OSLOMET

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What makes leaders humble?

A quantitative analysis of their personality traits and implicit motives

Abstract

This thesis explores what makes a leader humble. Building on theory on personality traits, implicit motives and moral leadership we conducted a quantitative, cross-sectional study to examine various factors that contribute to humility in leaders. The data collection was twofold: leaders were asked to complete the HEXACO 60-item personality test, while their followers evaluated their leadership style. Subsequently, the Motive-Self Categorization test was administered to both leaders and followers, examining their implicit motives.

The main findings of the study (N=131) revealed a positive correlation between Extraversion and humble leadership, aligning with prior research. This was the only trait that significantly predicted humble leadership. Leaders with above-average power motivation and Agreeableness were found to exhibit an increased level of humble leadership, where agreeableness function as a moderator. Contrary to previous studies, no correlation between Honesty-Humility and humble leadership was found. Our study highlighted a notable variation in humble leadership across countries, with Norwegian leaders displaying a higher degree of humble leadership.

These findings suggest that humble leadership might be a largely learnable skill, indicating the potential for organizations to develop more effective leader training programs focusing on ethical leadership. Our study adds new insight to the antecedents of humble leadership. Further research is recommended to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships between implicit motives and humble leadership. The thesis holds implications for organizations aiming to foster humble leaders, as well as for policymakers and regulators striving to create environments that encourage humility.

Preface

This master's thesis forms the last part of the Master Programme in Business Administration at Oslo Metropolitan University.

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Table of content

List of figures and tables

1.0 Introduction

"Nothing is more deceitful than the appearance of humility. It is often only carelessness of opinion, and sometimes an indirect boast."

- Jane Austen *(Pride and Prejudice)*

Recently, the concept of humility has been garnering considerable interest in the realm of organizational studies (Owens et al., 2013). Leadership is crucial for the survival and reputation of businesses, and leaders are shaping the cultures of businesses (Schein & Schein, 2018). Yet, they are still humans who makes mistakes both at work and in their private lives. According to the famous philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre we are moral beings as we are "condemned" by the reality of our shared existence to constantly make decisions about "what we ought to do" in relation to others (Sartre, 1946). Although we are all compelled by what we should or can do, the moral compass of each individual is different. For some, the moral compass is almost non-existent resulting in immoral- and deviant behaviour. One leadership approach that addresses these considerations is humble leadership. Humble leadership supports moral behaviour by fostering self-reflection, empathy, ethical role modelling, collaboration and team development (Kelemen et al., 2023). While the research on humble leadership has progressed greatly, we still know little about who the humble leader is (Owens et al., 2013).

In today's world, we often see leaders prioritizing their personal interest over the greater good, which has resulted in corruption cases, scandals, and a loss of trust in institutions. In Norway we expect both kindness and a strong sense of morality from our leaders. Compared to many other countries in the world Norway has strict anti-corruption laws as well as regulators that monitor both companies as well as governments. Even so, there have been several examples of corruption and poor management in both private and public sectors.

Despite how much a company focuses on compliance and ethics, it only takes one bad leader to destroy a reputation. In Yara, they "believe that success can only be celebrated when it is achieved in the right way" (Yara International, 2022) Despite this they uncovered corruption related to projects in Libya, India and Russia in 2011 (Bugge et al., 2016). Økokrim claimed the bribes of more than NOK 70 million were known by the management team. Four former directors were sentenced to prison, but three of them were later acquitted (Høgseth & Bøe, 2021). While some leaders put their unethical behaviour into a larger system, others create fraudulent companies to enrich themselves. The young entrepreneur Waleed Ahmed claimed to have made a solar cell iPhone case. He met royals, CEOs and ministers because of his alleged success (Nordby, 2012). With big companies such as AT&T and Telenor on the list of customers as well as agreements in more than ten countries, his company received public grants to develop the product (Nordby, 2012; Riseng, 2015). As it turned out, there were no large orders made by AT&T and Telenor, and the technology did not exist. He was not charged in Norway, but got convicted and imprisoned for 11 years in the United States, for defrauding an American investor (Elnan, 2015). Leaders stepping out of bounds happen in all sectors. In the Norwegian armed Forces, a colonel has received repeated warnings against him about sexual harassment of younger women he was in charge of. At the same time, he was promoted to new leadership roles (Svendsen, 2022).

Humble leadership can be seen as a bottom-up leadership (Owens & Hekman, 2012). The Norwegian cultural norm and phenomenon called "Janteloven" instructs people to be humble, and states that no one should ever try to be more, try to be different, or consider oneself more valuable than others (Bromgard et al., 2014). The main purpose of the "law" is to reduce the feeling of pride, which is a feeling that can boost self-esteem and inform oneself that their behaviour is valued by others (Bromgard et al., 2014). Having too much pride can result in an egocentric and narcissistic view of oneself, it can also result in having a derogatory view of others. Perhaps Janteloven can contribute to more casual leaders, and possibly increase humility among leaders in Norway?

In the wake of the recent corporate scandals, humility is now viewed as more important, and is considered to be a crucial trait of those who lead and work within organizations. Especially since scandals are often linked to the overconfidence, pompousness and self-entitlement of the corporate executives involved (Owens et al., 2013). Understanding the function of humility in leadership is crucial for examining its impact on moral behaviour. Humility has been defined as a psychological state characterized by a balanced view of one's self-worth, a focus on the well-being of others, and a willingness to learn from others. Humble leaders are also characterized by their openness to learning, willingness to admit mistakes, and genuine care for the well-being of others (Owens et al., 2013). This has been shown to result in humble leaders often being seen as more approachable, trustworthy, and effective, leading to improved organizational performance and employee satisfaction (Owens & Hekman, 2012).

Most research so far has focused on the outcomes of humble leadership and has overlooked the antecedents. One of the key aspects of this thesis will be to delve into the relationship between personality traits and humble leadership. The Big Five personality traits—Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and emotional stability— have been widely studied in relation to various outcomes, including leadership effectiveness (Judge et al., 2002). Recent research has started exploring the connection between these traits and humble leadership (Kalshoven et al., 2011), suggesting that certain personality characteristics may predispose individuals to act in a more humble and moral manner. The HEXACO inventory has six dimensions of explicit personality traits, and includes the dimension of Honesty-Humility (Ashton & Lee, 2009). Individuals who score high on the Honesty-Humility aspect have an accurate self-appraisal, and they are willing to admit mistakes. Many studies have tried to emphasize the Honesty-Humility aspect in relation to leaders. Because of this, humble leadership has gained its place in leadership theories (Kelemen et al., 2023; Owens & Hekman, 2012).

Previous research has overlooked implicit motives regarding humility in leaders and have emphasized mainly explicit personality traits. Winter et al. (1998) argues that the concept of

explicit personality traits and implicit motives have lived separate lives, and its existence has been challenged by the two sides. It is about time we reconsider the separation between these two important concepts and research how they interact with each other (Winter et al., 1998). Implicit motives are unconscious psychological needs that drive behaviour and have been linked to various aspects of leadership. The three motives, which is also called The Big Three, are the desire for power, affiliation, or achievement (McClelland, 1975). Understanding the interplay between implicit motives and humble leadership is essential for identifying the factors that contribute to humble behaviour in leaders.

Despite the fact that few studies have attempted to understand the origins or causes of humble leadership, those that have done so have emphasized both internal motivation and external factors that boost observer perceptions of humble leadership (Kelemen et al., 2023). Personality traits have long been regarded as potential predictors of different aspects of human behaviour, and recent studies suggest that they may play a role in determining humble leadership as well (Judge et al., 2009; Kelemen et al., 2023). Furthermore, there has been little to no research into how implicit motives can help influence humble leadership. By identifying these factors, it may be possible to develop a better understanding of what makes leaders humble and pave the way for more effective strategies to promote humble leadership in organizations and institutions. By shedding light on these important aspects, this thesis seeks to contribute to the ongoing conversation about the prerequisites of humble leadership and help organizations foster a more moral and responsible environment (Treviño et al., 2006).

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to identify which personality traits and implicit motives humble leaders possess. By examining the various factors that contribute to humility in leaders, this thesis seeks to shed light on the mechanisms through which humble leadership can be promoted and supported. The findings of this investigation may have important implications for organizations seeking to develop humble leaders, as well as for policymakers and regulators who aim to create environments that encourage humble behaviour. Identifying

the personality traits, implicit motives, and possibly external factors that contribute to humble leadership may enable organizations to implement more targeted interventions and strategies for fostering humble leadership. Thus, aiming to create change by promoting leaders who care.

1.1.1 Problem statement

Based on the purpose of the thesis, the problem statement of this thesis is as follows:

What personality traits and implicit motives are associated with humble leadership?

2.0 Theory

In this chapter we will survey the relevant theory for the problem statement. Initially, the focus is directed towards various leadership theories associated with moral leadership, starting with humble leadership. Furthermore, we will review theories on personality, and focus particularly on HEXACO. Lastly, we will dive into the theory on implicit motives and the Big Three. The literature produces a possible guideline on the leadership criteria for moral leadership.

2.1 Humble leadership

Some decades ago, humility was a trait that was associated with personal weakness, shyness, lack of ambition, lack of confidence or passivity. Today, humility is a stable and positive trait whose core characteristics is its "other-enhancing" orientation (Zhou & Wu, 2018). Vera & Rodriguez-Lopez (2004, p. 393) considered humility "a critical strength for leaders and organizations possessing it, and a dangerous weakness for those lacking it." Owens et al. (2013) defines humility as an interpersonal characteristic that emerges in social contexts. When it comes to humble leaders, they will have a manifested willingness to view themselves accurately, display appreciation of followers' contributions, and their teachability. A person's humility can vary in terms of contextual cues and circumstances, and they will have a different baseline for expressing humility based on life experience, socialization, and heredity (Owens et al., 2013). Swain & Korenman (2018) argues in their research that humility is viewed as a stereotypically female trait, and hubris is viewed to be more masculine.

In recent years, empirical research on humble leadership has proliferated across influential and well-grounded theories. Kelemen et al. (2023) conducted a literature review on humble leadership. They reviewed several studies that have developed methods to specifically define the core elements of humble leadership. Kelemen et al. (2023) especially emphasizes Owens & Hekman (2012) identification of three dimensions of humble leadership; (1) willingness to view oneself accurately, (2) an understanding of followers' strengths and contributions, and (3) teachability.

Ou et al. (2014) used a slightly different approach to define humble leaders and their role among Chief Executive Officers (CEOs). They concluded that there are six characteristics of humble leaders: (1) a self-view of accepting that something is greater than self, (2) self-awareness, (3) openness to feedback, (4) appreciation of others, (5) low self-focus, and (6) self-transcendent pursuit. Additionally, through qualitative interviews Oc et al. (2015) did a similar study and identified nine dimensions of humble leadership: (1) having an accurate view of self, (2) recognizing followers strengths and achievements, (3) modelling teachability and being correctable, (4) leading by example, (5) showing modesty, (6) working together for the collective good, (7) empathy and approachability, (8) showing mutual respect and fairness, and lastly, (9) mentoring and coaching.

Notably, the three above mentioned articles identified some differences in the dimensions and characteristics of humble leadership. The articles have some core similarities, and the overall dimensions that are mentioned in all of the three articles are self-awareness/self-view, teachability/openness to feedback, and appreciation for others. Kelemen et al. (2023) proposes that the three elements that was mentioned in all the articles, forms the core of humble leadership.

There is evidence that humble leadership can reduce negative behaviours and has a positive relationship with employee organizational citizenship, ethical behaviour, and prosocial behaviour (Kelemen et al., 2023). Reversely, it reduces deviant and unethical behaviour, as well as hiding of knowledge. Furthermore, followers with a humble leader can feel more energized, are more engaged, committed, resilient, and more helpful to other subordinates, and share more information (Ou et al., 2014; Owens et al., 2013b; Walters & Diab, 2016). Besides, humble leadership makes followers feel good, and it positively relates to follower affection, like empathy, felt authenticity, gratitude, satisfaction, and emotions. In other words, humble leadership enhances followers' well-being, including follower self-efficacy (Kelemen et al., 2023). Zhou & Wu (2018) argues that empirical research on leaders' humility suggest that leader humility tempers the ill effect of leader narcissism.

2.2 Moral leadership

Humble leadership shares many similarities with the umbrella term, moral leadership. Lemoine et al. (2019) separates moral leadership between ethical leadership, authentic leadership, and servant leadership. However, Kelemen et al. (2023) and Owens & Hekman (2012) proposes that humble leadership should be added to the framework of moral-oriented leadership approaches, given its theoretical overlap and similarities to the above-mentioned leadership views.

There is no consensus on what moral leadership really means. As commonly understood, to be moral is to show commitment to doing what is right. Rhode (2007) claims that a key element of moral leadership is moral reasoning. The moral reasoning for individuals differs in their analysis, and context plays an important role to this. For example, everyone will analyse right and wrong, and attempt to focus on what is acceptable and seek to avoid dishonour, disapproval, and guilt. Individuals engage in moral reasoning by relying on abstract principles that encompass universal concerns, and by focusing on their self-respect.

