Citation Information: Döner, E., & Efeoğlu, İ. E. (2023). Investigating the effect of five-factor personality traits on the self-leadership characteristics of public and private sector employees in Türkiye. *International Journal of Leadership Studies: Theory and Practice, 6*(3), 227-243. doi: 10.52848/ijls.1408944

Kaynakça Gösterimi: Döner, E., & Efeoğlu, İ. E. (2023). Türkiye'de bulunan kamu ve özel sektör çalışanlarına ait beş faktör kişilik özelliklerinin öz-liderlik karakteristikleri üzerinde etkisinin araştırılması. *Uluslararası Liderlik Çalışmaları Dergisi: Kuram ve Uygulama, 6*(3), 227-243. doi: 10.52848/ijls.1408944

INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF FIVE-FACTOR PERSONALITY TRAITS ON THE SELF-LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES IN TÜRKİYE

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Abstract

In the contemporary era, as a result of the radical progress of technology through digitization, business ecosystems are transforming into structures that are more competitive, innovative, and capable of responding rapidly to change. Throughout this transformative process, the concept of leadership has evolved towards more diverse perspectives, building on its significance since the Industrial Revolution. Beyond the traditional notion of leadership, the concept of self-leadership emerges as a crucial tool in the rapidly changing dynamics of competitive business environments. Research suggests that the characteristics of self-leadership vary according to individuals' personality structures. Due to the insufficient exploration of studies concerning the relationship between individuals' self-leadership and their personality structures within Turkish culture, this study was conducted. In this perspective, a quantitative research methodology was employed by researchers, with a focus on relational analysis among variables. The study involved the administration of self-leadership and the Big Five personality traits scales to 349 participants. Gender and sectoral differences in the relationship between self-leadership and the five personality traits were also examined. The analyses revealed significant effects of the five personality traits on self-leadership in the overall context (β: .376, p < .05). The extraversion personality trait exhibited a significant impact on self-leadership (β: .322, p < .05). Openness to experience had a significant effect on self-leadership (β: .344, p < .05), as did the responsibility personality trait (β: .348, p < .05). When examined from a gender perspective, the gender factor was identified as a significant variable in the impact of the agreeableness personality trait on self-leadership (β1: .247; β2: .192, p < .05). Additionally, the gender factor was found to be a significant variable in the impact of extraversion personality trait on self-leadership (β1: .271; β2: .382, p < .05). Furthermore, when exploring differences between individuals working in the public or private sectors, the sector factor was identified as a significant variable in the impact of emotional stability personality trait on self-leadership (β1: .243; β2: .337, p < .05).

Keywords: Leadership, Personality, Private Sector, Public Sector, Self-Leadership.

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Öz

Günümüzde teknolojinin dijitalleşme aracılığı ile radikal ilerlemesi sonucunda, iş ekosistemleri daha rekabetçi, yenilikçi ve değişime hızlı cevap verme yetkinliklere sahip olacak bir yapıya dönüşmektedir. Bu dönüşüm sürecinde, liderlik kavramı sanayi devriminden itibaren sahip olduğu önemi daha çoklu perspektiflere doğru geliştirebilmektedir. Liderlik kavramının ötesinde öz-liderlik kavramı hızlı değişen rekabetçi iş dinamiklerinde önemli bir araç olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Yapılan araştırmalarda, bireylere ait öz-liderlik karakteristik özelliklerinin kişilik yapılarına göre değişkenlik kazandığı düşünülmektedir. Türk kültüründe, kişilerin öz-liderliği ile kişilik yapılarında arasında gerçekleştirilen çalışmaların yetersiz olması sonucu bu çalışma gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu perspektifte, araştırmacılar tarafından yürütülen çalışmada nicel araştırma metodolojisi uygulanmış ve değişkenler arası ilişkisel analiz hedeflenmiştir. Gerçekleştirilen çalışma kapsamında, 349 kişiye öz-liderlik ve beş büyük kişilik özellikleri ölçekleri sunulmuştur. Öz-liderlik ve beş faktör kişilik özellikleri arasındaki ilişkide cinsiyet ve sektörel farklılıklar da incelenmiştir. Yapılan regresyon analizleri sonucunda, beş faktör kişilik özelliklerinin genel boyutta öz-liderlik üzerinde anlamlı etkisi keşfedilmiştir (β: .376, p<.05). Dışadönüklük kişilik özelliğinin öz-liderlik üzerinde anlamlı ve pozitif etkisi mevcuttur (β: .322, p<.05). Yeniliğe açıklık kişilik özelliğinin öz-liderlik üzerinde anlamlı ve pozitif etkisi mevcuttur (β: .344, p<.05). Sorumluluk kişilik özelliğinin öz-liderlik üzerinde anlamlı ve pozitif etkisi mevcuttur (β: .348, p<.05). Bireyler cinsiyet perspektifinde incelendiğinde, cinsiyet faktörü uyumluluk kişilik özelliğinin öz-liderlik üzerinde etkisinde anlamlı bir değişken olarak analiz edilmiştir (β1: .247; β2: .192 p<.05). İlaveten, cinsiyet faktörü dışadönüklük kişilik özelliğinin öz-liderlik üzerinde etkisinde anlamlı bir değişken olarak analiz edilmiştir (β1: .271; β2: .382 p<.05). Diğer taraftan, bireylerin çalıştığı kamu veya özel sektör farklılıkları incelendiğinde, sektör faktörü duygusal kararlılık kişilik özelliğinin öz-liderlik üzerinde etkisinde anlamlı bir değişken olarak analiz edilmiştir (β1: .243; β2: .337 p<.05).

