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Study of the Relationship between Personality Traits of Managers and Transformational Leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of Iran

Rostam Heydari

Department of Public Management, Naghadeh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Naghadeh, Iran.

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ABSTRACT

Background: Management and leadership together form the central basis for leading staff towards high goals of the organizations and one factor contributing to success of new management and leadership in every organization and institution is skill of its work force stemming from personality traits of managers i.e. managers should have a sound personality besides talents, capability, intelligence and scientific and technical knowledge. In this way the manager would be more motivated and excited to perform the task honestly and in a more innovative way. Such a transformational manager or leader would be able to obtain a clear vision of the academic unit and prepare a healthy and appropriate setting for his/her colleagues and staff so that they feel more secure and provide a more meaningful education. **Objective:** Given the necessity for transformation and reconstruction of organizations and educational institutions, attitudes towards and increasing focus on human relations in organizations and also impacts of personality traits on organizational leadership, present research aimed to study the relationship between managers' personality traits and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province. Statistical population comprised of 170 managers of Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province among them 120 ones were selected as the sample based on Cochran's formulae using random sampling procedure. **Results:** Finally given data normality and using parametric methods and Pearson's correlation coefficient, data analysis showed that there was a significant positive relationship between personality traits (except for neuroticism) and transformational leadership. **Conclusion:** Various studies showed that individual behavior depends upon his/her personality characteristics. In this respect, competent and creative managers significantly contribute to performance of their organizations because of their specific personality characteristics. Behaviors being shown by managers of academic units have a significant impact on organizational transformation and evolution and play a significant role with respect to achieving organizational goals and employees' motivation and satisfaction. Identification of the relationship between personality traits and transformational leadership in academic units helps the organization to select and train appropriate individuals with respect to their personality traits so that they can led the organization towards a prosperous future employing modern organizational leadership methods i.e. transformational ones.

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INTRODUCTION

Universities and higher education institutions are the underlying part of all scientific-research activities and also are among the most important bases of social systems and guarantee societal development. They are considered as driving force and thinking brain of the society. Today management of advanced universities and higher education institutions is the responsibility of skillful, learned and knowledgeable managers and leaders who employ management and leadership knowledge and techniques in this process. Increasing progress of scientific achievements, research development and increase in scientific rating, expansion of higher education in domestic universities and updating scientific knowledge in Iranian universities all created heavy responsibilities for transformational leaders and managers.

One essential task of managers in management process is transformational leadership in organizations. Indeed the essence of transformational leadership is the increasing influence of transformational leaders on colleagues and subordinates and/or employees of an organization. This leadership characteristic is one major

Corresponding Author: Rostam Heydari, Department of Public Management, Naghadeh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Naghadeh, Iran.
Phone number: 00989358537519

feature of each real manager in an organization. Transformational leaders and managers in addition to having contingency approach to environmental variables also should consider management and organization as one single system and address employees' behaviors with this attitude and select their leadership style based on actual conditions, nature of tasks and responsibilities and staff qualities so that they can be successful in playing an effective role in their organization.

On the other hand, one significant issue in higher education system in general and in Islamic Azad Universities in particular is selection of skillful leaders and managers in such a way that they can play an effective role in management and leadership of their organizations. Thus identifying personality traits of managers is necessary in many organizational conditions and also for achieving organizational goals. Thus measurement of these characteristics is critical in selection of transformational leaders and managers who are able to think globally and act locally for higher education institutions and universities. With a strategic holistic look it can be seen that in today society no organization is able to ensure its success and progress without employing insightful, committed and professional managers and exploiting new leadership methods.

Thus management and leadership together form the central basis for leading staff towards high goals of the organizations and one factor contributing to success of new management and leadership in every organization and institution is skill of its work force stemming from personality traits of managers i.e. managers should have a sound personality besides talents, capability, intelligence and scientific and technical knowledge. In this way the manager would be more motivated and excited to perform the task honestly and in a more innovative way. Such a transformational manager or leader would be able to obtain a clear vision of the academic unit and prepare a healthy and appropriate setting for his/her colleagues and staff so that they feel more secure and provide a more meaningful education. Identification of the relationship between personality traits and transformational leadership in academic branches helps in selecting and training appropriate managers among people with relevant personality traits so that they provide new leadership methods i.e. transformational ones in their organizations and in this way prepare them for the future. Thus present research seeks to answer this question; "is there a significant relationship between personality traits of managers and transformational leadership style in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province?"