Additionally, Rhode (2007) suggests that individuals have a relatively poor grasp of their own moral reasoning in a business context, compared to reasoning in other aspects of their lives. Organizational reward structures affect the judgement of leaders, and their decisions have an impact on subordinates. There has been documented evidence of variety of cognitive biases that can contribute to moral myopia. Leaders often have high self-confidence in their own capacities and judgement, which can lead to arrogance, overoptimism, and an escalation of commitment to choices that turn out to be wrong. This can result in individuals ignore or suppress dissent, cover up mistakes by withholding, denying, or sometimes destroying information (Rhode, 2007).

2.2.1 Ethical leadership

Ethical leadership can be described as the embodiment of morally upright behaviour exhibited in personal conduct and interpersonal connections. In this form of leadership, the leader actively encourages and fosters such behaviour among their followers through open

and reciprocal communication. Furthermore, ethical leadership is reinforced through the leader's decision-making processes and the establishment of shared norms within the organization (Brown et al., 2005). Humble- and ethical leadership outcomes are similar, yet there are some distinctions between the two. In particular, humble leadership is not focused on integrity and the ethical awareness, in the way ethical leadership is (Kelemen et al., 2023).

Brown et al. (2005) suggests that those who are perceived to be ethical leaders behave in a matter that is normatively appropriate, possessing traits like honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and care. This is similar to humble leadership, which also triggers integrity and compliance with normative standards (Kelemen et al., 2023). This makes the leader a legitimate and a credible role model.

Additionally, ethical leadership provides their followers with a voice, by not only drawing attention to ethics but by making it salient in the social environment. Furthermore, these leaders set ethical standards, reward ethical conduct and discipline those who do not follow the standards, which contributes to vicarious learning. Ethical leaders consider the ethical consequences of their decisions and make fair and principled choices that can be emulated by others (Brown et al., 2005). Kelemen et al. (2023) suggests that humble leadership can sometimes result in unethical behaviour, whereas ethical leadership does not.

2.2.2 Authentic leadership

Authentic leadership is the moral leadership style most conceptually similar to humble leadership (Kelemen et al., 2023). Authentic leadership focuses on compliance with external expectations. Authentic leadership is primarily concerned with a leader's awareness, self-regulation, and self-control, and how these qualities are promoted to subordinates (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). In other words, authentic leadership theory holds that a leader behaves in a manner that is consistent with their true self (Hannah et al., 2005).

Walumbwa et al. (2008) have proposed an Authentic Leadership Questionnaire, that consists of the following four factors: self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing,

and internalized moral perspective. Many of the traits listed above are identical to those of humble leaders. In addition, both authentic and humble leadership concentrates on leading by example (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Walumbwa et al. (2008) defines self-awareness as the understanding of how one derives meaning from the world, and how this impact self-perception over time. Walumbwa et al. (2008) defines relational transparency as being your authentic self, which promotes trust through disclosure while trying to minimize displays of inappropriate emotions. Balanced processing is defined by analysing all relevant data, before concluding or deciding. Additionally, they describe internalized moral perspective as a form of self-regulation that is internalized and integrated, guided by internal moral standards and values (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

The key distinction between authentic and humble leadership is that humble leadership focuses on assessing and recognizing their strengths and weaknesses as well as the capabilities of their followers (Owens et al., 2013). Authentic leadership does not take this into consideration.

2.2.3 Servant leadership

Servant leadership is the last one of the moral leadership styles, and this too share some similarities and distinctions with humble leadership. Liden et al. (2015) claims that servant leadership needs to be presented as a multidimensional construct. The first dimension being emotional healing, which encompasses the leader who cares about followers' personal problems and well-being. The second is the leader's involvement in the community, and creation of value by encouraging followers to be active in the community. Third, the leader's conceptual skills, how the leader solves work problems and understand the organizational goals (Liden et al., 2015). Another dimension is empowering, assessing the degree the leader trusts their followers with autonomy, responsibility, and decision-making. Servant leaders also ensure that their subordinates grow and succeed, and some help their followers to reach their full potential (Liden et al., 2015). Furthermore, servant leaders will put their subordinates first, where the leader prioritise meeting the needs of followers before their

own. The last dimension is ethical behaviour, this includes honest, trustworthy, and to serve as a role model of integrity (Liden et al., 2015).

Owens & Hekman (2012) claims that one important difference between servant and humble is that humble leadership models the process of becoming, while servant leadership models serving others. Besides, humble leadership is different than servant because it includes self-awareness and recognizing both their own and their followers strengths and weaknesses (Kelemen et al., 2023).

2.3 Personality

Personality has been emphasized in previous research as crucial for understanding individual differences and how they affect performance in organizations. The five-factor model of personality is a central theory in personality research, and is thus important for the management field (Goldberg, 1990). The model identifies five core factors of the human personality: openness, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Extraversion and neuroticism (Judge et al., 2002). Neuroticism explains the tendency to exhibit poor emotional adjustment, like anxiety, insecurity, and hostility. Extraversion represents the tendency to be social, confident, active and to experience positive external influences like energy and eagerness. Openness is the tendency to be imaginative, non-conform, unconventional and autonomous. Agreeableness is the tendency to be trusting, compliant, caring, and mild. Conscientiousness is composed of two facets: achievement and dependability. To better understand the explicit personality traits of humble leaders the HEXACO inventory is more useful. It has some similarities with the five-factor model, but the most important distinction is the inclusion of the trait Honesty-Humility.

2.3.1 HEXACO

The HEXACO model is a personality framework that aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of an individual's personality traits. Based on the Big Five, the HEXACO model stand out by including a sixth dimension (Ashton & Lee, 2009). The six dimensions are

Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness (versus anger), Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience. The sixth dimension, Honesty-Humility, provides an aspect that is useful for investigating humble leadership. Researchers have found that Honesty-Humility is the most significant predictor for dishonest behaviour amongst basic personality traits (Heck et al., 2018). It is also the strongest predictor of workplace deviance (Pletzer et al., 2019).

Over the last decades, there has been an increased interest in Honesty-Humility and how it influences organizational outcomes. Kelemen et al. (2023) have argued that prior research has found that Honesty-Humility positively relates to helpfulness, forgiveness, and generosity. In addition, it is also associated with having better social relationships, and increased positive emotions, as well as many other positive outcomes (Kelemen et al., 2023). However, Ogunfowora & Bourdage (2014) argues that the Honesty-Humility dimension is likely to be a hidden trait during interpersonal interactions. Further, they argue that individuals who score low on the Honesty-Humility dimension tend to exhibit behavioural tendencies such as insincerity, manipulativeness, fraudulence, and pretentiousness. These behaviours are not observable to the untrained eye (Ogunfowora & Bourdage, 2014).

Prior research has also found evidence that individuals are not able to accurately judge honest or deceptive behaviours during a brief interaction. Therefore, a person's level of dishonesty, insincerity, willingness to manipulate others and fraudulent behaviour may not be known before a long period of time has passed (Ogunfowora & Bourdage, 2014). Additionally, leaders who score low on Honesty-Humility tend to engage in impression management behaviours. This is a behaviour where leaders try to hide their negative characteristics and attempt to present themselves in a favourable light (Ogunfowora & Bourdage, 2014). Consequently, it makes it even harder to accurately determine whether a person scores low on Honesty-Humility.

The dimensions Extraversion, Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness are considered by most researchers to be largely identical between the big five and HEXACO inventories

(Ashton & Lee, 2005). Extravert people are described as outgoing, lively, extraverted, sociable, talkative, cheerful, and active (Ashton & Lee, 2008). People who score high on Openness to Experience are described as intellectual, creative, unconventional, innovative, and ironic. Individuals who score high on Conscientiousness are described as organized, disciplined, diligent, careful, thorough, and precise. Even though the Emotionality dimension can look similar to neuroticism, they do not measure the same. Only the big five includes anger in this dimension, while HEXACO includes sentimentality. Individuals with a high score of Emotionality are described as emotional, oversensitive, sentimental, fearful, anxious, and vulnerable. When it comes to Agreeableness, they both share an association with gentleness, but only HEXACO includes an association with not experiencing anger, and only big five includes an association with sentimentality. Agreeable individuals are described as patient, tolerant, peaceful, mild, agreeable, lenient, and gentle. The biggest difference between the two is still the additional dimension Honesty-Humility, which reflects an ethical or moral aspect of personality. A high score on this dimension will be characterized as being sincere, honest, faithful/loyal, modest/unassuming, and fair-minded. However some argue that it is too similar to the Big Fives Agreeableness to be its own distinct dimension (McCrae & Costa Jr, 2008). Both dimensions are associated with interpersonal cooperation despite the opportunities for exploitation (Ashton et al., 2014). Prior studies have found correlations between Agreeableness and Honesty-Humility between 0.61-0.70 (Gylfason et al., 2016; Schneider & Goffin, 2012).

2.4 Implicit motives

There has been little to no research on the topic of humble leadership and the leaders' implicit motives. To better understand who becomes humble leaders, it is crucial to understand their implicit motives as well as their explicit traits. Schuh et al. (2014) argues that motivation is a primary driver of behaviour and that it shapes the direction, persistence, and intensity of behaviour. Implicit- and explicit motives are seen as two different kinds of motivational constructions where they have specific functions and different behavioural effects. Explicit motives serve the function of conscious goals and duties and are tied to the self-concept and serve the preservation of self-esteem (Langens & McClelland, 1997). In

contrast, implicit motives are not consciously represented, but they influence long-term outcomes such as career success and well-being (Steinmann et al., 2015). Schultheiss & Brunstein (2010 p. 603) defines implicit motives as "Motivational dispositions that operate outside of a person's conscious awareness and are aimed at the attainment of specific classes of incentives and the avoidance of specific classes of disincentives". Researchers distinguish between three different implicit motives, which they also call the Big Three, these are; the affiliation-, the achievement-, and the power motive (Runge, 2019).

As implicit motives are unconscious and not accessible through introspection, two different methods of measuring human motives have been established; self-report measures and projective techniques (Runge, 2019; Sokolowski et al., 2000). Self-report measures assume that behaviour is represented consciously. In this method the researcher will directly ask a person what their motives and goals are, or what they would do in specific situations. A method developed by Murray (1938) measures motives in fantasy and usually confronts the person with a set of pictures and ask them to tell stories about them. Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) is a prominent measurement of implicit motives. TAT is a picture-based test where respondents must write stories in response to the pictures that shows various social scenes. The story will then be evaluated by expert coders and be put into a motivational category (Runge, 2019). To distinguish it from respondents' instantaneous choice behaviour in questionnaires, this open-ended answer structure has been dubbed operant. Based on this fundamental idea, researchers have created a variety of implicit motive tests. The Motive self-categorization (MSC) test allows respondents to self-code their stories (Runge, 2019).

There are two possible benefits of using the MSC to evaluate one's own implicit motives. First, the measurement of the same construct rather than explicit or semi-implicit motives is ensured by using an operant response behaviour format, similar to typical implicit motive measures (Runge & Lang, 2019; Sokolowski et al., 2000). Second, the context-specific components are more closely related to the actual stories than general, abstract motive definitions since they do not rely on such definitions (Runge & Lang, 2019). Therefore,

whether respondents can grasp their own motives from their stories should not be influenced by differences in how specialists and laypeople interpret a motive (Runge & Lang, 2019).

2.4.1 The Power Motive

A power motivated person has an incentive to impact, control and/or influence another person and/or group. Winter (1973) claims individuals may satisfy motivational needs through interpersonal powers over others, examples of occupations include leadership roles, such as being a business executive, teacher, psychologist, or member of the clergy. The implicit power motive can be conceptualized as two different components: socialized- and personalized power. Socialized power can be defined as use of power for institutional advancement rather than for personal advancement (Chusmir & Parker, 1984). In contrast, individuals who score high on personalized power tend to have a desire for direct control or dominance. Therefore, personalized power can be seen as egoistic, and at times antisocial (Magee & Langner, 2008).

Individuals who score high on personalized power, will have an incentive to draw attention to themselves by using products that can be seen as "prestige possessions" (Winter, 1973). They might use these items, like cars or credit cards, to impress others (Schmidt & Frieze, 1997). A socialized power motivated person will use their knowledge to give unsolicited help to others and can influence other people for the greater good. For example, they can use their own power to create opportunities for their followers or make them develop their skills and knowledge (Chusmir & Parker, 1984).

Almost ten years ago, Schuh et al. (2014) wrote about the role of power motivation in regards to leadership role occupancy. They argue that power incentive individuals are strongly represented in positions that allow them to be influential. Thus, explaining that power-motivated people show higher aspirations for managerial positions, are more politically active, and more likely to pursue careers that involve teaching others. They also tend to seek to participate in formal leadership training, talk to other leaders and coaches,

and they regard successful managers as role models. Additionally, Schuh et al. (2014) argues that power incentive individuals are more likely to show greater persistence in pursuing leadership tasks. In other words, these individuals tend to make better use of development opportunities, and therefore, also develop leadership-relevant skills, knowledge and abilities (Schuh et al., 2014). Winter (1973) supports this view and claim that there is a connection between power motive and leadership success. The reason being that individuals with high power motive will make themselves visible and are experts at establishing themselves in influential positions in organizations as well as developing networks with allies. Furthermore, Winter (1991) argues that power-motivated people tend to talk a lot, and are rated by peers as influential and encourage participation from others.

