management.

➤ Trait Theory of Leadership

Trait Theory of Leadership posits that certain inherent traits are linked to effective leadership (Northouse, 2018). This theory forms the basis for understanding the impact of personality traits on leadership styles. Behery and Al-Nasser (2016) found that transformational leadership correlates with higher employee commitment and more favorable attitudes, particularly among older employees. This indicates that transformational leadership may enhance workforce engagement, especially in diverse age settings. Similarly, Girma (2016) highlighted the association between traits such as emotional stability and conscientiousness with leadership effectiveness in the banking sector, emphasizing the role of inherent traits in leadership success.

➤ Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory focuses on leaders who inspire and motivate followers to exceed expectations and achieve higher performance levels. Al Yahyaee and Mohamad (2021) examined transformational leadership in the public sector, revealing that characteristic such as individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation impact employee job satisfaction. Younger employees tend to prefer individualized consideration, while older employees favor idealized influence and intellectual stimulation. These findings underscore the necessity of adapting transformational leadership to fit employee demographics. Al Rahbi et al. (2017) supported this by demonstrating how transformational leadership influences team motivation in the healthcare sector, indicating that such leadership can enhance motivation through supportive behaviors.

➤ Transactional Leadership Theory

Transactional Leadership Theory emphasizes the role of supervision, organization, and performance in achieving organizational goals. Hai (2021) explored leadership styles in both public and private sector banks, identifying that transactional leadership styles significantly affect organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction and commitment. This highlights the relevance of transactional leadership in understanding how structured, reward-based leadership impacts employee outcomes in banking contexts.

➤ Empowerment Leadership

Empowerment Leadership Theory prioritizes serving the needs of the team and fostering a culture of trust and collaboration. Aldhaheri (2017) investigated how servant leadership, characterized by empathy and support, is crucial for adaptability in diverse environments, offering insights into how these principles can be applied in the banking sector.

➤ Big Five Personality Traits

The Big Five Personality Traits—Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness—are fundamental in understanding leadership effectiveness. Koutsoumpa (2023) reviewed

personality traits linked to effective leadership, emphasizing how traits like conscientiousness and emotional stability impact leadership success. This general understanding provides a foundation but lacks a focus on the specific context of the UAE banking industry.

➤ *Birkman Method*

The Birkman Method assesses interests, usual behavior, needs, and stress behavior, providing insights into how these dimensions influence leadership effectiveness. Birkman (2022) highlighted the application of this method in leadership development, showing how understanding stress behavior and needs can enhance leadership effectiveness across various organizational contexts.

➤ *Contingency Theory*

Contingency Theory posits that leadership effectiveness depends on situational factors. Koutsoumpa (2023) supported the notion that leadership effectiveness is contingent upon specific situational and cultural factors, which are relevant to the UAE banking sector.

➤ *Emotional Intelligence Theory*

Emotional Intelligence Theory explores how leaders' ability to manage their own and others' emotions affects their leadership effectiveness. Girma (2016) provided insights into how emotional intelligence impacts leadership success, emphasizing the role of traits related to emotional regulation and empathy.

➤ *Additional Studies and Identified Gaps*

Alefari et al. (2020) analyzed leadership styles in UAE manufacturing SMEs, noting a prevalence of autocratic styles, but did not address personality traits or the banking industry. Parahoo et al. (2017) discussed the interplay between leadership, organizational culture, and innovation in the UAE, emphasizing organizational culture but omitting personality traits and the banking sector. Shamsi et al. (2015) examined coaching constructs in the UAE oil and gas sector, focusing on leadership development without covering personality traits or the banking industry. Ensari (2020) reviewed the relationship between personality traits and various leadership styles, offering a theoretical foundation but not focusing on the UAE banking sector. Nassef (2019) recommended transactional leadership for multicultural teams in the oil and gas industry, while Muhammad (2019) explored promotional strategies in UAE Islamic banks, which are not directly relevant to leadership styles or personality traits. Drewniak (2020) studied how leadership styles affect employee expectations but did not focus on the banking sector or personality traits. Alnuaimi (2020) looked at leadership practices in the UAE Interior Ministry, providing insights into leadership practices but not addressing the banking sector or personality traits. Long (2015) reviewed self-leadership and personality traits' impact on job satisfaction, while Parameswaran (2022) explored dark triad leadership traits in the UAE educational sector. Arunima (2014) investigated the correlation between emotional intelligence and leadership styles in healthcare, and Abdallah (2020) discussed gender differences in leadership traits.