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kamu Sektörü, Kişilik, Liderlik, Öz-Liderlik, Özel Sektör.

Introduction

In the contemporary business landscape, there is a prevalence of rapid changes in strategies, innovation in business models, and transformative operational practices (Jooste et al., 2015). Leaders adhering to outdated mindsets often encounter difficulties finding relevance and asserting themselves in this evolving business environment. Conversely, leaders who embrace self-disruption exhibit traits such as high learning agility, self-awareness, emotional and social intelligence, purpose-driven orientation, and a balance of assurance and humility (Daud, 2020). The viewpoint on leadership has consistently adapted and adjusted in response to global occurrences, shifts in generational dynamics, technological advancements, and various other influential factors (Northouse, 2021). Despite the extensive body of research on leadership, the understanding of self-leadership is steadily expanding.

Self-leadership involves cultivating and managing individual energy to instigate, motivate, and achieve high-level performance, thereby enhancing and sustaining the leadership ethos of the organization at an individual level (Neck and Manz, 2007). Individuals practicing self-leadership exhibit heightened self-awareness and efficacy, showcasing the capacity to impact a leader's communication, emotions, and behavior (Bryant and Kazan, 2013). The relationship between self-leadership and success in leadership roles has ignited substantial scholarly dialogue (Hybels, 2016). Notably, the intricacies of self-managing within the leadership context hold considerable weight as a predictor of one's effectiveness. Therefore, leaders' adeptness at governing their actions illuminates their broader managerial capabilities. The chosen leadership style serves as a potent signal of their unique leadership attributes. Furthermore, research has unveiled the damaging effects of deficiency in leadership behaviors displayed by top management teams on organizational performance (Neck and Manz, 2010). This negative impact can be attributed to the deficit in proactive leadership skills at the individual level, which can ripple through the entire organization. Stewart et al. (2011) envisions certain individuals possessing an inherent predisposition for self-leadership, highlighting the significance of comprehending the motivating factors. Consequently, it is crucial to explore individual factors, such as personality traits, and contextual factors within the environment that could influence self-leadership (Stewart et al., 2019). The exercise of self-leadership within an organizational framework has the potential to engender proficient leadership, promote organizational stability, and augment overall productivity (Long et al., 2015). An important factor contributing to the scholarly interest in employee self-leadership is the organizational pursuit of competitive advantage, which extends beyond external orientation, involving aspects such as customer and competition strategies, to encompass internal orientation, specifically focusing on cost control (Olson et al., 2005). The act of engaging in self-

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leadership is thought to enhance the self-awareness and self-regulation of leaders, motivating them to exhibit authentic behavior and consequently serving as a positive role model for followers (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Leaders' adept at self-leadership demonstrates enhanced capability in effectively managing the inherent stresses associated with their roles (Lovelace et al., 2007).

While numerous factors influence self-leadership, personality traits are particularly critical, as represent relatively stable patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Ashton and Lee, 2007). Among personality models, the Big Five, encompassing "Openness to Experience", "Conscientiousness", "Extraversion", "Agreeableness", and "Emotional Stability", has gained widespread acceptance due to its robust empirical foundation and relevance to various psychological outcomes (John and Srivastava, 1999). Additionally, prior research has indicated that individuals with openness to experience are inclined to discover meaningfulness and experience feelings of competence (Azucar et al., 2018), aligning with the competence aspect of the natural rewards strategy. Across contemporary organizations, businesses, and higher education institutions, the value of self-leadership principles has gained widespread recognition. This is reflected in the proliferation of training programs specifically designed to cultivate self-leadership characteristics and behaviors within the professional context (Neck and Manz, 2010). This research study explores the intricate relationship between big-five personality traits and self-leadership, offering a deeper understanding of individual differences in self-leadership levels through hypotheses developed by researchers as follows.

The self-leadership, being composed of behavior awareness & volition, task motivation, and constructive cognition, reaches significantly high levels with individuals possessing extraversion, emotional stability, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness as being part of big-five personality traits (Furtner and Rauthmann, 2010). The impact of each trait on self-leadership is significantly influenced by its interaction with other traits, individual skills, and the specific context. For instance, someone high in both conscientiousness and agreeableness might exhibit self-leadership through meticulous planning and collaboration, while someone high in openness and extraversion might approach it through innovation and proactive communication (Long et al., 2015). Therefore, it can be concluded that the big-five personality trait has a significantly positive impact on the self-leadership characteristics of employees in Turkish culture.

H_1: "The Big-Five Personality" has a significantly positive impact on self-leadership characteristics.

Extraverted individuals often enjoy social interaction and can be adept at influencing others, which can help motivate and lead teams. Extraverts tend to have higher self-confidence and optimism, which can translate into self-belief and initiative, crucial aspects of self-leadership (Houghton et al., 2004). Extraverts are typically comfortable with communication and persuasion, which can be advantageous in setting goals, providing feedback, and navigating challenging situations. Therefore, it can be concluded that the extraversion trait has a significantly positive impact on the self-leadership characteristics of employees in Turkish culture.

