

Outstanding Leadership Traits of a Superman in the History of the World, Cyrus the Great

¹Enayat Allah Aghaei and ²Alireza Shirvani

¹Department of Management, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Isfahan, Iran

²Department of Management, Islamic Azad University, Dehaghan Branch, Dehaghan, Iran

Abstract: In order to provide leadership model based on the teachings of Cyrus the great, mixed research method is used. To do this, first of all among relevant concepts 128 teachings obtained by using inductive content analysis and the available assumptions in the three general components of leadership. In the population of Experts the snowball technique was used to access the authorized number of samples and also 13 people worked on the implementation of the Delphi technique. Verification and arrangement of the extracted variables in the form of three components in Delphi questionnaire were done by using experts' opinion and its validity were approved by professors and experts of management, culture and history. Its reliability was also confirmed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient 0/961. For consensus in experts' opinion, the three-stage Delphi technique was used and in the final phase approved factors were identified by 75% of the experts that in the field of leadership traits 8 variables were referred to as "important". To determine the degree of the importance of elected leadership traits, the similarity index was calculated. The results show that the attributes of "integrity of the leader" and "self-restraint and patience", have the highest and lowest ranking among eight favorite leadership traits and some suggestions were made in line with the results. The result show that what now known as the leadership traits by the scientists, Cyrus the great had them altogether and this is a source of pride. We hope that this learnings were used not to blame the past but as a reminder to take the responsibility of our future.

Key words: Leadership, leadership teachings of Cyrus the great, leadership traits, favorite leadership traits

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, building the first State Court and ruling a vast territory in 2,500 year ago with that geographical and cultural diversity was not possible without having outstanding human-divine characteristics, without worthwhile habits of thought and belief, without power of wisdom, without adherence to the outstanding principles and rules. A successful leader has a set of attributes that other people hardly have the entire collection. Wherever a coordinate and resonant group is observed there is one or several initiative individual(s) that changed "I"'s to "we". The individual(s) called "leader".

Statement of the problem: A brief consideration of the needs of today's society shows that it is needed idealist, compassionate and competent managers in all areas with strong and higher incentives. It may be said the old management has no advice for us. But, it should be noted that in oriental culture we have all the main strategies to manage affairs in large scales. In the management of Cyrus the great who had "the management of one of the most well-run governments of all historical periods" there is a question whether the use of force and bayonet was

enough to handle it or there was used administrative and human mechanisms and advanced leadership styles to run the empire? (Yuki, 1994). Considering the authority of Cyrus as the first prominent director and geographical spread of Persia and its cultural and conditional diversity of that time, it is clear that management of Cyrus had a certain model. The identification of such a model was the basis for the study to identify what the rule of attributes and features of Cyrus was along with the principles and skills of leadership in the success?

The importance and necessity of the research: Good reputation of Cyrus as the 87th most influential man of all time (100 influential man of all time, 2007) was because of his leadership and management style over this vast land on three continents at that time. His charter shows that he is unprecedented and liberal while the inscriptions of kings in those days stated the bloodshed and killing of innocent people. Doing such research in the community for the first time with novel and innovative way can provide a practical and applied model for the community and world managers in accordance with Iranian culture. So, knowing the leadership characteristics of Cyrus the great is informative in any case. Such reasons are as

follows: the emphasis of contingency management on paying attention to indigenous elements, the need for native patterns of leadership, inefficiency of most theories of leadership with the conditions of the country, lack of Research in the field of native model of leadership consistent with the cultural principles of the society, very little knowledge of Iranian community about historical myths of Persia, Cyrus the great as the founder of the first government bureaucracy and 87th the most influential man in the world at all time, paying attention to every aspect of modern leadership and management in ancient Persia, modeling of successful managers in the world (the world's largest bureaucracies managers) from leadership of Cyrus the great, the importance and lasting value of the achievements that have survived from the past, outstanding traits of Achaemenid Cyrus as the model for that day and today's world.

