

When values fall short: The surprising roles of honesty-humility, emotionality, and conscientiousness on leadership effectiveness

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ABSTRACT

Building effective global leaders is crucial for an organization to remain competitive. While fundamental traits like personality have always been important in the context of leadership, the use of the HEXACO model in Indonesian organizational leadership development is relatively new. This research examines the impact of HEXACO traits on the leadership effectiveness of lecturers who also serve as academic leaders at one of Indonesia's Islamic higher education institutions, which is ranked among the top 40 religious-based universities worldwide, according to uniRank 2024. A total of 147 valid responses were garnered and analyzed descriptively using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with AMOS. The results show that extraversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience positively influence leadership effectiveness, while honesty-humility, emotionality, and conscientiousness have no significant effect. Although honesty and humility are important values that support ethical behavior, global leaders require the ability to influence and adapt, be flexible, and be creatively innovative. Additionally, overly conscientious leaders tend to be inflexible and emotionally high-stress during critical moments, which makes them less dependable.

Keywords: HEXACO; Leadership; Personality Traits; Higher Education; Developing Countries

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Introduction

Organizations today face rapid and widespread change that is often difficult to predict and effectively control. To provide insight into how individuals react to these shocks, Döner and Efeoğlu (2023) proposed Perceived VUCA Exposure, a psychological metric that examines personal perceptions of the impact of VUCA on everyday life. Using this metric, researchers obtained significant evidence suggesting that perception, not the external event itself, significantly mediates a leader's agility and adaptability in volatile situations. The classic VUCA model, Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity, still serves as a rich lens through which these challenges can be cataloged. Volatility captures sudden and widespread disruptions (Behera et al., 2023); uncertainty signifies the failure to foresee specific future outcomes (Dugoin-Clément, 2024; Chen, 2024); complexity indicates multiple interrelated factors that cloud judgment (Dumitru et al., 2023); and ambiguity indicates a situation that remains vague and open to competing interpretations (Chaudhri et al., 2024).

VUCA, an acronym originating from a military context, aptly describes the challenges and complexities of today's global higher education (Waller et al., 2019; Enderle, 2018; Taatila, 2017). It is no longer appropriate for higher education leaders to take a reactive and rigid approach to change—instead, they need to be proactive, agile, and innovative (Tando et al., 2024; Winkler et al., 2024; Waller et al., 2019). These sudden developments demand a high degree of adaptability and flexibility, which are strong qualities of resilience (Diefenbach & Deelman, 2016). Diefenbach and Deelman further explain how an effective leader needs to combine and balance the conflicting ideals of fairness, equity, productivity, and diversity (Elkington et al., 2017; Stewart et al., 2016). Leaders are formed by using and integrating a variety of methods, but the most effective appears to be a proactive and anticipatory approach that is responsive to any emerging trends.

It is interesting to note that older workers appear to exhibit more organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) and are less likely to exhibit counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) compared to younger employees (Ng & Feldman, 2008). However, these employees often tend to be slow-moving, negatively impacting change initiatives because they prefer stability over risk (Pletzer, 2021). This approach can conflict with the need for agility and swift action demanded by modern leadership (Fernández-Pérez de la Lastra & Sánchez-Gardey, 2024; Winkler et al., 2024). Furthermore, contemporary leaders and managers are expected to possess vision and be able to see the potential even in ambiguity and uncertainty (Rani & Widyowati, 2021; Fazlurahman, 2018). Compounding these challenges, the

increasing complexity of organizations poses challenges in effectively managing cross-disciplinary, multicultural teams to drive innovative solutions. The main challenge, with limited or no information, is to navigate uncertainty and make effective decisions (Bakar & Dorasamy, 2023).

External conditions require some degree of foresight and flexibility; however, equally important is the understanding that strong leadership is not a function of technical capabilities or management practices. Rather, distinct personal characteristics influence leadership competencies (Tuan et al., 2024; Gilli et al., 2023). According to Boyatzis (1982), personality determines leadership competency. Competence, as defined by Spencer and Spencer (1993), is the collection of skills and abilities a person possesses in order to perform assigned roles and responsibilities. Competence encompasses knowledge, skills, abilities, and other relevant attributes for sound leadership in a global context (Hassanzadeh et al., 2015). Caligiuri (2000) added that personality traits are also an indicator of successful global leadership.

