

## Personality Factors as Predictor to Choice of Behavioural Influence Tactics

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### Abstract

The study had been conducted to explore the relationship between personality disposition of managers and its impact on choice of their behavioural influence tactics. This study was conducted on 156 managers working in organizations. Two personality factors: Agreeableness and Conscientiousness had been investigated on their impact on the choice of behavioural influence tactics. Data was analysed using correlation and ordinary least square regression analysis. Results indicated that managers with Agreeableness personality disposition had chosen significantly more Ingratiation and Exchange of benefit tactics. They had not preferred the assertiveness tactic. In the same vein, managers with Conscientiousness personality disposition preferred Rationality, Assertiveness, and Exchange of benefit tactics. Conscientiousness personality disposition did not have the significant relationship with Upward appeal and Coalition formation.

**Keywords:** Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Influence tactics, Ingratiation, Rationality, Exchange of benefit, Assertiveness, Upward appeal, and Coalition formation.

### 1. Introduction

Social influence process is a widely spread form of behaviour. It is a social process because it requires at least two people. Even a casual observation suggests that in everyday life, everyone attempts to influence the behaviour of others for one purpose or another (Bohra, 1981). In a social interaction, it is inevitable for people to interact and influence others. This class of behaviour is so rampant that it can be observed in all walks of life. People use influence behaviour in a family setting. Entire socialization process is an influencing process in which parents influence children and shape their behaviour. It is also visible in peer groups. Hence, influence behaviour has an immense functional utility in our daily life. People also use extensively the behaviour at work place. One can see widespread use of influence behaviour in an organizational context. People like to influence other persons for a variety of purposes in various organizational contexts. Social influence process is commonly observed in an organizational context ranging from achieving organizational goals to personal goals (Srivastava, 2025). For example, in organizations, managers' influence behaviour could be directed to achieve various goals like persuade others to get rewards, to avoid punishments, to get promotion, to make their presence felt, to implement a plan and so forth.

Influence behaviour is considered to be a facilitating factor when an individual strives to influence others in the achievement of organizational goals (Macelland, 1970). Yukl & Falbe (1990) viewed one of the most important determinants of managerial effectiveness is success in influencing subordinates, peers, and superiors. The concept of influence in an organizational setting can be broadly referred to as the generalized ability to change the actions of others in some intended fashion (Mowday, 1978). The influence can be downward, upward, or horizontal depending on who wants to control or influence across the different hierarchies in an organization.

A considerable number of theories and research have investigated the causality of the social influence process and managerial effectiveness in an organizational context. Managerial effectiveness is a process of interaction between managers and their subordinates, superiors, and peers where managers' attempt to influence the behavior of them (superiors, subordinates, and peers) to accomplish organizational goals (Yukl, 2010). Research has shown that positive benefits can accrue to employees as a result of their use of influence tactics (Clarke, Alshenalfi, & Garavan, 2019). Influence behaviours are most important in situations where managers have less formal control (Yukl, Chavez, & Seifert, 2005). Studies have shown how influence behaviour contributes to effective leadership (Covaleski et al., 1998). Effective performance in organizations cannot do without influence and employees must influence others in order to get things done (Steizel & Rimbau-Gilabert,

2013). The ability to influence subordinates, peers, and supervisors is viewed as a major determinant of a manager's effectiveness (Yukl, Kim, & Falbe, 1996). To be successful, a manager must be able to influence other people inside the organization (e.g., suppliers, clients, stockholders, government officials) (Yukl, Chavez, & Seifert, 2005). Yukl and Falbe (1990) found that "a manager's effectiveness depends on success in influencing others to (a) modify their plans and schedules, (b) approve and support the manager's plans and proposals, (c) provide additional resources needed to accomplish major tasks, (d) accept and carry out new assignments, and (e) provide relevant and timely information." A substantial amount of research has empirically established a relationship between the social influence process and managerial & leadership effectiveness.