2.4.2 The Affiliation Motive

Individuals with a high affiliation motivation will have a high incentive to enjoy mutual friendships. McClelland (1987) defines affiliation motive as establishing, maintaining a close, friendly relationship with other people, or being emotionally concerned over separation from someone else. Whenever possible, research has shown individuals with high affiliation tries to avoid conflict and competition. Furthermore, they would like to spend time interacting with other people and can navigate social networks faster than those who score low on the need for affiliation. Also, in social interactions they will be sympathetic and accommodating towards other people (Schmidt & Frieze, 1997). There is, however, some similarities between power- and affiliation motive. In some social settings, a person that is driven by a high need for power may be friendly toward someone, or to provide unsolicited help/assistance to another person in order to enjoy personal rewards (Schmidt & Frieze, 1997).

Steinmann et al. (2016) claims that previous research has ignored the implicit need for affiliation when it comes to leadership success. It has also been reasoned that the need to initiate and maintain a positive relation with others have had negative effects on leadership tasks. However, affiliative leaders are reluctant to monitor their followers' performance, give negative feedback, or to impose sanctions. Furthermore, they tend to avoid conflicts and

make exceptions to the rules based on the needs as well as they consider followers individually. They are also accommodating and sympathetic (Steinmann et al., 2016). Humble leaders who score high on affiliation are more likely to create a positive work environment where team members feel valued and supported.

Boyatzis (1973) divides affiliation into two different types: affiliative assurance and affiliative interest. The affiliative assurance is described as a longing for the approval of other people, and they fear of being left alone. Leaders that are characterized by affiliative assurance can experience anxiety over potential rejection from their followers or superiors, avoid conflicts, and refrain from providing negative feedback on followers' work performance. Thus, aiming of fostering strong and secure relationships. In contrast, affiliative interest is described as being concerned with their followers needs, development and welfare. Leaders with affiliative interest support and empower their followers and seek to create a work environment characterized by openness and trust (Steinmann et al., 2016). Furthermore, these leaders work toward organizational objectives together with their follower. Boyatzis (1973) highlighted in his study that affiliative interest benefit effective leadership.

2.4.3 The Achievement Motive

The achievement motive is the third and last motive described by McClelland (1987). Individuals with a high need for achievement motivation will have the incentive to outperform someone else, meet or surpass a standard or excel in their field. In addition, they could also have a high incentive to do something unique. There are different definitions of what constitutes achievement, they differ by age, sex, and culture. However, a consistent defining factor that applies to these groupings is the pursuit of improvement or doing something better. Schmidt & Frieze (1997) claims there are several characteristics and behaviour that has been associated with high achievement motivation. For example, they prefer working on moderately difficult tasks, and in situations where they can take responsibility for their performance. Also, individuals with high achievement want performance feedback, and are more likely to seek out information about new ways to perform tasks (Schmidt & Frieze, 1997).

McClelland & Boyatzis (1982) found in their research that individuals with a high achievement motive only contributes to leadership success or promotion in lower or technical management positions. Advancement in these positions, depends on how good you are at your work, and not necessarily your ability to lead others, which is a skill needed for higher management. Steinmann et al. (2016) argues in their article that leaders that are only motivated by achievement are usually concerned with attaining goals, reluctant to delegate responsibility, and tries to keep control over all aspects over their work. Additionally, leaders that are only motivated by achievement tend to avoid making decisions and are not interested in enforcing authority. The end result being that they share characteristics with those who lead passively (Steinmann et al., 2016).

Some research suggests that people who score high on achievement, benefit success in small-scale businesses, entrepreneurial positions, or sales. Those characterized with high achievement actively engage in proactive actions, takes full responsibility for their tasks, and dedicate themselves to innovation. Furthermore, individuals with high achievement are devoted to working hard, which leads to good productivity. They want to avoid conflict and will try to improve things, such as productivity and efficiency. Thus, their motivational composition fosters their involvement in corporate innovations (Steinmann et al., 2016).

2.5 Hypotheses

In this chapter, we will introduce previous empirical research and present our hypotheses based on this.

Rego et al. (2017) found that social bonds could develop between leaders and their followers due to their humility (2017). In the HEXACO inventory the Honesty-Humility dimension includes sincerity, fairness, greed avoidance and modesty. These are all behaviour that are found in the humble leadership style. For humble leadership to be most effective, it should be genuine and sincere (Kelemen et al., 2023). Big 5's Agreeableness, which is highly

correlated with Honesty-Humility, have been found to be linked to the low-self focus aspect of humble leadership (Maldonado et al., 2022). Our first hypothesis is therefore:

Hypothesis 1: Honesty-Humility is positively related to humble leadership.

A humble leader is open to feedback, appreciates others, has a self-transcendent pursuit and low focus (Ou et al., 2014). These are all ways of conduct that align with several of the Agreeableness traits in the HEXACO inventory. Previous research links the trait to a leaders low self-focus (Maldonado et al., 2022). To be gentle and flexible could be seen as being open to feedback and having a self-transcendent pursuit. The patience trait aligns with the humble leader's low focus. If the work environment is dynamic, it augments the leader's feedback-seeking behaviour, which increases humble leadership (Deng et al., 2019). Our second hypothesis is therefore:

Hypothesis 2: Agreeableness is positively related to humble leadership.

An extravert has traits such as being talkative, sociable, enthusiastic, warm and in the possession of positive emotions. These are all traits that could be perceived in a humble leader in many cases. The humble leader acknowledges peoples' strengths and contributions, and they model teachability (Owens & Hekman, 2012). Extraverted leaders could therefore be perceived as humble. When leaders ask their followers questions it is more likely that they will be rated as humble leaders. If the leader is talkative, enthusiastic or sociable it could be more likely that they ask questions (Cojuharenco & Karelaia, 2020). Maldonado et al. (2022) found that there was a positive association between Extraversion and appreciation of others as well as self-transcendent pursuits, while a negative association was observed with low self-focus. Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3: Extraversion is positively related to humble leadership.

A person with a high score on the Consciousness dimension is organized, disciplined, diligent, careful, thorough and precise (Ashton & Lee, 2008). They are more likely to be able to control their impulses, carry out plans and follow their internal moral code (Miller & Lynam 2001). The trait is also linked to lower anti-social behaviour (Miller & Lynam 2001). Because society sets certain rules of conduct, a leader and a follower can develop a trusting relationship with mutual commitments thanks to this trait (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Wang et al. (2020) found that Consciousness acts as a moderator between humble leadership on team creative efficiency. There have been found a positive correlation between Consciousness and appreciation of others, accurate self-assessment and low self-focus in previous research (Maldonado et al., 2022). Building on this, our fourth hypothesis is that:

Hypothesis 4: Consciousness is positively related to humble leadership.

In our study, we do not distinguish between the two components of power: socialized- and personalized power. Socialized power is defined by Chusmir & Parker (1984, p. 760) "as power used for institutional advancement rather than personal aggrandizement". Personalized power can therefore sometimes be seen as egoistic, and at times antisocial (Magee & Langner, 2008). Since we do not distinguish between the two counterparts, we therefore believe, given only power motive, humble leaders will score low on the power motive. Given this, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 5: Power motive is negatively related to humble leadership.

The affiliation motive, is defined as establishing, and maintaining close and friendly relationships with other people, or being emotionally concerned about separation from someone else (McClelland, 1987). Humble leadership can be seen as a bottom-up leadership approach that involves listening and observing others (Owens & Hekman, 2012; Zhou & Wu, 2018). Therefore, we believe that humble leaders score high on the affiliation motive. The sixth hypotheses, is therefore:

Hypothesis 6: Affiliation motive is positively related to humble leadership.

2.5.1 Conceptual Framework

Based on these 6 hypotheses, we present the conceptual framework in Figure 1.
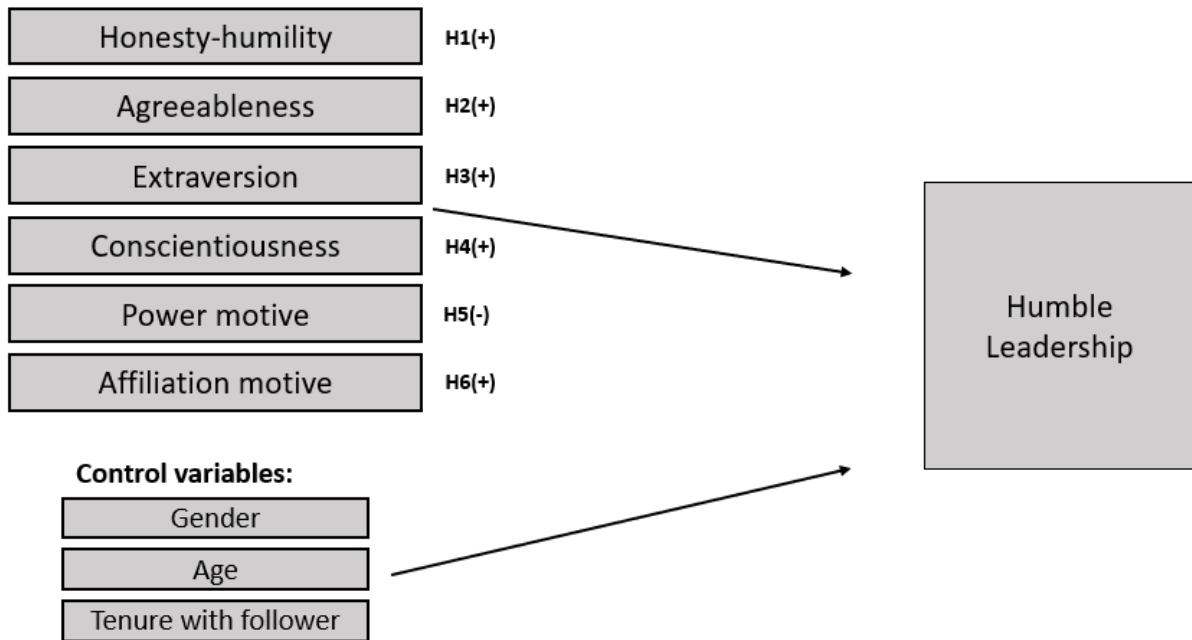
Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

We include gender, age, and tenure with follower as our control variables. We included the control variable of tenure with follower into our study, as it can impact humble leadership (Wang et al., 2018). To account for potential influences on humble leadership, we controlled for the leader's gender and age.

2.5.2 Channelling effects

Channelling effects refers to the interaction between implicit motives and personality traits, and how this may influence humble leadership. Our channelling hypotheses suggests that personality traits and implicit motives influences leader behaviour. In the following chapter we will connect the implicit motives and personality trait to humble leadership and propose three channelling hypotheses.

Extraversion and achievement motive

Hypothesis 3 states that Extraversion is positively related to humble leadership. If a leader scores high on Extraversion and has a high incentive for achievement, we believe it will have a negative relation to humble leadership.

A leader who scores high on the achievement and on Extraversion may be more focused on individual success and recognition rather than team collaboration. This combination might make a leader talk a lot, perhaps more about themselves than others, and brag about their success (i.e., being pretentious). If leaders possess both Extraversion and achievement motivation, they may present themselves in a manner that others perceive as superficial. Additionally, it does not align with "appreciation of others' strengths", which is a trait humble leaders possess (Owens et al., 2013). Furthermore, extraverted, and achievement-oriented leaders may focus more on their individual goals, rather than the team's goals.

A leader who scores high both on the explicit trait Extraversion, and the implicit motive achievement, can make others feel alienated as they do make connections with others, but they do not try to nurture a relationship. This stems from the assumption that they are social creatures (i.e., Extraversion), but they are too concentrated with their work (i.e., achievement motive), and the traits are therefore conflicting. The combination may be associated with the dark side of Extraversion, and that they can have aspects of narcissism (Gruda et al., 2021). Furthermore, this combination of traits may put extreme pressure on their followers, as they can be verbal and are also extremely concerned with upholding a standard of excellence. This combination of traits can lead the leader to believe they know what is best and be resistant to learning from others. Therefore, it may not align with willingness to view oneself accurately and teachability, which are one of the key traits of humble leaders (Owens et al., 2013).

In the case where the leader exhibits lower levels of Extraversion and higher levels of achievement, it is posited that they may approach a closer proximity to the characteristics

associated with humble leadership. However, they may not fully embody the essence of a humble leader. A leader who scores low on Extraversion and high on achievement, might have the desire to work independently. We believe this leader will be portrayed as the typical achievement motivated person. As the leader scores low on Extraversion, we believe that this person will be somewhat conflict-avoidant, as they may find it challenging to assert themselves in social situations or confront others with differing opinions. These leaders will perhaps prioritize harmony and avoid situations that could potentially lead to conflict or disagreement.