Simultaneously, effective global leaders require the competence domain of intercultural and global leadership through the Global Competencies Inventory (GCI). GCI measures the degree to which individuals hold global and intercultural leadership competencies (Bird, 2013). In addition, the recent focus on the critical role of personality traits has underscored the benefits of the HEXACO model (Ashton & Lee, 2007), which competes with the well-known Big Five model (John & Srivastava, 1999). The HEXACO framework adds an extra dimension of personality, Honesty-Humility, which is critical for explaining moral conduct. It has been shown that the HEXACO model is more effective than the Big Five in predicting important criteria like manipulative behavior, deviance, and materialistic attitudes (Ashton et al., 2014). Still, the empirical studies on the effects of Honesty-Humility traits on performance outcomes are inconsistent. As some studies suggest, higher levels of Honesty-Humility increase trust (Travaglino et al., 2024; Rotenberg et al., 2024; Le et al., 2022) and ethical behavior (Reilly et al., 2022) in organizations. Conversely, other studies show that overly humble people tend not to take risks (Wei et al., 2022; Buta et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2019) and are poor drivers of innovation (Zhang et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021; Gino & Ariely, 2012), which can impede performance. Furthermore, all forms of dishonesty, as noted by Gerlach et al. (2019), depend on the personal factors of the participant, such as age and gender, alongside the situational context.

Building upon the mixed findings, it is clear that the association between specific personality traits, notably Honesty-Humility, and leadership effectiveness requires further exploration. Moreover, in the context of higher education, and particularly concerning

lecturers who also serve as leaders in their departments, this relationship has not been well studied. These individuals are often confronted with the dual burden of performing scholarly tasks alongside distinct managerial functions while representing the culture of the institution. For this reason, the current study seeks to examine the impact of HEXACO personality traits on global leadership competencies within the context of lecturer-organizational leaders. By studying this cohort, the research aims to enhance understanding of the influence of personality on leadership effectiveness in academia, thus providing useful insights for leadership and talent management strategies in higher education.

This study investigates an Islamic higher education institution in Indonesia that is ranked among the top 40 religious-based universities worldwide, according to the uniRank University Rankings 2024. This study aims to improve the integrated quality and international standing of the institution's higher education system by applying the Global Competency Inventory (GCI) framework developed by Stevens et al. (2014), Bird and Stevens (2013), and Mendenhall et al. (2010). This study focuses on lecturers due to their importance as academic leaders within the institution. In the higher education system, lecturers play multiple roles as teachers and leaders in research and in fields such as science, technology, the arts, community service, and scholarship. They engage with the public and enhance the quality of education. Lecturers are also described as expert professionals dedicated to the advancement of knowledge in their disciplines. These academics are active as scholars and researchers and have established numerous international collaborations and partnerships with other institutions across Indonesia and the world. In the context of higher education institutions, lecturers take on the role of transformational leaders, which is crucial for the development of these institutions.

Literature Review

Global Leadership Competencies

Global leadership competencies refer to a set of abilities, attitudes, and knowledge that enable a leader to perform effectively in international and cross-cultural contexts. Bird and Osland (2004) emphasized that not all leaders working in global settings are necessarily global leaders; specific competencies are required, encompassing cross-cultural managerial skills, personal traits, and interpersonal abilities. Jokinen (2005) proposed a three-tier model of global leadership competencies consisting of core competencies (self-awareness, curiosity, and personal transformation), desired mental characteristics (optimism, self-regulation,

empathy, and cognitive abilities), and behavioral competencies (social skills, networking, and knowledge). Bird and Osland's (2004) pyramid model highlights a hierarchical structure where global knowledge forms the foundation, followed by threshold traits such as integrity and curiosity, then global mindset attributes, interpersonal skills, and finally, advanced system-level competencies like ethical decision-making and community building.