Several studies have examined the antecedents of behavioural influence tactics using such variables as gender (Thacker, 1995), objective of influence (Yukl & Falbe, 1990), power (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1990; Lamude, 1994), motivation (Barbuto, Fritz, & Marx, 2002; Yukl & Falbe, 1990), direction of influence (Falbe & Yukl, 1992), personality (Blickle, 2000; Harrell – Cook, Ferris, & Dubebohn, 1999; Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson 1980) etc. Empirical studies have shown that the choice of influence tactic selected by superiors depended on the relative power of subordinates, the objectives of influence and other situational factors (Higgins, Judge, & Ferris, 2003). Studies have identified superiors' use of influence tactics and direction of influence (Bhal & Ansari, 2000) and relative effectiveness of different tactics in relation to organizational contexts (Tjosvold & Wisse, 2009).

A range of research has studied the relationship between managers' influence tactics and outcomes. Results from these studies have shown that influence tactic use relates to perceptions of leadership effectiveness (Brennan, Miller, & Seltzer, 1993; Schmidt & Kipnis, 1984; Tepper, Brown, & Hunt, 1993), subordinate commitment (Yukl & Tracey, 1992), and subordinate completion of tasks (Brennan, et al., 1993).

Personality of a manager plays an important role in an organizational influence process. Managers' choice of influence tactics is critically contingent on the personality disposition of managers. A human's personality is defined as 'a dynamic organisation, inside the person, of psychophysical systems that create the persons' characteristic patterns of behaviour, thoughts and feelings' (Allport, 1961, p. 11). Ones & Anderson (2002) found that personality traits have a main effect on work behaviors. He reiterated that personality effects work behaviours which in turn determines organizational performance. Ones, Viswesvaran, and Dilchert (2005) describe personality traits as enduring dispositions and tendencies of individuals to behave in certain ways. Mowday (1978) found that managers use influence tactics more when their power and achievement needs are high. Ones & Anderson (2002) found that use of ingratiation tactic was related to locus of control and self-monitoring. In the study, we have explored the role of personality as a determinant of influence process. We have explored the relationship between Big Five personality factors and the choice of behavioural influence tactics by the managers in an organizational context.

### Big Five Personality Model

The Big-Five model was originally developed by Tupes and Christal (1961). When we consider a managers' personality for an organizational context, the Big Five Model offers a complete framework and provides a good understanding about personality (Barrick et al., 2001; Mount & Barrick, 1995). The Big-Five personality factors are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness. The Big-Five factor model is assumed as reliable and containing valid dimensions for assessment of individual's personality. People displaying the **extraversion** personality trait are high in sociable, mingle with others and are enthusiastic. Extraverts tend to have an assertive personality and are outgoing in nature. They have better interpersonal relationships and are more emotionally expressive. People with **agreeableness** personality trait are helpful and unselfish with others. They have a forgiving nature. They trust other people easily. They are considerate and kind to almost everyone. They like to cooperate with others and are more compliant and conforming. **Conscientiousness** refers to "socially prescribed impulse control that facilitates task and goal- directed behaviour (John & Srivastava, 1999, pp. 121). People with the conscientiousness personality trait do a thorough job and are part of a reliable workforce. They are organized and energetic. They persevere until the task is finished. They do things efficiently and are not easily distracted. People exhibiting the **neuroticism** personality trait are depressed, are not relaxed and cannot handle stress well. They worry a lot. They are not emotionally stable and are upset very easily. They are also moody and get nervous easily. They are hypervigilant and are vulnerable to the physical

and psychological effects of stress. **Openness** refers to sincerity to new thoughts and embracing disruptions (Bing & Lounsbury, 2000). People with the openness personality trait have active imagination. They are quite inventive and value artistic & aesthetic experiences. They prefer non-routine work. They reflect and play with ideas. People with openness personality trait have good sensitivity and curiosity. Tintarev et al. (2013) demonstrated that people who are characterized with openness tend to prefer diverse source of influence.