To study the relationship between transformational leadership and personality traits of managers in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province, personality traits were defined in five dimensions based on Mc Crae and Costa's theory: neuroticism (this dimension relates to capability of individual to tolerate stress. Neurotic people have low emotional stability. These individuals are anguished, anxious, disappointed, stressful, shy, susceptible and hurried), extraversion (it refers to a cluster of characteristics and defines the extent to which a person is energetic, warm, courageous, active, self-confident, enthusiastic and thrill-seeking and has positive feelings. Extravert people tend to be warm, emotional and friendly. They usually cope with various people more successfully. Extravert people are positive in their work and life), conscientiousness (conscientiousness or compassion is a measure of reliability. A conscientious person is a competent, dutiful, loyal, goal-oriented, self-disciplined, punctual and reliable individual. Conscientiousness is considered as a useful and important quality in many organizational conditions and it is an appropriate measure for performance prediction in many various jobs), agreeableness (it is a dimension related to interpersonal relationships. An agreeable person is an altruist individual, shows empathy towards others and is willing to help them, he/she believes that others are mutually helpful to him/her), openness to experience (this dimension refers to the extent to which an individual is interested in novelty and experience of new things. A person with this personality trait has a strong imagination, is interested in artistic effects and is curious and open to others' feelings. Also these people have ideas and are pragmatic individuals) (Aqdam Pour *et al* 2011, 87-88).

Transformational leadership was operationalized based on five dimensions based on Bass and Avolio's theory: idealized attitudes (inducing members to feel proud to cooperate with their leader and sacrifice their personal interest for common good are among prominent and idealized qualities of a leader), idealized behaviors (also representing the most important values and beliefs, having a strong sense of goal and paying attention to ethical and spiritual outcomes of decisions are considered as qualities of idealized behaviors), intellectual stimulation (intellectual stimulation is considered as a tool in the hands of transformational leaders toward developing learning organizations. Learning in these organizations occurs when followers analyze organizational issues, revise work processes and find new methods and appropriate solutions for problems), inspirational motivation (indeed leaders' inspirational motivation develops a common picture of the future for their followers and when there is a realistic vision, individuals engage in learning because of their own motivation and not consider it as a prescribed task), individual consideration (it includes spending time on training and coaching, dealing with individuals in a personalized way not merely as group members, helping others to realize their potentials, listening to others' needs and demands in a careful way) (Mougheli, 2004, 100-102).

*Research Theoretical Literature:**Personality:*

Every person has a unique thought, behavior, lifestyle or personality. Personality is a combination of constant physical and psychological characteristics forming the individual identity. These characteristics or constant features include attitudes, thoughts, activities and feelings of the person resulting from interaction of genetic and environmental factors (Kreitner and Kinicki 2010, 183). Personality concept is of importance for management because from viewpoint of most managers it plays significant role in the way in which an individual perceives, evaluates and reacts to his/her environment. Personality refers to those individual's characteristics which form constant intellectual, emotional and behavioral patterns. This is an extensive definition for personality and leads one to pay attention to various aspects of an individual; at the same time this definition represents focusing on the inner quality and constant behavioral patterns of a person so that these patterns can be systematized through environmental study. Our studied system include thoughts, emotion and external (observable) behaviors, their relationship being of significant importance in forming a unique personality in psychology (Parvin and John, 2001, 3).

There have been various theories with respect to individual differences and personality since old times but during two recent decades, personality has been increasingly focused as a result of development of personality Big Five Model of Robert Mc Crae and Paul Costa (1997, 1998). Personality Big Five Model consists of a set of individual characteristics being unique for every person and leading him/her towards showing consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings and performance. In addition, Mc Crae and Costa defined personality traits as essential internal attitudes leading to habits, visions, skills, beliefs and other characteristics in a cultural context. Thus personality traits are relatively constant and stabilize individual differences with respect to thoughts, feelings and behaviors (Vogt and Laher, 2009, p.39). From Mc Crae and Costa (1999)'s viewpoint, these five traits are natural desires with biological basis; it means that behavioral differences related to the mentioned five dimensions are associated with structure of genes and brain and other similar factors. Managers' personality traits include neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness.

Neuroticism:

It refers to a trait related to inadaptability and emotional instability. This measure is based on negative feelings e.g. fear, sadness, arousal, anger, feeling guilty and permanent and inclusive feeling of embarrassment. Based on Mc Crae and Costa's theory, neuroticism indicators include: 1. Having inner peace, 2. feeling inferior to others 3. Anxiety 4. Prosociality 5. Lack of mental balance 6. Feeling empty 7. Social and emotional stability, 8. Sensitivity and irritability 9. lack of patience and persistence in doing works, 10. Flexibility 11. Feeling internal weakness 12. isolation

Extraversion:

Extraverts are social people but pro sociality is only on characteristic of such individuals. In addition they are active, talkative and determined people. They love excitement and activity and tend to be optimism about success in the future. Extraversion represents interest of the person to expand its business and industry. Extravert people highly tend to establish social relationship with others, be self-belief, feel comfort in various social settings, participate in collective activities, enjoy parties and social relationships, be happy, have high energy and be optimist. Extraversion indicators according to Mc Crae and Costa theory include: 1. Pro sociality, 2. Lack of control on feelings, 3. Introversion and sadness 4. Feeling pleasure at the company of others 5. Tendency to be more active 6. Being self-oriented 7. Confidence in internal ability 8. Being sociable 9. Optimism 10. Hyper activeness 12. Avoiding responsibility