H_{1a}: "Extraversion" has a positive impact on self-leadership characteristics.

Individuals high in agreeableness prioritize cooperation, harmony, and avoiding conflict. This can sometimes lead to putting others' needs before their own, potentially hindering self-directed goal pursuit and assertive decision-making, key aspects of self-leadership. Agreeable individuals might struggle to set boundaries or disagree with others, potentially leading to exploitative situations or difficulty asserting their ideas and initiatives, both of which can hamper self-leadership (Furtner and Rauthmann, 2010). Agreeable individuals might shy away from direct communication or expressing strong opinions, potentially hindering their ability to effectively delegate tasks, provide constructive

feedback, or lead by example, all of which are crucial for effective self-leadership (Woods et al., 2023). Therefore, it can be concluded that the agreeableness trait has a significantly negative impact on the self-leadership characteristics of employees in Turkish culture.

H_{1b}: "Agreeableness" has a negative impact on self-leadership characteristics.

Individuals high in conscientiousness are known for their discipline, organization, and goal-oriented behavior. These qualities directly translate into effective self-goal setting, planning, and execution, all crucial aspects of self-leadership. Conscientious individuals hold themselves accountable for their actions and strive for excellence. This translates into self-monitoring, performance evaluation, and continuous improvement, all of which are foundational for effective self-leadership (Harari et al., 2021). In the face of challenges, individuals high in conscientiousness demonstrate grit, perseverance, and the ability to bounce back from setbacks. These qualities are crucial for self-leaders to navigate obstacles, overcome difficulties, and maintain motivation amidst challenges. Therefore, it can be concluded that the conscientiousness trait has a significantly negative impact on the self-leadership characteristics of employees in Turkish culture.

H_{1c}: "Conscientiousness" has a positive impact on self-leadership characteristics.

Individuals high in emotional stability, often referred to as "neuroticism" in the Big Five, display better control over their emotions, mitigating stress and impulsive reactions. This enables them to maintain a clear head under pressure, make rational decisions, and stay focused on goals, crucial aspects of self-leadership (Houghton et al., 2004). Emotionally stable individuals are better equipped to cope with challenges and setbacks. They are less likely to give up in the face of difficulties, allowing them to persist through tough times and exhibit the resilience needed for effective self-leadership. Therefore, it can be concluded that the emotional stability trait has a significantly negative impact on the self-leadership characteristics of employees in Turkish culture.

H_{1d}: "Emotional Stability" has a positive impact on self-leadership characteristics.

Individuals high in openness are known for their curiosity, imagination, and willingness to explore new ideas and approaches. These qualities fuel creative problem-solving, innovative solutions, and the ability to adapt to changing situations, all crucial for effective self-leadership in today's dynamic world (Furtner and Rauthmann, 2010). Openness to experience translates into a willingness to embrace change and adapt to new situations. This flexibility allows self-leaders to navigate uncertainty, explore different approaches, and pivot, when necessary, crucial skills in a world of constant evolution. Therefore, it can be concluded that the openness to experience trait has a significantly negative impact on the self-leadership characteristics of employees in Turkish culture.

H_{1e}: "Openness to Experience" has a positive impact on self-leadership characteristics.

Traditional gender roles often have different expectations for agreeableness. Men may be associated with assertiveness and decisiveness, while women may be associated with being supportive and collaborative. These expectations can influence how individuals internalize and express agreeableness, leading to different ways it manifests in self-leadership behaviors. Additionally, exposure to role models and societal stereotypes can further shape how individuals develop their self-leadership. Seeing successful men with strong self-leadership traits like decisiveness and initiative might encourage men to express agreeableness through compromise and collaborative decision-making while seeing successful women primarily displaying supportive and relationship-oriented leadership styles might lead women to focus on those aspects even if they are naturally high in agreeableness (AbuShmais, 2013).

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Therefore, it can be concluded that sex type significantly differentiates the level of agreeableness's impact on the self-leadership characteristics of employees in Turkish culture.

H_2: Sex type significantly differentiates the level of agreeableness's impact on self-leadership characteristics.

Traditional gender roles have often associated men with extraversion, portraying them as assertive, adventurous, and outgoing, while women may be associated with being more introverted, agreeable, and nurturing (Weathington and Moldenhauer, 2008). These expectations can influence how individuals internalize and express extraversion, leading to different ways it manifests in self-leadership behaviors. Therefore, it can be concluded that sex type significantly differentiates the level of extraversion's impact on the self-leadership characteristics of employees in Turkish culture.

H_3: Sex type significantly differentiates the level of extraversion's impact on self-leadership characteristics.

Public sector organizations may sometimes offer greater job security and work-life balance compared to some private sector jobs (Buelens and Van den Broeck, 2007). This potential for a more predictable and stable work environment could benefit individuals lower in emotional stability and allow them to focus on self-leadership development without excessive external pressure. The demanding nature of some private sector jobs can lead to long hours, high-pressure situations, and unpredictable schedules. This could require individuals with higher emotional stability to manage stress effectively and maintain composure for effective self-leadership (Houghton et al., 2004). Therefore, it can be concluded that sector type significantly differentiates the level of emotional stability's impact on the self-leadership characteristics of employees in Turkish culture.

