SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE LINKING TO LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS: INTERCEDING ROLE OF PERSONALITY TRAITS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the relationship between spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness. It was further in the objective of the current study to explore the personality traits as mediating factors between the relationship of spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness. Data were collected from a sample of 260 managers aged between 22 and 60 years working in different organizations in Multan. Managers provided information regarding emotional intelligence, personality traits, and leadership effectiveness. Findings revealed that spiritual intelligence was significantly related to leadership effectiveness and personality traits of extroversion and openness to experience. Result further revealed that personality trait of openness to experience was found positively correlated with leadership effectiveness. Results proposed that personality dimension of openness to experience mediated

the relationship between spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness among managers.
Implications of these findings and directions for future research are discussed.

Keywords

Leadership Effectiveness, Personality Traits, Openness to Experience, Spiritual Intelligence

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1. Introduction

In the recent past, Zohar and Marshall (2000) suggested that apart from analytical intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ), spiritual intelligence (SQ) is a separate kind of intelligence. They explained that SQ helps in identifying and solving the conflicts of meaning. Furthermore, Goleman (2001)also made very interesting arrogates and stated that utilizing SQ type of intelligence we can keep ourselves healthy and we can develop ourselves completely. They further asserted that IQ and EQ functions as a supporting capacity toSQ and that SQ are the most prominent intelligence. Other authors like Wolman (2001) maintained that spiritual intelligence is an ability to raise quality queries about meaning in life, concept of God, and to know the existence of people on earth, and the connection between people and the world.

Significance of spiritual development at workplace has been now recognized by worldwide organizations and their leaders. Tapping the individual spirit at workplace has turn into a very profitable occupation. The role of spiritual growth at working place now cannot be pushed aside because of much advancement and acknowledgement for spiritual growth. For instance; when God furnishes the front page of *Fortune Magazine* (Conlin, 1999), Covey (1994) dialogued about the start of modern period with spirituality in the business world, the World Bank established the Spiritual Unfoldment Society, Zohar and Marshall (2000) developed the concept of spiritual intelligence, Vaill (1998) views spirituality as a requirement of effective leadership, and Hawley (1993) reported spirituality as a central and fundamental aspect of leadership.

Thus as a consequence, developing the individual spirituality at work has become a blooming job. The germinating attraction in spirituality is pondered in a number of books, journals, and conferences on the subject. Occupational periodicals are now full of articles acclaiming both a renewed interest in religion and the increasing significance on spirituality in the workplace (Cash & Gray, 2000).

Emmons (2000a) contended the basic five main abilities that explain spiritual intelligence. These fundamental qualities of SQ are:1. the capacity to exceed the physical and

material themes of transcendence particularly in form of spirituality (e.g. Piedmont, 1999), 2. the ability to experience compounded states of consciousness, 3. the capacity to place daily life activities, events, and relationships with a concern of religious purpose, 4. the ability to use spiritual intelligence to resolve issues in life, 5. the ability to be involved in moral activities such as forgiveness; gratitude, humble, and compassion).These moral doings are included in the title of SQ due to the existence of these salient features in all major religions; for instance, gratitude is a extremely determined disposition in Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist traditions (Paloutzin, Emmons & Keortge, 2003).

Cowan (2005) proposed that newly arising theoretical account of SI offer provide essential advantageous strategies for generating logical links to leadership effectiveness and organizational outcomes. Emmons' model (1999) is the most consistent and outstanding dimension that entail connections to effective leadership. Though Emmons has elaborated main aspects of spiritual intelligence, but it stays in the responsibility of organizational leaders to convert these thoughts into organizational setting and leadership abilities for effective outcomes. The work of Zohar, and Marshall (2001) also provides practicable knowledge for fertilizing and polishing leadership associations, but it is not fully elaborating dimensions related to leadershipas does Emmons'.

Warner (1987) explored in a study conducted on children that practice of transcendental meditation by children positively affect their mental growth. In another investigation, Kember (1985) found that meditation positively influences academic performance. Further Cranson, Orme-Johnson, Gackenbach, and Dillbeck (1991) proposed that people practicing transcendental meditation improved their IQ score and learning acquisition over a 2-year periodcompared to control group. Alexander, Charles, Swanson, Gerald, Rainforth, Maxwell, et al. (1993) discovered that workers who practiced meditation over a 3-month period were found with low anxiety and stress, with high job satisfaction, and they also improved their personal interactions at workplace. Ellison (1983) work on measuring spirituality demonstrated the two aspects of Spiritual Well Being Scale including spiritual belief and existential well-being (EWB). EWB was found positively associated with social competencies and self-esteem. Spiritually oriented people seem to posses healthy and positive human relations and also display more empathy towards others. As a result, these people prove themselves as effective leader in organizations (Elmer, MacDonald, & Friedman, 2003).