Research objectives:

- Extraction and explanation of important teachings of Cyrus the great leadership in the form of leadership traits
- Ranking the important leadership traits based on the teachings of Cyrus the great

Research questions:

- What are the important teachings of Cyrus the great leadership in the areas of leadership traits?
- How important are the variables of leadership traits based on similarity index?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study based on its goal is a fundamental research. In terms of method is a deductive content analysis. For content analysis there are various stages including (Dandamayev, 2012): The first step is the preparation phase (coding and stating the extraction addresses from any teaching). To identify and extract teachings of Cyrus the great leadership at first, the library method is used and by referring to authentic historical documents and books and resources note taking is done. After extracting concepts and teachings and explaining the concept in the introduction of any teaching, the experts were asked to identify the fitness of any teaching with the concepts by selecting a number from 1-9 which respectively represent the lowest and highest teaching fitness with the concept expressed in every area from the perspective of experts.

Second step: reviewing and explaining management categories that represents each concept in the existing default- regardless of the environment and circumstances, leaders can be successful and efficient through correct

understanding and correct application of the three components in leadership. Therefore, using of library studies and according to previous research it is found that among extracted teachings 30 cases are related to leadership traits (Subject of this study). Third stage: the processing of collected data-based on the following sub-stages: Identifying leadership traits 55, 65 and 75% of experts were referred to as important during the three stages of Delphi. Ranking of variables based on similarity to ideal solution (TOPSIS)

Population and sample: The population is all qualified management experts at universities in the country that due to the uncertainty of the population and restrictions on access to experts and geographical distribution snowball sampling method is used. Thirteen experts contributed in the research during Delphi stages.

Methods and Tools of collecting and analyzing data: To identify variables, the researcher by taking notes from books, documents, sources and scientific documentation, extracts the cultural teachings of the leadership traits and it is investigated in the form of Delphi questionnaire by asking questions about the appropriateness of each of the extracted factors from the teachings of Cyrus the great with today's categories and using nine-option spectrum to be seen which leadership traits is more important in the perspective of the experts based on the appropriateness. In order to complete the using of second hand sources, knowledge with no scientific sources and logical reasoning is also used. During Delphi process, it becomes clear what proportion of what factors is accepted by experts and it is done with the aim of reaching a consensus in decision making. In the quantitative analysis Delphi technique was used to identify the major categories of leadership traits and TOPSIS technique is used to rank leadership traits.

Reliability and validity: Due to the limited access to the first hand sources, it was used Eastern and Greek sources close to the first-hand sources such as the writings of ancient and modern historians. And through comparing available historical evidence with other documents and relevant historical documents it was adjusted by intellectual standards. So, the validity of research is measured through internal and external review of documents and historical sources. In order to raise the credit of the work, in ranking of the variables in the form of key components using the Delphi technique, the variables were designed in the form of questions and they were verified and reviewed by experts and qualified professors. The components were extracted from scientific resources based on the three components of leadership

(Smith, 1924) and were also evaluated by experts. Cronbach's alpha for the whole questionnaire was 0/961 and it was 0/906 for leadership skills. It means the questionnaire has high reliability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis and extracting the results

Identifying and extracting the teachings represent leadership traits of Cyrus the great: About the life and character and the rule of Cyrus the great, we need resources to lead us to a better understanding of him. The most important resources about the life of Cyrus the great include: Eastern sources, Greek sources. The most important Eastern sources include Nabonidus Chronicle, the Cyrus Cylinder (Young, 1963). Even linguistic research on two pieces of fossilized horse bones at the Museum of the Forbidden City of China led to the detection of the Chinese version of Cyrus Cylinder. It dates back to the reign of the Achaemenid. Undoubtedly, the Cyrus Cylinder is a valuable historical document (Morgan, 1993).

Among the ancient Greek sources talked about Achaemenid Cyrus, “Herodotus”, “Ctesian” and “Xenophon” are most notably. Herodotus was more than a century and Xenophon and Ctesian were <2 centuries away from Achaemenid era. Xenophon, to comply with the younger Cyrus, reported Cyrus the great’s lovers

narrative; Ctesian, to comply with the atmosphere of the court of Artaxerxes II, narrated the opponent narrative and Herodotus, influenced by the moderate nature and rational character of Darius that lasted to the days of Artaxerxes I, narrated the moderate spoke about Cyrus. In addition to Xenophon, Herodotus’ writings is somewhat reliable and modern archaeological research in some cases, support his statements.