H_4: Sector type significantly differentiates the level of emotional stability's impact on self-leadership characteristics.

The abovementioned hypotheses pave the way for a broader observation of the reason behind the relationship between big-five personality traits and self-leadership characteristics with the support of sex, generation, managerial role, and sector-type variables in this research study. Before examining the hypotheses claimed by researchers, scrutinizing the self-leadership, and big-five personality traits, and both of them provide a deeper understanding for scholars.

Theoretical Background

While classic leadership models center around leaders motivating their subordinates, self-leadership emphasizes the self-motivation of employees, reducing dependence on external influences (Harari et al., 2021). Self-leadership designates an individual as both the originator and recipient of influence, distinguishing itself from other motivational concepts like self-efficacy and work engagement by encompassing explicit strategies that individuals can actively opt to pursue (Knotts et al., 2022). In the last two decades, self-leadership has been one of the adoptable managerial instruments that has been preferred by managers in multiple organizations and corporations (Elloy, 2005). Neck and Houghton (2006) characterize self-leadership as encompassing self-knowledge, self-awareness, self-management, and self-discipline. Each of these elements contributes to the effective execution of leadership within the organizational context. The self-leadership, which includes the components of self-management and regulation, is defined as a process in which individuals control their reactions to direct themselves by applying notable cognitive and behavioral strategies (Andressen et al., 2012; Neck and Houghton, 2006). Self-leadership is also characterized as a process of self-influence through which individuals attain the self-direction and self-motivation essential for optimal performance (Neck et al., 2019). Self-leadership

is based on the assertion that individuals manage themselves, and despite external interventions, people's behaviors are ultimately shaped by their internal motivations (Shek et al., 2015). The focus of the self-leadership investigation primarily pertains to the individual and personality side of leadership (Neck and Manz, 2012).

Self-leadership is an approach that emphasizes what should be done and why, in addition to how it should be done (Pearce and Manz, 2005). Self-leadership affects both the performance of tasks that naturally involve rewards and the performance of tasks that do not involve natural rewards even though, are required to be performed (Neck and Houghton, 2006). Strategies related to self-leadership are classified as behavior-focused, constructive thinking, and natural reward strategies (Norris, 2008). Behavior-focused strategies include cognitive strategies such as self-observation, setting self-goals, self-rewarding, self-punishment, and providing cues (Marques-Quinteiro et al., 2019).

The behavior-oriented practice of self-observation, which entails enhancing one's self-awareness regarding the enactment of specific behaviors concerning their timing and reasons, embodies elements of both self-reflection and self-regulation. Self-observation encompasses the establishment of standards and the evaluation of outcomes, playing a crucial role in mitigating unproductive behaviors (Manz and Neck, 2004) while directing attention toward productive behaviors (Stewart et al., 2011). Another behavior-focused element is self-rewards, which involves offering support and incentives for desired behaviors and the achievement of goals. This component is crucial for performance (Neck et al., 2017) and represents a form of self-reflection, delivering positive outcomes in response to meeting self-established standards. The last one, self-cueing strategies, involves setting up environmental cues, such as using sticky notes and to-do lists while minimizing negative stimuli like smartphones and video games that could potentially divert attention from desired behaviors (Knotts et al., 2022).

Individuals develop natural reward strategies to emphasize the enjoyable aspects of a task or activity they perform. These strategies aim to create an environment that motivates and rewards the individual for engaging in the task or activity, enabling self-motivation and self-reward (Furtner et al., 2011). Strategies for natural rewards entail the use of foresight to instill inherent motivation into tasks, fostering motivation and internalizing goals through the inherently enjoyable aspects of an activity. The focus is on intrinsic rewards that prompt individuals to engage in work for its inherent value rather than relying on external incentives. These strategies generate sentiments that contribute to positive attitudes (Frese and Fay, 2001; Manz, 2015).

In constructive thinking model strategies, individuals employ tactics such as identifying conventional and dysfunctional thought patterns, replacing them with new models that can enhance their performance, envisioning successful future outcomes in their minds, and developing self-affirming verbal techniques (Abid et al., 2021). Instances of constructive thinking strategies include substituting negative self-talk and mental thoughts with positive beliefs and expectations, intentionally harnessing and directing willpower and desire, and employing mental imagery of successful task performance (Van Zyl, 2008).

Leadership incorporating self-leadership skills should be considered an advantageous tool in dealing with managerial challenges (Pearce and Manz, 2005). One reason for the significant importance of the concept of self-leadership is the rapidly changing business environment, which demands flexibility, quick responsiveness, creativity, and high learning abilities (Afridi, 2021). An individual who demonstrates self-leadership behavior has a positive attitude and a productive working life, as well as opportunities to renew and develop professional knowledge and an increase in the tendency to take responsibility (Elloy, 2005). The acquisition of self-leadership skills is a trainable endeavor; therefore, it is not confined exclusively to individuals inherently possessing innate abilities in self-motivation and occupational proficiency (Furtner et al., 2012). Self-leadership emerges through personal influence,

