



Journal of Intercultural Management and Ethics

JIME

ISSN 2601 - 5749, ISSN-L 2601 - 5749

published by

Center for Socio-Economic Studies and Multiculturalism

Iasi, Romania

www.csesm.org

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THE PERSONALITY OF TRAITS IN SHAPING LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE IN INDONESIAN CASES: FACET-LEVEL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Leadership can be examined from personality traits. The understanding of how personality influences leadership behavior based on facet-level analysis remains underexplored. The purpose of this study is to explain the association between personality and leadership behavior and the performance of local public institutions in Indonesia. A deductive approach was employed for hypothesis testing through a survey of village head leadership samples with 566 village apparatus respondents to explain 283 village heads in Indonesia. Data analysis using SEM Covariance-Based. Neuroticism has a negative association with leadership behavior but not with organizational performance. Emotional instability inhibits public leadership effectiveness. Each personality dimension has a positive association with leadership behavior but not with organizational performance. Facet-level analysis reveals differences in strength between traits something often overlooked in previous studies. The study results expand understanding of assumptions in Upper Echelons Theory according to new empirical evidence in the local context that leader behavior becomes a key mechanism linking personality with organizational performance. Selection and development of local leaders should consider personality profiles of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

Keywords: Big Five personality, Facet-level, Leadership behavior, Local Government performance

1. Introduction

Studies on leadership styles continue to develop and undergo changes consistent with the conditions of public sector institutions (Reddick et al., 2025; Van Wart, 2014). The concept of leadership has evolved from a focus on group processes or personality actions to the art of persuading compliance, to more sophisticated concepts encompassing influence relationships, power differences, persuasion, influence on goal achievement, and others (Bass, 1990) These various changes challenge traditional forms of leadership (Branderhorst & Ruijer, 2025). (Anderson & Sun, 2024) suggest that leadership can be viewed from a hierarchical model where leadership is influenced by personality traits. Previous studies reveal that fundamental personality traits can predict leadership behavior (Aydogmus et al., 2018; Deinert et al., 2015; Özbağ, 2016). Individuals with certain traits, such as extraversion and conscientiousness, tend to demonstrate effective leadership behavior. big five theory explains that traits influence how someone leads, makes decisions, and motivates subordinates.

However, according to (Karlsen & Langvik, 2021), there are inconsistencies in the influence of personality traits on leadership behavior suspected to arise because there is no differentiation in facet-level analysis. (Kordsmeyer et al., 2024) add that only limited research exists on personality effects at a more detailed facet level. This increases limitations in understanding how behavioral tendencies affect leadership comprehensively. Different

leadership styles have different personality predictors (Shahzad et al., 2021). Personality is also context-related, meaning its influence on leadership behavior can vary (Dalal et al., 2015). (Boman, 2024) describes personality traits as having gray areas. It is further explained that high agreeableness is not always advantageous; moderate narcissism shows adaptive sides.

Leadership behavior at the local level is closely related to village government effectiveness in promoting village development both directly and indirectly, in line with (Wang et al., 2014) and (Mickson & Anlesinya, 2020). The role of leadership is not only formal and hierarchical as in one organization but also collaborative, with distributed roles and people-oriented behaviors (Cepiku & Mastrodascio, 2019). Local leadership serves as a bridge between bureaucratic orientation and efficiency demands; leaders make decisions based on hierarchy (administration), but are politically elected with voter expectations (Rybnikova et al., 2015). Local leadership plays a role in managing the balance between institutional demands and citizens' political reactions. Local leadership has proven to be a key determinant of policy innovation in sustainability programs. Local leaders face complex challenges (Ming et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, local leaders such as those in rural areas have strategic roles to support sustainability. With various government programs such as BUMDes (Village-Owned Enterprises), Red and White Cooperatives in rural areas, and Free Nutritious Meal Programs, villages face challenges as well as opportunities to support the national economic system. High budget efficiency but suboptimal output; fluctuating APBDes realization/absorption making planning unstable; limited apparatus capacity (finance, technology, evaluation); uneven public services and slow response to remote hamlets; weak transparency/accountability; planning sometimes not aligned with local needs; low service innovation; and weak risk mitigation and asset maintenance.

However, knowledge about leadership, both antecedents from the personality side and outcomes for organizations, is rarely explored. Leaders exist in elite spaces that are difficult to penetrate and understand, even at the lowest level. Various phenomena exist regarding leadership that are counterproductive to state objectives, including at the local government level. The process of selecting leaders in local government institutions such as villages pays little attention to leader personality traits, including the dark side of leadership. There is a failure of decentralization reform to adequately improve service delivery at the local level (Lameck, 2022). It is emphasized that leaders responsible for leadership tend to focus on self-interest rather than public interest. Local leaders still face challenges in balancing leadership style and forming psychological orientation of employees that support innovation (Kousina & Voudouris, 2023).

Studies on leadership behavior viewed from personality traits are crucial to support organizational performance. Leaders not only determine the strategic direction of organizations. Leadership establishes structure within a group, mechanisms involving influence, power, and persuasion to affect the behavior of others and achieve goals (Bass, 1990; Branderhorst & Ruijter, 2025; Trottier et al., 2008). However, exploration of leadership, especially in the local public sector, remains low. This makes understanding of leadership viewed from personality traits still very low (Rybnikova et al., 2015). There are biases regarding leadership that cause "understanding of leadership cannot be captured comprehensively" (Hutchinson et al., 2014). Additionally, there is diversity in situational factors that make explanations of leadership and the role of personality as a predictor increasingly complex.