Mendenhall and Osland (2002) constructed a six-dimensional framework of global leadership competencies, including cross-cultural relationship skills, traits and values, global business expertise, global organizing expertise, cognitive orientation, and vision. These dimensions emphasize that global leaders need not only technical knowledge but also cognitive and affective capabilities to navigate global complexity. Meanwhile, Javidan and Walker (2013) classified global leadership competencies into three forms of capital: intellectual capital (global business savvy, cosmopolitanism, cognitive complexity), psychological capital (passion for diversity, curiosity, self-assurance), and social capital (cross-cultural empathy, diplomacy, and interpersonal impact). This framework underlines the importance of balancing internal competencies (such as self-awareness and personal resilience) with external competencies (such as building global relationships and understanding international organizational dynamics).

Bird (2013) categorized 160 global leadership competencies into three key categories: business and organizational acumen, managing people and relationships, and self-management. Business acumen encompasses strategic vision, organizational acumen, and change leadership. Managing people and relationships encompasses cross-cultural communication, interpersonal skills, empowering others, and teamwork through a multicultural lens. The self-management category includes traits such as curiosity, flexibility, a global mindset, emotional resilience, and integrity, demonstrating a synthesis of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions necessary for effective global leadership. Global leadership competencies, therefore, are more holistic than technical skills, encompassing sensitivity to social issues, social intelligence, and maturity derived from multicultural interactions. Bird and Stevens (2013) also classified global leadership assessment tools into three categories: cultural differences assessments, intercultural adaptability assessments, and global leadership competency assessments. Cultural differences assessments focus on measuring national value systems, while intercultural adaptability assessments concentrate on cross-cultural skills and are often used in global manager training, using tools such as the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory, Cultural Intelligence, Intercultural Development Inventory, and Multicultural Personality Questionnaire. Examples

of global leadership competency assessments include the Global Executive Leadership Inventory and the Global Mindset Inventory, which measure basic but important attributes, including vision, empowerment, and diplomacy. One of the most comprehensive tools, the Global Competencies Inventory (GCI), developed from expatriate adjustment research, includes perception management, relationship management, and self-management, with sub-dimensions like curiosity, intercultural empathy, self-confidence, and stress management. GCI is widely recognized as a promising instrument because it combines cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects into a holistic framework for measuring global leadership competence.

HEXACO Traits

Personality is often characterized as a set of consistent traits that dictate how a person thinks, feels, and behaves across various contexts and periods of time. Schneider and Smith (2004) define personality as individual attributes that provide form, structure, and consistency in behavior. Hogan and Kaiser (2005) also brought forth two fundamental elements of personality: human nature and individual differences. There is a general consensus among scholars that personality constitutes a stable pattern of traits and characteristics, which guarantees a person's behavior remains consistent yet unique. Supporting this view, Ashton and Lee (2007) define personality as the differences in individuals' typical behavioral, cognitive, and emotional tendencies observed over time and across different contexts. The study of personality has predominately revolved around the examination of leadership through the exclusive scope of trait theory, which aimed at determining the distinguishing attributes of leaders vis-à-vis non-leaders (DeRue et al., 2011). Early leadership scholars operated under the assumption that personality traits are immutable and constant (Ahmad et al., 2020; Shakeel et al., 2019). This approach, however, is not consistent with contemporary views in personality psychology. As Cervone (2005, p. 429) aptly states, "The Big Five should not be perceived as fixed possessions," instead, they "summarize things people tend, on average, to do." Traits are behavioral inclinations subject to change over time. For many years, the predominant assumption in personality psychology postulated the existence of the Big Five as the most robust and replicable set of foundational traits. This approach has now been challenged by a growing number of researchers proposing a more comprehensive model consisting of six key dimensions (Saucier, 2009). This model led to the creation of the HEXACO personality model (Lee & Ashton, 2004), which encompasses the domains of

Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness (with Anger), Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience.

Honesty-Humility and Leadership Effectiveness

Honesty-Humility refers to those who, unlike the deceitful and arrogant (Pletzer et al., 2024; Zettler et al., 2020), are modest, fair-minded, and sincere while also avoiding greed. These traits are associated with ethical leadership (Aditama et al., 2025; Chen et al., 2025; Derfler-Rozin & Park, 2022), authentic leadership (Baquero, 2023; Malik et al., 2023; Keselman & Saxe-Braithwaite, 2020), and supporting trust-building (Tangtammaruk et al., 2024; Le et al., 2022). Leaders high on honesty and humility tend to be more equipped to garner organizational loyalty and nurture a constructive organizational environment because of their integrity and fairness (Ete et al., 2020; Molle et al., 2023). In our view, at least in the context of organizational and academic leadership, the traits of honesty, sincerity, fairness, and modesty are vital to the development of robust and dependable leadership.