Therefore, we believe that an individual who scores high on the achievement motive and high on Extraversion, would not be a humble leader. The seventh hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 7: The achievement motive is more negatively related to humble leadership when Extraversion is high, than when Extraversion is low.

		Extraversion	
		High	Low
Achievement	High	This leader focuses on their own success, and not the teams' goals. This leader does not exhibit humble leadership.	This leader is conflict-avoidant, prioritize harmony and avoid conflict-related situations. This leader does not exhibit humble leadership.
	Low	This leader is generous and helpful, is curious, talkative and asks questions. This leader exhibit humble leadership.	This leader does not give feedback or praise to their team. Does not exhibit humble leadership.

Figure 2: Channelling effect Extraversion and Achievement motive

Honesty-Humility and affiliation motive

An individual who scores high on the affiliation motive has a need for social interactions and a connection with others. The affiliation motive is also associated with individuals who do more to establish, maintain and nurture these relationships (Lang et al., 2012). Honesty-Humility is a personality trait that is characterized by a willingness to listen to and learn from others, a recognition of one's own limitations and imperfections, and a focus on the needs

and perspectives of others over your own ego and status (Kelemen et al., 2023). A leader who scores high on the Honesty-Humility dimension and high on the affiliation motive, will probably be nurturing, ask questions and guide their followers so they can reach their goals. They may also care for their followers and have a good professional relationship with them.

Additionally, these leaders may like their workplace and have a positive attitude towards other and new employees. This leader probably wants feedback so they can improve their managerial style, as well as the organization. In addition, this leader could have the wish to learn from others, and especially from their followers. We also believe a leader with this combination will recognize their followers' capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses, as well as their own. We believe this combination aligns well with Owens et al. (2013) three factors; appreciation of others' strengths, teachability and willingness to view oneself accurately.

A leader who scores low on the Honesty-Humility dimension and high on affiliation, may pick out their favourite followers, and perhaps make it obvious that these employees are their favourites (Steinmann et al., 2016). Because of this, they might not promote fairness, transparency, and equal treatment of their followers. Additionally, a leader who scores low on Honesty-Humility will have a tendency to exhibit behavioural traits such as insincerity and manipulativeness (Ogunfowora & Bourdage, 2014). Especially, since they do score high on affiliation, the leader may be manipulative or be insincere to the followers they do not favour. A leader scoring low on Honesty-Humility and scoring high on affiliation, would not be humble.

By scoring high on the Honesty-Humility dimension as well as having a high affiliation motive, we believe a leader would be humble. Based on the above-mentioned, we therefore hypothesize:

Hypothesis 8: The affiliation motive is more positively related to humble leadership when Honesty-Humility is high, than when Honesty-Humility is low.

		Honesty-Humility	
		High	Low
Affiliation	High	This leader is other-oriented, interested in their followers, and will help their team reach their goals. This leader is more likely to exhibit humble leadership.	This leader could have favourites and treat followers differently. Does not promote fairness, transparency, and equal treatment. This leader does not exhibit humble leadership.
	Low	This leader is helpful and generous to their followers. Can be perceived as a humble leader.	This leader is poor at giving feedback, not humble and anti-social. This leader would not exhibit humble leadership.

Figure 3: Channelling effect Honesty-Humility and Affiliation motive

Agreeableness and power motive

We stated in our hypothesis 4 that power motivated people are negatively related to humble leadership. However, if we include the explicit trait Agreeableness as a moderator, we believe the leader will be humble. Agreeableness is characterized by a person's tendency to be cooperative, empathetic, and to be supportive to other people. Individuals who score high on the power motive have a need to influence other people or groups, and seek to limit others' impact on themselves (Lang et al., 2012). Power motivated people are also more talkative, and being agreeable can lead to gentler approaches to followers, which is in line with humble leadership behaviour (Winter, 1991).

If a leader scores high on Agreeableness and power, this will result in a decrease in personalized power, and they would be a leader who uses their power to influence the organization for the better. With this combination the leader may be able to work collaboratively with others and build good relationships with their followers (Blake et al., 2022). Leaders exhibiting these traits may also demonstrate an inclination to provide and facilitate opportunities for their followers, thereby enabling them to pursue and achieve their professional goals. In addition, they will be able to differentiate their followers' strengths and weaknesses and appreciate these. Also, they can be able to accurately assess their own capabilities and will know their own limitations. Furthermore, as they are leaders who wants the best for their organization, they would appreciate their followers' feedback.

However, if you score low on Agreeableness and high on power, this can result in the leader desiring personalized power. With this combination the leader may only use their power and influence for their own personal good. This leader would perhaps not care about their followers' feedback unless they can take credit for it themselves. This combination could be manipulative, insincere, and fraudulent. Consequently, leaders exhibiting any of these characteristics may lack the capacity to view oneself accurately. Furthermore, leaders who score low on Agreeableness and scoring high on the power motive may be competitive and focus on personal goals rather than interpersonal harmony. Therefore, it does not align with Owens et al. (2013) core dimensions of humble leadership.

We therefore believe a leader who sores high on Agreeableness and high on the power motive will be a humble leader. Our last hypotheses are therefore:

Hypothesis 9: The power motive is more positively related to humble leadership when Agreeableness is high, than when Agreeableness is low.

		Agreeableness	
		High	Low
Power	High	Motivated to influence others and lead them in a way that is gentle, avoids leaderal criticism and provides opportunities for their followers. This leader leads in a humble way.	The leader is not goal oriented, may have a sense of leaderalized power, and lack the capacity to view oneself accurately. This leader does not lead in a humble way.
	Low	The leader is very nice, it is easy to have a good time, but they seem to resist taking a leadership role and do not want to influence others. This leader leads in a humble way.	This leader is anti-social and do not want the leadership role. The leader does not exhibit humble leadership.

Figure 4 Channelling effect Agreeableness and Power motive

3.0 Methods

In this chapter we will describe our study's method. The research strategy and design will be explained. We have conducted a quantitative study to better understand the concept of humble leadership, and how it relates to personality traits and implicit motives. This will give us a broad overall picture of the topic. We have used both primary and secondary data. This means that we have used both data we have gathered, and that others have gathered (Ringdal, 2018). We wished to only use primary data to study moral leadership in Norway but had to supplement with data gathered for a similar project in Belgium, to be able to analyse the data properly.

3.1 Research design

We have chosen to look pragmatically at the choice between the various research methods (Ringdal, 2018). Since our problem statement and previous research on humble leadership, and leadership in general points to a quantitative method. Our study is a survey based on a cross-sectional study (Ringdal, 2018). Stock & Watson (2020) defines cross-sectional data as data which is collected on different entities. An advantage of using cross-sectional data is that we can learn more about relationships among variables by studying differences across people, firms, or other economic entities during a single period (Stock & Watson, 2020).

The results from our study will be part of a larger study on moral leadership. Therefore, we used the same design as an ongoing project at Ghent University in Belgium. It consisted of two Modules. In module 1 leaders were asked to take a HEXACO 60-item personality test, and answer questions about their follower. For the followers in module 1, instead of taking the personality test they evaluated their leader's leadership style. In this survey control items were incorporated to verify that participants were paying adequate attention. Both leaders and followers answered demographic questions in Module 1. Module 2 was identical for both leaders and followers and consisted of the Motive-Self Categorization test for their implicit motives. We estimated that respondents would spend 10-15 minutes to finish module 1, and 20-40 minutes on module 2. Because the survey had only been done in Dutch, we first had to translate the MCS test. As we do not speak Dutch, we first translated it to

English using the translation website Deeple.com. One of the researchers then translated it from English to Norwegian. To ensure the translation was correct, the other researcher translated it from Norwegian back to English again. This ensured that no important information or content was lost. The background information was translated using the same method. The HEXACO questionnaire, however, already had an approved Norwegian translation we could use. The feedback that was provided to the respondents on the HEXACO test was translated directly from English to Norwegian, as there did not exist an official translation.

3.2 Procedure

Our sample of participants is a convenience sample, because we have recruited from our networks (Ringdal, 2018). Participants have been recruited from several different industries, which secured diversity in the sample. Every leader that participated had to be evaluated by their follower. When we recruited a leader, we asked them to choose the follower who had worked for the company the longest, if possible. However, there is no guarantee they complied with this request. There were two requirements to take the survey: the respondents must have been in the workforce for more than one year and have at least 40% employment. The rationale was to recruit participants from our network and from different organizations. This would secure a wide range of fields as well as different personality types. If participation was encouraged or mandated by top management in an organization, we would have gotten more respondents and a wider sample. To recruit such organizations, we approached 103 businesses by e-mail, but they were not interested in participating. Consequently, all respondents have been recruited from either our network or respondents that recruited for us in the organization they are working in. A resulting advantage is that our selection is diverse and spread across several different sectors and organizations.

We were four master students responsible for the recruitment of respondents. To ensure that every respondent received the same initial information about the study, we made a standardized set of templates we could use (Appendix 1). The templates shared a common structure, with variations in content tailored to the specific target group (i.e., leaders,

followers, or businesses). When they agreed to participate and had arranged the participation of a follower or leader, they received an e-mail with the links to module 1 and module 2. The e-mail had information on how long the surveys were estimated to take, and very brief information about what the study entailed. In the link to module 1 they found an informed consent form, which they had to approve. The Belgian respondents were also recruited by students, in a similar way as the Norwegians. Every organization that was approached by us received the same invitation to participate.

The topic we informed the respondents that we were investigating were leadership styles, personality, and motivation. We chose not to be open about researching moral leadership, as we thought it could have influenced how the leaders answered the questions. We feared that if they knew the full scope of the research, they would give answers that portrayed them and their company in a more beneficial light. To motivate the respondents to take the survey, we set up automatic response for the results on the HEXACO test and the Motive-Self Categorization test. As it was not necessary for the followers to take the personality test, we provided them the link to the official HEXACO test that they could take if they were interested.

3.3 Participants

We initially received responses from a total of 42 complete dyads, consisting of one leader and their follower, and supplemented them with a random subsample of 100 Belgian dyads, resulting in a combined dataset of 142 dyads. It is worth noting that some of the participants who agreed to take part in the study recruited additional individuals from their workplace, which contributed to the overall sample size.

In the final sample the criteria for participating were that they must be at least 21 years old, have a minimum of 2 years of work experience, and be employed at least 80% or full-time. This was stricter than originally intended, but we made this choice to have the same criteria as the Belgian sample. Upon reviewing our dataset, we found that three participants did not

meet these criteria and subsequently removed them from the sample. Additionally, eight participants were excluded as they answered the control questions wrong and failed the attention checks. Thus, resulting in a final sample of 131 complete dyads.

In the final sample of 131 dyads, there was 83 female and 48 male followers. Amongst leaders there were 63 females and 68 males. 96 dyads were from Belgium, and 35 from Norway. For followers, the minimum age was 21, the maximum age was 64, with a mean age of 40.48 and a standard deviation of 11.16. In the case of leaders, the age range was the same, from 21 to 64, but with a higher mean age of 45.53 and a slightly lower standard deviation of 9.70. The respondents were recruited from a wide variety of sectors (Appendix 2).

When it comes to the education of our respondents 35.11% have a higher education from a non-university institution. 53.43% of the respondents have higher education from a university, and 11.45% have completed secondary education. The majority of the dyads maintain regular contact, with most dyads being in communication daily or at least 2-3 times per week. A small proportion, only 8%, report contact once per week or less. 81% of the followers perceive their relationships with their leader as close or very close, while a mere 1.5% characterize it as distant. Furthermore, in 94% of the dyads, the follower and the leader belong to adjacent hierarchical levels. The respondents worked in different industries (Appendix 2).

3.4 Dropout

Dropout in a quantitative study refers to the phenomenon where participants do not complete the study or withdraws from it (Ringdal, 2018). This can affect the validity and generalizability of the findings, and it is important to consider the reasons for the dropout. Addressing issues due to the dropout is important to ensure the study's credibility. Most participants did not give a reason for dropping out, but those that did listed health issues, lack of time and inability to recruit a co-participant as their main reasons. To reduce dropout, we strived to give clear and precise information about what the study would entail

for the respondents. We asked everyone to complete both modules within one week, and followed up on those who did not.

The dropout rate was assessed for both followers and leaders. Initially, we contacted 31 followers, of which 21 agreed to participate, resulting in a dropout rate of 32.26% for this group. We reached out to 71 leaders, and 35 of them agreed to join the study, leading to a dropout rate of 50.70%. We sent questionnaires to a total of 64 dyads. Out of these, we received complete responses from 42 dyads, indicating a completion rate of 65.63%. A completion rate of 60 % is considered normal (Ringdal, 2018). Eight individuals actively withdrew themselves from the study, with seven of them being leaders and one being a follower. Additionally, one dyad failed to complete any modules between the two of them, one follower did not answer any modules, and two leaders did not answer any.

The incomplete responses primarily consisted of participants who answered module 1 but did not proceed with module 2. As a result, the data collection process experienced a certain level of dropout and attrition. As this was a normal rate of dropout, we do not think it poses a threat to the validity.

3.5 Measures

The measures used in this study were the 60-item HEXACO personality trait model, a measure on humble, servant, authentic, ethical leadership and transformational styles, and the Motive-Self Categorization test for implicit motives.