Tintarev (2013) studied the relationship between influence strategies and the Big Five personality traits. They opined through their findings that there was a relationship between individuals' personalities and use of influence strategies. They suggested that not all targets of influence were affected from the agents' same influence behaviour. In the research, we have taken two dimensions of Big Five personality traits. These traits are agreeableness and conscientiousness.

### **Agreeableness and Behavioural Influence Tactics**

Agreeableness is an element of interpersonal behaviour (Trapnell & Wiggins, 1990). This component of a managers' personality is meant to enhance interpersonal effectiveness of managers in an organizational context. Agreeable managers are humane, kind-hearted, openhanded, credulous and cooperative. Costa & McCrae (1992) found that agreeableness is negatively related to aggression and hostility. As agreeable managers are humane, they would not prefer to use hard influence behaviours like intimidation or disparagement. Being relationship oriented managers, they prefer to use ingratiation tactics. They referred ingratiation as a behaviour by an individual seeking to "increase his or her attractiveness in the eyes of others (pp. 572). Yukl and Falbe (1990) defined ingratiation as the behaviour when a person seeks to get you in a good mood or to think favorably of him or her before asking you to do something. The basic goal for influence in ingratiation is an increase in the target's feeling of positive regard toward the agent (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). Ingratiation can be conceived of as a set of interpersonal influence tactics that function to "enhance one's interpersonal attractiveness" and ultimately "gain favor" with another individual (Vonk, 2002). Towards this end, managers with agreeableness would like to use more ingratiation tactics. Agreeableness is negatively related to aggression and hostility (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Managers with the agreeableness trait will not use hard influence tactics like coalition formation and assertiveness. Graziano et. al, (1996) found that individuals with the agreeableness trait preferred interpersonal tactics that were oriented towards conflict resolution and away from power assertional tactics. Exchange of benefit suggests that people might be grateful to return a favour. People will reciprocate to favours (Cialdini, 2001). They defined exchange as the universal belief that people should help those who helped them in the past. Dohmen, et. al, (2008) found that agreeableness had a significant role in choice for exchange of benefit influence tactic.

### **Conscientiousness and Behavioural Influence Tactics**

Conscientiousness individuals are ambitious, practical, task-focused, persistent, as well as playful, careful and organized (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Mount & Barrick, 1995). Conscientiousness individuals are more likely to use rationality. As individuals with the conscientiousness trait are task oriented, they will prefer assertiveness tactics as well. Because they are task-focused and hardworking, they should be repelled by soft tactics like ingratiation, upward appeal and coalition formation. Dohmen, et al, (2008) suggested that individuals with the conscientiousness trait will prefer to use exchange of benefit tactic.

### **Behavioural Influence Tactics**

1. **Ingratiation-** Ingratiation as a proactive social and organization influence behaviour is mostly used in a social and organizational context and also is the most researched influence behaviour in academic literature related to social and organizational influence behaviour. Ingratiation is an influence tactic outside the authority of formal organizations (Pandey & Bohra, 1984). Ingratiation is defined as a "class of strategic behaviour illicitly designed to influence a particular other concerning the attractiveness of one' personal quality" (Jones, 1964:11). Wortman and Linsenmeir (1977) stated that ingratiation is intended to increase one's attractiveness in the eyes of others. Later, Liden and Mitchell (1988) referred ingratiation a behaviour by an individual seeking to "increase his or her attractiveness in the eyes of others (pp. 572). Yukl and Falbe (1990) defined ingratiation as the person seeking to get you in a good mood or to think favorably of