This study fills the knowledge gap by conducting in-depth explanation of leadership behavior examined from personality traits in the specific context of local government in

Indonesia and its relationship with organizational performance. To explain this contribution, the author integrates Personality Traits theory and Upper Echelons Theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Upper Echelons Theory explains the unique characteristics of leaders and organizational performance (Venugopal et al., 2023). Leaders exert a significant influence across various organizational levels and external stakeholders; thus, their personality traits are essential in navigating daily operations to achieve strategic organizational goals.

Methodologically, this study attempts to answer the inconsistency of trait influence by focusing on facet-level analysis, in line with (Karlsen & Langvik, 2021) and (Fosse et al., 2023), stating that such analysis is more specific and accurate for predicting certain behaviors. This study contributes to overcoming the low exploration and understanding of leadership in the local public sector. This study provides richer and more specific understanding of how personality traits analyzed at the facet level influence leadership behavior in local government, which in turn will help overcome bias and clarify mechanisms of influence, power, and leadership persuasion in establishing strategic direction and achieving organizational goals. The research objective is to explain the influence of personality traits on leader behavior that ultimately determines organizational performance in Indonesian local government.

RQ1: Do personality traits have a positive association with leader behavior in rural Indonesia?

RQ2: Does leader behavior mediate the positive association of personality traits with organizational performance in rural Indonesia?

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Personality Trait

These traits are descriptive dimensions that indicate individual tendencies in thinking, feeling, and acting (Boman, 2024). Psychological dimensions that explain variations in individual tendencies in behavior, emotions, and thinking, encompassing a spectrum of "neutral," "benign," and "dark" traits. Personality traits as non-cognitive skills reflected in five main dimensions that are relatively stable in working-age adults and play important roles in influencing decisions and outcomes (Cobb-Clark & Schurer, 2012). All Big Five dimensions show substantial associations (Angelini, 2023; Zell & Lesick, 2021). It refers to characteristic patterns in thinking, feeling, or acting that are usually constant over time and in relevant contexts (Weligodapola et al., 2023). Personality Traits are relatively stable psychological characteristics that influence how someone thinks, feels, and behaves in organizations, often measured with the Five-Factor Model: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism (Angelini, 2023; Goldberg, 1990; Hassan et al., 2016; McCrae & Costa Jr, 1997).

2.2 Upper Echelon Theory (UET)

Upper Echelon Theory (UET) starts from the premise that humans have bounded rationality, so complex and significant strategic decisions are greatly influenced by behavioral factors (Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Venugopal et al., 2023; Yamak et al., 2014). UET becomes the main framework for understanding how "who the managers are" determines "what organizations do" (Neely et al., 2020). It is further explained that the theory's assumptions are: first, bounded rationality, where leaders experience obstacles in processing all available information completely. Leaders filter, interpret, and select information based on values, background, and experience. Second, managerial discretion, where leaders have wide latitude in determining organizational strategy and important decisions. Strategic choices are greatly determined by leader subjectivity. Third, demographic and psychological characteristics such as values, cognition, and personality function as proxies for understanding how leaders view situations and act in decision-making processes (Ludigdo et

al., 2025; Sozen et al., 2022). Finally, the assumption that strategic choices shape outcomes emphasizes that strategic decisions influenced by executive characteristics will shape organizational development direction, determine performance, and affect organizational sustainability in the long term ((Miller & Xu, 2020); (Ullah Khan et al., 2023).

Given the constraints of bounded rationality in navigating informational complexity, strategic decisions are heavily shaped by a leader's subjective lenses. The relationship between personality and leadership is multidimensional, requiring an examination of how specific traits mediate cognitive abilities to fulfill strategic mandates. Upper Echelons Theory (UET) serves as the primary theoretical anchor, offering a structural basis to analyze how personality dimensions influence leadership within the organizational landscape.

2.3 Leadership Behavior

Leadership behavior is a set of actions and interaction styles used by leaders in influencing, guiding, and motivating organizational members to achieve common goals (Ángeles López-Cabarcos et al., 2022; Judge & Bono, 2000; Robbins & Judge, 2017). Leader behavior as real actions of leaders in creating environments that support innovation, motivation, and collaboration in the public sector (Demircioglu & Chowdhury, 2021). From an ethical perspective, this behavior is not only understood as leadership "style" but as real activities undertaken by leaders to build ethical culture. Leadership behavior as concrete and consistent actions of leaders to instill ethics in organizations, both through decisions, communication, and personal example (Reddick et al., 2025). (Eichenauer et al., 2022) define it as supervisor behavior demonstrated through two main dimensions: Agentic behaviors, task-oriented including actions focused on achievement and performance, such as independence, assertiveness, clear communication, project management, and firm decision-making. The second dimension is Communal behaviors including actions focused on social relationships and emotional support, such as warmth, care, empathy, flexibility, and social support. Leadership behavior is understood as a real mechanism that shapes the psychosocial work climate and impacts engagement, stress, and worker mental health (O'Donovan et al., 2021). (Kornør & Nordvik, 2004) group behaviors into: Looking for new possibilities, Hard working, and Dealing with people.