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evolves through behavior and personal perspectives, and is applicable through self-management (Malmir and Azizzadeh, 2013). Self-leadership is the endeavor of an individual to organize their own living space, manage responsibilities within the organization, elevate social awareness, and enhance motivation levels toward work, life, and the organization (Georgianna, 2007). Self-leadership facilitates the transformation of an individual into a leader, and the cultivation of self-leadership skills contributes significantly to the advancement of broader leadership capabilities (Parakhina et al., 2019). Individuals with self-leadership skills have managed innovation cycles and utilized creativity without being exposed to inexplicable challenges because of possessing behavioral control and steady motivation levels (Ghosh, 2015; Pratoom and Savatsomboon, 2012). Liu et al. (2020) assert that self-leadership holds significance in dynamic environments and contributes to the improvement of group leadership and the quality of care provided to staff. According to Kusdinar and Haholongan (2019), self-leadership plays a role in influencing positive innovative behavior, suggesting that a higher level of positive self-leadership corresponds to an increased occurrence of innovative behavior among employees. Regarding the outcomes of self-leadership, Sesen et al., (2017) posit that self-leadership has the potential to impact job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and innovative behaviors. For enhancing job attitudes, job performance, and organizational commitment, self-leadership should be absorbed by individuals whether leaders with a job title or not in the organization (Stewart et al., 2019).

In self-leadership, there exists internal motivation, social cognition, self-determination, and self-regulation to be motivated to achieve goals and personal satisfaction (Mayfield et al., 2021). Individuals taking initiative can contribute beneficial outcomes for organizations during the chaotic and complicated business progresses owing to having self-leadership skills that provide behavioral control, advanced thinking mechanisms, and endurable motivation for employees (Stewart et al., 2011). There is a clear recognition that personality characteristics (i.e., extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness) significantly contribute to motivational processes (Judge and Ilies, 2002), encompassing aspects such as self-regulation, social cognition, and intrinsic motivation, all of which are pivotal to the concept of self-leadership (Houghton et al., 2004). Personality can be defined as the distinctive and characteristic patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior that describe an individual's interaction with the physical and social environment.

The Big-five personality model is a universally accepted approach explaining how individuals typically describe their or someone else's personality (John et al., 2008). The Big-five personality model is oriented towards elucidating individual personality through the examination of five significant factors and explicating the alterations within them, along with an exploration of their influences on various aspects, as delineated by Wood-Bell in 2008. The personality traits of an individual consist of five main elements: "emotional stability (stability), extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness" (Robbins and Judge, 2017).

The dimension of extraversion encompasses individuals' willingness to engage in social interactions and the ease with which they establish relationships (Robbins and Judge, 2017). Extraverted individuals derive pleasure from meeting and getting to know new people; however, conversely, individuals with such personality traits tend to exhibit impatience by seeking rapid outcomes in prolonged and slow-paced processes and tasks (Gustavsen and Hegnes, 2020). Individuals with extraverted tendencies not only experience a positive social environment in the workplace but also closely associate their extraverted characteristics with the reflection of positive affect or positive emotion (Clark and Watson, 2008). Extraverted individuals tend to maximize gains from social relationships, but an increase in social interactions can lead to an escalation in time and energy costs (Milfont and Sibley, 2012). Outgoing individuals are perceived as positive figures in the business world and workplace, exerting favorable influences on their colleagues (Alarcon et al., 2009). Conversely,

individuals with low extraversion traits are characterized as reserved, cautious, calm, and introverted individuals (Hammond, 2001).

Emotional stability is associated with whether an individual remains calm and stable or exhibits tension when faced with stress, correlating with the degree of sensitivity to psychological stress (Gustavsen and Hegnes, 2020). In other words, it can be explained as an individual's capacity to withstand stress (Robbins and Judge, 2017). Individuals experiencing emotional stability issues tend to endure prolonged negative emotions due to afflictions such as distress, anxiety, and obsession (Cooper et al., 2013). Furthermore, individuals grappling with emotional instability may manifest various behavioral disorders inherent to their constitution.

Individuals with the agreeableness personality trait exhibit behavioral characteristics such as a predisposition towards collaboration, reliability, selflessness, and kindness, distinguishing them from other personality traits (Moody, 2007). Individuals possessing agreeableness, are observed to establish relationships with others by demonstrating empathy in their social interactions and displaying a tendency to view events from a positive perspective (McCrae, 2002). Agreeableness is the state of a person being kind, grateful, compatible, and open to cooperation (Roccas et al., 2004).

Individuals with a sense of conscientiousness are characterized by competence, organizational skills, achievement orientation, task dependency, self-discipline, and thoughtful behavior (Burger and Reevy, 2022; Zhang, 2008). Conscientiousness encompasses the individual's level of commitment to organizational goals, perseverance, diligence, motivation, patience, and determination to achieve objectives (Zhao and Siebert, 2006). In other words, conscientiousness can be described as being attentive, responsible, careful, and self-disciplined (Grankvist and Kajonius, 2015; Roccas et al., 2002; Strang, 2009). Individuals possessing the characteristic of openness are thought to exhibit traits such as being exploratory, non-traditional, having independent thinking, and being versatile. Conversely, individuals with lower levels of this characteristic are considered to have traits like a preference for the known over the unfamiliar, displaying more traditional tendencies (Burger, 2006). Additionally, individuals open to new experiences may attract attention for their creative attributes in organizations during the change, owing to their creative thinking and advanced imaginative capabilities (McCrae and Greenberg, 2014). Individuals with high conscientiousness provide awareness toward their behaviors and loyalty to tasks assigned to them, as being part of self-leadership through behavioral-focused, natural reward, and constructive thought strategies (Renn et al., 2011).