3.5.1 HEXACO

To measure the participating leader's personality, we have used the HEXACO-60 model of personality structure. The HEXACO test **includes** several dimensions, these are Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience (Ashton & Lee, 2009). We chose to use the 60-item version to conduct the study, as opposed to the 100-item version. This was to give us a higher chance of successful recruiting because it takes less time. The main reason for choosing HEXACO was because it includes the dimension Honesty-Humility, which is unique. By exploring these six

dimensions, the model helps create a comprehensive profile of an individual's personality and can provide valuable insights into their behaviour, motivations, and interpersonal relationships.
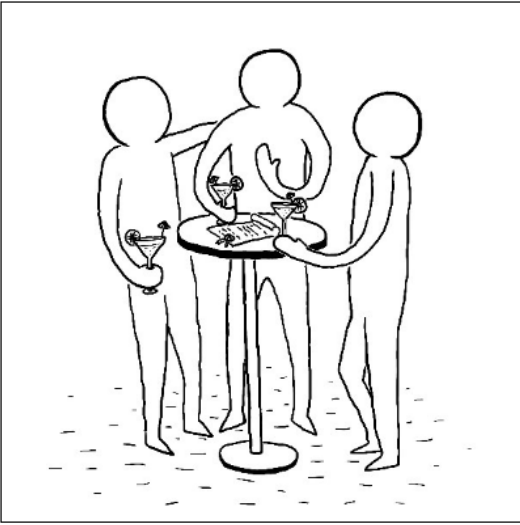
3.5.2 Moral leadership measures

To measure the humble leadership style we used Owens et al. (2013) nine-item scale. This includes three different core dimensions of humble leadership; willingness to view oneself accurately, a displayed appreciation of others' strengths and contributions, and teachability. To identify the leader's leadership styles, the followers would rate several statements about their leader. One statement from the survey for humble leadership was "My leader actively seeks feedback, even if it is critical", which stems from the factor "Willingness to view oneself accurately". Another statement was "My leader shows appreciation for the unique contribution of others", which is from the second factor "Appreciation of others' strengths". The same procedure was done for the leadership styles servant, authentic and ethical which was based on different research articles (Brown et al., 2005; Liden et al., 2015; Neider & Schriesheim, 2011). We used followers to report on their leaders because leaders who claim to be humble are not necessarily perceived as humble by their followers (Rego et al., 2017). According to Davis et al. (2010) self-reported humility may, in fact, indicate low levels of humility for certain individuals.

3.5.3 Motive self-categorization test (MSC)

To measure implicit motives we used the Motive-Self Categorization (MSC) test developed by Runge & Lang (2019) through their research. The test is used to measure participants implicit motives. The MSC consists of two different parts. During the first part of the test, the respondent is presented with 15 drawings of different social scenes. They are instructed to freely imagine a store based on the picture, as well as to point out one character as the main character of their story. For each picture they answer the following questions: (1) "What is important for the person in this situation and what is the person doing?", (2) "How does the person feel?", and (3) "Why does the person feel this way?". See Picture 1 for reference.

The second part of the MSC test consists of the self-categorization (Runge & Lang, 2019). They are shown each picture and their story again. They are then asked to indicate a single statement that is the most fitting to the story they wrote about the picture. See Picture 2. There are six different statements for each picture and an option for when none of the statements fit their story. When respondents choose the statement that best fits their story, the options are automatically recoded to one of the three implicit motives.

Picture 1: Part 1, question 6 in the MSC-test

O	A	The person tries to concentrate on her work, is distracted but wants to focus on a goal.
O	B	The person feels superior to the others and is maybe carrying out her duty as supervisor.
O	C	The person presents herself or her work and is maybe proud of what she achieved.
O	D	The person presents something, wants to receive attention and be appreciated or leave a good impression.
O	E	The person is interested in getting to know the other person, to strengthen an existing relationship or clarify something.
O	F	The person wants to influence or convince others but might also feel a bit insecure.
O	G	None of the statements fits my story.

Picture 2: Part 2, question 3. Coding of the story

3.6 Data analysis

3.6.1 Validity and reliability

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument, test, or measurement accurately measures the concept or construct it is intended to assess (Ringdal, 2018). In our study we are using well documented measures, which provided a solid foundation for interpreting the results and generalizing the findings to the broader population or context. The translation was important, to ensure that we measured what was intended. The sample has dyads from a broad spectre of sectors and a good distribution across education levels, which makes it possible to generalize. The control variables contribute to the validity of the study, because it allowed us to make sure that the results were not just valid for a specific group of leaders. The research design, where followers evaluate their leaders' leadership style, ensures a more unbiased and truthful reporting. Multicollinearity may occur when an independent variable is highly correlated with one or more of the other independent variables in a multiple regression model (Stock & Watson, 2020). This can undermine the statistical significance of an independent variable and hurt the validity. To test for this, we did a VIF test on each model.

Reliability refers to the consistency, stability, and dependability of a research instrument, test, or measurement (Ringdal, 2018). High reliability is essential for ensuring the quality of research findings, as it indicates that the instrument is measuring the intended construct with minimal error or variability. Cronbach's alpha is a measure that falls between 0 and 1 and used to assess the internal consistency. That is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. In essence, reliability is the correlation between a test and itself (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). There are varying opinions on the acceptable range of alpha values, with some suggesting 0,7 to 0,95 (Ringdal, 2018; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Previous studies have shown that the HEXACO inventory dimensions have a test-retest reliability of 0.88 (Henry et al., 2022). In our study Cronbach's alpha was 0.75, 0.76, 0.82, 0,66, 0.78 and 0.81 for honesty/humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and

Openness to Experience, respectively. Only Agreeableness was below the acceptable range, with 0.66. Humble leadership had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89. Because it is challenging to calculate Cronbach's alpha for the MSC, we used the calculations from Runge & Lang (2019). These are 0.26, 0.11 and 0.42 for affiliation, achievement, and power, respectively.

3.6.2 Ethical guidelines

When approaching potential respondents, we gave them clear information about what the study entailed, and how it would be conducted. They were given some information about the topic of researched, but it was not disclosed that we would look specifically at moral leadership styles. Before anyone agreed to participate, we let them know how much time they could expect to spend on each module.

We also gave information about our privacy policy. This involved informing that the survey was anonymous. Because we asked family members, friends, and other people in our network to take the survey it was crucial that they knew this beforehand. Furthermore, a third-party PhD candidate prepared the data and anonymized it so it could not be traced back to the respondents before we started to analyse it. All respondents were informed that they could withdraw from the study if they wanted to. They could also ask us to delete their answers if it was still tied to their personal information. The project was approved by Sikt (Sikt.no, n.d.).

3.7 Weaknesses

When we recruited dyads, we mainly tried to recruit the leader first. As we thought this could increase the likelihood that the follower also agreed to take the survey. We did inform the leader that they should choose the follower he or she has been working with the longest. However, some leaders could not recruit the follower that had the longest tenure. If this was the case, they could choose freely themselves. One drawback of this approach is that the leader's selection of followers based on personal connection could potentially bias the evaluation of the leader by the followers.

The requirements to take the test was that the respondents have been in the workforce for at least two years and have at least 80 % employment. However, it was not a requirement that the dyads had been working together for two years. Those who had been working with their leader for a short time might not be able to evaluate them very well. We registered that many respondents spent several hours to complete module 2. This could be due to losing focus and could have led to them rushing the last part of the test.

One of the dangers by having a voluntary online survey is that participation is appealing only people who are dutiful in nature and have a good employee-leader relationship. This can result in a biased dataset.

One weakness with the MSC test is that it is possible that none of the items fit the respondents story (Runge & Lang, 2019). If we used expert coders, they still would be able to code these stories and put them in a categorization. Furthermore, the concept of generating a narrative based on an image may elicit varying levels of appeal among individuals, with some finding it engaging while others may perceive it as inconsequential. It is plausible that individuals who do not resonate with the image-based approach might regard it as trivial, potentially influencing their test responses and overall test participation.

An important consideration pertains to the potential lack of knowledge regarding potential cultural variations in personality traits, implicit motives, and leadership between the Norwegian and Belgian samples. While this could be viewed as a limitation, it also offers the advantage of enhancing the sample size and introducing diversification.

4.0 Results

In this chapter we will present the analysis of our study. To systematize the analyses, we have chosen to distinguish between a correlation analysis and a regression analysis. All analyses were done in R-studio.

4.1 Correlation analysis

Table 1: Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of the variables.

Measure	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Gender	1.52	0.50												
2. Age	45.53	9.70	0.16											
3. Tenure	8.16	7.48	0.02	0.49**										
4. Honesty-humility	3.81	0.52	-0.16	0.27**	0.00	(0.75)								
5. Emotionality	2.80	0.60	-0.50**	-0.10	-0.06	-0.07	(0.76)							
6. Extraversion	3.77	0.50	0.03	0.08	0.03	-0.05	-0.18*	(0.82)						
7. Agreeableness	3.32	0.47	-0.10	0.20*	0.06	0.31**	-0.06	-0.06	(0.66)					
8. Conscientiousness	3.78	0.52	-0.06	0.03	-0.02	0.08	0.15	0.02	-0.16	(0.78)				
9. Openness to experience	3.24	0.67	0.15	0.32**	0.16	0.11	-0.16	0.21*	-0.02	0.04	(0.81)			
10. Power motive	5.67	1.94	0.11	0.08	-0.06	-0.19*	-0.01	0.21*	0.05	0.14	0.02	(0.42)		
11. Affiliation motive	2.63	1.69	-0.15	-0.01	0.13	0.14	-0.07	0.08	0.05	-0.22**	-0.03	-0.05**	(0.26)	
12. Achievement motive	3.09	1.65	-0.10	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.17	-0.14	0.05	0.07	-0.04	-0.35**	-0.08	(0.11)
13. Humble leadership	4.16	0.56	-0.01*	0.07	-0.10	0.08	0.04	0.17	0.10	-0.01	0.10	-0.36	-0.10	0.07

Note. N=131. M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Cronbach's alpha in parentheses.
$* p < 0.05$.
$** p < 0.01$.

The only correlation we see in the dependent variable humble leadership is with gender. The negative correlation indicates that humble leadership is more predominant in woman than men. Age has a positive correlation with the trait Honesty-Humility, indicating that leaders get more honest and humbler as they get older. Age is also positively correlated with Openness to Experience, which suggest that the older they get the more open they are to new ideas and perspectives. There is also a positive correlation with Agreeableness. We also found that female leaders score higher on the trait Emotionality then men.

Honesty-Humility is positively correlated with Agreeableness, which supports Gylfason et al., (2016). It is also negatively correlated with the power motive. Emotionality is negatively correlated with Extraversion, indicating that emotional leaders are more introverted. Conscientiousness is negatively correlated to the affiliation motive. The power motive is

negatively correlated with both the affiliation and achievement motives. This is not in line with previous findings, as correlations between implicit motives are usually low (Runge et al., 2020). Our sample on average has a lower score on affiliation motive and achievement motive, and a high score on power motive. This is consistent with previous findings (Runge et al., 2020).

4.2 Regression analysis

To test our hypotheses, we conducted multiple regression analyses to predict humble leadership with the six personality traits, the three implicit motives and the channelling hypotheses. To examine our 6 hypotheses, we made five different models. We first fitted a model with only control variables (Model 1). Subsequently, we included the six traits of the HEXACO inventory (Model 2). Then we included the three implicit models (Model 3). We then included both the HEXACO traits and the implicit motives (Model 4). Finally, we fitted a model with the HEXACO traits, the implicit motives, and the interactions for the channelling hypotheses. To be able to compare the variables with different scales in the models we standardized them using the scale() function in R. This created new variables with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Regression analyses predicting humble leadership with control variables, implicit motives and explicit traits.