him or her before asking you to do something. The basis for influence in ingratiation is an increase in the target's feeling of positive regard towards the agent (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). Ingratiation can be conceived of as a set of interpersonal influence tactics that function to "enhance one's interpersonal attractiveness" and ultimately "gain favor" with another individual (Vonk, 2002). Eastman (1994) viewed ingratiation as a form of social influence defined as "a political tactic employee use to further their personal interests" (pp. 1379). Jones (1964) classified ingratiation tactics into three categories: Self presentation, opinion conformity and other enhancement. Ingratiation as a form of social influence is defined as "a political tactic of employees". Research has indicated that ingratiation can either help or impede employees in attaining their personal and career goals (Treadway, et. al. 2007). Ingratiation is viewed as a common form of interpersonal influence behaviour among corporate leaders and can help managers acquire greater social structural power in the corporate elite (Westphal & Shani, 2016). In an ingratiation context, when the subordinate hides his or her intention of ingratiation and attracts the supervisor's attention successfully, the supervisor will form a favorable impression of the subordinate as well as his or her attributes and desirable qualities (Turnley & Bolino, 2001). Conversely, if the intention of ingratiation is detected, the subordinate is likely to fall into what Cialdini (1984) calls the 'ingratiator's dilemma': instead of increasing his or her attractiveness in the supervisor's eyes, all the subordinate's efforts run the risk of being perceived as insincere and self-serving. Nguyen, Seers and Hartman (2008) examined ingratiation as a correlation of citizenship behaviour and desired outcomes in work teams. The ingratiation was found to be positively associated with individual satisfaction within teams and the extent to which individual members were perceived as likeable among the peers. Ingratiation is associated with beneficial organizational outcomes such as group solidarity and teamwork (e.g., Strutton & Pelton, 1998), leader member exchange quality (Deluga & Perry, 1994), performance assessment and extrinsic success (Higgins, Judge, & Ferris, 2003). Ingratiation coupled with high levels of positive effectivity forms an effective buffer to the influence of abusive supervision or turnover intentions (Harvey et. al., 2007). Recent research has provided evidence that ingratiatory behaviour may be an especially effective means of advancement among the corporate elite (Stern & Westphal, 2010). CEOs who have achieved a relatively high social status should become more attractive targets for flattery and opinion conformity from other managers and directors (Park, Westphal & Stern, 2011). Ingratiation is positively related to perceptions of increased likeability (Gordon, 1996; Higgins, Judge, & Ferris, 2003; Jones, 1964, 1990; Jones & Pittman, 1982; Schlenker, 1980; Shaughnessy et. al., 2011).

2. **Exchange of Benefits-** Kipnis and his associates (1980) defined exchange of benefits as making an explicit offer to do something for another in exchange for their doing what one wants. Yukl (1998) observes that the agent says that he/she will make it worth your effort if you do what he/she asks. Exchange is linked to the leader-member exchange (LMX) perspective (Liden, Sparrowe & Wayne, 1997). In exchange, leaders promise future favors or benefit to members in return for fulfilling leaders' request (Sparrow, Soetjijto, & Kraimer, 2006). In this tactic, the agent offers an incentive, suggests an exchange of favors, or indicates a willingness to reciprocate at a later time if the target will do what the agent requests. According to McFarland, Rayan and Kriska, (2002), exchange of benefits was not categorized as hard or soft because it did not fit clearly into either category. Previous research has recognized that exchange off benefits lies somewhere between soft and hard tactics (Falbe & Yukl, 1992; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). At the same time, Enns & Mcfarlin (2005), viewed exchange of benefits as a "hard" tactic.
3. **Rationality-** Kipnis and his associates (1980) labelled it reason, Yukl and Falbe (1990) called it rational persuasion and Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990) termed it rationality. Lu and his associates (2019) defined logical reasoning as using rational argument and relevant facts to demonstrate that a request or proposal is feasible and germane to key objectives. Steensma (2007) found that rationality is valued in organizations; therefore, agents might use rationality to inspire their subordinates. Jensen (2007) viewed that rational persuasion to be an effective tactic when it came to changing the minds of the targets with regards to current issues. Logical reasoning involves making logical persuasive arguments to influence the decisions or behaviours of others. Standifird, Pons and Moshavi (2008) opined that logical reasoning involves the process of explanation and discussion.