Conger and Kanungo (1987) mentioned six qualities of transformational leadership that manifest charismatic behaviors. These qualities are the expression of shared ideas, the ability to respond to the group people's needs, being responsive toward group environment, risk-taking, nonconformity to early existing affairs, and the exhibit of unlawful actions (Conger & Kanungo, 1994). Conger and Kanungo (1998) extended that charismatic leaders frequently use the idealized thoughts. Authentic leaders motivate, instigate, separately understand, and impact followers through magnetic abilities (Bass, 1998).

Moreover, an effective leader serves subordinates by expanding their ability to recognize the difficulties of work and to stimulate the open vision for the organization (Creighton, 1999). Fry (2003) addresses that holistic leadership involves the four core dimensions of the person: physical body, intellectual level, emotions, and spirit. Hence, to instigate group member, leaders must remain engaged with their basic characteristics and convey them to members through insight and personal behaviors to develop a sense of spiritual survival through membership.

McCormick (1994) debates that enduring meaning for all present working in troubled situations is provided by the integration of spirituality and management. On the basis of her experiences as leadership advisor, Wheatley (1999, 2002) contended that the need for integration between spirituality andwork is an unavoidable result of our troubled situations where leaders must reply to questions of meaning such as 'what are my values?' and 'what is the meaning and purpose of my work and life?'. Usually these questions have only been responded by the spiritual intelligence.

Personality traits of extraversion (to be social and dynamic), emotional stability (to have emotional adjustment), openness to experience (creative and adaptive), agreeableness (to be relying and handling), conscientiousness (achievement and reliable) may affect differently the quality of effective leadership. Literature on the investigation of connection between personality traits and leadership has clearly provided the association of leadership effectiveness and emotional stability (Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994); extroversion (Gough, 1990); openness to experience (Bass, 1990); agreeableness (Zaccaro, Foti, & Kenny, 1991); conscientiousness (Goldberg, 1990).

The growing attraction in knowing how spirituality influences occupation and leadership provided the base for the present study. Keeping the spiritual qualities discussed earlier like assurance in the meaning, aim and goal of life, and a task for the improvement of the world that

fasten into the inspirational components of leaders, this study was planned to see the effect of spiritual intelligence on leadership effectiveness. It was assumed that spiritual intelligence will be connected with leadership effectiveness and personality traits, and personality traits will further be related to effective leadership. It was hypothesized that personality traits will mediate the relationship between spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness.