Stating the teachings about the leadership traits and explaining the concept representing each teaching:

Teachings or lessons learned from the occurred experience are not the concrete results from the experience of problem solving but they are laws, rules, principles, secrets and codes that are causing results. After extracting teachings from reliable sources (right column of Table 1), in order to analyze the teachings of Cyrus the great, first management words that can represent any of the teachings were extracted. Then, the appropriateness of any teachings with modern management concepts representing each teaching was evaluated by experts with using the Delphi technique Table 1.

Delphi method was used to identify important variables representing the teachings of Cyrus the great in the leadership traits. For preparing Delphi questionnaire, 30 questions with 9 options was designed and given to the experts. After collecting the questionnaires based on

Table 1: Variables representing the teachings of cyrus the great in the area of leadership traits

Category	The teachings of Cyrus the great
Integrity in Leadership	Leadership means “bringing people to the peak of merit”
Honesty	“It is not allowed to do anything to reach the lofty goals
Justice proportionate to people	I always urge all people to be treated like a senior. I let my servants to what others possess, they also benefit from. Inefficient leaders are slow at practice but quick in greed; they teach their people that they will get wealth sooner through the wrong way like plunder
Benevolence	Conquest with the aim of reconciliation and peace and equality and the elimination of injustice and unrighteousness”
High attraction Power	There was something in Cyrus that encouraged others to follow him
Being friend with men and seeking knowledge and wisdom and truth in leadership	Believing that “victory don’t give the conqueror country the right to commit any aggression and inhuman action”
Task-orientedness	Not being involved in the mundane temptation and refraining from greed in the case of success”
Sense of social responsibility	Persians spoke of him as a father, because he was kind and didn’t cut short what was good for Iranians
Moral characteristics of generosity	Professor “Christensen”: there was a respect in his laws to the rights of other nations and envoys of other countries and it was the priority of his government that today those rules called international relations
Popularity with others	Cyrus was a great general. In his time, there was freedom among Iranian people and they ruled many other nations. In addition, he gave freedom to all nations under his rule and all people praised him. His soldiers were ready to sacrifice their life for him and they welcomed any danger
Freedom and love and respect for social rights	Plato: “Persians under the rule of Cyrus watched the boundaries of slavery and freedom since they released first and then they became commander of many nations. In his time, the kings gave freedom to their subordinates and directed them to respect humanitarian law and equality. There was a good relation between people and the kings hence people would help them in time of danger and participate in the wars
Ultra-rational approach based on individual strength in leadership	In a number of books of the prophets of the Old Testament (the second book of Chronicles, Ezra, Isaiah and the Book of Daniel), sometimes act of Cyrus as a savior for liberating Jews from captivity is seen as a conscious or unconscious divine mission
Moderation in behavior	After leaning on the throne to run the world's largest empire, Cyrus preferred compromise and tolerance to confrontation and war and he would employ this method in other governmental affairs as well
Wisdom and thinking ability	I organized the world with my efforts as I wanted, not by force of arms but wisdom

Table 1: Continue

Category	The teachings of Cyrus the great
Believing in employee synergy	You think and I will give my view"
Helping people to respect humanitarian law and equality	He would camp with a great bunch of soldiers, next to his officers under the big tents"
God reliance with self-reliance	I covenant with the gods not to have oppression and lies in Persian Empire
Benevolence and not getting caught in his own self	"Diodorus Sysulus" speech about Cyrus one hundred years after Christ: "In dealing with enemies had unparalleled bravery and in acting with subordinates had kindness and compassion"
Self-Restraint and patience	Resisting in confronting with annoyance and avoiding resentment and anger and revenge"
God centeredness	I covenanted with my Lord to be worthy of creation"
Having holistic view	It was my duty : to create an incentive to achieve lofty goals along with achieving personal goals"
Intellectual domination	"Manifestation of Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds"
Modernity	The spread of knowledge and transformation of ideas are necessary for making the world a better place to live
Liberality	Declaration of national mourning for the death of the king of Babylon (for someone who was his own enemy"
Compassion	Bestow freedom of religion to the newly conquered country and assign the new ruler from among the natives of the land"
Paying attention to the freedom and spirit of humanity	Freeing the slaves unlike the traditions of the rulers of the time"
Gentlemanly and polite behavior	Cyrus enacted a law to act the prisoners with respect. He gave them food and clothing to work for Iran. On the contrary before the time that prisoners were blinded
High, peaceful and well-behaved character	I have worshiped the only God but have not attacked any idols home and temples and even helped many followers of different religions to rebuild their religious buildings. Because I believe I should never convinced someone to believe a way that I believe"
Elusiveness of the leader of comfort and wealth and making more attempts at the peak of power	I would never eat food unless I would work the day as if I deserve to eat. Even my horse had to sweat to get fodder
Prudence and foresight	Hoarding food, sewing winter clothing for the troops and preparing for winter. Making silos and storing wheat and constructing canals to meet water shortage