4. **Assertiveness-** Yukl and Falbe (1990) called it “Pressure tactic.” Kipnis et al., (1980) and Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990) termed it as “assertiveness.” Pressure tactics involve the use of “demands, threats, frequent checking, or persistent reminders” (Yukl & Chavez, 2002) directed towards members. Kipnis et al., (1980) defined assertiveness as “using a forceful manner to get what one wants.” Assertiveness includes tactics such as “demand that he/ she does what was requested” (Erez, Rim & Keider, 1986). Pressure tactic cues members that their leaders expect compliance with their requests regardless of members’ intrinsic motivation (Sparrowe et al., 2006). Exerting pressure is described as “forcing” influence tactics (Emans et. al., 2003).
5. **Upward Appeal-** Upward appeal is gaining support from someone’s boss in an effort to influence that person. It is using the hierarchical structure to work the system when attempting to influence. Upward appeal has been studied extensively since Kipnis et al. (1980) originally defined it. Person-centered variables appear to appropriate antecedents of upward appeal tactics. Research in the antecedents of upward appeal has revealed positive relationships with locus of control and extrinsic motivation (Hochwarter et al., 2000), Machiavellianism (Vecchio & Sussmann, 1989), self-monitoring (Caldwell & Burger, 1997) and negative relationships with social identity (Hochwarter et al., 2000).
6. **Coalition Formation-** Coalitions involve gathering support from several people, creating a peer pressure or a “ganging up” effect to influence others’ actions or decisions (Barbuto Jr. & Moss, 2006). As defined by Yukl and Falbe (1990), in coalitions, the person seeks the aid of others to persuade you to do something or uses the support of others as a reason for you to agree too. Kipnis and his associates (1980) viewed coalition formation as an attempt to build alliances with others. Hence, mobilizing others to help in persuading the target individual is part of coalition formation (Kipnis et al., 1980).

As in the Indian context, very few studies have explored the relationship between personality traits and proactive influence tactics. The objective of the research was to see the relationship between personality traits and choice of influence tactics in an organizational context.

## 2. Methodology

### Sample

The study was conducted on 156 professionals working in organizations (banking & finance, insurance, audit, administration, manufacturing, Information Technology etc.) Respondents having superiors and subordinates were qualified for the study. Average age of the respondents was 49.4 years. Respondents employed in technical work made up 36.5 percent of the total respondents and respondents in non-technical work made up 63.5 percent of the total respondents. Respondents varied in work experience: 29.8 percent had up to 1 years of experience, 19.6 percent had 1 years and one month to 5 years of work experience, 16.2 percent of respondents had 5 years and one month to 10 years of work experience, and 34.4 percent of respondents had more than 5 years and one month of work experience. In terms of number of subordinates, 72.1 percent of respondents had 0-10 subordinates. 19.8 percent had 11-50 subordinates, and 7.8 percent had more than 51 subordinates. Respondents varied in terms of their educational qualifications as follows: 48.1 percent were graduates, 25.7 percent were post-graduates, 19.8 percent were Diploma/Master’s in Business Administration, 4.2 percent were M.Phil. /Doctoral Degree, and 2.1 percent respondents were undergraduates.

## 3. Measures

### Big five personality traits

The 18-item instrument relating to Agreeableness and Conscientiousness dimensions developed by John, Donahue, and Kentle (1991) was used for the study. It is based on the Big Five Model of the Personality. A five-point scale ranging from 1 “Disagree strongly,” 2. “Disagree a little,” 3. “Neither agree nor disagree,” 4. “Agree a little,” and 5 “Agree strongly” was used in the study. It was a self-report inventory. The agreeableness dimension had nine items. Conscientiousness dimension also had nine items. It took ten minutes to fill the instrument.