Independent variable   Mediating variable   Dependent variable

Spiritual Intelligence → Personality Traits → Leadership
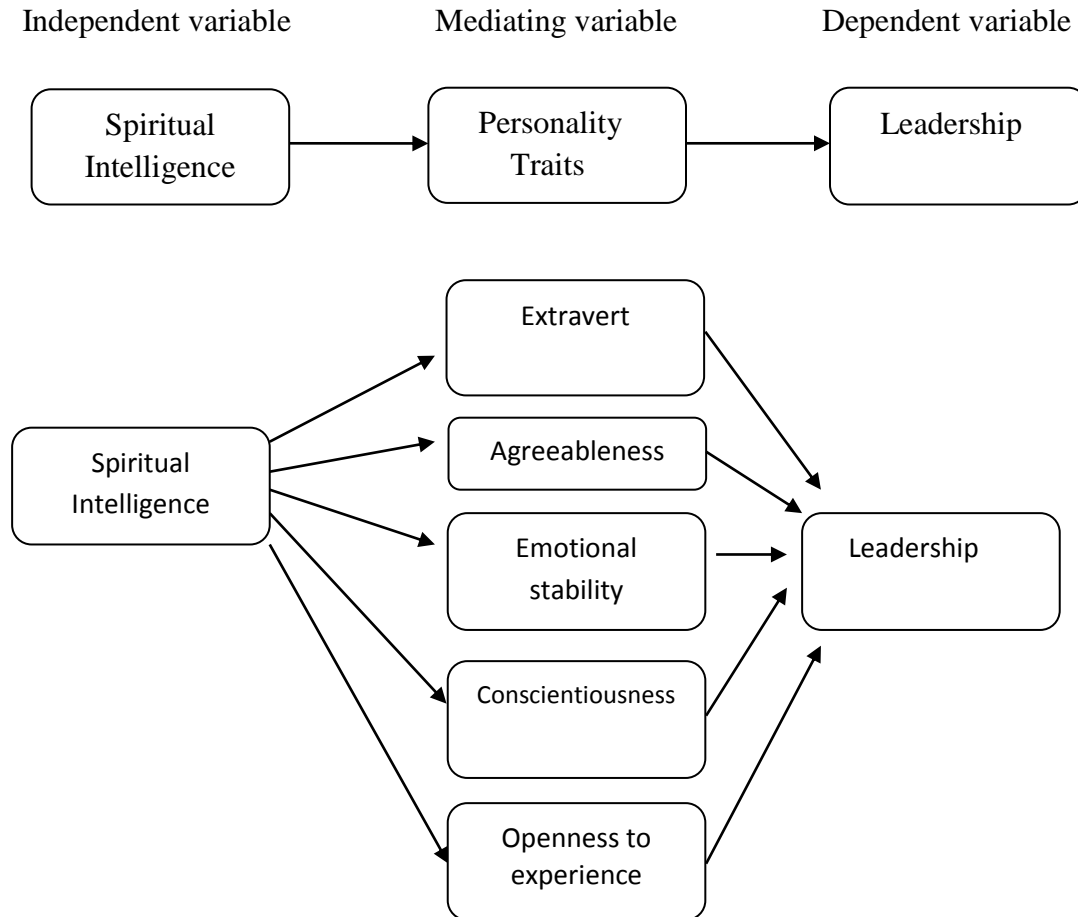
Figure 1: *Hypothesized Model*

2. Method

2.1 Participants

A sample of 260 managers working in different organizations of Multan was selected through convenient sampling technique. All the participants were males aged between 32 and 60 years old. They were more or less matched on their educational level, job experience, job position, and economic class.

2.2 Instruments

2.2.1 Spiritual Intelligence Inventory

This scale developed by King (2008) contains 24 items that are responded on 5-point likert scale; 0- Not at all true of me, 1- Not very true of me, 2-Somewthat of me, 3-very true of me, and 4- Completely true of me. It has four factor subscales; Critical Existential Thinking, Personal Meaning Production, Transcendental Awareness, and Conscious State Expansion. Scores are obtained by adding the items on each subscale after reverse coding of 6 items. High scores on each subscale reveal the greater ability of spiritual intelligence. The composite score comes from the total of four subscales ranging between 0-96. The reliability coefficient was found .89.

2.2.2 Ten-Item Personality Inventory

Ten-item Personality Inventory developed by Gosling, Rentfrow, William, and Swwan (2003) assess the big five personality traits including extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. 7-point Likert scale is used to collect the responses of participant wherein 1 shows strongly disagree and 7 shows strongly agree. All even items are first reverse coded for the responses, and then individual score on all traits are computed by adding the replies on 1 and 6 for extraversion, 4 and 9 for emotional stability, 2 and 7 for agreeableness, 3 and 8 for conscientiousness, and 5 and 10 for openness to experiences. Reliability coefficient of this scale was found 0 .62.

2.2.3 Leadership Effectiveness Scale

Leadership Effectiveness Scale developed by Callaghan comprises 30items. These items define30 characteristics of effective leadership that generally a leader usually employed. Participant responses on 4-points ratting scale ranging from 1-4depicting 4 "Usually if not always, 3 "Fairly often", 2 "Occasionally", 1 "Rarely if ever". Total score is calculated by summing the answers on all items. Obtained scores between 105 and 120are interpreted as "Strong Leader", scores between 90 and 104 are considered as "Good Leader", and scores between 75 and 89 are presented as "mean needs to improvement". The reliability coefficient of this scale was found .90.

2.3 Procedure

Sample availability was made by sending the invitation and consent letters to the organizations' mangers. For this purpose, initially 300 managers were first contacted and were assured about the confidentiality of their responses. 260 managers positively responded to the

letters by showing their compliance to participate in the study. They were requested to fill out three questionnaires measuring personality traits, cultural intelligence, and leadership effectiveness. They were provided the sufficient and clear guidelines about how to response on measures. The data were statistically analyzed through SPSS-17.