2.4 Local Organizational Performance

Performance in the public sector relates to community life and success in implementing government agendas. Generally, performance is considered the result of strategies for fiscal consolidation aimed at maximizing public administration efficiency (Rogge et al., 2017). In the Indonesian context, local government performance is defined and measured through the Service Satisfaction Index (SSI), built from household perceptions of changes in public service quality (health, education, and basic administrative services) post-decentralization (Eckardt, 2008). Organizational performance demonstrates the ability of local government organizations to provide effective, efficient, innovative, and accountable public services (Kadir et al., 2024). (Akbar et al., 2012) explains that performance is not only the result of public services but the institutionalization process of performance measurement systems (PMS) influenced by regulations, management commitment, technical knowledge, and organizational capacity. Organizational performance as the result of integrating strategic and operational processes linking national goals, organizational goals, down to bureaucratic units (Siti-Nabiha et al., 2023). Organizational performance encompasses various interrelated aspects: finance, output, service quality, participation, key indicators, and service user satisfaction (Wardhani et al., 2017).

The concept and measurement of government performance are multidimensional. (Pudjono et al., 2025) add that local government performance indicators include aspects of financial/operational efficiency, organizational and HR effectiveness, strategic management,

and governance and risk management. Performance is not merely output results but government's response to public mandates related to transparency, financial management, and implementation of development programs (Adiputra et al., 2018; Salvador & Sancho, 2021). Government performance measures include transparency and information openness in Local Government Activity Reports (LAR). Performance indicators are reflected in the form of a Disclosure Index, namely the extent to which local governments present strategic, financial, and public service performance information in official reports (Adi et al., 2016).

However, performance indicators are more often developed to fulfill regulatory obligations (conformance) rather than truly improving organizational effectiveness, often symbolic or ceremonial rather than substantial (Akbar et al., 2012). (Lewis et al., 2016) add that using simple performance measures without considering factors beyond local government control can produce measurement errors. Selected indicators are not comprehensive enough as performance measures. Failure or minimal results are often caused by poor implementation, when public organizations only focus on measurement but fail to use data strategically (Gerrish, 2016). There is fragmentation and disagreement in the use and definition of indicators, despite global pressure for standardization (Iacuzzi & Valle de Souza, 2022).

2.5 Hypothesis Development

a. personality traits and leadership behavior

Personality traits influence behavior and are understood as parallel patterns (good/bad) and require balance at low, moderate, or high levels depending on social and personal context (Boman, 2024). (Kalshoven et al., 2011) explain personality traits are understood as relatively stable psychological characteristics that influence how individuals think, feel, and behave in various situations. Personality traits reflect someone's behavioral consistency, including leadership behavior. Traits as predispositions that determine tendencies to make decisions, interact with subordinates, and face moral dilemmas. Generally, (Kornør & Nordvik, 2004) state that leadership style is a manifestation of personality tendencies that emerge in social and organizational contexts. Personality influences leadership behavior through mechanisms of expressing individual basic traits in organizational social contexts (Karlsen & Langvik, 2021). Personality is considered the biological and psychological basis that influences how leaders express interpersonal and organizational behavior. Various traits have different levels of relevance to certain leadership styles (Shahzad et al., 2021). Each main domain is divided into three facets (subdimensions) for more specific and accurate personality descriptions (Burro et al., 2025). However, according to (De Fruyt et al., 2009), the stability of personality structure does not eliminate risk; in each dimension there are maladaptive variants that emerge if traits are expressed extremely or disproportionately. Each personality dimension contains dual potential—positive and negative depending on intensity level and socio-cultural context appropriateness.

Leaders high in extraversion tend to be energetic, communicative, and assertive. This supports participative leadership behavior and motivates subordinates through positive social interaction (Kao et al., 2023). Increased assertiveness, positive emotions, and high activity levels, which are crucial in leadership contexts for social interaction and building relationships with colleagues and clients (Zell & Lesick, 2021). Extroverts are also able to foster trust, tend to be optimistic, hopeful, capable of self-regulation, and self-aware (Shahzad et al., 2021; Zadok & Benoliel, 2023), reflecting leader behavior. (Burro et al., 2025) explain that extraversion reflects someone's level of energy, dominance, and social involvement, broken down into three facets: Sociability, Assertiveness, and Energy Level. Extraversion reflects a combination of openness to social interaction, high enthusiasm in activities, and tendency to express positive emotions that are outgoing, energetic, influential in groups, and being a source of spirit and inspiration for others and groups (Ali et al., 2024; Costa &

McCrae, 1995; Weligodapola et al., 2023). Extraversion as the strongest predictor of overall leadership effectiveness (Kornør & Nordvik, 2004), (Karlsen & Langvik, 2021), (Kahya & Şahin, 2018). However, high extraversion can cause dominant or authoritarian behavior, suppressing team participation (Kornør & Nordvik, 2004). Its effect is not linear and highly dependent on its facets—assertiveness, sociability, and energy have different influences on how leaders interact with subordinates. The proposed hypothesis is:

H1: Extraversion has a positive association with leadership behavior

Agreeableness is defined as an individual's tendency to be cooperative, empathic, and maintain positive social relationships (Ishaq et al., 2019; Javalagi, 2022; Zadok & Benoliel, 2023). Leaders with high agreeableness can manage conflict and other difficult situations, thus avoiding counterproductive behavior and maintaining harmonious work relationships. Agreeableness is related to fairness, part of authenticity (Shahzad et al., 2021). (Weligodapola et al., 2023) emphasize high agreeableness as capital for building relationships based on trust and collaboration. This dimension strengthens collaborative and ethical leadership, increasing organizational harmony. Agreeableness impacts people and real-world outcomes (Harvey & Paul Green, 2022; Kahya & Şahin, 2018; Wilmot & Ones, 2022).