**Behavioural influence tactics**

Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990) conducted a study for a theoretical and empirical analysis and refined the Kipnis, et al., (1980) questionnaire to measure influence tactics used by subordinates. Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990) conducted four studies for content analysis and factor analysis of six sub-scales of Kipnis et al., (1980). These four studies like the Kipnis et al., (1980) study assessed the influence tactics. The questionnaire had tactics of ingratiation, rationality, assertiveness, upward appeal and coalitions consisting of 6, 5, 4, 6, 4, and 2 items respectively. The result of these studies validated the six influence tactics proposed by Kipnis et al., (1980). Thereafter, Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990) through factor analysis proposed a refined 18- item questionnaire (3 items in each of the six dimensions) which had theoretically more valid content, perceptual distinctiveness and adequate scale reliabilities. In the study the 18-items questionnaire developed by Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990) was used to measure influence tactics. It includes influence tactics: 1. Ingratiation, 2. Exchange of benefit, 3. Rationality, 4. Assertiveness, 5. Upward appeal, and 6. Exchange of benefit. Respondents were asked to respond on a five-point scale. Scale value varied from “never” (1), “Seldom” (2), “Occasionally” (3), “Moderately” (4), and “Usually” (5). Range of score was one (1) to five (5). Because subjects were to report the frequency of actual behaviors, high scores should indicate more use of influence tactics.

The scale consisted of a total of thirty six items (36). Scale has a section of personal information. It contained demographic variables, such as, name of organization, age, gender, cadre, nature of work, number of subordinates, experience in organization and educational qualification. The questionnaire consisted of the following instruction: “In any organization, different behaviours are used to influence others. This study is linked to these behaviours. It takes 20 minutes to fill this questionnaire. Some people like you will participate in it. Whatever you are going to tell will only be used for research purposes. Your name will not be associated with the information given by you. It is not important to write your name on the questionnaire. Will you cooperate? It took 20 minutes of time to fill the questionnaire. Respondents were approached at their work place to fill the questionnaire. To eliminate the social desirability factor in the response of respondents, it was asked ‘What behaviour managers use to influence others (superiors, subordinates, and colleagues) in organization.’

**4. Results**

**Table 1: Means, Standard deviations, and correlations between personality traits and behavioural influence tactics.**

	M	SD	Cronbach alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Agreeableness</b>	3.5	.98	.81	-							
<b>Conscientiousness</b>	3.2	1.01	.90	-0.01	-						
<b>Ingratiation</b>	3.7	1.2	.87	0.23	0.02	-					
<b>Exchange of Benefit</b>	2.1	1.01	.73	0.17	0.10	0.35	-				
<b>Rationality</b>	3.9	.83	.86	-0.18	0.32	0.11	0.01	-			
<b>Assertiveness</b>	2.7	1.18	.91	-0.19	0.18	0.16	0.38	0.43	-		
<b>Upward Appeal</b>	2.3	1.20	.71	-0.07	0.03	0.32	0.43	-0.02	0.23	-	
<b>Coalition Formation</b>	2.5	1.09	.92	-0.01	-0.06	0.35	0.32	0.08	0.16	0.19	-

N= 156, For r = 0.16, p < 0.05. For r = 0.21, p < 0.01.

**Table 2: Relationship between personality traits and behavioural influence tactics**

	Ingratiation	Exchange of benefit	Rationality	Assertiveness	Upward appeal	Coalition formation
Agreeableness	0.212	0.151	-0.031	-0.144	-0.08	0.012
Conscientiousness	0.032	0.123	0.321	0.141	-0.002	-0.004

N = 156, \*p < 0.01 (two-tailed test); \*\*p < 0.05 (two-tailed test); \*\*\*p < (two-tailed test)