Openness to experience:

Components of this trait are active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings and independent judgment. They are people who are curious about their surrounding world and seek to enrich their internal experiences. Their life is full of experience. These individuals tend to enjoy new theories and unconventional values and have more negative and positive feelings compared to others (Safari and Goudarzi, 2009, 89-90). Thus it represents the extent to which a person is interested in novelty and new experiences. Indicators of openness to experience according to Mc Crae and Costa theory include: 1. Objectivism 2. Self-confidence, 3. Interest in natural order, 4. Belief in employees deviation after hearing apparently contradictory talks 5. Lack of appreciation for art 6. Diversity seeking 7. Inattention to emotional aspects of the environment 8. Respecting expert opinions in decision making, 9. Pessimism towards surrounding environment 10. Inattention to others' fate 11. Having extreme curiosity, 12. Introversion.

Agreeableness:

like extroversion, this indicator emphasizes on interpersonal relationships. An agreeable person is essentially altruist, show empathy towards others, is enthusiastic about helping them and believes that others

also show the same behaviors. In contrary, a disagreeable person is self-centered and suspicious of others' intentions and he/she is more competitive than cooperative. This trait is related to tendency of the individual to identify with others. Indicators of agreeableness based on Mc Crae and Costa theory are as follows: 1. being courteous towards others 2. Inflexibility towards family members 3. Being egoist from others' view 4. Tendency to compete in a healthy manner 5. Being pessimistic about others 6. Being suspicious of the society, 7. Having public acceptance 8. Being cautious around others (being sensitive and self-centered) 9. Not being lenient with others 10. Feeling empathy towards others (respecting others) 11. Being honest to others 12. Misusing others to achieve personal goals.

Conscientiousness:

Self-control refer to active process of designing, organizing and executing task. In summary two significant features including ability to control impulses and employing planned behavior to achieve the intended aims are indicators for conscientiousness. It consists of trustworthiness, accountability, perseverance and accuracy mostly leading to better job performance compared to others, avoiding impulses, disturbance and delay in doing works and inhibiting impulsive action and motivation (Samavatian *et al.* 2010, 39-40). This component is a measure of reliability. According to Mc Crae and Costa, indicators of conscientiousness include: 1. Being neat 2. Being accountable and having an ordered work plan 3. Lack of adequate carefulness 4. Being honest in conducting tasks, 5. Having an ordered plan for the future, 6. Weakness in decision making, 7. Being serious with respect to achieving personal goals, 8. Being punctual from others' viewpoints 9. Lack of stable personality 10. Feeling responsible to doing the best 11. Inability to do works 12. Having plans to do works (Khanifar *et al.*, 2009, 51-52).

Leadership:

From organizational viewpoint, leadership is a process referring to exploiting influence without any force to direct and guide activities of members of a group and is consisted of a set of characteristics. Leaders motivate their subordinates and staff and encourage them to perform according to the agreed contracts and are certain that employees would perform in the same way to achieve rewards and satisfy their leader. Burns believes that transactional leadership can be completely implemented in bureaucratic systems in which roles and rewards have been defined in a clear way (Good Now and Way man, p.1). In the following some definitions for leadership are provided:

- John W. Gardner: leadership is a power being achieved through motivation and is transferred from one person to the other and leads to achievement of the primary goal or vision of the first individual (Moraski, 2001, p.51).
- Warren Bennis: leadership is a process of influencing by which an individual or a leadership group encourages a group to do a work being focused by the leadership or all participants (Moraski, 2001, p.51).
- Stogdill (1974) argued that the number of leadership definitions is equal to the number of persons provided a definition for it (Peter Seloane, 2010, pp.22-23).
- According to Yukl (1998), researchers usually define leadership with respect to their individual viewpoints and mostly focus on their own favorable aspects (Peter Seloane, 2010, pp.22-23).
- Bass (1990) claimed that leadership definition has been subject to discussion of researchers and academics for several years. He argued that there were numerous definition for leadership. The number of definitions was equal to the number of individuals provided a definition for this concept. Every individual proposed a new definition for leadership according to his/her specific viewpoints (Konorti, 2008, p.10). Avolio defined leadership as a process of influencing activities of a group with organized efforts towards achieving intended goals.

Transformational Leadership Theory:

During the last final decades of 20th century, a theory became prevalent in leadership field known as transformational leadership theory. This theory led influential men and women with their own specific leadership characteristics to give their subordinates the power of achieving group goals and become effective and successful leaders (Moraski, 2001, p.8). Transformational leadership is the process of deliberately influencing individuals or groups towards creating discrete changes and evolution in existing condition and organizational function as a whole. Transformational leaders revolutionize and transform the whole organization through their talks and actions and are very influential among their followers. This type of leadership realizes when leaders increase their followers' interest in their tasks, inform them about the goals and missions and encourage them to think beyond personal interests. This leadership style is based on idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspiring motivation and individual consideration (Moghli, 2003, 79).