While these studies offer valuable insights, there remains a significant gap in research specifically addressing the interaction between personality traits and leadership styles within the UAE banking sector. This research aims to address this gap by exploring how personality traits correlate with various leadership styles, providing a foundation for more targeted leadership development in this context.

➤ *Conceptual Framework:*

The conceptual framework for examining the relationship between personality traits and leadership styles in the UAE banking sector begins with two key independent variables: personality traits and leadership styles. Personality traits are measured using the NEO Personality Inventory, which includes dimensions such as Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, as well as the Birkman Method, which assesses Interests, Usual Behavior, Needs and Stress Behavior. These personality traits are hypothesized to influence various leadership styles, including Transformational, Transactional, Servant and others. Leadership styles are the dependent variable in this framework and are assessed based on their effectiveness within the UAE banking sector. The effectiveness of these leadership styles is influenced by how well they align with the leader's personality traits. Additionally, contextual factors serve as moderating variables in this framework. These include Organizational Culture, Team Dynamics, and Sector-Specific Factors within the UAE banking sector.

The interactions between these elements are critical to understanding how personality traits shape leadership styles and their effectiveness. Organizational Culture, Team Dynamics, and Sector-Specific Factors may moderate the relationship between personality traits and leadership styles, affecting leadership effectiveness. This framework helps to elucidate how these variables interrelate and contribute to effective leadership in the UAE banking sector.

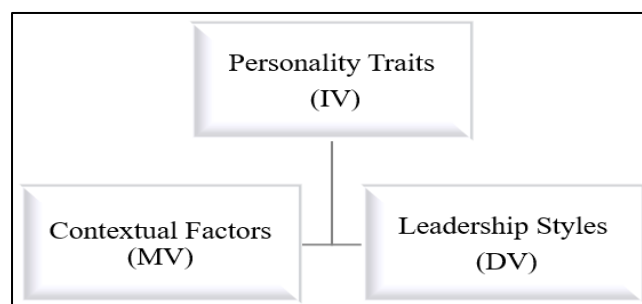


Fig 1 (Created by Author)

III. METHODOLOGY

➤ *Research Design*

This study employs a quantitative research design to explore the relationship between personality traits and leadership styles within the UAE banking sector. The primary focus is on identifying significant predictors of leadership effectiveness and examining how contextual factors moderate these relationships.

➤ *Sampling Technique*

A non-probability sampling method, specifically convenience sampling, was utilized for this study. Convenience sampling was chosen due to the accessibility and availability of the participants who fit the criteria for the research. The sample comprised 24 leaders from one of the leading banks in the country. These leaders were selected based on their roles in handling global operations, which provided a diverse and comprehensive perspective on leadership within the banking sector.

➤ *Participants*

The participants included 24 senior leaders from a leading bank in the UAE. These leaders were responsible for managing global-level operations, ensuring that the sample represented a high level of leadership experience and diversity in leadership styles.

➤ *Data Collection Instruments*

To measure personality traits and leadership styles, the following instruments were used:

• *NEO Personality Inventory:*

This instrument measures five major dimensions of personality: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. It is a widely validated tool used for assessing personality traits.

• *Birkman Method:*

This instrument assesses Interests, Usual Behavior, Needs, and Stress Behavior. The Birkman Method provides insights into how individuals behave under normal conditions and stress, offering a comprehensive view of their personality.

➤ *Data Collection Process*

The data collection process involved the following steps:

• *Online Assessments:*

- ✓ The NEO Personality Inventory and the Birkman Method assessments were distributed to the selected leaders via email. Instructions for completing the assessments were provided online to ensure clarity and consistency.
- ✓ Participants completed the assessments online at their convenience, allowing for flexibility and ease of participation.

• *Data Retrieval:*

- ✓ Upon completion of the online assessments the results were automatically generated by the assessment platforms.
- ✓ The computer-generated results were then downloaded for further analysis.

• *Feedback Sessions:*

- ✓ After the assessments, feedback sessions were conducted to discuss the results with the participants.

- ✓ Depending on the participants' availability, these sessions were held either face-to-face or virtually.
- ✓ Face-to-face sessions were conducted for participants within the country, while virtual sessions were arranged for those outside the country.

➤ *Data Analysis*

The data collected was analyzed using statistical methods to identify correlations and predictive relationships between personality traits and leadership styles. The analysis involved:

• *Descriptive Statistics:*

- ✓ Summarizing the data to provide an overview of the participants' personality traits and leadership styles.