However, on the other hand, being too high in agreeableness can hinder firm and innovative decision-making, because leaders tend to avoid confrontation to maintain interpersonal relationships. Agreeableness most strongly predicts Employee/Relations style; if too high, it can cause weaknesses in firm decision-making or difficulty facing conflict (Kornør & Nordvik, 2004). Its effect on leadership depends on situation and social context (Javalagi, 2022).

H2: Agreeableness has a positive association with leadership behavior

Conscientious leaders have task orientation, discipline, and high responsibility (Shahzad et al., 2021; Zadok & Benoliel, 2023). They are more consistent in maintaining integrity, enforcing rules, and acting based on moral principles (Babalola et al., 2019). Conscientiousness is described as dependable, competent, achievement-oriented, responsible, having self-discipline, performing obligations well, and efficient (Wahyono et al., 2021). Leaders have work ethics and self-control oriented toward sustainable goals over time (Zell & Lesick, 2021). (Weligodapola et al., 2023) add that conscientiousness shapes leadership behavior that is goal-oriented, responsible, and disciplined, which ultimately strengthens leader effectiveness in directing teams, maintaining organizational stability, and achieving long-term success. However, overly perfectionistic and excessively meticulous traits can increase risk of failure in early stages due to excessive focus on details and rules (Cantner et al., 2011) and have negative relationships with adaptive performance when work demands increase (Harris et al., 2019). (Kornør & Nordvik, 2004) emphasize that Conscientiousness is the strongest predictor of overall leadership effectiveness. However, extreme Conscientiousness causes perfectionism and rigidity, hindering innovation (Ishaq et al., 2019). In this study, the proposed hypothesis is:

H3: Conscientiousness has a positive association with leadership behavior

Leaders who are emotionally stable are better able to control emotions, remain calm under pressure, and are not easily affected by stress. This enables wise decisions and maintains fairness in leadership. PT influences behavior (Schmitt et al., 2022; Weligodapola et al., 2023; Zell & Lesick, 2021). Leaders high in neuroticism tend to be emotionally unstable, have low self-esteem, and low self-efficacy that can reduce team trust and hinder leadership effectiveness. Judge & Bono (2001) found that neurotic individuals tend to be negatively affected by the environment and have difficulty building social networks, which are main capital as a leader. Emotional stability is key for leaders who are resilient, confident,

and effective in facing organizational challenges and dynamic environments. High neuroticism triggers emotional instability, which reduces team trust. Neuroticism has negative correlations with change-based leadership styles and interpersonal relationships (Ishaq et al., 2019; Kornør & Nordvik, 2004; Zadok & Benliel, 2023).

H4: Neuroticism has a negative association with leadership behavior

Leaders high in openness tend to be creative, flexible, and open-minded. They are more open to new ideas, innovation, and also sensitive to complex ethical values in organizational environments. Openness serves as the main tool in finding and exploiting new opportunities (Jeraj et al., 2015). Openness to Experience describes individuals' tendency to explore new ideas, think imaginatively, and accept change positively (Weligodapola et al., 2023); (Zadok & Benliel, 2023). Openness to Experience plays an important role in shaping strategic and futuristic thinking based on opportunities outside organizational routines. Openness to Experience encourages innovation and organizational learning, by opening space for new ideas from team members and being more flexible and adaptive to change, thus effective in facing uncertainty. Openness to Experience inspires and motivates subordinates through vision and creative ideas. Openness correlates positively with Change/Development style (Kornør & Nordvik, 2004). On the other hand, excessive openness causes disorder or too many undirected changes.

H5: Openness has a positive association with leadership behavior

b. Leadership Behavior Mediates the Positive Association of Personality Traits with Local Organizational Performance

Leaders are reflections of institutional characteristics. According to Upper Echelons Theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), leader characteristics such as personality, values, and experience will be reflected in organizational strategic choices that shape the direction and achievement of institutional goals. Personality, values, and unique experiences that shape leaders influence organizational strategy and performance (Venugopal et al., 2023). Organizational behavior and visible results are reflections of leaders' values, experiences, and situational interpretations (Ludigdo et al., 2025; Neely et al., 2020; Sozen et al., 2022). (Ullah Khan et al., 2023) emphasize the relationship between personality and organizational behavior, so organizational strategic decisions are not purely results of full rationality but reflections of leaders. There are cognitive limitations and managerial discretion making individual characteristics determining factors in organizational strategy. Its influence can be seen from how organizations respond to the environment, take risks, innovate, and achieve long-term success (W. S. Lee et al., 2018; Ullah Khan et al., 2023). Leaders with extroverted personalities are more effective in decision-making and directing teams according to organizational goals (Do & Minbashian, 2014; Liegl & Furtner, 2023; Wilson et al., 2021). Openness to Experience is the strongest predictor of innovative and inclusive leadership as a source of organizational advantage. Leaders who are highly conscientious are less inspirational and visionary, showing organizational value breakthroughs (Zadok & Benliel, 2023).

High levels of neuroticism cause leaders' inability to regulate emotions and stress, which directly impacts leadership behavior and organizations, including responding to threats (Fosse et al., 2023; Ge et al., 2025; Schmitt et al., 2022). Neuroticism in leaders causes ambivalence in organizational identification and contradiction (Youssef et al., 2025). Neurotic leaders find it difficult to become inspirational figures because high emotionality hinders leadership stability and subordinate trust to support organizational achievement (Zadok & Benliel, 2023). Leaders with high neuroticism act as triggers of psychological threats in organizations (A. Lee et al., 2024). However, (Fosse et al., 2023) emphasize that the negative influence of neuroticism is not always absolute, as it can be buffered by leaders' agreeableness traits.