Burns defined transformational leadership as a process in which leaders and followers move each other towards higher levels of ethics, spirituality and motivation. These leaders seek to enhance awareness and consciousness of followers by attracting them toward ethical values including freedom, justice, peace and

altruism and not bad feelings including fear, greed, envy and hate. In this way the followers shift from daily selves towards their better selves. From Burns' viewpoint, transformational leadership may incorporate everyone in any position in the organization. This leadership style is not only associated with subordinates but also it encompasses peers and superiors (Azgali, 2006, 68-69). Koehler and Pankowski (1997), introduced transformational leadership as an inspiring trend towards change and helping employees to reach a higher level of performance and improve their own and organizational conditions (Irtaimeh, 2011, p.125). According to Leithwood, transformational leaders always seek to achieve these three goals: helping members to progress, following a professional culture and fostering teachers' development and helping them to solve problems in a collaborative and more effective ways (Konorti, 2008, p.17). Results of various research suggest that transformational leadership leads to acceptable outcomes for organizations. For example these leaders increased organizational commitment of their subordinates, enhanced their loyalty to their organizational unit and on the other hand they improved motivation of their subordinates. Finally, transformational leadership style results in increased effectiveness of leaders. Because of the same fact many researchers sought to identify factors contributing to transformational behaviors.

Transformational leadership is one of the modern leadership paradigms and represents the process of transforming people. It is associated with ethical qualities and long-term goal. Evaluating driving factors influencing the followers, meeting their needs and behaving them as complete individuals are among characteristics of this leadership style. Transformational leaders inject an insight in their followers which inspiring them and motivates them to achieve extraordinary outcomes and more importantly lead them to accept and understand that insight as their own vision and goal. Transformational leaders attract followers' attention to collective goals and motivates them to pursue organizational goals. Bass and Avolio (1998) believed that transformational leadership forms when the leader develops his/her followers' interests, makes them aware of the group mission and motivates them to look beyond their own interests and benefits (Chaleshtari *et al*, 2009, 75). According to Bass and Avolio's theory, components of transformational leadership are as follows: idealized attitudes, idealized behaviors, inspiring motivation, intellectual motivation and individual consideration (Ya'qoubi *et al* 2010, 70-71).

- Idealized influence (idealized attitudes, idealized behaviors): transformational leaders act as a role model for their followers. These leaders are celebrated and trusted and followers try to imitate such leaders. One thing these leaders should conduct to gain this status is to explore others needs and give them more priority than their own personal needs. In this way the individual gains characteristics of a charismatic leader. Indicators of idealized attitudes and idealized behaviors are as follows according to Bass and Avolio's theory: 1. Inducing the sense of pride in members 2. Showing competence and power 3. Acting in ways to stimulate others 4. Sacrifice self-interest to common good, 5. Speaking of values and beliefs 6. Emphasizing on having a strong sense of goal 7. Paying attention to ethical and spiritual aspects of decisions 8. Importance of having a sense of cooperation with respect to the mission.

- Inspiring motivation: transformational leaders act in a way that motivates their followers without challenging them; they induce team spirit and stimulate optimism and enthusiasm. Leader encourages employees to believe in the goal and the fact that it is achievable if adequate effort is exerted. These leaders are usually optimist towards the future and accessibility of the goals. Indicators of inspiring motivation according to Bass and Avolio's theory are as follows: 1. Speaking of the future optimistically, 2. Being serious about the works which should be done 3. Emphasis on providence, 4. Making members feel hopeful about achievability of goals.

- Intellectual motivation: leaders motivate their followers intellectually. Transformational leaders encourage their followers to be creative in problem solving and question taken-for-granted assumptions. They encourage the followers to view problems from various viewpoints and employ innovative problem solving techniques. According to Bass and Avolio's theory, indicators of intellectual motivation are as follows: 1. Careful evaluation of recommendations to make sure of their suitability 2. Paying attention to various viewpoints in problem solving 3. Demanding for viewing problems from different perspective 4. Suggesting new ways to do works

- Individual consideration: transformational leaders pay significant attention to personal needs of followers and act as coaches and teachers to meet them. These leaders identify needs of individuals and help them in fostering skills required to meet those needs (Bass and Avolio, 1994, pp.3-4). These leaders may spend a lot of their time to foster, teach and coach the followers. Indicators for individual consideration are as follows according to Bass and Avolio's theory: 1. Allocating time to guide and train the members 2. Dealing with members as individuals not group members, 3. Paying attention to different needs and capabilities of individuals, 4. Helping others to develop and foster their capabilities.