Parameter	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			Model 5		
	Est.	t	ß	Est.	t	ß	Est.	t	ß	Est.	t	ß	Est.	t	ß
Coefficients (b)															
Intercept	0.54	1.92 .		0.52	1.55		0.57	2.00*		0.59	1.76 .		0.40	1.22	
Gender	-0.36	-2.02*	-0.36	-0.34	-1.61	-0.34	-0.38	-2.10*	-0.38	-0.39	-1.82	-0.39 .	-0.29	-1.41	-0.292
Age	0.01	0.05	0.01	-0.09	-0.78	-0.09	0.00	-0.03	-0.00	-0.10	-0.90	-0.10	-0.08	-0.74	-0.08
Tenure	-0.10	-0.96	-0.10	-0.08	-0.81	-0.08	-0.08	-0.76	-0.08	-0.05	-0.53	-0.05	-0.07	-0.70	-0.07
Honesty-humility				0.03	0.36	0.04				0.06	0.54	0.06	0.03	0.29	0.03
Emotionality				0.00	0.02	0.00				-0.02	-0.20	-0.02	0.00	0.03	0.00
Extraversion				0.16	1.80	0.16 .				0.20	2.11*	0.20	0.21	2.18	0.21*
Agreeableness				0.10	1.08	0.102				0.10	1.03	0.10	0.10	1.09	0.10
Conscientiousness				-0.01	-0.17	-0.02				-0.05	-0.57	-0.05	-0.11	-1.18	-0.11
Openness to experience				0.13	1.36	0.13				0.12	1.25	0.12	0.14	1.43	0.14
Power							-0.01	-0.07	-0.01	-0.06	-0.49	-0.06	-0.09	-0.79	-0.09
Affiliation							-0.12	-1.09	-0.12	-0.19	-1.68	-0.19 .	-0.21	-1.96	-0.21 .
Achievement							0.04	0.45	0.04	0.05	0.55	0.05	0.06	0.58	0.06
Honesty-humility:Affiliation													0.12	1.41	0.12
agreeableness:Power													0.34	3.52	0.34**
Extraversion:Achievement													-0.08	-0.82	0.35
R^2	0.04			0.10			0.06			0.13			0.22		
F	1.80			1.45			1.24			1.43			2.16		

Note. N=131. Est= Estimate.
Dfs: Model 1: 127, Model 2: 121, Model 3:124, Model 4:118, Model 5: 115
* $p < 0.05$.
** $p < 0.01$.
. $p < 0.10$

We found no evidence of multicollinearity in our data. To test for this, we calculated the VIF for each predictor. No variance inflation factor had a median greater than 1.5 in any model, which suggest that there is no significant presence of multicollinearity (Ringdal, 2018). The Breusch-Pagan test were done to test for homoskedasticity in the regression Model 5. The p-value was 0.76>0.05, and we concluded that there were no heteroskedasticity in the model (Stock & Watson, 2020).

Models 1, 2 and 3 does not account for a substantial amount of variance, with an R^2 of 0.04, 0.10 and 0.06, respectively. The F-statistic is 1.8, 1.45 and 1.24, respectively. The degrees of freedom for the denominator are 127, 121 and 124, respectively. The p-values are all greater than 0.05. This suggest that the predictors collectively do not have a statistically significant effect on the outcome variable humble leadership. Model 4 does account for a substantial amount of variance with an R^2 of 0.13, which can be considered as a medium effect (Cohen, 2013). The F-statistic is 1.43, with a p-value of 1.16. That is not significant at the 5 % level. In model 5 the R^2 were 0.22, which indicate that these variables account for a large amount of

variance in humble leadership. The F-statistic were 2.16, with degrees of freedom for the denominator of 115. The median residual is 0.03 and 0.06 for model 1 and model 5 respectively, which suggest that the model's prediction is accurate and there is no significant bias in the predictions. To test if the added variables significantly improved the fit of the models, we made ANOVA tables. We found that the F-statistic for the change in sum of squares from Model 1 to Model 2, 3 and 4 all had corresponding p-values greater than 0.05. This indicates that the additional predictors in the models did not significantly improve the fit of the model over Model 1. The ANOVA table of Model 1 and Model 5 show that model 5 has a smaller residual sum of squares than model 1. This suggests a better model fit for Model 5.

In Model 4 and Model 5, the trait Extraversion is a predictor for humble leadership. The β is 0.20 (p=0.04) in Model 4, which means that for one standard deviation change in Extraversion, humble leadership will increase by 0.20. In Model 5, the β is 0.21 (p=0.02), which means that for one standard deviation change in Extraversion, humble leadership will increase by 0.21. In Model 2 the trait is a moderately significant predictor at the 10 % level. This supports hypothesis 3, that Extraversion is positively related to humble leadership. See Figure 7.

In Model 5, the interaction between the trait Agreeableness and power motive is a predictor for humble leadership. The β is 0.34 (p=0.00) which means that for one standard deviation change in the interaction between Agreeableness and power, humble leadership will increase by 0.34. This implies that power motivation is correlated with humble leadership, but only when the leader also is agreeable. This supports hypothesis 9, that the power motive is more positively related to humble leadership when Agreeableness is high than when Agreeableness is low. See Figure 7. Figure 5 shows the direction of the significant interaction.
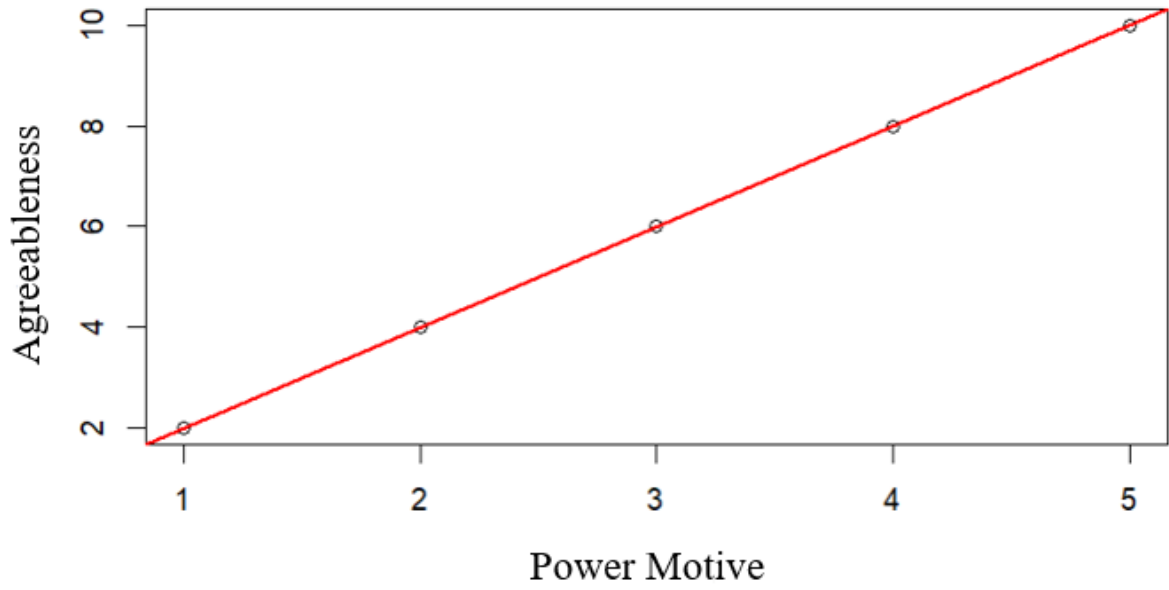
Figure 5: Scatter Plot with Regression Line of the interaction between Power motive and Agreeableness
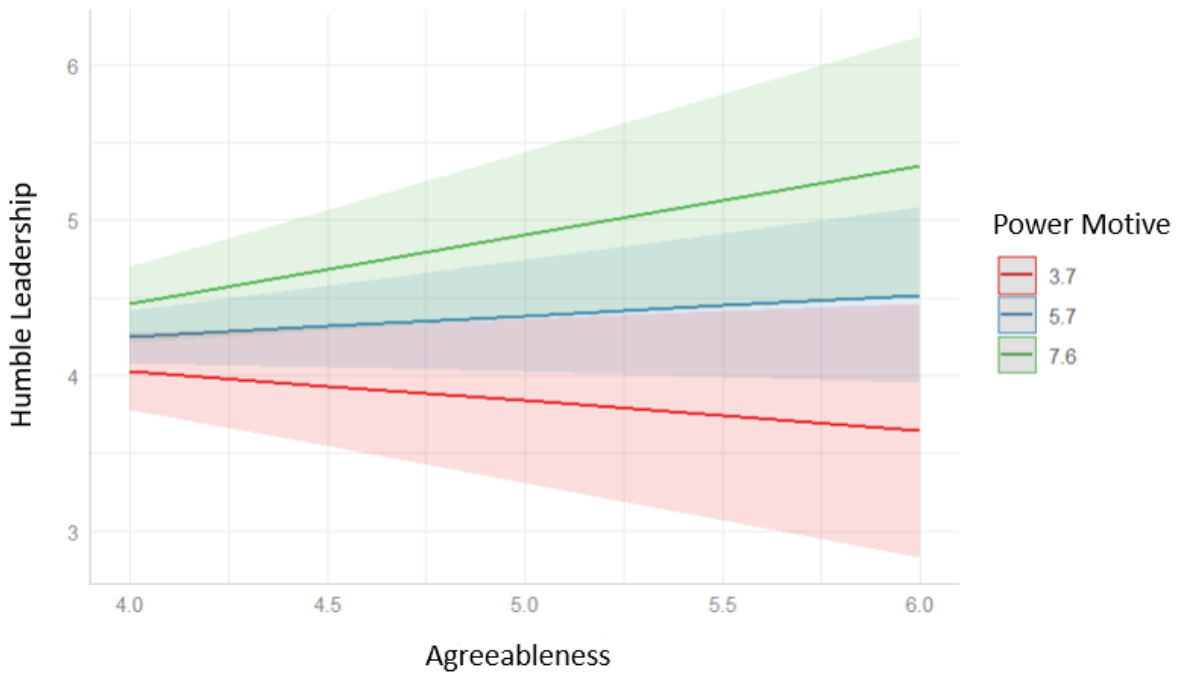

Figure 6: Predicted values of Humble Leadership

Mean Power motive	Agreeableness trend	Lower CI	Upper CI	P-value
3.74	-0.182	-0.48	0.11	0.23
5.67	0.131	-0.07	0.34	0.21
7.61	0.444	0.13	0.76	0.01

Table 3: Values of simple slope test

To interpret the significant interaction in the regression model we performed a simple slope test (Ford, 2023). In this test the non-standardized variables were used to display the relationship between them. From Figure 6 we can see that when the Power motive is set to its mean 5.7 the relationship between Agreeableness and power motive is slightly positive. Table 3 tells us that if a leader has an average power motivation, a one unit increase in Agreeableness will increase humble leadership by 0.13 points, with a 95 % confidence interval of [-0.07, 0.34]. When the power motive is one SD below its mean (3.7) the relationship is negative, a one unit increase in Agreeableness will decrease humble leadership with 0.182 points. If the power motive is above 1 SD on the other hand, the relationship is positive, a one unit increase in Agreeableness will increase humble leadership with as much as 0.44 points. The simple slope test tells us that when the power motivation is low, Agreeableness has a negative effect on humble leadership. When power motivation is high, Agreeableness has a strong positive effect on humble leadership.
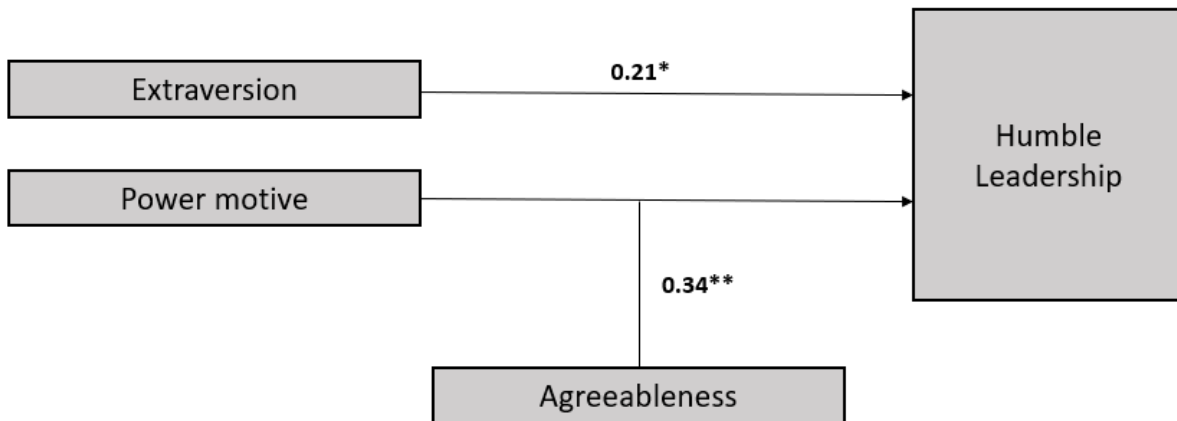
Figure 7: Conceptual framework after testing the hypotheses.

In Model 1 and Model 3 gender were significant predictors of humble leadership. The β is -0.36 and -0.38, respectively, which tells us that female leaders are on average 0.36-0.38 units more humble than male leaders. In both Model 4 and 5 Achievement is a marginally significant predictor of humble leadership. The β is -0.19 and -0.21, respectively. This implies that for every one unit increase in the achievement motive, there will be a 0.19-0.21 decrease in humble leadership. As these results are only marginally significant, we cannot draw conclusions based on them.

Our analysis did not find support for H1, H2, H4, H5, H6, H7 or H8.

4.3 Post-hoc analysis

As we wanted to explore additional relationships in the data, we carried out a post-hoc analysis. The original plan was to research humble leadership in Norwegian leaders, and so we wanted to see if there were any differences between the Belgian and Norwegian dyads. To do this we added "country" as an independent variable in Model 1 and Model 5. Both models suggest that country is a predictor for humble leadership. The β is 0.55 and 0.50 in Model 1 and Model 5, respectively. Because Belgium is coded as 1 and Norway as 2, this suggests that a Norwegian leader is between 0.50- and 0.55-units humbler than a Belgian leader. The predictor was significant in both Models, at the 0.01 level and 0.05 level.