• *Correlation Analysis:*

- ✓ Assessing the strength and direction of relationships between personality traits and leadership styles.

• *Regression Analysis:*

- ✓ Identifying significant predictors of leadership styles from the measured personality traits.

• *Moderation Analysis:*

- ✓ Examining the moderating effects of organizational culture and team dynamics on the relationship between personality traits and leadership styles.

➤ *Ethical Considerations*

The study adhered to ethical guidelines to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to the assessment, and they were assured that their data would be used solely for research purposes. Additionally, participants were given the option to withdraw from the study at any point without any repercussions.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

In Chapter Four, we explore the process of analyzing the data collected to understand how personality traits relate to different leadership styles. This chapter will explain how we used various methods and tools to uncover patterns and identify key factors influencing leadership. We will begin by describing the analytical techniques we applied, such as regression analysis, and explaining why we chose these methods. This includes detailing how we examined the relationship between personality traits and leadership styles. Following that, we will present and interpret the results of our analysis. We will highlight the key findings and discuss how they answer our research questions and fit in with existing theories. This chapter aims to provide a clear and accessible understanding of how our findings contribute to the broader knowledge of leadership and personality traits.

➤ *Statistical Analysis*

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Neuroticism	24	0	57	19.92	19.323
Extraversion	24	57	98	77.58	13.950
Openness to Experience	24	30	98	78.67	16.727
Agreeableness	24	21	98	74.00	17.232
Conscientiousness	24	38	98	79.12	16.430
Transformational	24	3	99	82.42	21.127
Transactional	24	51	99	95.00	9.655
Empowerment Leadership	24	10	88	31.04	22.829
Valid N (listwise)	24				

➤ The Descriptive Statistics for the Data Reveal the Following Key Points About the Personality Traits and Leadership Styles of the 24 Participants:

- Neuroticism: Scores range from 0 to 57, with a mean of 19.92 and a standard deviation of 19.32. This indicates a low level of neuroticism among participants, with considerable variability in their scores.
- Extraversion: Scores range from 57 to 98, with a mean of 77.58 and a standard deviation of 13.95. Participants tend to have high levels of extraversion, with less variability compared to neuroticism.
- Openness to Experience: Scores range from 30 to 98, with a mean of 78.67 and a standard deviation of 16.73. This suggests that participants have high openness to experience, with moderate variability in their scores.
- Agreeableness: Scores range from 21 to 98, with a mean of 74.00 and a standard deviation of 17.23. Participants show high levels of agreeableness, with some variability in the scores.
- Conscientiousness: Scores range from 38 to 98, with a mean of 79.12 and a standard deviation of 16.43. This indicates that participants score high on conscientiousness, with moderate variability.

- Transformational Leadership: Scores range from 3 to 99, with a mean of 82.42 and a standard deviation of 21.13. Participants exhibit a broad range of transformational leadership behaviors, with a high average score and considerable variability.
- Transactional Leadership: Scores range from 51 to 99, with a mean of 95.00 and a standard deviation of 9.66. Participants show high levels of transactional leadership, with less variability compared to other leadership styles.
- Empowerment Leadership: Scores range from 10 to 88, with a mean of 31.04 and a standard deviation of 22.83. This indicates a wide range of empowerment leadership scores among participants, with a lower average and high variability.

Overall, the data shows that participants tend to have high levels of extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, with significant variability in neuroticism. Leadership styles vary widely, with transformational and transactional leadership scores being high and consistent, while empowerment leadership scores are more variable and lower.

Table 2 Correlation Analysis

Correlations									
		Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness to Experience	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Transformational	Transactional	Empowerment Leadership
Spearman's rho	Neuroticism	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.039	-.066	-.108	-.139	-.115	.032
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.856	.761	.616	.516	.592	.884
		N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Extraversion	Correlation Coefficient	.039	1.000	.295	-.239	.216	.435*	-.198
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.856	.	.162	.260	.310	.034	.353
		N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Openness to Experience	Correlation Coefficient	-.066	.295	1.000	-.029	.390	.364	.256
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.761	.162	.	.894	.059	.080	.227
		N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Agreeableness	Correlation Coefficient	-.108	-.239	-.029	1.000	.282	-.274	.006
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.616	.260	.894	.	.182	.194	.977
		N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Conscientiousness	Correlation Coefficient	-.139	.216	.390	.282	1.000	.267	.255
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.516	.310	.059	.182	.	.208	.229
		N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Transformational	Correlation Coefficient	-.115	.435*	.364	-.274	.267	1.000	.359
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.592	.034	.080	.194	.208	.	.085
		N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Transactional	Correlation Coefficient	.032	-.198	.256	.006	.255	.359	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.884	.353	.227	.977	.229	.085	.
		N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
	Empowerment Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	.134	.206	.148	-.427*	-.097	-.130	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.534	.335	.490	.038	.653	.546	.
		N	24	24	24	24	24	24	24