Research Hypotheses:

Transformational leadership is one main basis of every organization and educational institution and productivity and output of every educational institution is based on management and leadership methods

employed by it. Various studies suggest that an individual's behavior depends upon his/her personality traits. Thus personality traits of managers are the foundation of their behaviors. Thus competent and creative managers have a significant effect on organizational performance because of their specific personality traits. Behaviors shown by managers of academic units have a great effect on organizational transformation and achieving high-level goals of the organization. Motivation and satisfaction of employees highly depend on behaviors of organizational managers. Effects of personality traits on managers' behavior and performance on the one hand and the effect of managers' behavior on performance of academic units on the other hand, show the importance of studying the relationship between managers personality traits and their organizational performance. Study of managers' personality traits help Islamic Azad University Branches to select appropriate individual inside or outside of the organization to make them ready for future leadership of the organization. With respect to the fact that personality trait of managers was defined based on five dimensions of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness based on Mc Crae and Costa theory, thus the relationship between each of the above-said personality traits and transformational leadership is addressed. Thus in this paper the main hypothesis of the research is proposed as the following:

Main Hypothesis:

There is a significant relationship between personality traits of managers and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Neuroticism and Transformational Leadership:

Neuroticism is among personality traits addressed by Zarandi *et al* (2011) as one major factor with respect to transformational leadership. Transformational leaders mostly show a high level of self-confidence in the organization. Current organizational challenges include setting standards, clarifying performance outcomes for employees and convincing them about achievability of organizational high level goals. Leaders with such responsibility traits show such characteristics as low emotional stability, lack of mental balance, irresponsibility in social relationships, self-centrism, lack of energy, anxiety and depression leading to disappearance of self-confidence and self-fulfillment. This personality trait acts as a barrier to transformational leadership which is based on optimism and managers and leaders with neuroticism are not considered as favorable ones. There is a reverse relationship between neuroticism and transformational leadership. Thus the first hypothesis of present research is proposed as the following:

H1: there is a significant relationship between neuroticism (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Extraversion and Transformational Leadership:

Major characteristics of extravert people such as accepting leadership and responsibility and their high energy and frankness prepare the ground for them to influence employees. Extroversion is one of the personality traits studied by Simone T. A. Phipps (2011) as an essential factor with respect to transformational leadership. According to this study, extraversion is of high significance with respect to its relation to social influence and dominance in the field of transformational leadership because extravert people are sociable, adaptable, ready to communicate with others, self-confident and energetic. Also they better cope with different people and are positive in their work and life. Clarity is a significant feature of behaviors shown by transformational leaders and reflects their inner motivation. Transformational leaders should be able to guide the favorable goal in its proper direction. In particular, organizational managers and leaders should communicate adopted regulations and bylaws to employees. Thus the second research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H2: there is a significant relationship between extraversion (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Openness to Experience and Transformational Leadership:

According to findings of Bono and Judge (2004) there is a significant positive relationship between openness to experience and transformational leadership. They explain this positive relationship based on the fact that transformational leaders have more demand for change and also change is one feature of transformational leadership reflected in intellectual motivation and is considered as a behavior associated with this leadership style. Among characteristics of managers with openness to experience seeking to try new activities and experience various things and awareness of their own feelings may be mentioned which probably they are good predictors of transformational leadership behaviors. Thus the third hypothesis is proposed as the following:

H3: there is a significant relationship between openness to experience (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Agreeableness and Transformational Leadership:

According to findings of Bono and Judge (2004) and the research literature, this trait has the strongest relationship with transformational leadership and includes such characteristics as tolerance, humor, leniency, peacemaking as well as conscientiousness. According to importance of agreeableness, with respect to transformational leadership the fourth hypothesis of the research is proposed as the following:

H4: there is a significant relationship between agreeableness (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Conscientiousness and Transformational Leadership:

According to Lee (2012), conscientiousness has a positive relationship with transformational leadership. People with such personality trait tend to be hardworking, careful and have better job performance and are more responsible than others. Of course physical change is considered as one task of transformational leadership. Hardworking and being responsible contribute to identify current organizational situation and according to the results of previous studies, there is a significant positive relationship between conscientiousness and transformational leadership and it seems that this personality trait is a strong predictor of transformational leadership behaviors. Thus the fifth hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H5: there is a significant relationship between conscientiousness (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

According to the formulated hypotheses, the research conceptual model is as shown in Figure 1:

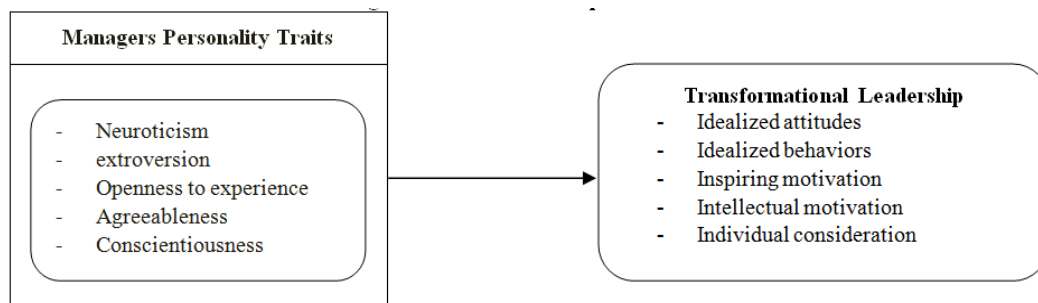


Fig. 1: Research Conceptual Model.