Different from (Kalshoven et al., 2011) who explain that personality contribution is not very large toward leaders' ethical behavior. Leadership success is not only determined by personality but the ability to adapt behavior according to social and situational role demands (Schmidbauer et al., 2025). The positive effect of extraversion on leadership emergence weakens in virtual contexts (Wilson et al., 2021).

H6: Leadership behavior mediates the positive association of personality traits with Local Organizational Performance

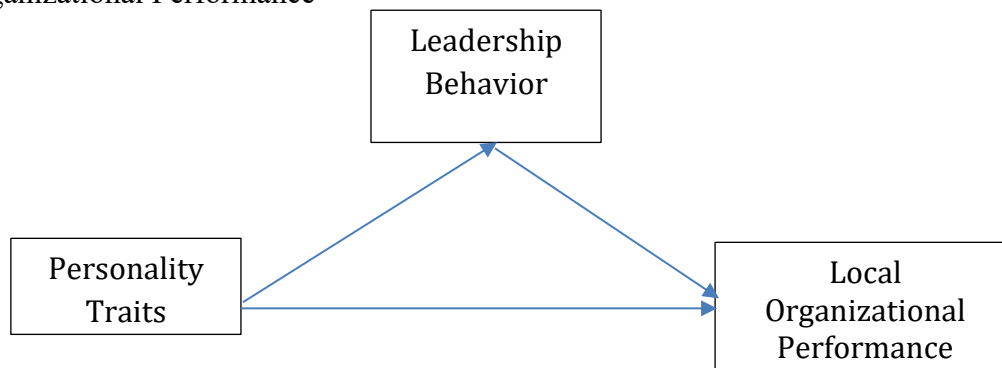


Figure 1: Proposed research model

3. Research Method

Research with a deductive approach using causal study through survey using questionnaires according to (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This approach was chosen due to the need for structural hypothesis testing that examines causal/relational relationships between variables using covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) with AMOS.

The research sample consisted of village heads (or equivalent) in Indonesian administrative regions. Established inclusion criteria were active village heads with minimum 1 year tenure, willing to complete questionnaires and provide access permission to administrative performance data only for research purposes. Sample size was determined based on conventional criteria of ≥ 200 . This research used subordinate assessment according to (Kornør & Nordvik, 2004), stating that subordinate assessment of supervisor behavior is often more correlated with leadership effectiveness than their own self-reports. Scores for each leader used the average of two subordinates (Judge & Bono, 2000).

In this study, sample size was established according to (Hair et al., 2019), namely x 10 per indicator/parameter. Data collection used stratified quota sampling by region in West Java consisting of 18 districts. The number of samples per district was taken based on proportionality. After determining samples per district (quota), convenience sampling was then used for practical access. The total data successfully compiled was 566 data points.

Personality Traits facet-level measurement was developed based on Judge and (Judge & Bono, 2000) and (De Fruyt et al., 2009) according to context. Measurement according to Five personalities has been tested for validity and reliability. Neuroticism was measured based on Subtrait/Facet: anxiety, angry hostility, depression, impulsiveness, vulnerability. Test results showed validity values ranging from 0.411-0.756 with CR from 0.812-0.937. Other subtraits, namely extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, have been tested for validity and reliability.

Leadership behavior was developed based on concepts from (Kornør & Nordvik, 2004) and (Karlsen & Langvik, 2021) relevant to local government contexts. Measurement examined: 1) Change such as how leaders experiment with new ways of doing things, 2) Production with statement items whether leaders plan carefully, 3) Employee where leaders are measured whether they are considerate of employees. Test results showed adequate validity values for instruments. Composite reliability values > 0.70 . Next was development of

Local Organizational Performance measurement based on (Kadir et al., 2024), (Rogge et al., 2017), (Pudjono et al., 2025), and (Wardhani et al., 2017). Measured dimensions were financial and operational efficiency, organizational and HR effectiveness, public service quality & citizen satisfaction, transparency and accountability, strategic management and governance, innovation and public participation, and risk management and sustainability. Test results showed validity value ranges of 0.47-0.811 with CR values > 0.7. Instruments also had adequate GOF values.

In this study, measurement used a dual measurement model: local organizational performance assessment by village heads and/or staff. Second measurement: administrative data such as development target achievement, budget realization, service time, village service index. Data analysis used SEM analysis with AMOS (CB-SEM) according to stages proposed by (Hair et al., 2019). The authors employed Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) to test the model, thereby mitigating the risk of Type I inflation and ensuring the robustness of the hypothesis testing process

4. Results

a. CFA Testing and Reliability & CFA Testing

Testing based on stages of measurement model specification, estimation, model improvement according to modification indices with theoretical caution regarding various relationships between indicators and sub-traits. Test results are as follows:

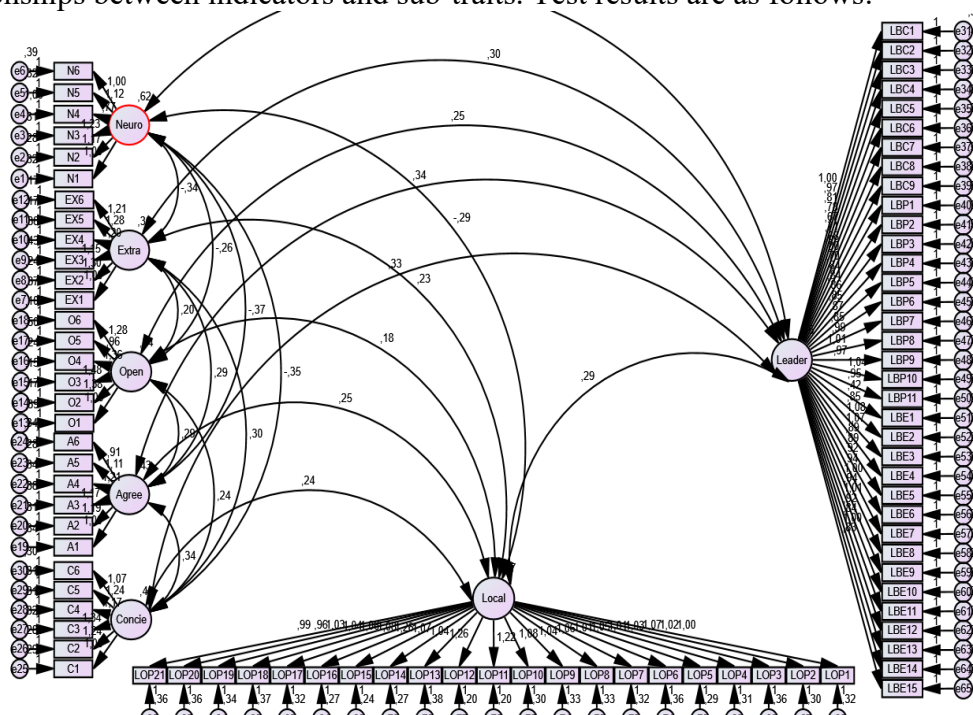


Figure 2; CFA Test Results - Unstandardized Regression Weight

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) results show that indicators of each variable have adequate factor weight ranges. Average loading per personality facet ranged between 0.78-0.81, AVE for each facet ranged 0.605-0.675, and Composite Reliability (CR) was at high levels (0.891-0.929). Convergent validity and composite reliability of all trait constructs were adequate. For leadership behavior construct, factor weight range was (0.304-0.857). AVE = 0.524 and CR = 0.977. One loading factor value, LBE1 0.304, but was still used. Construct for local performance showed loading range 0.7-0.866. Calculation results: AVE = 0.575 and CR = 0.975.

Discriminant validity test results using Fornell-Larcker and HTMT showed constructs were acceptable to explain each latent variable as can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Convergent Validity, Composite Reliability, and Discriminant Validity Test Results

Variables/ Sub	AVE	Composite Reliability	Discriminant Validity							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Neuro	0.625	0.891	0.790							
Extra	0.641	0.929	0.53	0.801						
Open	0.675	0.939	0.33	0.31	0.822					
Agree	0.605	0.916	0.52	0.54	0.57	0.778				
Concie	0.645	0.927	0.50	0.60	0.42	0.68	0.803			
Leader	0.524	0.524	0.44	0.44	0.33	0.50	0.48	0.724		
Local	0.575	0.975	0.36	0.41	0.27	0.39	0.39	0.41	0.758	

Source: Data processing results 2025

Discriminant validity test results using Fornell-Larcker criteria showed diagonal values (\sqrt{AVE}) greater than correlations between constructs in all displayed pairs, e.g., \sqrt{AVE} Neuro = 0.790 > correlation with Extra 0.53. These results indicate the Fornell-Larcker criterion was met; constructs were adequately discriminated.

b. Goodness-of-Fit Analysis

GOF analysis results are as follows in Table 2

Table 2. Model test results

GOF Parameters	Stage First test	Res- peticification	Cur of value	Conclusion
Absolute fit measure				
p-value (Sig.)	0.000	0.000	$\geq 0,05$	Moderate
CMIN	2.504	1.951	$\leq 2,00$	Fit
GFI (Goodness of Fit)	0.808	0.901	$\geq 0,9$	Fit
RMSEA (Root Mean square Error of Approximation)	0.073	0.058	0.08	Fit
Incremental fit measure				
AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index)	0.784	0.830	$\geq 0,90$	Moderate Fit
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	0.887	0.966	$\geq 0,95$	Fit
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.888	0.967	$\geq 0,95$	Fit
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	0.780	0.940	$\geq 0,95$	Moderate Fit
Parsimonious fit measure				
PNFI (Parsimonious Normed Fit Index)	0.667	0.730	0.6	Fit
PGFI (Parsimonious Goodness of Fit Index)	0.674	0.681	Mendekati 1	Moderate

Source: Data processing (2025)

Test results indicated the need for improvement. GOF values showed conformity between data and model construction. After respecification, the model showed substantial fit

improvement. Although χ^2 remained significant ($p < 0.001$), χ^2/df decreased to 1.951 (≤ 2) from previously 2.504, GFI increased to 0.901, RMSEA decreased to 0.058, and CFI/IFI increased to 0.966/0.967, overall showing good model fit, although AGFI and some parsimonious measures remained in the moderate.

c. Causal Relationship Test both direct hypothesis test (H1, H2) and mediation (H3). Standard coefficient estimate (β), significance p.