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

The analysis of Spearman's rho correlations reveals several insights into how personality traits relate to different leadership styles. Neuroticism shows weak correlations with transformational, transactional, and empowerment leadership, none of which are statistically significant. This suggests that neuroticism does not strongly impact these leadership styles. Extraversion, on the other hand, has a moderate positive correlation with transformational leadership that is statistically significant, indicating that individuals with higher extraversion are more likely to exhibit transformational leadership behaviors. However, the correlation between extraversion and transactional leadership is weak and not significant, and the relationship with empowerment leadership is also minimal and non-significant.

Openness to experience shows a moderate positive correlation with transformational leadership that approaches significance, hinting at a potential link where higher openness might be associated with greater transformational leadership. Yet, its correlations with transactional and empowerment leadership are weak and not statistically significant. Agreeableness exhibits a strong negative correlation with empowerment leadership that is statistically significant, suggesting that higher agreeableness might be associated with lower empowerment leadership. Its correlations with transformational and transactional leadership are weak and not significant, with agreeableness potentially having a minor negative relationship with transformational leadership.

Conscientiousness shows weak positive correlations with both transformational and transactional leadership, though these are not statistically significant. Its correlation with empowerment leadership is very weak and not significant, indicating that conscientiousness has minimal impact on these leadership styles. Overall, the findings highlight that while some personality traits like extraversion and agreeableness have more noticeable relationships with leadership styles, many correlations are weak and not statistically significant, suggesting that other factors may play a more substantial role in influencing leadership behaviors.

V. CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

➤ The Research Aimed to Explore the Relationships Between Personality Traits and Different Leadership Styles, Focusing on Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. The Results Reveal that:

- **Extraversion** is positively and significantly associated with transformational leadership, suggesting that more extroverted individuals are likely to exhibit transformational leadership qualities.
- **Agreeableness** is negatively associated with empowerment leadership, indicating that higher agreeableness may correlate with lower levels of empowerment leadership.
- Other personality traits, such as neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness, show weak or non-

significant correlations with the leadership styles studied. This indicates that these traits do not have a strong or consistent impact on transformational, transactional, or empowerment leadership styles in this sample.

Overall, while certain personality traits like extraversion and agreeableness demonstrate significant relationships with specific leadership styles, many of the correlations are weak and not statistically significant, suggesting that personality alone may not fully account for variations in leadership behaviors.

➤ Discussion & limitations:

The findings provide valuable insights into how personality traits influence leadership styles, but they also highlight the complexity of these relationships. The significant positive correlation between extraversion and transformational leadership aligns with previous research, which often finds extroverted individuals to be more effective in leadership roles that require inspiration and motivation. The negative association between agreeableness and empowerment leadership suggests that leaders who are more agreeable might struggle with empowering others, due to their inclination to avoid conflict or prioritize harmony over assertiveness.

The weak correlations for other personality traits suggest that factors beyond personality may play a crucial role in shaping leadership styles. For instance, organizational culture, situational factors, and individual experiences might also influence how leadership behaviors are expressed. The variability in leadership styles, especially the low mean score for empowerment leadership and high mean for transactional leadership, indicates that leaders in this sample may emphasize different aspects of leadership depending on the context or their personal experiences. Additionally, cultural diversity significantly influences leadership styles and their effectiveness. The study's limitations include its reliance on a small, convenient sample, which may not be representative of the broader population of banking leaders. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to establish causal relationships between personality traits and leadership styles. Future research with larger, more diverse samples and longitudinal designs could provide more comprehensive insights into these relationships.

Future research could benefit from exploring additional factors that influence leadership, such as organizational dynamics or leadership training programs. Furthermore, increasing the sample size and diversity could provide more robust insights into how different personality traits interact with various leadership styles across different contexts. This study contributes to the understanding of personality and leadership, but it also underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to studying leadership effectiveness.

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