Methodology:

Questionnaire Design:

To collect required data to test research hypothesis the following questionnaires were used:

Personality Inventory:

Costa and Mc Crae developed a questionnaire known as Revised NEO Personality Inventory which assesses five main personality traits. First three personality traits including neuroticism, extraversion and openness to experience were emphasized in their personality inventory and later two other traits i.e. agreeableness and conscientiousness were added to represent five personality traits as mentioned above. In addition they divided each personality traits into six facets. These facets define dimensions of each personality trait (Parvin and John 2002, 222). This inventory consists of 60 items based on 5-point Likert scale.

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire of Bass and Avolio:

During the recent decade Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire has been continuously changed and modified; the newest edition of it has been provided by Bass and Avolio in 2000. This questionnaire is based on five main components: including: idealized attitudes (4 items), idealized behavior (4 items), intellectual motivation (4 item), inspiring motivation (4 item) and individual consideration (4 item). Thus this questionnaire consists of 20 multi-choice questions based on 5-point Likert scale: 5: completely agree, 4: agree 3: to some extent 2: disagree 1: completely disagree.

Reliability and Validity of Research Data Collection Instruments:

In present research, face validity was employed to explore the validity of research instruments. First the formulated questionnaires were provided to relevant experts in the field of psychology and management to see if the questions assess the intended concepts. Then questionnaires were modified based on experts' opinions. To test questionnaire reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was used. Based on this method, a pilot study was conducted on 30 managers and based on software SPSS outcome, reliability of questions related to personality and

transformational leadership were respectively 0.820 and 0.811 showing good reliability of questionnaires. Cronbach's Alpha related to each variable is presented in Table 1.

Statistical Population and Research Sample:

Statistical population of present research comprised of all managers of Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province in 2012. Based on related statistical information, number of managers in Islamic Azad University branches was 171 and among them 120 ones were chosen as sample using stratified random sampling procedure. In stratified random sampling procedure, population members are divided into various strata based on their intra group characteristics and sample subjects are proportionally selected among all strata. Stratified random sampling leads to proportional distribution of the sample across the all strata of the population and general characteristics of the population are also represented and recognized. Present research is an applied one based on its purpose and a correlation al one based on the method of collection of descriptive data. To analyze statistical data, first data were extracted from questionnaires and formulated as a table. Then all data were analyzed using software Excel and SPSS in two parts of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Descriptive tests were used to prepare tables and calculate percentages and appropriate measures of center and dispersion including mean and standard deviation. In inferential part, to test research hypotheses, normality and non-normality of data were determined using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and based on the results, Pearson's or Spearman's correlation tests were used to determine the quality and extent of relationships between variables. If the level of significance (sig.) was higher than $\alpha = 0.01$, normality of data was inferred and the relationship between variables were explored using Pearson's correlation and if the level of significance (sig.) was lower than $\alpha = 0.01$, then non-normality of data was demonstrated and the relationship between variables were explored using Spearman's correlation. Here this test was conducted for the whole data and also on every individual variable and the results are shown in Table2.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha related to research variables.

Row	Dimensions	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Transformational leadership	20	0.811
2	Personality traits	60	0.820
3	Neuroticism	12	0.779
4	Extraversion	12	0.886
5	Openness to experience	12	0.825
6	Agreeableness	12	0.847
7	Conscientiousness	12	0.857
The whole questionnaire		80	0.963

Table 2: Results for test of normality for research variables.

		Transformation leadership	Managers' personality traits	Managers' neuroticism	Managers extraversion	Managers' openness to experience	Managers' agreeableness	Managers' conscientiousness
N		120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Normal Parameters ^a	Mean	4.14	3.34	2.56	3.51	3.11	3.58	3.96
	Std. Deviation	.540	.215	.577	.389	.393	.522	.526
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.921	.481	1.022	1.114	.669	1.395	1.214
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.365	.975	.247	.167	.763	.041	.105

According to the obtained results shown in Table2, it is seen that the level of significance (sig.) for research variables was higher than the assumed significance level ($\alpha = 0.01$). Thus normality of data was accepted and parametric methods and Pearson's correlation coefficient were used to test hypotheses. Results for Pearson's correlation coefficient between research variables are shown in Table3.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Test of Research Hypotheses:

Research main hypothesis:

There is a significant relationship between managers' personality traits and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Given the output of SPSS shown in Table 3, the correlation between two variables is 0.375 showing a relatively weak positive correlation. On the other hand since the level of significance for the test (0.000) is lower than research error coefficient (0.05), thus H0 (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and research hypothesis is supported at 95 % confidence interval and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between managers personality traits and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

H1: there is a significant relationship between neuroticism (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Table 3: Pearson's correlation coefficient between research variables.