3. Results

Pearson correlations and linear Regression Analyses were computed to analyze the hypothesized model. Sobel tests were performed to see the mediating effects of personality traits between spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness.

Table 1: *Means, Standard Deviation, and Correlation Values*

	Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Spiritual Intelligence	65.38	15.47	1					
2	Leadership Effectiveness	77.25	15.69	.000	1				
3	Conscientiousness	8.50	2.49	.054	.152**	1			
4	Openness to experience	7.74	3.37	.-.362**	.199**	.232**	1		
5	Agreeableness	8.96	2.74	-.076	.043	.221**	-.072	1	
6	Extroversion	9.78	3.10	.354**	-.015	-.072	-.317**	-.086	1
7	Emotional Stability	9.51	2.790	.186**	.085	.-.030	-.123*	.360**	.339**

*p>.05, **p>.001

Table 1 shows the means, SD, and correlation values between all variables. Results entail that spiritual intelligence is significantly positively linked to effective leadership andpersonality traits of emotional stability and extroversion, and negatively related to openness to experience. Further, findings reveal the significant association between leadership effectiveness, conscientiousness and openness to experience.

Table 2: *Standardized Coefficients and t-values from Path analysis of the trans-contextual Model*

Relationship	Path Coefficients	T Statistics
Spiritual Intelligence -> Conscientiousness	-0.26	0.91
SpiritualIntelligence -> Openness to Experience	-0.52**	5.52**
SpiritualIntelligence -> Agreeableness	-0.26	1.04
SpiritualIntelligence -> Extroversion	0.43**	3.75**
Spiritualintelligence -> Emotional Stability	0.28	1.84
Conscientiousness -> Leadership Effectiveness	0.11	0.56
Openness to Experience -> Leadership	0.32*	1.98*
Agreeableness -> Leadership Effectiveness	0.19	0.80

| Extroversion -> Leadership Effectiveness | -0.01 | 0.08 |
| Emotional Stability -> Leadership Effectiveness | 0.17 | 0.79 |

*p>.05, **p>.001

Table 2 presents the beta coefficients and t-values for the hypothesized paths. Results imply that spiritual intelligence is a significant predictor for the personality dimensions of openness to experience and extroversion. Finding further indicates that trait of openness to experience predicts the leadership effectiveness.
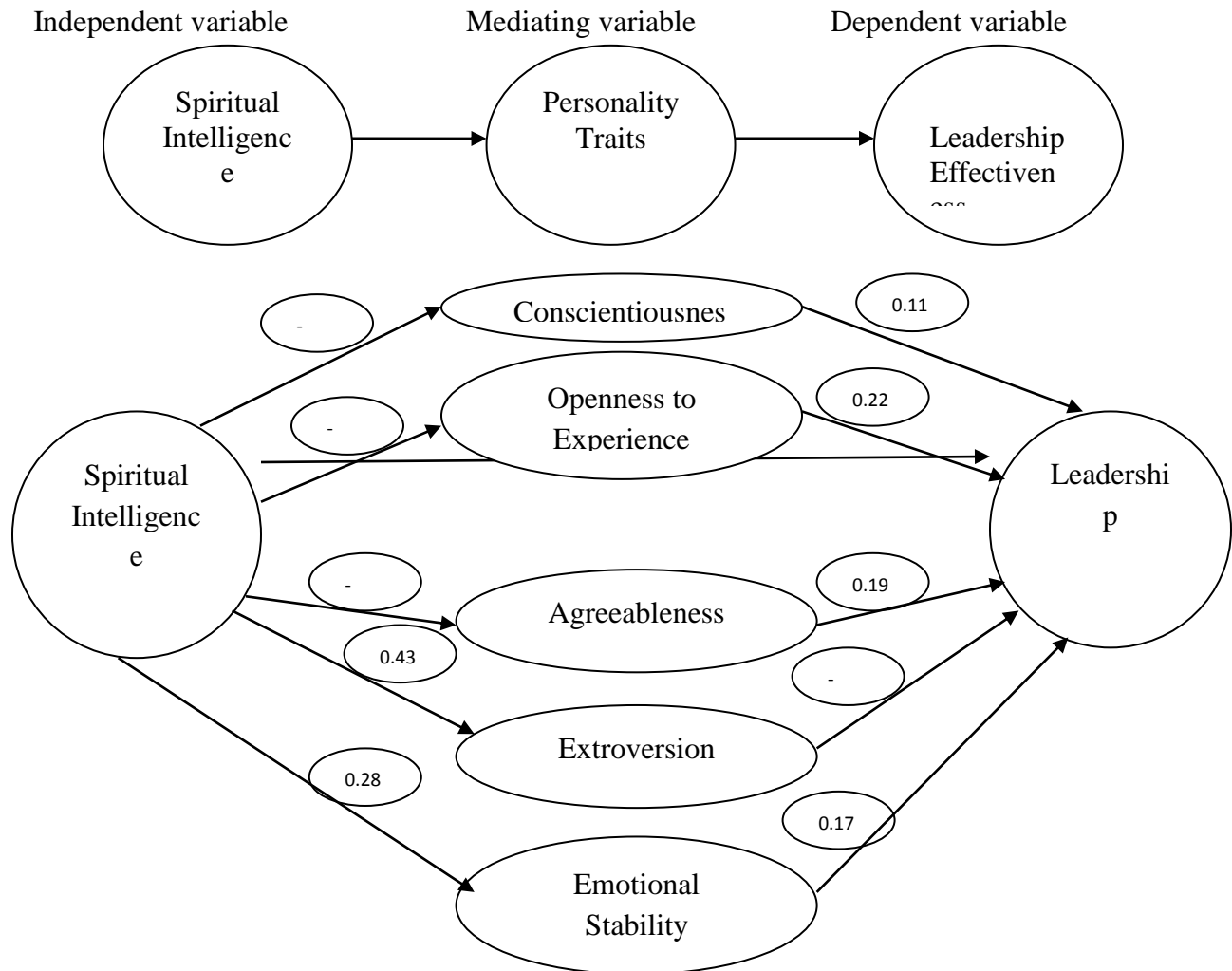