Self-leadership strategies encompass the deliberate formulation of objectives, mindful monitoring of progress toward those objectives, integration of pleasurable elements into actions aimed at achieving goals, and cultivation of constructive cognitive patterns (Ho and Nesbit, 2018). Openness to experience may relate to increased self-monitoring and information-seeking behaviors, which are crucial for informed decision-making and goal-setting within self-leadership (Kim, 2016). Bendell et al. (2019) noted a correlation between conscientiousness and intrinsic motivation, which represents one of the inherent reward strategies in the context of self-leadership. Emotional stability empowers an individual to maintain composure in high-pressure situations and effectively manage adverse feedback (Gerhardt et al., 2007). Roberts et al. (2014) identified a correlation between openness to experience and motivation for goal-setting, a construct that, while not precisely a self-leadership strategy, is likely closely linked to behavioral self-leadership (Menzel et al., 2010; Terracciano et al., 2008). Conscientiousness plays a crucial role in the cultivation of meta-skills within the realm of self-leadership, potentially facilitated by self-directed self-regulation and the application of self-leadership practices (Afridi, 2021).

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Method

This study aims to investigate how the degree of each big-five personality trait has an impact on the self-leadership skills of employees being part of public and private industries. Thereby, researchers preferred to follow a correlational research study design, as part of the quantitative method (Creswell and Creswell, 2017), to observe possible relationships among variables by using Self-Leadership and Big-Five Personality scales. The research model was designed as the hypothesis claimed in the introduction section. At following steps are implemented by researchers to conduct research by determining sample, and instruments, and drawing a general research model depicting possible relationships with lines according to the hypothesis asserted in this study.

Research Model

Identifying research models provides a general understanding of which and how hypotheses were established for scholars and readers (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Any research model includes dependent and independent variables including relationship lines and hypothesis. In this study, researchers designed a model describing the hypothesized relationships among variables covering big-five personality traits in each and self-leadership in general.
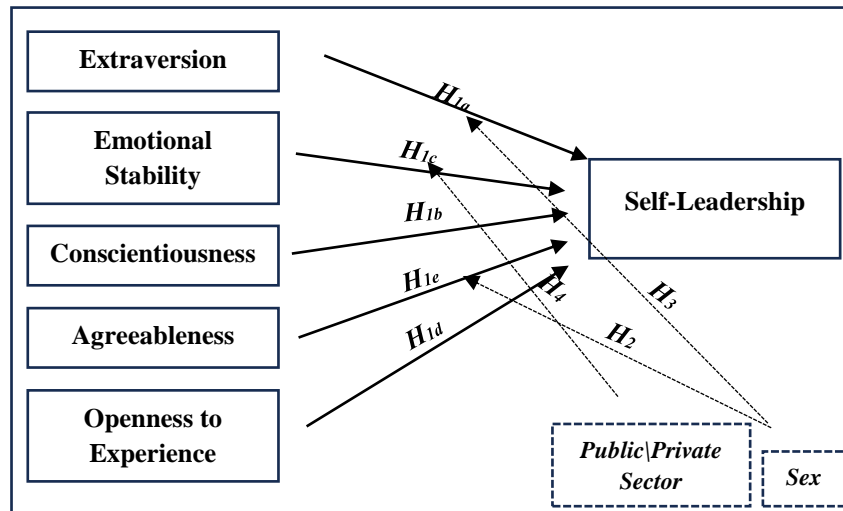

Figure 1. *Research model of personality trait – self-leadership relationship*

Figure 1 represents the research model including the asserted relationship among variables and other demographic variables, possibly affecting the asserted relationships between self-leadership and big-five personality.

Research Instruments

Quantitative research methods require scales to measure respondents' answers to developed questionnaires to observe the hypothesis claimed (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). Therefore, researchers preferred to use the Turkish version of the shortened Big-Five Personality and Self-Leadership scales to conduct a study regarding employees' characteristics and skills. The rationale for selecting Turkish scales lies in the participants' residency in Turkey and their native proficiency in the Turkish language, factors that directly influence their cultural background. The Shortened Big-Five Personality (SBFP) - Turkish version – scale was developed by Atak (2013) to adapt the original scale to Turkish culture which indicates reliable internal validity (Extraversion (α): .86; Emotional Stability (α): .83; Conscientiousness (α): .84; Agreeableness (α): .81; Openness to Experience (α):,89 and good model-fit (CMIN/df: 2.20, GFI:.95, CFI:.93, and RMSEA:.030) results. SBFP scale includes ten items with five-factor dimensions. The Self-Leadership (SL)-Turkish version- scale was developed by Şahin (2015) to

adapt the original scale to Turkish culture which indicates reliable internal validity (Self-leadership (α): .81) and good model-fit (CMIN/df: 1.506, GFI:0.89, CFI:.98, and RMSEA:.063) results. SL scale includes nine items with three-factor dimensions.