		Transformation leadership	Managers' personality traits	Managers' neuroticism	Managers' extraversion	Managers' openness to experience	Managers' agreeableness	Managers' conscientiousness
Transformational leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	.375**	-.204*	.307**	.198*	.242**	.397**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.026	.001	.030	.008	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Managers' personality traits	Pearson Correlation	.375**	1	-.119	.617**	.618**	.513**	.679**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.196	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Managers' neuroticism	Pearson Correlation	-.204*	-.119	1	-.322**	-.170	-.564**	-.554**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.196		.000	.064	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Managers' extraversion	Pearson Correlation	.307**	.617**	-.322**	1	.311**	.212*	.447**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000		.001	.020	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Managers' openness to experience	Pearson Correlation	.198*	.618**	-.170	.311**	1	.208*	.320**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.030	.000	.064	.001		.023	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Managers' agreeableness	Pearson Correlation	.242**	.513**	-.564**	.212*	.208*	1	.543**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000	.000	.020	.023		.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Managers' conscientiousness	Pearson Correlation	.397**	.679**	-.554**	.447**	.320**	.543**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).								
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).								

Given the output of SPSS shown in Table 3, the correlation between two variables is -0.204 showing a relatively weak negative correlation. On the other hand since the level of significance for the test (0.026) is lower than research error coefficient (0.05), thus H₀ (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and research hypothesis is supported at 95 % confidence interval and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between managers neuroticism and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

H2: there is a significant relationship between extraversion (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Given the output of SPSS shown in Table 3, the correlation between two variables is 0.307 showing a relatively weak positive correlation. On the other hand since the level of significance for the test (0.026) is lower than research error coefficient (0.05), thus H₀ (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and research hypothesis is supported at 95 % confidence interval and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between managers extraversion and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

H3: there is a significant relationship between openness to experience (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Given the output of SPSS shown in Table 3, the correlation between two variables is 0.198 showing a relatively weak positive correlation. On the other hand since the level of significance for the test (0.030) is lower than research error coefficient (0.05), thus H₀ (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and research hypothesis is supported at 95 % confidence interval and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between managers openness to experience and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

H4: there is a significant relationship between agreeableness (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Given the output of SPSS shown in Table 3, the correlation between two variables is 0.242 showing a relatively weak positive correlation. On the other hand since the level of significance for the test (0.008) is lower than research error coefficient (0.05), thus H₀ (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and research hypothesis is supported at 95 % confidence interval and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between managers agreeableness and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

H5: there is a significant relationship between conscientiousness (one personality trait of managers) and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Given the output of SPSS shown in Table 3, the correlation between two variables is 0.397 showing a relatively weak positive correlation. On the other hand since the level of significance for the test (0.000) is lower than research error coefficient (0.05), thus H_0 (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and research hypothesis is supported at 95 % confidence interval and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between managers conscientiousness and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province.

Discussion and Conclusion:

With respect to necessity for revolution and restructuring of educational institutions and organizations by leaders and increasing focus on human relations in organizations and also with respect to the effect of leadership personality traits on organizations, present research aimed to study the relationship between personality traits of managers and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province. To measure managers personality traits Mc Crae and Costa's theoretical framework (including five components: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness) was employed and items for transformational leadership were formed based on Bass and Avolio's theory (including five components: idealized attitudes, idealized behaviors, intellectual motivation, inspiring motivation and individual consideration).

Results showed that all five studied personality traits except for neuroticism (which had a significant negative relationship with transformational leadership) had a significant positive relationship with transformational leadership. Various studies showed that individual behavior depends upon his/her personality characteristics. In this respect, competent and creative managers significantly contribute to performance of their organizations because of their specific personality characteristics. Behaviors being shown by managers of academic units have a significant impact on organizational transformation and evolution and play a significant role with respect to achieving organizational goals and employees' motivation and satisfaction. Identification of the relationship between personality traits and transformational leadership in academic units helps the organization to select and train appropriate individuals with respect to their personality traits so that they can lead the organization towards a prosperous future employing modern organizational leadership methods i.e. transformational ones.

Zarandi *et al* (2011) showed that there was a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and manager personality traits (extraversion and openness to experience). Characteristics of extrovert persons including accepting responsibilities and leadership and their energy and frankness prepare the grounds for their impact on subordinates and among the characteristics of individuals with a high level of openness to experience, seeking to try new activities and experience various things and awareness of their own feelings can be mentioned and it seems that these features are good predictors of transformational leadership. Finally, neuroticism, conscientiousness and agreeableness had significant negative relationships with transformational leadership.