H₁: Honesty-Humility has a significant positive influence on leadership effectiveness.

Emotionality and Leadership Effectiveness

Emotionality denotes a person's predisposition toward anxiety, fear, and dependence, as well as being overly responsive to emotions, which is in contrast to bravery or emotional equilibrium (Pletzer et al., 2024). While Emotionality is frequently considered a vulnerability (Grosland & Roberts, 2020), from an individual's leadership perspective, it may serve to augment empathy (Burhan & Khan, 2024; Carrasco & Díaz, 2023), compassion (Raina, 2022), and better interpersonal relationships (Kurdyukov, 2023) and thus serve as an asset. Perspectives and cultural nuances are crucial for effective leadership. Leaders with greater Emotionality tend to be more aware of and responsive to the needs and feelings of their subordinates, which makes it possible to build trust and support their team members (Krivoshchekov et al., 2024). This emotional awareness is particularly valuable in global and multicultural contexts, where sensitivity to diversity is important.

H₂: Emotionality has a significant positive influence on leadership effectiveness.

Extraversion and Leadership Effectiveness

It is a common belief that leaders are often extroverts, with extroversion considered a prerequisite for effective leadership. Indeed, a number of scholars have established a strong link between this personality trait 'extraversion' and successful leadership. Sociability, high energy, and positive emotionality constitute extraversion (Walker, 2020). As noted by Pletzer

et al. (2024), extroverted individuals are social, energetic, and often talkative. Bono and Judge (2004) even identified extraversion as the strongest and most consistent predictor of transformational leadership. This association is not surprising as integral qualities characterized in transformational leaders are optimism, enthusiasm, and the ability to inspire people, which coincide with extraverted behaviors (Liao et al., 2023; Karlsen et al., 2021; Kass et al., 2024). Nevertheless, some studies have reported mixed results concerning the effectiveness of extroverted versus introverted leaders in competitive or proactive group environments (Atamanik, 2013; Judge & Zapata, 2015). For instance, Grant et al. (2011) argued that yes, while extraversion was positively related to group effectiveness, this relationship was contingent on the proactivity of the group members.

H₃: Extraversion has a significant positive influence on leadership effectiveness.

Agreeableness and Leadership Effectiveness

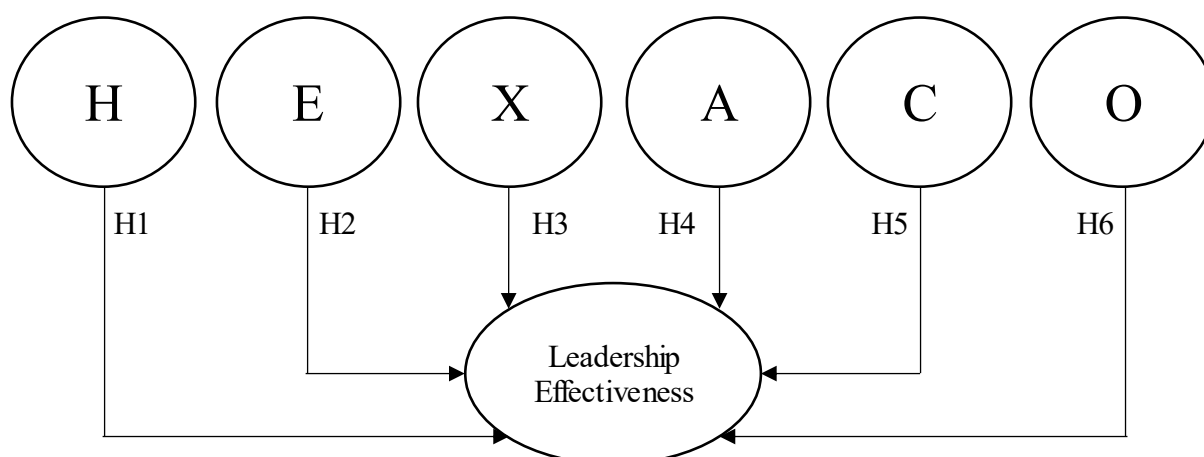
In the HEXACO model, agreeableness refers to the traits of forgiveness, gentleness, anger control, and flexibility, which are the opposite of hostility and stubbornness (Pletzer et al., 2024). This dimension captures the difference between tolerant, cooperative individuals and those who are antagonistic and defensive. As described by Hassan et al. (2023), agreeable individuals are pleasant, easygoing, and kind as opposed to easily irritable, argumentative, or overtly critical. It is important to note that the HEXACO version of Agreeableness diverges from that of the Big Five in its focus on emotional reflex and anger control. In leadership roles, these characteristics are indispensable for resolving disputes and preserving harmony (Zadok & Benoliel, 2023; Lim et al., 2023) and for promoting collaboration within diverse teams (Ge et al., 2025; Harvey & Gree, 2022).