scientific degree, specialization and research experience of the experts, the responses of each of the experts weighed from 1-2 and the mean weight of all experts' answers were calculated by multiplying responses of each expert by the assigned weight. Delphi method was done in three stages for leadership traits components that its results are as follows: In the first stage of the Delphi method, from among 30 variables related to leadership traits component, 14 variables with the rank percent of at least 55%, in the second phase 11 variables with the rank percent of at least 65% and in the third stage 8 with the rank percent of at least 75% were selected, respectively. The results of the third stage of the Delphi method of leadership traits have shown in the following Table 2. Paired comparison test or t-test for paired samples test is used to check "whether there is a significant difference between the mean scores of leadership traits in steps 1 and 2 and steps 2 and 3 in the Delphi method or not". Also, it is used "to check whether mean scores of leadership traits in three stages of Delphi method have uptrend tendency or not. The absolute value of the difference between the average scores of the leadership traits in steps 1 and 2 of the Delphi method was 43133/0. There is a significant difference between the mean scores of the leadership traits in steps 1 and 2 of the Delphi method in the significance level of 0/05 and the mean scores of the leadership traits in steps 1, 2 of Delphi method had an increasing trend. There is not a significant difference between the mean scores of the leadership traits in

Table 2: Results of the third stage of the delphi method for the component of the leadership traits

Variables of responses	The mean		Rank	Rank (%)	Percent	At least 75%
	weight	SD of responses				
Q1	69/7	0/48	26	0/137	13/07	
Q2	94/8	0/28	1	1	100	Important
Q3	97/7	0/49	18	0/413	03/41	
Q4	59/7	0/51	27	0/103	10/03	
Q5	69/8	0/48	4	0/896	06/89	Important
Q6	8/09	0/64	17	0/448	08/44	
Q7	47/7	0/52	30	0/000	0	
Q8	88/7	0/55	20	0/275	27/05	
Q9	56/7	0/52	28	0/068	6/08	
Q10	38/8	0/51	10	0/655	05/65	
Q11	94/7	0/49	19	0/379	09/37	
Q12	88/7	0/64	20	0/275	27/05	
Q13	50/7	0/52	29	0/034	3/03	
Q14	81/8	0/44	3	0/931	01/93	Important
Q15	19/8	0/44	15	0/517	07/51	
Q16	84/7	0/55	23	0/206	20/06	
Q17	84/7	0/49	23	0/206	20/06	
Q18	34/8	0/48	12	0/620	62	
Q19	47/8	0/51	8	0/758	08/75	Important
Q20	84/8	0/38	2	0/965	05/96	Important
Q21	31/8	0/60	13	0/551	01/55	
Q22	56/8	0/52	5	0/827	07/82	Important
Q23	81/7	0/44	25	0/172	17/02	
Q24	44/8	0/51	9	0/724	04/72	
Q25	16/8	0/38	16	0/482	02/48	
Q26	53/8	0/52	7	0/793	03/79	Important
Q27	56/8	0/52	5	0/827	07/82	Important
Q28	31/8	0/63	13	0/551	01/55	
Q29	88/7	0/64	20	0/275	27/05	
Q30	38/8	0/85	10	0/655	05/65	

steps 2 and 3 of the Delphi method in the significance level of 0/05. It means the mean scores of the leadership traits in steps 2, 3 of Delphi method have not had an

Table 3: Descriptive scales of the component of leadership traits in three stages