Data Analysis Tools

In this research study, statistical software gave support to examine each scale's descriptive values and investigate the hypothesis claimed according to respondents' answers to questionnaires. For examining descriptive values and investigating the possible relations through regression analysis, SPSS 24.0 was preferred. Also, SPSS 24.0 software enabled researchers to explore how demographic variables differentiate the impact of each personality trait on self-leadership traits through implementing regression analysis with split samples into specified groups reflected in asserted hypotheses.

Sample and Data Collection

This research study was conducted with respondents from both the public and private sectors regardless of industry type. We preferred to choose the purposive sampling method to obtain respondents' answers more accurately. In the purposive sampling method, the criteria are graduation from a university with a bachelor's degree at least, a minimum of five years of experience, and working in a full-time job in this study. Our sample consisted of 349 respondents representing the whole universe following the statistical calculations. Questionnaires were distributed to 382 full-time employees via e-mail, online platforms, and face-to-face and collected from 349 (42% Women, 58% Men) full-time employees with 23 missing participants. To preclude common method bias, each observation scale was designed on another page by considering factorial dimensions. The generation of the participants was categorized as Generation X (47%), and Generation Y (53%). Most of the participants are full-time working in the private sector (54%) compared to the public sector (46%) participants. More information about respondents' profiles including marital status, educational level, and managerial role is depicted in Table 1 as follows.

Table 1. *Respondents' profile*

Demographic Information	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Woman	*147*	*42%*
Man	*202*	*58%*
Generation		
Generation X	*164*	*47%*
Generation Y	*185*	*53%*
Marital Status		
Single	*149*	*43%*
Married	*200*	*57%*
Educational Level		
Graduate	*242*	*69%*
Post-Graduate	*107*	*31%*
Public\Private Sector		
Public Sector	*160*	*46%*
Private Sector	*189*	*54%*
Managerial Role		
Manager	*153*	*44%*
Non-Manager	*196*	*56%*

Results

To conduct research analysis, it's crucial to examine whether data is normally distributed or not which determines statistical tests type and researchers' analysis steps accordingly. With observation of skewness and kurtosis values reflects a clear understanding of the data's normality structure, which exists in a range between -2 and +2 value intervals (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). When analyzing data

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through exploratory statistics, our research data shows normality distribution and significant internal reliability, which are depicted in Table 2 for each scale and its dimensions.

Table 2. *Descriptive statistics*

Scale - *Factor*	Mean	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
Big-Five Personality Trait	5.56	-.173	-.419	.849
Extraversion	*5.70*	*-.728*	*-.521*	*.861*
Agreeableness	*5.21*	*-.277*	*-.563*	*.872*
Conscientiousness	6.07	-1.305	1.078	.831
Emotional Stability	*5.15*	*-.474*	*-.015*	*.828*
Openness to Experience	*5.63*	*-.837*	*.171*	*.817*
Self-Leadership	4.24	-1.563	1.327	.835
Behavior Awareness & Volition	*3.41*	*-.413*	*-.798*	*.848*
Task Motivation	*3.52*	*-.501*	*-.302*	*.810*
Constructive Cognition	*3.23*	*-.285*	*-.240*	*.805*

Researchers examined the hypotheses claimed through regression analysis. As can be illustrated in the following tables (Table 3, Table 4). There exist statistical values to validate hypotheses whether accepted or rejected. The Big-five personality has a significantly positive impact on the self-leadership characteristic of employees (β: 376, $p<0.05$), which ensures the H1 is statistically valid, as accepted. The extraversion personality trait has a significantly positive impact on the self-leadership characteristic of employees (β: 322, $p<0.05$), which ensures the H1a is statistically valid, as accepted. The conscientiousness personality trait has a significantly positive impact on the self-leadership characteristic of employees (β: 348, $p<0.05$), which ensures the H1b is statistically valid, as accepted. The emotional stability personality trait has a significantly positive impact on the self-leadership characteristic of employees (β: 251, $p<0.05$), which ensures the H1c is statistically valid, as accepted. The openness to experience personality trait has a significantly positive impact on the self-leadership characteristic of employees (β: 344, $p<0.05$), which ensures the H1d is statistically valid, as accepted. The agreeableness personality trait has a significantly positive impact on the self-leadership characteristic of employees (β: 227, $p<0.05$), which ensures the H1e is statistically valid, as accepted.

Table 3. *The outputs of regression analysis*

Model	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)		14.670	0.00
Big-Five Personality	.376	5.839	0.00
Extraversion	.322	5.127	0.00
Agreeableness	.227	4.213	0.00
Conscientiousness	.348	5.455	0.00
Emotional Stability	.251	4.457	0.00
Openness to Experience	.344	5.396	0.00

The sex type differentiates the impact of agreeableness on self-leadership significantly in which women's agreeableness personality trait has a greater effect on their self-leadership characteristics, compared to men (β_1: 192, β_2: .247; $p<0.05$). The sex type differentiates the impact of extraversion on self-leadership significantly in which men's extraversion personality trait has a greater effect on their self-leadership characteristics, compared to women (β_1: 271, β_2: .382; $p<0.05$).

Table 4. *The outputs of regression analysis based on sex type*

Model	β	$t_{1,2}$	Sig.
(Constant)		20.687, 20.727	0.00
Agreeableness - Men	.192	2.340	0.00
-Women	.247	2.450	0.00
(Constant)		10.915, 10.425	0.00
Extraversion - Men	.382	4.711	0.00
-Women	.271	3.681	0.00

The sector type differentiates the impact of emotional stability on self-leadership significantly in which women's agreeableness personality trait has a greater effect on their self-leadership characteristics, compared to men (β_1: 243, β_2: .337; p<0.05).