Table 3: Results of the causal study relationship test of direct and indirect variables

Path			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Standardized regression weight	Conclusion
Direct Effect								
Leader	<---	Neuro	-0.209	0.06	-3,486	***	-0.284	Significant
Leader	<---	Extraversion	0.21	0.085	2,468	0.014	0.216	Significant
Leader	<---	Openness	0.12	0.077	1,555	0.12	0.118	Not Significant
Leader	<---	Agreeableness	0.256	0.086	2,963	0.003	0.294	Significant
Leader	<---	Conscientiousness	0.248	0.087	2,857	0.004	0.27	Significant
Local	<---	Leader	0.219	0.059	3,698	***	0.253	Significant
Local	<---	Neuroticism	-0.093	0.053	-1,759	0.079	-0.147	Not Significant
Local	<---	Extraversion	0.228	0.075	3,017	0.003	0.271	Significant
Local	<---	Openness	0.098	0.068	1,447	0.148	0.112	Not Significant
Local	<---	Agreeableness	0.048	0.076	0.634	0.526	0.064	Not Significant
Local	<---	Conscientiousness	0.104	0.076	1,374	0.169	0.131	Not Significant
Indirect Effect								
Variable	Path	Variable	Path	Variable	Estimate	Z Score	Conclusion	
Local	<--	Leader	<--	Neuro	-0.046	-3.178	Mediating significantly	
Local	<--	Leader	<--	Extra	0.046	2.186	Mediating significantly	
Local	<--	Leader	<--	Open	0.026	1.443	No significant mediation	
Local	<--	Leader	<--	Agree	0.056	2.673	Mediating	

							significantly
Local	<--	Leader	<--	Consie	0.054	2.511	Mediating significantly

The analysis of the first model (Leader Behavior) reveals four significant path coefficients: neuroticism (-0.284), extraversion (0.216), agreeableness (0.294), and Conscientiousness (0.270). The squared multiple correlation (R Squared) for leader behavior is 0.301, indicating a moderate explanatory power. Specifically, these four personality dimensions account for 30.1% of the variance in leader behavior, with agreeableness emerging as the strongest positive predictor and Neuroticism as the most significant negative predictor. In the second model, the R-Squared value for local organizational performance is 0.278, also categorized within the moderate range. Leadership exerts a direct significant effect on performance (0.253), with extraversion showing the most potent influence (0.271). Other variables did not reach statistical significance in this direct path."

To assess model consistency, a MANOVA was conducted. While the first model consistently identified four significant personality traits (excluding Openness), the second model revealed shifts in significance for extraversion, neuroticism, and conscientiousness when leadership was held constant. This divergence stems from the stringency of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in determining significance levels. Rather than weakening the findings, these discrepancies underscore the pivotal role of the leader behavior as a mediator. It suggests that without effective leadership, traits such as conscientiousness may not fully translate into optimal organizational performance. This complexity reaffirms that the mechanism through which personality influences performance is inherently contingent upon the mediating role of leadership."

5. Discussion

The research results show that sub-traits have varying influences on leadership and organizational performance. High neuroticism leads to less effective leadership. Extraversion has a positive effect on leadership behavior. Openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness also have positive impacts. The indirect effect of neuroticism on the quality of village governance is negative. Leadership behavior reduces the negative influence of leaders' neurotic personality on organizational performance. Leadership behavior has a buffering mechanism that inhibits the negative impact of neuroticism on organizational life. Leadership behavior mediates the influence of openness, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness on organizational performance.

Facet-level analysis provides a deeper understanding of how each element of a leader's personality contributes to improving leadership quality and village governance. Understanding specific facets of a leader's personality helps in selecting village leaders with appropriate personality qualities to create better and more effective governance. Consistent with previous studies, knowledge of the influence of specific personality characteristics from the big five factors predicts leader behavior and provides more detailed and clear organizational outcomes, as stated by (Kordsmeyer et al., 2024). Previous studies have shown that extraversion and openness encourage strategic change, while conscientiousness tends to inhibit it. CEO conscientiousness reduces market risk perception, whereas extraversion and neuroticism increase it (Venugopal et al., 2023).

This study provides a substantive contribution by integrating facet-level analysis of the big five personality into the framework of upper echelons theory (UET) to predict leadership behavior and local government performance in Indonesia. The empirical findings critically address the inconsistencies in the influence of personality traits on leadership

behavior previously reported by (Karlsen & Langvik, 2021) and (Kordsmeyer et al., 2024). These inconsistencies are believed to stem from the adoption of overly broad personality dimensions (broad factors), which, although offering general predictive power, fail to deliver high fidelity for specific organizational outcomes, consistent with the perspective of (Zell & Lesick, 2021). This study underscores the need for a methodological paradigm shift to produce a more fundamental understanding that is closer to the actual behavior of local leaders (Kordsmeyer et al., 2024).

The research findings show that to address the inconsistency in the influence of personality traits on leadership behavior, as discussed by (Karlsen & Langvik, 2021) and (Kordsmeyer et al., 2024), one approach is through facet-level research. The inconsistency arises from the adoption of broad big five dimensions, where the level of abstraction is too general. Although the broad construction of personality traits can predict various performance outcomes, as noted by (Zell & Lesick, 2021), its generality weakens predictive accuracy for highly specific outcomes. Facet-level analysis, by focusing on the components that constitute each factor, provides a more fundamental understanding with higher fidelity because it is more closely aligned with actual behavior.