To further investigate the relationship between humble leadership and the traits Honesty-Humility and Agreeableness we fitted new models. One model had the control variables gender and age, the HEXACO traits, the implicit motives and an interaction between Agreeableness and affiliation motive. In this model the Extraversion trait was a significant predictor for humble leadership, as before. In addition, the interaction of the affiliation motive and Agreeableness were a significant (p=0.03) predictor for humble leadership, with a β of

-0.023. This indicates that the effect on humble leadership is negative. The models F-statistic were significant with a p-value of 0.05. The R^2 were 0.16, which means that the independent variables explain 16 % of the variance. The simple slope test for this interaction tells us that at the mean level of Agreeableness, a one unit increase in affiliation motive will reduce humble leadership with -0.02 points (Appendix 3). If the Agreeableness score is one SD higher than the mean a one unit increase in affiliation motive will reduce humble leadership with 0.08 points. Both these effects are significant at the 0.05 level. This suggest that while there is a decrease in humble leadership when the leader scores high in Agreeableness and has an affiliation motive, it is a small one.

5.0 Discussion

In our study we have sought to improve our understanding of who becomes humble leaders. The overall purpose of the study was to investigate personality traits and implicit motives and how they play a role in the humble leadership style. To better understand personality traits in relation to humble leadership we conducted a test by using the HEXACO inventory. To understand their implicit motives, we used the Motive Self-Categorization test. We specifically measured how personality traits and the big three motives correlates with perceived humble leadership. Extraversion is positively correlated to humble leadership. Interestingly we also found that the power motive can be a predictor for humble leadership, if accompanied with Agreeableness. In this chapter, we will analyse our findings and discuss them in relation to previous research.

5.1 Theoretical implications

5.1.1 Main findings

Our study finds that extraverted leaders are more likely to be humble leaders, which gives support for hypothesis 3. An extraverted person can be characterized by being verbal, sociable, and warm. These facets could increase the leaders' feedback-seeking behaviour, which increases humble leadership (Kelemen et al., 2023). An extraverted leader would be more likely to ask questions, which also increases the perception of humble leadership. Our results is in line with previous findings (Maldonado et al., 2022).

There were no significant correlations between humble leadership and the power motive in our regression analysis. This does not support hypothesis 5. It is possible that the power motive did not correlate negatively with humble leadership because our sample of power motivated leaders may mostly consist of socialized power. This type of power motive does not come off as egocentric and is not in conflict with genuine care for the followers (Chusmir & Parker, 1984). Individuals with a socialized power motive use their power for institutional advancement rather than personal gain (Chusmir & Parker, 1984). This is aligned with humble leadership, where the leader focuses on the collective good over personal ambition.

We found support for hypothesis 9, that the power motive is more positively related to humble leadership when Agreeableness is high. Power-motivated people are described as being influential and encourage participation (Winter, 1973, 1991). This aligns with the collaborative and inclusive nature of humble leadership, which often involves encouraging team members to share their ideas and participate actively in decision-making processes. Power-motivated individuals are described as seeking leadership training, looking up to successful managers as role models, and showing persistence in pursuing leadership tasks (Schuh et al., 2014). This proactive attitude towards leadership development can potentially align with humble leadership, especially when combined with high Agreeableness, which might facilitate the interpersonal relationships and teamwork inherent in leadership roles. An agreeable, power-motivated leader may still desire influence and control but is also likely to consider the feelings and needs of others, aligning more closely with the principles of humble leadership.

When this type of power motivation is combined with high Agreeableness, which is a personality trait associated with cooperation and consideration for others, it can align with humble leadership. Agreeableness can further strengthen this relationship as it involves being cooperative, warm, and considerate.

While personalized power, which is characterized by a desire for direct control or dominance, may seem in conflict with humble leadership, high Agreeableness could potentially balance this aspect (Magee & Langner, 2008). If it is true that leaders with a personalized power motive are less likely to be humble leaders, this effect could have been cancelled out by the leaders with socialized power motive in the sample. It could also be the case that leaders with personalized power motive knows how to hide their negative characteristics to their followers, as they are masters of influencing others, thus resulting in practicing an impression of humble leadership (Ogunfowora & Bourdage, 2014). Power motivated leaders can also have a tendency to engage in impression management

behaviours, in which the leader hides their negative characteristics and tries to present themselves in a more favourable light (Ogunfowora & Bourdage, 2014).

Our analysis show that both a person's level of Agreeableness and their desire for power can influence how much they exhibit humble leadership. However, these two factors interact with each other in interesting ways. First, if a person does not desire power, being more agreeable makes them less likely to be a humble leader. Second, if a person has a strong desire for power, being more agreeable makes them much more likely to be a humble leader. Lastly, if a person's desire for power is just average, being agreeable does not change much about their likelihood of being a humble leader. Power motivated people are more talkative, and moderated by agreeableness it can come off as humble behaviour (Winter, 1991). In conclusion, how agreeable a person is can have different effects on their humble leadership, depending on how they score on the power motive.

Agreeableness did not act as a predictor for humble leadership, thus hypothesis 2 is not supported. Neither personality trait is correlated with humble leadership. Our study only reports on the follower's perception of their leader's style of leadership. It could be that the traits do correlate with humble leadership, but that it is not perceived as such by the followers. There is also empirical evidence that leader attributions about followers can actually influence humility. If a leader perceive their follower as more competent, they will likely engage in humble leadership (Kelemen et al., 2023). This finding contradicts previous research, which found that Agreeableness correlates positively with humble leadership (Maldonado et al., 2022).

Humble leadership and the affiliation motive have a marginally significant negative correlation. As this correlation was only marginally significant, we cannot draw any conclusions from it. If it is the case that they are indeed correlated, it could be because a humble leader with a high affiliation motive might be too focused on understanding and supporting others that they neglect other important aspects of leadership, like setting clear expectations and ensuring accountability. It could be because some perceive leaders with an

affiliation motive as someone with hidden motives (Schmidt & Frieze, 1997). Humble leaders are described as creating a positive work environment where team members feel valued and supported. Individuals with high affiliation tend to enjoy mutual friendships, avoid conflict, and be sympathetic and accommodating towards others. This could make leaders with affiliation motives reluctant to monitor their followers' performance, give negative feedback, or impose sanctions. Because these are tasks the humble leader must perform, there may be a potential disconnect, as effective leadership often requires giving constructive feedback and enforcing rules. If a leader is overly concerned with being liked, they may struggle to make tough decisions or take necessary actions that could potentially upset or disappoint others. This can make competent followers see them as less appreciative towards their expertise. Furthermore, individuals with high affiliation motive may have favourites. It can create an environment that is unequal, the feedback can be seen as unfair, and it can also result in low transparency. The mean affiliation motive in our sample were 2.63, which is quite low. The lacking correlation could thus stem from too little data on leaders with the implicit affiliation motive.

In our post-hoc analysis we found that if a leader is agreeable, and is also affiliation motivated, they are less likely to be a humble leader. While this effect is not strong, it is still interesting. When a leader has an average level of Agreeableness and their affiliation motive increases, their level of humble leadership tends to slightly decrease. However, when a leader is more agreeable than average an increase in affiliation motive can lead to a somewhat larger decrease in humble leadership. In essence, while having higher Agreeableness and a stronger affiliation motive may slightly reduce a leader's humility, the decrease is small and not drastic. This combination of trait and motive will not necessarily lead to a bad leadership style even though the leader would not be humble. They can be preoccupied with being liked by everyone, which might come in the way of leading in a humble way. None of these necessarily promotes the willingness to view oneself accurately, lets them understand their followers strengths, or teachability, which is in the core of humble leadership (Owens et al., 2013).

None of our analyses revealed correlations between the trait Honesty-Humility and humble leadership. Thus, there is no support for hypothesis 1. This is surprising, because one would think that a leader that scores high on the Honesty-Humility scale would be a humble leader. Honesty-Humility is the personality trait that most resembles humble behaviour. Even though leaders who score high on this dimension are in fact humble individuals, our findings implicate that they are not necessarily humble leaders. A person scoring high on the dimension Honesty-Humility would be sincere, honest, loyal, unassuming, and fair-minded. While there is some overlap with the characteristics of a humble leader, there is also differences. The trait Agreeableness have been argued to be similar to the Honesty-Humility trait, as they are both associated with interpersonal cooperation despite the opportunities for exploitation (Ashton et al., 2014; McCrae & Costa Jr, 2008). In our sample there is a correlation between the two traits of 0.31. Taking this into account, our results are not in line with previous research on personality and humble leadership, where Agreeableness were correlated with humble leadership (Maldonado et al., 2022). One explanation could be that the followers do not recognize the difference between a true and non-authentic humble leader. The lacking correlation could also be due to the small sample size.

Our study failed to support hypothesis 8, indicating no correlation between humble leadership and affiliation motive and Honesty-Humility. This discrepancy may be attributed to the possibility that leaders who display excessive affiliation behaviours may appear insincere or lacking authenticity. Additionally, it is important to note that our study did not differentiate between affiliative assurance and affiliative interest, as outlined by Boyatzis (1973). Leaders who experience affiliative assurance may not necessarily exhibit humble leadership qualities, as humble leaders often prioritize the needs and growth of their team members over seeking personal recognition. Furthermore, certain aspects of Honesty-Humility, such as sincerity and fairness, may not always align with the central focus of humble leadership (Kelemen et al., 2023). However, leaders with high affiliative interest tend to support and empower their followers, fostering an environment of openness and trust. These leaders actively collaboration with their followers to achieve organizational

objectives (Boyatzis, 1973). These factors might contribute to the absence of a correlation found in our study.

The findings of our study did not support hypothesis 4, as there was no correlation between humble leadership and Conscientiousness. Conscientiousness is characterized by qualities such as being organized, diligent, and adhering to personal moral standards (Ashton & Lee, 2008). While both consciousness and humble leadership are individually valuable traits, they may operate differently and prioritize distinct aspects of leadership. Consciousness may be more closely associated with task-oriented leadership behaviours, including goal setting, goal attainment, efficiency, and maintaining high standards. In contrast, humble leadership places greater emphasis on interpersonal relationships, collaboration, and fostering the growth and potential of team members (Owens et al., 2013). Interestingly, previous research have reported a positive relationship between conscientiousness and humble leadership (Maldonado et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2020). Our findings suggest the possibility that the trait of conscientiousness may not necessarily translate into the specific behaviours associated with humble leadership. It is worth considering potential factors such as sample size limitations or bias issues that may have contributed to these results.

Our study did not provide evidence for hypothesis 7. Achievement motivated individuals are concerned with upholding a standard of excellence (Lang et al., 2012). Since they are so concerned with their own performance, they might find team collaborations challenging. High Extraversion often involves a focus on social engagement, enthusiasm, and assertiveness, which could potentially reinforce the more task-focused, control-oriented tendencies of individuals with a high achievement motive.

5.1.2 Other findings

The post-hoc analysis revealed that there was more likely for Norwegian leaders to be humble than for Belgium leaders. This could be due to the high prevalence of flat structures in Norway. It is also engrained in the culture that no-one is better than others, even if they have more power or wealth (Bromgard et al., 2014). Another not so surprising find was that

female leaders score higher on the Emotionality trait than male leaders. In addition, female leaders practice humble leadership more than their male counterparts. This could eighter be because women are more humble, or it could be linked to the "women are wonderful" effect (Krys et al., 2018). This result is not in line with previous research (Swain & Korenman, 2018)

We did find that the age does have an impact on humble leadership. They are more open to experience and scores higher on Honesty-Humility than their younger counterparts. This is surprising, because one might think that older leaders are more stubborn and wants to do it their way. As they think they know the best since they probably have the longer tenure and been in the workforce for a longer period. However, this can also just be a prejudice against this age group. Since they have been in the workforce for a longer period, they know they should listen to other people's ideas.

5.2 Practical implications

The lack of correlation between personality traits and humble leadership, except Extraversion, suggests that a leader can learn how to behave humble. It might be that these leaders do not have the characteristic of a humble person, but they practice humble leadership anyway. If this is the case businesses or leaders may benefit from leader training with focus on humble leadership. It could be just as effective to act humble as it is to be humble. The fact that leaders that are motivated by power, who are also agreeable are perceived as more humble could support this claim. A leader who is not characterized as a humble person, may in fact be open to feedback, have a high level of self-awareness, and appreciate their followers' capabilities (Owens et al., 2013). Thus, they are not necessarily intrinsically humble, but may practice humble leadership. For example, a leader can be very modest, and avoid seeking attention or praise for their actions. They might also see the strengths of their followers, but does not appreciate it, in that sense where they give credit to their followers for it. Peng et al. (2020) found in their study that higher-level leader's humble leadership is positively related to lower-level leaders' humble leadership. Humble leadership can therefore influence the leadership style both upward and downward in an

organization. If an organization wants to promote humble leadership, they will be wise to start at the top.

As Norwegian leaders are rated as humbler than their Belgian counterparts, it could be worth looking into the different business cultures of the two countries. Norway's flat structure and "Janteloven" can be factors that promote humble leadership.