Table 5. *The outputs of regression analysis based on sector type*

Model	β	$t_{1,2}$	Sig.
(Constant)		14.255, 9.413	0.00
Emotional Stability – Public Sector	.243	2.687	0.00
– Private Sector	.337	3.216	0.00

To observe the differences in personality traits regarding sex type, a t-test analysis was conducted, and the results indicated that there exist significant differences among men and women in agreeableness and extraversion personality traits (mean difference: -.33793 p< .05; mean difference: .24948 p< .05)

Table 6. *The outputs of t-test analysis regarding personality trait \ sex type*

Demographic \ Variable	Std Error Difference	Mean Difference	Sig.
(Sex: Men - Women)			
Agreeableness	*.1257*	*-.33793*	*0.00*
Extraversion	*.1367*	*.24948*	*0.00*

To observe the differences in personality traits regarding sector type, a t-test analysis was conducted, and the results indicated that there exist significant differences among men and women in emotional stability personality traits (mean difference: -33778 p< .05)

Table 7. *The outputs of t-test analysis regarding personality trait \ sector type*

Demographic \ Variable	Std Error Difference	Mean Difference	Sig.
(Sector: Public & Private)			
Emotional Stability	*.1352*	*-.33778*	*0.00*

The above-mentioned results indicated that the hypotheses asserted by researchers are valid in general and will be discussed in the following section through broader considerations regarding existing literature.

Discussion and Conclusion

Self-leadership derives its strength from the resources inherent in the individual (Manz. 2015). Our findings support existing literature that suggests a significant relationship between personality traits and self-leadership with considering Turkish culture. Individuals with high levels of conscientiousness tend to exhibit greater self-leadership characteristics, as they demonstrate an organized and disciplined approach to tasks and responsibilities. Similarly, openness to experience may contribute to a more innovative and adaptable form of self-leadership. Moreover, extraversion can make self-leadership more effective by advanced social interaction. These effects emphasize the importance of understanding one's personality tendencies in the context of assuming leadership responsibilities. A noteworthy aspect of our study is the examination of sex differences in the relationship between personality traits and self-leadership. While both men and women exhibit a significant role in the relationship between certain personality traits and self-leadership, the strength and nature of these associations may vary. For instance, our results indicate that women with higher levels of agreeableness tend to display stronger self-leadership capabilities compared to their men counterparts. Understanding these sex-specific nuances is crucial for developing tailored leadership development programs that cater to the unique strengths and challenges faced by individuals of different genders. Another intriguing dimension is the influence of sector type (public or private) on the relationship between personality traits and self-leadership. The public and private sectors revealed distinct patterns. The public sector seemed to favor traits like extraversion and agreeableness, likely due to its emphasis on public service and collaboration. Conversely, the private sector valued emotional stability due to its focus on individual performance and

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competitive environments. Employees in the private sector may face different demands and expectations than those in the public sector, leading to variations in how personality traits contribute to self-leadership. For example, individuals with high extraversion may find their leadership style more aligned with the demands of the private sector, which often values assertiveness and networking. Employees in private sectors possess more emotional stability compared to public ones due to frequently exposed stress, limited project times, and competitive business environments. Therefore, emotional stability has a stronger significant impact on self-leadership in the private sector. Sex differences emerged in the relationships between specific traits and self-leadership. Women displayed a stronger positive association between agreeableness and self-leadership, highlighting the potential impact of strategic communication on female leadership styles. Additionally, the link between extraversion and self-leadership was clearer in men, aligning with traditional gender roles that associate assertiveness with masculine leadership. This research underscores the intricate interplay between personality, self-leadership, sex, and sector type. Recognizing these nuanced relationships could empower individuals to leverage their strengths and develop self-leadership strategies tailored to their personality, gender, and work environment. Furthermore, organizations can benefit from this knowledge by tailoring leadership development programs and career advancement opportunities to better suit the diverse needs and capabilities of their workforce. Organizations aiming to enhance self-leadership skills should consider tailoring their leadership development programs to address the unique needs and strengths associated with diverse personality profiles, taking into account the specific context of the sector and the gender of the individuals involved. Moreover, these findings contribute to the ongoing dialogue on gender diversity and the importance of recognizing and leveraging individual differences in the pursuit of effective leadership practices within organizations. Further research could delve deeper into these complexities by incorporating additional personality models, exploring specific self-leadership strategies within each trait, and examining the influence of organizational culture and context. Examining longitudinal data could also shed light on how these relationships evolve over time and in response to career development interventions.

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between Big-five personality traits and self-leadership, taking into account sex and sector type. The intricate interplay of these variables underscores the need for a nuanced approach to leadership development within organizations. Recognizing that personality traits impact self-leadership differently for men and women, as well as across public and private sectors, allows for more targeted interventions and strategies.

Statement of Research and Publication Ethics

The research was carried out following the principles of publication ethics.

Authors' Contribution Rate

The article was written with equal contributions from both authors.

Statement of Interest

There is no conflict of interest with any person or organization.

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