H₄: Agreeableness has a significant positive influence on leadership effectiveness.

Conscientiousness and Leadership Effectiveness

Conscientiousness refers to the qualities of being organized, responsible, and diligent, as opposed to being disorganized, rash, and unreliable. Conscientiousness is also known as the "desire to achieve" (Sun et al., 2016). This trait also encompasses goal orientation and persistence, which are key elements of this dimension (Jones et al., 2022). Goal-directed behavior, self-discipline, and persistence also illustrate this trait (Phillips et al., 2024; Di Sarno et al., 2023; Barros et al., 2022; Hagger et al., 2021). On the other hand, Amanchukwu et al. (2015) noted that while 'conscientious' individuals have a strong focus on achievement,

Figure 1. Research Framework



their actions may conflict with ethical standards. In leadership contexts, especially within global environments, these qualities are essential for ensuring consistency, ethical decision-making, and long-term strategic planning. Prior studies have shown that conscientiousness is positively correlated with leadership effectiveness, as conscientious individuals are more dependable, goal-oriented, and adaptive in global settings (Judge et al., 2002; Rockstuhl et al., 2011; Ahmed Iqbal et al., 2021).

H₅: Conscientiousness has a significant positive influence on leadership effectiveness.

Openness to Experience and Leadership Effectiveness

The Big Five personality traits feature Openness to Experience, which captures a person's imagination, thinking, and perspectives, as well as intellectual curiosity and creativity. People who score high on this trait are more likely to seek new experiences and tend to be more cognitively and behaviorally flexible (McCrae & Costa, 1997). Openness to experience contributes to improving cross-cultural relations and communications (Christensen, 2023) as well as greater inclusion (Lika, 2024) in the decision-making processes. Prior research has demonstrated that Openness to Experience is strongly associated with leadership effectiveness (Alat & Suar, 2024; Snow Andrade, 2023).

H₆: Openness to Experience has a significant positive influence on leadership effectiveness.

Figure 1 presents the study framework, illustrating the direct effects of HEXACO personality traits on leadership effectiveness. Based on this framework, it is proposed that each HEXACO trait, Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness,

Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience, has a significant positive influence on leadership effectiveness among lecturers who also serve as organizational leaders.

Methods

This study employed a quantitative research approach to examine the influence of personality traits, specifically conscientiousness and openness to experience, on global leadership competencies among lecturers who also serve as academic leaders at one of the top 40 Islamic universities, which is ranked by uniRank. The research aimed to identify key personality dimensions that contribute to leadership effectiveness in a global academic context. The study targeted the entire population of lecturers and academic leaders at the selected Islamic university, consisting of 620 individuals. The sample size was determined using the guidelines suggested by Hair et al. (2014), which recommend that the minimum sample should be five to ten times the number of parameters estimated in the structural model. With 28 parameters identified, the required sample size ranged from 140 to 280 respondents. A total of 147 valid responses were collected using a convenience sampling technique and subsequently analyzed. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire designed to measure constructs derived from the Big Five personality traits and leadership effectiveness. All items in the questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale, where respondents indicated their level of agreement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In this study, leadership effectiveness was operationalized using items from Oyilande's (2008) Exemplary Behavior Leadership Questionnaire (EBLQ) and Kerr et al. (2006). HEXACO items were adopted from the measurement scales developed by Ashton et al. (2007) and Ashton et al. (2014).