Table 1 showed the mean, standard deviation, Cronbach alpha and correlations of personality traits and behavioural influence tactics. The table indicated that Rationality tactic was used moderately (mean value of 3.9) by managers in an Indian context. It was followed by Ingratiation tactic with mean value of 3.7. Exchange of benefit with mean value of 2.1 was used seldom by the managers as an influence tactic. At the same time, managers indicated that Coalition formation, Upward appeal, and Assertiveness tactics were used occasionally by the managers. Construct reliability was assessed by using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha is a very popular technique used to study internal consistency among items of the constructs measuring the individual construct of personality traits and influence behaviour. Cronbach's alpha values were ranged between 0 and 1 and the threshold being .7 and above (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Table 1 showed that all the Cronbach's alpha values were above the threshold, hence the reliability of constructs is supported.

Table 2 described the results from a series of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analyses, where each of the influence tactics (Ingratiation, Exchange of benefit, Rationality, Assertiveness, Upward appeal, and Coalition formation) was regressed on all of the predictor variables personality traits (Agreeableness and Conscientiousness). The table showed that managers who scored high on Agreeableness were more likely to use Ingratiation tactic ( $\beta = 0.212$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Exchange of benefit ( $\beta = 0.151$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). It suggested that managers with Agreeableness personality traits preferred Ingratiation and Exchange of benefit tactics. Table 2 results showed that Assertiveness tactic preference was lowered as managers Agreeableness personality trait score increased ( $\beta = -0.144$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It indicated that Agreeableness personality traits managers, very significantly, chose less the Assertiveness tactic. With Rationality and Upward appeal tactics relationship of Agreeableness personality trait were negative but not statistically significant. At the same time, relationship of Coalition formation tactic was not significant with Agreeableness personality traits of the managers.

Table 2 showed the results of OLS regression analysis between Conscientiousness personality traits and behavioural influence tactics of managers. The results showed that managers who scored high on Conscientiousness personality trait were more likely to prefer Rationality influence tactics ( $\beta = 0.321$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), Assertiveness ( $\beta = 0.141$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Exchange of benefit ( $\beta = 0.123$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It suggested that managers with Conscientiousness personality trait preferred more Rationality, Assertiveness and Exchange of benefit. With the Conscientiousness personality traits, no significant relationship was found with Upward appeal and Coalition formation tactics.

## 5. Discussion

Influence process is an important organizational phenomenon. The process plays very vital role in increasing the effectiveness of managers and organizations. A number of researches has indicated the role of influence process as a significant factor to various organizational related outcomes. Situational and personality dispositions are significant determinants of behavioural influence tactics. Situational factors are more reactive (micro level determinate) in nature to shape the influence process. But personality disposition as a factor to regulate the choice of behavioural influence tactics is more stable in nature. Buss (1992) asserted that the use of influence strategies is related to individual differences in personality. He further opined that the type of personality could predict the tendency to use certain influence tactics over others. Numerous studies had established a link between personality factors and choice of behavioural influence tactics. At the same time, few studies had been conducted to explore the linkage between personality traits and influence tactics in Indian context. To see the relationship between personality dispositions and choice of behavioural influence tactics in an Indian context, we have used Schriesheim and Hinkin (1990) instrument to measure the influence tactics of managers. The instrument entails Ingratiation, Exchange of benefit, Rationality, Assertiveness, Upward appeal, and Coalition formation. To

measure the personality traits of managers' we used John, Donahue and Kentle (1991) scale based on a theoretical proposition of Big Five personality factor. The Five personality factors constitute Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness. Previous research was contradictory in findings in relationship between the Big Five factors and behavioural influence tactics. For example, Caldwell and Burger (1997) found that high Agreeableness individuals used Assertiveness tactics but Cable and Judge (2003) asserted that Agreeableness personality individuals did not prefer Pressure tactics. To a large extent some consistent findings were related to Agreeableness and Conscientiousness personality factors. Over the period of time, repeated findings were reported by various studies on the role of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness personality factors on choice of a particular influence tactics in an organizational context. Therefore, we have opted these two personality factors to explore the linkage between personality disposition and influence tactics for Indian context.