Figure 2: *Hypothesized Model*

Table 3: *Sobel Test Showing Mediation effect of Personality Traits for the relationship Spiritual Intelligence and Leadership Effectiveness*

Path	B_A	SE_A	B_B	SE_B	Sobel Test	P

SI→CON→ LE	-0.26	0.28	0.11	0.19	0.49	0.16
SI→OPE→ LE	-0.52	0.09	0.22	0.15	-1.42*	0.04*
SI→AGR→LE	-0.26	0.25	0.19	0.23	0.65	0.15
SI→EXT→LE	0.43	0.11	-0.01	0.15	0.07	0.24
SI→EMO→ LE	0.28	0.15	0.17	0.21	0.74	0.11

*p>.05

Table 3 designates the results of sobel tests for mediating effects of five personality traits between the connection of spiritual intelligence and effective leadership. Results suggest that only on personality trait of openness to experience is a significant mediating factor between spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness.

4. Discussion

Retrospective literature generally available on intelligence model and particularly on spiritual intelligence led our attention to examine the role of spiritual intelligence in management where leaders or heads have to handle the conflicts among employees. Because spiritual intelligence serves as the extent to which an individual posses the intellectual and emotional attributes that direct to perceive whole situation, lead towards tasks, help in designing short and long-term objectives associated with longer outcomes, and maintain activities for the sake of provision of services to them (Emmons, 1999, 2000a). Thus keeping these main properties of spiritual intelligence, the present study was planned to explore how spiritual intelligence may impact on leadership effectiveness particularly when the personality trait of a leader is also a significant factor between both variables.

First, it was hypothesized that spiritual intelligence will be positively related to leadership effectiveness. The present finding affirmed the assumption and proposed the significant positive relationship with leadership effectiveness. This finding is endorsed by the definition of spiritual intelligence documented by Zohar and Marshall (2000) who defined it as the intelligence that help to understand and resolve issues and problems of meaning and value, the intelligence through that our behaviors and our aliveness are placed in a broader, deeper, and meaning-providing context.

Secondly, it was hypothesized that spiritual intelligence will be connected with different types of personality traits. Findings indicated that personality traits of emotional stability and

extroversion were positively associated with spiritual intelligence, and openness to experience was negatively associated with spiritual intelligence. These findings can be considered in the light of Emmons (1999, 2000a) and Gardner[i]s (1983, 1999) explanation of intelligence. As they defined it in terms of a set of abilities with which we may solve problems and produce things that are useful in a community context or to see the spirituality through the lens of intelligence.