Validity describes the accuracy with which an instrument measures its intended target. In this study, validity was analyzed using Pearson correlation to evaluate whether each item of the questionnaire correlated strongly with the total score of the construct (Odom & Morrow, 2006). Significant high correlation coefficients indicate that an item is valid and effectively captures the underlying concept. Meanwhile, reliability focuses on the consistency of an instrument in measuring the same concept across different occasions or items. In this study, reliability was assessed using the threshold of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. A Cronbach's alpha score of 0.60 and above is acceptable (Taber, 2018), and such a score indicates that the items within each construct reliably measure the same concept. The results of the validity and reliability tests (Table 1) show that all items are valid and reliable.

Furthermore, structural equation modeling (SEM) serves as an analytical tool in this study to evaluate the formulated hypotheses. SEM was executed with the use of AMOS software version 22.00, which encompass other methods not only for factor analysis but also-

Table 1. Validity and Reliability

Items		r-Count	r-Table	Decision
Leadership Effectiveness (LEF) – Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.792$				
LEF1	I pays attention to my subordinates points of view.	0.519	0.162	Valid, Reliable
LEF2	I treat subordinates in fair manner.	0.510		
LEF3	I set goals for subordinates performance that are quite challenging.	0.440		
LEF4	I help subordinates overcome their work problems.	0.508		
Honesty-Humility (HON) – Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.653$				
HON1	I am sincere and do not manipulate others.	0.384	0.162	Valid, Reliable
HON2	I avoid taking advantage of others.	0.426		
HON3	I live a simple life and do not seek luxury.	0.482		
Emotionality (EMO) – Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.606$				
EMO1	I often feel anxious about future events.	0.478	0.162	Valid, Reliable
EMO2	I seek support from others when troubled.	0.450		
EMO3	I tend to worry about negative outcomes.	0.428		
Extraversion (EXT) – Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.688$				
EXT1	I enjoy being the center of attention.	0.380	0.162	Valid, Reliable
EXT2	I'm confident and outgoing with strangers.	0.467		
EXT3	I'm energetic and lively in social settings.	0.471		
Agreeableness (AGR) – Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.659$				
AGR1	I forgive people who have wronged me easily.	0.464	0.162	Valid, Reliable
AGR2	I am gentle and speak softly with others.	0.447		
AGR3	I remain patient even when provoked.	0.582		
Conscientiousness (CON) – Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.667$				
CON1	I make decisions carefully.	0.425	0.162	Valid, Reliable
CON2	I prefer to keep my work organized.	0.487		
CON3	When doing my work, I pay attention to details.	0.389		
Openness to Experience (OEX) – Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.603$				
OEX1	I am open to new ideas and perspectives.	0.551	0.162	Valid, Reliable
OEX2	I like to explore unfamiliar topics or skills.	0.488		
OEX3	I like generating creative ideas and solutions.	0.618		

Table 2. Results of Goodness of Fit Index Full Model

Goodness of Fit	Cut-off Value	Results	Conclusion
Chi square	Expected small	78.000	Good
Probability	>0.05	0.112	Good
CMIN/DF	<2.0	1.218	Good
RMSEA	<0.08	0.039	Good
GFI	>0.9	0.939	Good
AGFI	>0.9	0.886	Not good
TLI	>0.95	0.984	Good
CFI	>0.95	0.990	Good
NFI	>0.9	0.950	Good

path analysis (Ghozali, 2016). This tool was chosen due to the advantage of enhancing explanatory power and statistical efficiency by testing all relationships within a single comprehensive model (Hair et al., 2014). From the analysis of the data, the goodness of fit measures for the complete model (Table 2) are within acceptable and good ranges. Specifically, the values of model fit indices are: NFI = 0.950 (> 0.90), TLI = 0.984 (> 0.95), CFI = 0.990 (> 0.95), Probability = 0.112 (> 0.05), CMIN/DF = 1.218 (< 2), RMSEA = 0.039 (< 0.08), and GFI = 0.939 (> 0.90). Even though the AGFI value of 0.886 does not reach the suggested cutoff of 0.90, the other fit indices reveal that the model has a good fit. Hence, it can be viewed as acceptable and trustworthy for additional evaluation.