Leadership traits	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Number	30	30	30
Mean	7/6723	8/1037	8/1617
Standard deviation	0/44674	0/35036	0/41730
Standard error of the mean	0/08156	0/06397	0/07619

Table 4: Results of the paired set of leadership traits in three stages

Results	Stages 1,2	Stages 2,3
The correlation coefficient	0/890	0/930
Mean differences	-0/43133	-0/05800
Standard deviation of differences	0/20928	0/15841
Mean Standard error of the differences	0/03821	0/02892
t-test	-11/289	-2/005
Significance level	0/000	0/054
Lower bound of the confidence interval of 95%	-0/50948	-0/11715
Upper bound of the confidence interval of 95%	-0/35319	0/00115

Table 5: Ranking the variable of leadership traits based on similarity index values

Ranks	Similarity index	Selective variables of leadership traits	Q
1	7869/0	Integrity	2
2	6630/0	Wisdom and thinking ability	14
3	6548/0	God-centeredness	20
4	5221/0	High attraction power	5
5	4917/0	Attention to freedom and human soul	26
6	4761/0	Gentlemanly and courteous behavior	27
7	4699/0	Intellectual domination	22
8	4621/0	Self-restraint and patience	1

increasing trend. So, the experts' views got closer and they have reached a consensus and there is no need to continue the process of Delphi.

In response to the first question of the research; among the 30 attributes derived from the teachings of the leadership of Cyrus the great, there were eight favorite traits of leadership that 75% of experts are also agreed upon: Integrity (teaching 2), high attraction Power (teaching 5), wisdom and the ability of thinking (teaching 14), self-restrain and patience (teaching 19), God centeredness (teaching 20), intellectual domination (teaching 22), paying attention to the freedom and spirit of humanity (teachings 26) and gentlemanly and courteous behavior (teachings 27).

Ranking the selective variables of leadership traits with TOPSIS method:

The similarity index varies between zero and one. The more similar the preferred option to the ideal, the closer the similarity index to one. Based on the similarity index values the options can be ranked. The index values are arranged from largest to smallest and the option that has the greatest similarity index is selected as the best option. Similarity Index values in terms of leadership traits are as follows (Table 5).

CONCLUSION

The first question the researcher sought to answer it was what important teachings of Cyrus the great

in the area of leadership traits are? Accordingly, in response to the first question of the research, 128 teachings were extracted from the used scientific sources and 30 teachings (This study) according to Table 1 was determined as key components in leadership traits. These components, using Delphi questionnaire were evaluated by 13 historical-cultura-management experts in three stages with minimum rank percent of 55, 65 and 75, respectively and by measuring the fitness of each teaching with relevant and proportionate categories, a total of eight variables were diagnosed as "important" by vote and consensus of experts in the leadership traits.

In ranking of the variables of selective traits based on the teachings of Cyrus the great, the option that has the largest similarity index value is chosen as the best option. According to experts' responses mean and calculation of the average value of similarity index, important variables of the three components based on their importance are as follows: the teaching "to achieve lofty goals will not be permitted through doing anything" with similarity index of (/7869) representing the "integrity characteristics of the leader" earned the most points among the selective factors chosen from the teachings of Cyrus the great in leadership traits and this feature has also drawn the attention of theorists and modern management celebrities (Drucker, 2001).

The teaching "I organized the world with my efforts as I wanted, not by force of arms, but wisdom" representing the trait of "wisdom and thinking ability" in the leadership teachings of Cyrus the great has the most points (/6630) in similarity index after the trait of integrity. This feature has also drawn the attention of theorists and modern management celebrities (John Ketr and Peter Drucker). The teaching "I covenanted with my Lord to be worthy of creation" represents the trait of "God centeredness" and firm conviction to the God in the teachings of Cyrus the great is in third place.

"High attraction power" (/5221) based on the teaching "there was something in Cyrus that encouraged others to follow him ". "Paying attention to the freedom and spirit of humanity" (4917) based on the teaching "freeing the slaves unlike the traditional action of the rulers of the time". "Gentlemanly and courteous behavior" (/4761) based on the teaching "Cyrus enacted a law that the prisoners would be treated honorably. He would gave them food and clothing to work for Iran. On the contrary the captives were blinded before that time". "Intellectual domination" (/4699) based on the teaching "manifestation of Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds". "Self-restraint and patience" (/4621) based on the teaching "resisting in confronting with annoyance and avoiding resentment and anger and revenge".