The paradigm shift in methodology reflects the importance of facet-level analysis, particularly in countries such as Indonesia. The behavior of leaders at the local level has drawn considerable attention due to actions that create bias in organizational performance and even lead to negative outcomes, including manipulative behavior and corruption. From the perspective of upper echelons theory (UET) (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), achieving high fidelity in measuring leader characteristics to predict specific organizational outcomes is crucial. Leaders make decisions based on their perceived reality, which is filtered through their values, cognition, and most importantly—their personality. Studies that rely on the broad, low-fidelity dimensions of the big five are not sufficiently credible in linking a leader's unique psychology with specific organizational decisions and performance. By applying sub trait analysis—for example, within the conscientiousness framework the facets of dutifulness and achievement striving have distinct strategic implications. Dutifulness (adherence to procedures) promotes conservative strategies and high accountability, serving as a protective mechanism for institutional integrity. In contrast, achievement striving (orientation toward ambitious outcomes) drives a focus on results that may tolerate procedural shortcuts.

This facet-level analysis significantly enriches UET by explaining the psychological mechanisms underlying counterproductive risk and moral hazard. When Conscientiousness is treated as a single construct, the crucial distinction between process-oriented (accountable) leaders and extremely results-oriented (potentially unethical) leaders is overlooked. Excessive prioritization of the achievement striving facet over dutifulness can shift the pursuit of accelerated goal attainment toward ethical or legal violations, creating opportunities for budget misuse and corruption. Strong Dutifulness, on the other hand, supports clean governance. A deep understanding of personality not only clarifies variations in leadership strategy but also determines the extent to which leaders can uphold bureaucratic integrity and mitigate corruption risks in local governance. The big five factors, with their broad level of abstraction, provide only a general indication of behavioral preferences.

Contextually, this study addresses the limited exploration of leadership in the local public sector in Indonesia, which faces complex challenges such as fluctuations in village budget (APBDes) realization, limited bureaucratic capacity, and weak transparency. By employing subordinate assessments (which are more strongly correlated with leadership effectiveness than self-reports), this research provides a richer and more specific understanding of how personality traits—analyzed at the facet level affect leadership behavior. In turn, this helps mitigate bias and clarify the mechanisms of influence, power, and

persuasion in leadership when determining the organization's strategic direction. These findings are highly relevant to the growing demands for people-oriented behaviors, collaboration, and the ability to manage the balance between bureaucratic requirements and voter expectations hallmarks of local leadership (Cepiku & Mastrodascio, 2019; Rybnikova et al., 2015).

This study confirms that personality traits act as a cognitive mechanism through which local leaders interpret complex information during strategic formulation. By leveraging Upper Echelons Theory (UET), we demonstrate that leadership personality is a primary strategic driver of organizational outcomes. UET facilitates the synthesis of individual-level psychological traits with firm-level performance. Specifically, the managerial discretion inherent in leadership is shown to be personality-driven, providing a measurable basis to evaluate how these traits direct organizational effectiveness toward specific strategic objectives (Neely et al., 2020).

6. Conclusion, Implications and suggestions for further research

Village leaders' personalities have a significant influence on leadership behavior, which in turn affects organizational performance. Specifically, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness show positive and significant effects on leadership behavior, while Neuroticism has a negative effect. Openness does not demonstrate a significant influence in the context of rural local governance in Indonesia. Meanwhile, only Extraversion directly affects organizational performance, whereas Neuroticism has a negative impact, and the other traits show no direct influence. However, leadership behavior is proven to mediate the effects of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism on local organizational performance. These findings indicate that leadership behavior functions as a buffering mechanism that mitigates the negative impact of neurotic personality traits on organizational performance. Facet-level analysis also shows that personality subdimensions provide a more accurate picture of how leaders' traits shape leadership behavior and organizational governance.

The theoretical implication of these findings lies in the importance of expanding and deepening the UET framework. The integration of personality analysis at the facet level provides high fidelity in explaining the relationship between leaders' psychological characteristics and organizational performance, going beyond general personality models that are too broad and less accurate for specific outcomes. This research extends the scope of UET into the context of the local public sector, which has so far been dominated by studies in the private sector. Facet-level analysis enables the differentiation between functional and dysfunctional personality traits, such as the strategic implications of Dutifulness and Achievement Striving within Conscientiousness, which directly influence governance and ethical risks in organizations. Thus, this study enriches the local leadership literature by emphasizing that leadership effectiveness is better explained through the interaction between personality characteristics and leadership behavior rather than relying solely on conventional leadership styles.

From a practical standpoint, this study provides a strong foundation for formulating personality-based policies for the selection and development of local leaders. Local governments can employ facet-level personality assessment instruments to select and train village heads who align with local leadership needs. Since leadership behavior has been shown to serve as a key mediating mechanism, behaviorally based leadership training interventions can be used to mitigate the negative effects of certain traits, such as neuroticism, on organizational performance. The findings related to conscientiousness also carry important implications for ethical risk mitigation and governance. The Dutifulness

subdimension should be strengthened to foster accountable leadership and prevent the misuse of power at the local level. Furthermore, these results can serve as the basis for designing capacity-building policies for village officials that emphasize people-oriented leadership and public service innovation.

Research on facet-level personality remains an open field. Future studies could extend the institutional context to the district level or other public organizations to test the external validity of the developed model. It is also recommended that future research include moderating variables such as organizational culture and policy complexity to capture the dynamics of personality influence more comprehensively. Moreover, longitudinal and mixed-method approaches would be highly beneficial for understanding changes in leadership behavior over time and the underlying psychological mechanisms. Exploring dark personality traits, such as adaptive narcissism, could also provide new perspectives on the dynamics of local political leadership. The integration of advanced analytical techniques, such as machine learning and psychometrics, could further enhance the predictive capability of personality profiling and leadership effectiveness.

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