We are elaborating our findings that spirituality is connected with emotional stability and extroversion by the work of Emmons (1999, 2000a) who postulated that spirituality can be defined as one type of intelligence because it determines activities and provides abilities to people to develop healthy relations by handling issues of them. It means this framework of intelligence offers the support to the present findings because according to this spiritually intelligent people can better understand the emotions of others, and also achieve ultimate objectives through teamwork. In other words, spirituality is grounded on capabilities with which a leader can produce valuable outcomes through emotional consistency and sociability.

Thirdly, it was in the assumption of the current study that personality traits will further be related to leadership effectiveness. Findings postulated the significant association between leadership effectiveness, conscientiousness and openness to experience. These inferences suggested that personality traits of conscientiousness and openness to experience have positive impact on leadership effectiveness. It implied that tendency to be inventive, creative, and adaptive (openness to experience) is more nutriment for being an effective leader. It also entailed that tendency to be trustworthy, achiever, and reliable (conscientiousness) is sustenance for performing as an effective leader.

Fourthly and lastly it was hypothesized that personality traits will mediate the relationship between spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness. Analyses performed sobel tests revealed that only one personality trait of openness to experience is a significant mediating factor between spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness. These findings explained that spiritually intelligent person will be effective leader if is also with the higher degree of openness to experience personality attribute. It means openness to experience interceded the relationship of spiritual intelligence with leadership effectiveness.

These findings can be further explained by the note of Greenleaf (1977) who elaborated effective leadership as service in the light of his own leadership experiences. He argues in accordance with the teachings of spiritual traditions that the servant leader directs the path by

displaying initiative, accepting and listening people, and showing empathy, expressing knowledge, and having idealized insights. Furthermore, the effective leader utilizes understanding and foresight into different levels of awareness.

Covey (1990) considers both emotional and spiritual growth as crucial and significant for leaders' effective performance. Interestingly, he elaborated all this from his anecdotal experience as a leadership sneaker. By giving the common inter-mutuality that is the basic component of an effective organization, he urges principle-centered leadership that employs the natural universal laws in consistent manners to direct behaviors and to promote faith. Covey further advocates that effective leaders "consistently practice the four attributes of human personality: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual" (p. 38). On the same ground, Strack and Fottler (2002) state that leaders who are with more spiritually intelligent likely to impose the five practices of effective leaders: empower others; challenge the process; inspire a shared vision; direct the behavior; and encourage the heart.

5. Conclusion

Based on literature review and in consideration of present findings, it seems justified to conclude that spiritual intelligence is a significant determinant for effective leadership. Study further demonstrated that different personality attributes regulate effective leadership behaviors. This study has contributed significantly in explaining which one dispositional trait is more influential for effective leadership. In regard to the Big Five Personality traits, extroversion, emotional stability, and openness to experience were found the significant correlates of leadership effectiveness than the other traits. Study has also provided the important finding that openness to experience play mediating role between the relationship of spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness. It does imply that spiritual intelligence in conjunction with personality trait of openness to experience develop the effective leadership in organizations.

6. Limitations and Suggestions

Despite the valuable findings deduced from this study regarding mediating role of personality traits between spiritual intelligence and leadership effectiveness, this study entails some limitations as well. The main limitations are linked to its sample size and sampling technique that are the major threats to generalize the results to the population of managers in all

kind of organizations. Consequently, it is advised to replicate the study by involving the randomly selected organizational managers with a larger sample size. One another limitation of the current study is that; only the big five personality traits have been examined. Hence several other personality attributes are needed to be addressed in the context of spiritual intelligence and effective leadership such as internal vs. external locus of control, optimism vs. pessimism, and Type A/B patterns. These findings can be utilized in understanding the leaders' actions through the eyes of their spiritual intelligence and personality traits. Thus the study findings recommend that leaders in any organization for occupational success should be selected on their level of spiritual intelligence and with creative, dynamic, and imaginative mind.

7. Scope for Future Research

However, future researches should control other constructs such as personality traits and leadership styles to examine their outcomes with components of spiritual intelligence which are critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness and conscious. state. Hence future studies can replicate this research on different professions such as teachers, head of the departments, doctors, CEO etc.; may study different construct of personality such as competitive, outgoing, ambitious, impatient and /or aggressive to measure relationship with leadership styles and spiritual intelligence.

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