SUGGESTIONS

The art of leadership of Cyrus the great which has made his friends and enemies to testify that he is a myth and superhuman, even after centuries can be a role model of managers of today's complex and multi-cultural communities and organizations. According to the results derived from the research, some suggestions are given in order of their importance: With leadership trait of Integrity you can create a foundation to build confidence in your leadership for yourself and others, strengthen the self-esteem, make your motivation and enthusiasm clear and understandable for yourself and others, proscribe yourself from conflict and destructive conflict, inspire from others to progress toward your goals and have initiative.

The leaders require to interact with people with a higher behavioral logic to change. The most successful leaders are either of strategic behavioral logic or are alchemist. Strategists pay attention to the attitudes and limitations of the organization, remove obstacles from the way easier and achieve greater success in neutralizing the inherent resistance of human to the changes, expand business ethics in wider circle of their organizations. Alchemists can repair and even rebuild themselves and the organization. Alchemist knows how to talk with the king and the pauper. Good leadership is the result of a combination of innate ability and learned skills. Sense of leadership that is the hallmark of wisdom and thinking ability, help leaders predict countless imperceptible things. Leaders who have the strong sense of leadership can predict their own success, the directions and deviations, thought of people and they can know themselves better.

God is strong, beautiful, fair, knowledgeable, subtle and creative. The attributes of God is the index for being God centeredness. These traits in human nature is infinite. Attributes of God are means to know Him. Worship means to build yourself based on the pattern of the divine attributes. To fulfill God centeredness as one of the important characteristics of leadership a/an strong, fair, knowledgeable, subtle, elegant and creative society must be made. Certainly if we act according to our nature everything will become divine. Attraction will be faced obstacles such as pride, lack of confidence, being moody, obsession and suspicion. In addition to remove these barriers the leader has to have the following attributes to achieve high attraction power for attracting others: to love life and enjoy the company of others, to mention the abilities and strengths of others, to give the hope to

people then they are fall in love with you, to do good things and share others with your wisdom and tact, resources and even special opportunities.

In regard to the freedom and spirit of humanity, nothing can affect others better than forgiveness and magnanimity. To sow magnanimity: be the student for what you have because magnanimity comes from happiness not increasing ambition and property. Think of others first. Do not let love of money overcome you! Know the money as a mean to do valuable things. Get used to the giving habit. Instead of staying do something to stay. Find someone to mentor and guide him and devote yourself to him to have a better leadership. In the difficult moments of life, man shows his personality by gentlemanly and polite behavior. Personality finds way for individuals in others hear. To promote character: find the gaps, find patterns, accept your faults. Repairing of character gaps happens when you accept your mistakes, apologize and want to deal with the consequences of your actions. Create your character from scratch. You must implement a plan to prevent happening of past mistakes.

The behavior that the managers show in dealing with employees can be called leadership style. Managers choose leadership style to make their influence on others more effective. Leaders need to know what style to use in any position. Successful and effective leaders are those who with using intellectual domination can adapt their leadership style well with the situation. Impatience causes the abandonment of endurance. Self-restraint and patience and adherence to moral values bring about the moral strength and lead us to the long-term consequences.

REFERENCES

- Dandamayev, M.A., 2012. The Cyrus Cylinder. In: *Encyclopædia Iranica*, Yar-Shater, E. (Ed.). Vol. 6, Bibliotheca Persica Press, New York.
- Drucker, P.F., 2001. The next society. Special Report, November 1, 2001. The Economist Newspaper Limited, California.
- Morgan, G., 1993. *Imaginization, the Art of Creative Management*. Sage Publications, London.
- Smith, S., 1924. *Babylonian Historical Texts Relating to the Capture and Downfall of Babylon*. Methuen Publishing, London, Pages: 154.
- Young, T.C., 1963. Cyrus the Great. Series: The Encyclopedia American Volume 8. American Corporation, New York.
- Yuki, G., 1994. *Leadership in Organization*. 3rd Edn., Prentice-Hall, New Jersey.