Result and Discussion

The first hypothesis of the study proposed that Honesty-Humility would positively impact leadership effectiveness. However, the statistical analysis presented in Table 3 showed a CR value of 0.849 and a p-value of 0.396, both exceeding the 0.05 significance threshold, indicating that the hypothesis is not supported. Nevertheless, the positive path coefficient suggests that Honesty-Humility does possess a one-way positive relationship with leadership effectiveness, suggesting that higher levels of this trait may lead to improved leadership outcomes; however, the effect is insufficient to reach statistical significance in this study. In simple words, honesty, humility, and sincerity are not dominant predictors of leadership effectiveness. While Travalglino et al. (2024), Rotenberg et al. (2024), and Le et al. (2022) found that honesty increases trust, and Reilly et al. (2022) claim it promotes ethical

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

	Hypothesis	Estimate	CR	Prob.	Decision
H ₁	HON -> LEF	0.086	0.849	0.396	Rejected
H ₂	EMO -> LEF	-0.042	-0.426	0.670	Rejected
H ₃	EXT -> LEF	0.179	20.144	0.032	Accepted
H ₄	AGR -> LEF	0.330	2.295	0.022	Accepted
H ₅	CON -> LEF	0.116	1.449	0.147	Rejected
H ₆	OEX -> LEF	0.336	3.861	***	Accepted

behavior within organizations, some other studies reported that overly humble individuals tend to lack risk-taking behavior (Wei et al., 2022; Buta et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2019) and lack the assertiveness needed to drive innovation (Zhang et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021; Gino & Ariely, 2012) ultimately hinders performance.

Over the past several years, there has been a marked sociocultural shift associated with organizational goals focusing on achieving quantifiable results rather than the byzantine processes that precede them (Goyal, 2024). Organizations demand leaders who can deliver measurable outcomes, achieve ambitious targets, and respond swiftly to external challenges. In such environments, means-ends rationality becomes more dominant—where the success of a decision is judged primarily by its outcomes rather than the ethical soundness of the process used to achieve them (Tenbrunsel et al., 2000). In academic contexts, means-ends rationality describes the phenomenon where achieving specific objectives is regarded as the principal undertaking irrespective of any underlying ethical implications (Blau, 2022). To put it simply, as long as the end results are favorable, the steps taken to achieve them are fully valid. This rationale partially explains the absence of decisiveness shown by leaders who score high on Honesty-Humility traits, which value adherence to ethics, fairness, and integrity in aggressive pursuit of results in highly competitive environments.

The second hypothesis of the study proposed that emotionality impacts leadership effectiveness. A CR value of -0.426 and a p-value of 0.670 (>0.05) were obtained from the analysis, which suggests that the hypothesis has been rejected. The negative path coefficient of -0.055 indicates that greater Emotionality is associated with lower leadership effectiveness, though this association is not statistically significant. An individual with strong Emotionality will struggle to demonstrate effective leadership competencies, as anxious and emotionally sensitive tendencies undermine confidence (Qian et al., 2024; Harris et al., 2022;

Tang et al., 2022), disrupt decision-making (Fenton-O'Creevy et al., 2011; Qudrat-Ullah, 2025), and reduce adaptability in complex multicultural environments (Santera et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Ferreira et al., 2022).

The third hypothesis suggests that Extraversion has an influence on the effectiveness of leadership. As indicated by the SEM analysis, a CR value of 2.144 and p-value of 0.032 (<0.05) confirms acceptance of this hypothesis. Moreover, the positive path coefficient of 0.179 indicates that greater global leadership competence is associated with increased levels of extraversion. These results corroborate those of Caligiuri and Tarique (2012), which demonstrated the impact of extraversion on effective global leadership. Extraverted individuals tend to actively pursue multicultural and international interactions, which bolster cross-cultural competence. Barrick and Mount (1991) also reported that extraversion had a strong impact on individual performance because energetic and outgoing individuals are more successful. Furthermore, Mol et al. (2005) showed the ability of extraversion to predict global leadership performance. The same reasoning applies to the fourth hypothesis, which states that Agreeableness affects leadership effectiveness. The analysis produced a CR value of 2.295 and a p-value of 0.022 (<0.05), thus supporting this hypothesis as well. The path coefficient of 0.330 suggests a strong positive correlation, indicating that lecturers exhibiting greater agreeableness also tend to demonstrate higher global leadership competence. Agreeableness includes the propensity towards selfless cooperation, helpfulness, tolerance, flexibility, generosity, sympathy, and politeness.