The study was conducted on managers working different types of organizations. Data was analysed by means, standard deviations, correlations and OLS regression analyses. In the regression analysis, each of behavioural influence tactics regressed on both the personality indicators. Results of the study were presented in Table 1 and Table 2. Results indicated that Indian managers preferred Rationality most followed by Ingratiation tactic to influence others in an organizational context. Exchange of benefit tactic was used least by the managers. Results found that managers with Agreeableness personality trait used more Ingratiation and Exchange of benefit and least preferred Assertiveness tactic. Agreeableness personality dimension emphasizes the relationship orientation of managers. Agreeableness personality people believe highly in team work, they cooperate with others, are more compliant in nature and are more conforming. Pandey (1981) worked on Ingratiation tactic within an Indian context. The result of the study confirmed the findings related to association between Ingratiation and Agreeableness. Liden & Mitchell (1988) found that Ingratiation behaviours are meant to increase the attractiveness in the eyes of others. The result of the study also supported the exertions of Dohmen et al, (2008) Agreeableness personality dimension and exchange of benefit are significantly correlated with each other. Costa & McCrae (1992) found that Agreeableness was negatively related with aggression and hostility (hard influence tactics). Finding of this study also indicated that Assertiveness tactic was preferred less by Agreeableness managers. Table 2 showed that Conscientiousness was positively related to Rationality Influence tactic. Conscientiousness personality factor is dominated by task oriented behaviour (Mount & Barrick, 1995). John & Srivastava (1999) opined that Conscientiousness facilitates task- and goal-directed behaviour. Cable and Judge (2003) found that Conscientious individuals tend to use the influence tactic of Rational persuasion. Findings of this study supported these views of the previous research when results indicated that Conscientiousness personality managers tend to use more rationality influence tactics in an organizational context. Further, Conscientious personality managers also significantly preferred Exchange of benefit influence tactics which supports the previous research findings (Caldwell & Burger, 1997; Dohmen et al, 2008). As Conscientiousness personality is also characterized by persistence and ambition, hence managers with the conscientious personality trait also preferred Assertiveness influence tactics.

Overall the results of the study provide support for the notion that personality affects the choice of behavioural influence tactics (Buss, 1992). The findings complement those from previous investigations examining the relationship between dispositional factors and influence tactics. The use of well-defined Big Five factor model provides the basis for identifying the specific trait related to choice of influence tactics in different situations.

## 6. Limitations Of The Study

This was conducted based on Schriesheim & Hinkin (1990) model of influence tactics. The model has only limited kind of influence tactics. Now in literatures, more than twelve behavioural influence tactics are identified (Yukl, Seifert, & Chavez, 2008; Srivastava, 2025). Exploring the linkage between personality factors and influence tactics with only few tactics is a limitation of the study. This study had considered only two dimensions of Big Five factor model of personality. These factors were Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. As the study investigated the relationship of influence tactics with only two personality factors, it is a great limitation of the study. Relationship of influence tactics with all the five factors in a holistic way can help in a better way to understand relationship between two constructs.

### **7. Future Direction Of The Study**

Future study can also include the dark triade (machcialliesm, self-monitoring and psychopath traits) and other personality constructs like locus of control etc. These dimensions also play very important role in the choice of behavioural influence tactics. The relationship between personality disposition and choice of behavioural influence tactics is mediated by direction of influence (downward and upward directions). Future study can also study the impact of influence study on the performance of managers which can be mediated by personality constructs.

### **8. Conclusion**

Results of the study indicated that personality construct determined the choice of behavioural influence tactics of managers. In this context, it appears that the self-awareness of personality disposition by managers is vital as it unlocks various answers to managers on the their choice of behavioural influence tactics.

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