By identifying the personality traits, implicit motives, and external factors that contribute to humble leadership, organizations can implement more targeted interventions and strategies for fostering humble leadership and creating a more moral and responsible environment.

5.3 Limitations

The cross-sectional research design makes it impossible to infer causality. A study over time would solve this problem.

Due to difficulties recruiting Norwegian dyads, our sample size only consists of 27 % dyads from Norway. The analysis that was done on only the Norwegian sample is too small to confirm or forecast any of our hypotheses regarding Norwegian culture only. Our sample is relatively small (N=131), which could very well be too small to generalize. It also contains a broad occupational background, thus making it hard to generalize toward a subsample in a more specific field. As the survey was very time consuming and required that the leaders recruited a follower, it is probable that the sample is composed predominantly of leaders who are dutiful in nature and maintain a good relationship with their subordinates. Although, there is an equitably distributed representation of personalities, as determined by the HEXACO personality inventory. Only one follower has rated each leader, and it is in most cases the leader who have chosen their employee. That could lead to an over-representation of followers who rate their leaders too good, because they are close. It would be beneficial to have multiple follower ratings to ensure unbiased reports.

5.4 Recommendations for future research

To have a better understanding of what advantages humble leadership poses, we suggest future research may look at different organizational outcomes such as performance and employee satisfaction. It would also be beneficent to learn more about how one becomes a humble leader or how one can be experienced as one. We recommend studies on the effectiveness of training programs for leaders that involve humble leadership and other moral leadership styles. In our analysis we did not find any correlations between Honesty-Humility or Agreeableness in relation to humble leadership. We propose further research on this topic to better understand why these does not relate to each other, or if they in fact do. Our analysis does not differentiate between socialized and personalized power. Our lack of support for hypothesis 5, and the support for hypothesis 9 makes it interesting do design a survey that differentiates between the two types of power motives.

We do not focus on gender in our thesis. An interesting finding was, however, that female leaders participate more in humble leadership than their male counterparts. It would be very interesting to further study the gender differences when it comes to humble leadership in more depth.

Another interesting angle would be to see if there is any difference in culture and countries, and to research if there are more humble leaders in certain countries. It is quite well known that leaders in Norway prefer a more informal leadership style than in other countries (Sund & Lines, 2014). This can be rooted in "Janteloven", the social norm instructs people to be humble and tries to diminish the sense of pride. We found in our thesis, that leaders participate more in humble leadership in Norway than in Belgium. These are Western European countries, with some distinctions, it would however be interesting to have a sample from at least two continents where the cultural differences are even greater. Through the data collection may prove too challenging. To learn more about humble leadership in Norway there should be made studies with only dyads from Norway.

There is evidence that organizations actually promote humility in leaders (Schein, 2010). As they probably do invest more in, for example, a code of conduct and will have it implemented in their onboarding program. If researchers can differentiate between organizations that are ethical to those who are not, it would be an interesting study and worth further investigate what the organization can do to promote humble leadership.

Each of the personality traits are complex and each dimension encompasses many facets. We did find positive correlation between Extraversion and humble leadership. Further research should investigate which facets are important for this correlation, as we do not know if it is the warm emotions or their assertiveness.

6.0 Conclusion

The primary aim of this master's thesis was to uncover the underlying personality traits and implicit motives associated with humble leadership. We conducted a cross-sectional study where we gathered data on leaders' personalities and implicit motivation, along with their subordinates' evaluations of their leadership style. The HEXACO Personality Inventory was employed to encompass the dimension of Honesty-Humility. The Motive Self-Categorization (MSC) test was utilized to map out the implicit motivation of leaders and followers.

Our principal findings include a positive correlation between Extraversion and humble leadership, which aligns with previous research (Maldonado et al., 2022). We also discovered that when a leader possesses above-average power motivation and the trait of Agreeableness, it enhances the degree of humble leadership. Contrary to previous research, we found no correlation between Honesty-Humility and humble leadership. Apart from Extraversion, no personality traits correlated with humble leadership. Our study revealed a significant difference in humble leadership across countries, with Norwegian leaders demonstrating a greater degree of humble leadership.

The lack of correlation between personality traits, implicit motivation, and humble leadership may suggest that this leadership style is largely learnable, prompting organizations to prioritize ethical leadership in their training programs for leaders. Further research should be conducted to comprehend the connections between implicit motivation and humble leadership.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Templates for recruitment and participation

For å få kontakt:

Til bedrifter:

Hei!

Ønsker du å lære mer om hva som motiverer dine ansatte, og samtidig bidra til forskning på lederstil og personlighet?

I vår masteroppgave skal vi undersøke ledelsesstiler, motivasjon og personlighet. Dette gjør vi sammen med et forskerteam på OsloMet og universitetet i Gent i Belgia. Vi håper deltakelse i studien kan være av interesse for dere.

Hva innebærer det å delta?

Om du ønsker å gi dine ansatte en kartlegging av sin personlighet og motivasjonsstil kreves det bare at minst en leder og en ansatt tar undersøkelsene. Formålet med studien er å blant annet se på interaksjoner mellom leder og ansatt. Vi ønsker derfor å rekruttere ledere, og en av deres ansatte til denne studien. Undersøkelsen består av to deler som må tas innen 7 dager fra første del er gjennomført. Del 1 er estimert å ta 10-15 minutter, og del 2 er estimert å ta 20-40 minutter. Begge deler må gjennomføres. Dere kan sende undersøkelsen til så mange eller få ledere dere ønsker, det er ikke noe minimum for å delta.

Hva får du?

Alle som deltar vil få tilsendt sine resultater på testene av personlighet og motivasjon. Dette kan gi dere personlig innsikt, eller brukes som verktøy i ledergruppen. Av hensyn til personvern vil ikke bedriften få tilsendt en samlet rapport. Ved avtale kan vi presentere studiens funn i etterkant. Dere får selvfølgelig et sammendrag av studien tilsendt ved forespørsel.

Er du interessert, eller har spørsmål er det bare å ta kontakt!

Med vennlig hilsen,

Altin, Hanna, Maja og Mathias

Masterstudenter i økonomi og administrasjon OsloMet

OSLOMET

Til folk vi kjenner (ansatt):

Hei!

Jeg skriver masteroppgave om lederstiler, motivasjon og personlighet, og lurer på om du kunne tenke deg å bidra? Det innebærer å ta undersøkelser, hvor den ene gir deg svar på hvilken motivasjonsstil du har. Du kan også ta en personlighetstest. I tillegg skal ansatte vurdere lederen sin, og lederne skal vurdere sin ansatte, og ta en personlighetstest. Hvis du vil hjelpe meg må du altså få med lederen din også. Alle resultater vil bli anonymisert før vi analyserer og i det hele tatt ser resultatene.

Til folk vi kjenner (leder):

Hei!

Jeg skriver masteroppgave om lederstiler, motivasjon og personlighet, og lurer på om du kunne tenke deg å bidra? Det innebærer å ta en personlighetstest, en test av motivasjonsstil og at du vurderer en ansatt. Hvis du vil hjelpe meg må du altså få med en du er leder for også, som også skal svare på undersøkelser. Alle resultater vil bli anonymisert før vi analyserer og i det hele tatt ser resultatene.

Mail som kan sendes ut til bedrifter av en som jobber der. Tilpasset ledere

Hei,

I vår masteroppgave skal vi undersøke ledelsesstiler, motivasjon og personlighet. Dette gjør vi sammen med et forskerteam på OsloMet og universitetet i Gent i Belgia. Vi håper deltakelse i studien kan være av interesse for dere.

Hva innebærer det å delta?

For å delta i studien må også en du er leder for delta. Undersøkelsen består av to deler. Del 1 er estimert å ta 10-15 minutter, og del 2 er estimert å ta 25-40 minutter. Begge deler må gjennomføres. Del 1 består av en personlighetstest, og del 2 består av en motivasjonstest. Den ansatte skal istedenfor personlighetstesten svare på spørsmål om sin leder, men de kan også ta personlighetstesten om de selv ønsker det. Resultatene vil bli anonymisert av veileder, vi vil derfor ikke kunne se enkeltpersoners svar.

Hva får du?

Alle som deltar vil få tilsendt sine resultater på testene av personlighet og motivasjon. Av hensyn til personvern vil ikke bedriften få tilsendt en samlet rapport. Ved avtale kan vi presentere studiens funn i etterkant. Dere får selvfølgelig et sammendrag av studien tilsendt ved forespørsel.

Er du interessert, eller har spørsmål er det bare å ta kontakt med meg på sXXXXX@oslomet.no!

Med vennlig hilsen,

XXXXX

Epost med linker til ANSATTE

Emnefelt: Masteroppgave OsloMet

Hei,

Tusen takk for at du vil delta i studien vi gjør i forbindelse med vår masteroppgave. Bidraget ditt hjelper oss veldig mye!

Som tidligere forklart består studien av to moduler. I modul 1 ber vi deg først fylle ut litt bakgrunnsinformasjon. Videre skal du svare på noen spørsmål for å vurdere din leder. Modul 2 består av en test av motivasjonsstiler, og resultatene vil presenteres umiddelbart etter fullført test.

Din personlige kode er:

Link til modul 1 (10-15 min):

https://businessschool.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_43flHXV0X7kDpZA?Q_Language=NO

Link til modul 2 (20-40 min):

https://businessschool.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3mI1edVjUrgsLGe?Q_Language=NO

Du kan ta modulene hver for seg, når det passer deg best. Vi ber om at du svarer på begge skjemaene i løpet av en uke.

Ønsker du i tillegg å ta personlighetstesten din leder skal ta, finner du den nedenfor. Dette er ikke en del av studien, men du kan ta den om du ønsker det.

Link til personlighetstest

Med vennlig hilsen

Hanna, Altin, Maja og Mathias

Appendix 2. Distributions of sectors

Industry	
Agriculture, nature, and fishing	1,53%
Education, culture, and science	14,50%
Engineering, production, and construction	28,24%
Healthcare, and well-being	15,27%
Law, security, and public administration	2,29%
Media and communication	2,29%
Other	2,29%
Tourism, recreation, and hospitality	19,08%
Trades and services	19,08%
Transport and logistics	3,05%

Appendix 3. Simple slope test (Affiliation motive:Agreeableness)
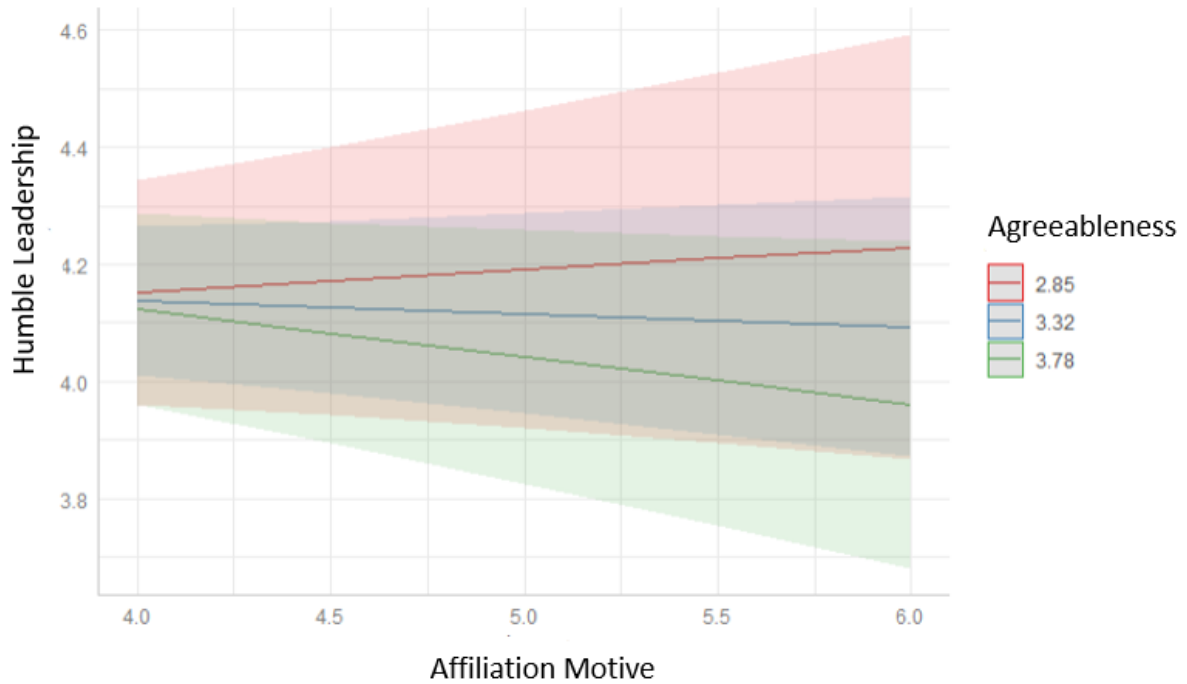
Predicted value of Humble leadership

Mean Agreeableness	Affiliation motive trend	Lower CI	Upper CI
2.85	0.04	-0.06	0.14
3.32	-0.02	-0-08	-0.04
3.78	-0.08	-0.16	-0.00

Simple slope test