Furthermore, this study failed to support Hypothesis 5, which proposed that Conscientiousness has a significant positive influence on leadership effectiveness. The analysis showed a CR of 1.449 and a p-value of 0.147 (> 0.05), indicating that the hypothesis is not supported. Although the path coefficient was positive at 0.116, the effect was not statistically significant. These results contrast with previous studies by Colbert et al. (2012), Caligiuri & Tarique (2012), and Guha & Fish (2018), which found a significant positive influence of conscientiousness on effective global leadership. Conscientiousness is often synonymous with self-discipline. Individuals who score high on this dimension are less likely to act impulsively; rather, they tend to be goal-oriented, waiting until clear objectives are articulated before acting (Phillips et al., 2024; Di Sarno et al., 2023; Barros et al., 2022; Hagger et al., 2021). Though these traits enable individuals to perform tasks accurately and reliably, they can also lead to stubborn caution (Eşitti, 2022) and resistance to change (Paloş & Gunaru, 2017; Paloş et al., 2022). In fast-paced environments with continuous shifts in

organizational dynamics and intense result-oriented pressure, this strong goal focus may lead individuals to adopt unethical means of fulfilling objectives (Amanchukwu et al., 2015).

Finally, our study confirmed what was proposed in Hypothesis 6, which stated that Openness to Experience positively and significantly influences leadership effectiveness. Strikingly, Openness to Experience showed the strongest impact of all traits, with the highest path coefficient of 0.336 and CR of 3.861, $p < 0.001$. This means that individuals who score high on Openness to Experience tend to be more flexible, creative, and open to diverse perspectives, which are essential for effective leadership in a global and multicultural context. Such individuals are eager to engage with the world internationally and multiculturally due to their curiosity and appetite for new experiences. These individuals, as Digman (1990) reminds us, possess intellectual and creative agility and cognitive flexibility, while Gupta et al. (2008) describe them as original, open-minded, intelligent, and artistically sensitive. In global leadership, Terrell and Rosenbusch (2013) emphasize that openness to experience is a critical asset for leaders who develop through direct global engagement, arguing that it fosters cultural openness, enables strategists to build cross-border networks, and fosters a sense of gratitude for learning. Their findings emphasize that openness and curiosity accelerate the achievement of global leadership.

In a similar context, Caligiuri and Tarique (2009; 2012) determined that an individual's Openness to Experience significantly influences global leadership competencies. In this regard, this study confirms previous research and confirms that Openness to Experience is crucial in the development of global leadership capabilities. Individuals with high levels of Openness to Experience tend to be more adept at identifying potential opportunities, optimizing changing challenges, and acquiring new skills necessary to function in complex and multifaceted international environments.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Overall, the findings of the study indicate that within the HEXACO model of personality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Openness to Experience notably potentiate the effectiveness of leadership, especially adaptability, sociability, and openness in a global academic context. Meanwhile, the traits of Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, and Conscientiousness had no impact on leadership effectiveness. These traits, which are associated with ethical integrity, emotional empathy, and industriousness, appear to lack supportive value in regard to responsiveness. Flexibility, strategic risk-taking, and innovation in highly competitive environments. The study results highlight the growing focus within

organizations on driven leadership as well as the imperative for leaders who strive to maintain ethical balance while being flexible and decisive. Therefore, nurturing those traits that enhance innovative thinking, collaborative approaches, and a global mindset is essential for cultivating effective leaders in higher education institutions facing rapid change and global competition.

This research contributes to the advancement of leadership studies in higher education by introducing the HEXACO personality model into the context of global academic leadership, a relatively new application in Indonesian universities. It also aligns these personality traits with the Global Competency Inventory framework, emphasizing the importance of developing leadership components such as cosmopolitanism, flexibility, and stress management. The findings provide practical implications for leadership development, recruitment, and global engagement strategies, offering universities a foundation for cultivating globally competent leaders prepared to navigate international collaboration, cultural diversity, and institutional competitiveness. Lastly, the study uses self-reported data which may be impacted by social desirability and self-enhancement biases. Future studies may address this limited objectivity by incorporating multi-source assessments, such as peer or subordinate evaluations

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