According to Bono and Judge (2000) there was a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness and openness to experience) and managers with openness to experience had more demand for change. Also seeking for change is another feature of transformational leadership reflected in intellectual motivation. Results from Bono and Judge (2000) with respect to agreeableness showed that it had the strongest association with transformational leadership compared to other traits and it becomes even more clear considering the fact that leaders with this personality trait make personalized decisions about their subordinates' needs and focus on their performance. In Bono and Judge (2000), neuroticism and conscientiousness had an inverse and negative relationship with transformational leadership and neuroticism including such qualities as anger, irresponsibility, surface social relationships and self-centrism had an inverse and negative relationship with transformational leadership. However leaders who are not rational and relax in their daily activities would not be efficient managers. Thus results from present research with respect to neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and openness to experience are consistent with those of Bono and Judge (2000). Thus the more extrovert the individual, the more his/her tendency towards transformational leadership and with respect to the significant positive relationships between four managers personality traits and transformational leadership, it can be concluded that they contribute to revolution and reconstruction of today educational institutions and organizations and improvement of human relations within them. Thus transformational leadership can move educational institutions towards the future by identifying organizational needs, initiating and facilitating changes appropriate for educational settings and realizing employees' potentials. In Islamic Azad University Branches of West Azarbaijan province, employees' commitment and optimal use of resources can be achieved by development of transformational leadership.

Recommendations Based on Research Findings:

According to the results of present study there was a significant positive relationship between personality traits (except for neuroticism) of managers and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University Branches

of West Azarbaijan province. In the following the recommendations for managers of organizations, educational institutions and universities are provided based on each personality trait.

Neuroticism:

According to the fact that based on research results there was a significant negative relationship between neuroticism and transformational leadership in academic units, the followings are recommended to enhance effectiveness of this variable with respect to managers of universities and educational institutions:

1. Neurotic managers should less be incorporated in making critical decisions at top level of the organization
2. To upgrade the level of mental health in organizational managers with a high level of neuroticism, they should be encouraged to engage in sport activities and healthy entertainments and this can mitigates psychological pressure and anxiety in their work with their employees
3. Appointing managers with high level of neuroticism at top positions of the organizations should be done with appropriate caution
4. Neurotic managers should be employed in the organizations less frequently because they are negatively excited, have low energy and create barriers to expression of transformational leadership

Extraversion:

With respect to the research results there was a significant positive relationship between managers' extroversion and transformational leadership in university branches. Thus the followings are recommended to enhance effectiveness of this variable with respect to managers of universities and educational institutions:

1. Extrovert managers should be employed more frequently in organizations because they accept responsibilities, show frankness and a high level of energy and in this way influence the employees.
2. Extrovert managers can motivate their followers towards achieving high goals of organizations and because of the same fact these managers should be used in organizations more frequently.
3. Extrovert managers engage in organizational activities with high interest and take great risks and this leads to high motivation of employees and increased output of the organization
4. In higher education context, focusing on this personality dimension both as a competency in selecting managers for their positions and as a criterion in assessing manger performance needs special attention.

Openness to experience:

According to the fact that research results showed a significant positive relationship between openness to experience and transformational leadership in university branches, the followings are recommended to enhance effectiveness of this variable with respect to managers of universities and educational institutions:

1. Managers with a high level of openness to experience can highly motivate their subordinates. Thus it is recommended to employ them at top level of organizations
2. Managers with a high level of openness to experience may be more participated in decision making and consultation with respect to various organizational issues.
3. Managers with a high level of openness to experience should be more developed to prepare the ground for organizational development and upgrading employees' knowledge.
4. Data banks for performance appraisal records and background of university managers should be developed in universities so that they can be relied in selecting and appointing managers.
5. In selection of managers with high level of openness to experience, their interest in obtaining new experiences, having a sense of curiosity and their interest in novelty should be focused and this personality trait may be considered as a criterion in selecting managers because it is highly associated with transformational leadership.

Agreeableness:

Given the fact that research results showed a significant positive relationship between managers' agreeableness and transformational leadership, the followings are recommended to enhance effectiveness of this variable with respect to managers of universities and educational institutions:

1. Managers with a high level of agreeableness who make personalized decisions for their subordinates and are fully aware of their performance should be more frequently employed in organizations
2. Given the fact that managers with a high level of agreeableness motivates employees through intellectual stimulation, these managers should be employed in organizations more frequently.
3. Managers with a high level of agreeableness, have high consciousness, are lenient with their subordinates and motivates their employees through peace making and these characteristics should also be paid adequate attention.

- **Conscientiousness:** given the results of present research, there was a significant positive relationship between conscientiousness and transformational leadership in Islamic Azad University branches; thus the

followings are recommended to enhance effectiveness of this variable with respect to managers of universities and educational institutions:

1. In selecting managers it is necessary to focus on conscientiousness and quality and observance of various aspects of conscientiousness can be important criteria in this process because these factors are highly related to transformational leadership
2. It is necessary to take serious actions to make managers aware of the effect of conscientiousness and its related skills on transformational leadership and its contribution to organizational beneficial outcomes.
3. Managers with a high level of conscientiousness are hardworking, proactive, punctual and self-disciplined and they should be employed in organizations more frequently.
4. Managers with a high level of conscientiousness are energetic and goal-oriented individuals and feel responsible for organizing subordinates and make them committed to organizations. Thus employing them in organization should be considered.

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