

# Exploration on the Early Development of Children's Leadership Based on the "Big 5" Personality Theory

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to discuss the feasibility of the early development plan of children's leadership under the "Big Five" personality theory, introduce the personality, "Big Five" personality theory, leadership and children's leadership related theories, and analyze the research trends of children's leadership. In the field of leadership training and development, children's leadership belongs to the early training stage of leadership, and children are the early stage of personality, intelligence and character development. Through early leadership courses and training, the research trend of leadership can be advanced to childhood, which helps to explain the training and formation process of leadership. Some empirical studies also show that the external factors that have the greatest impact on Teenagers' leadership development are mainly parents and parents. Therefore, this topic focuses on the ways of early leadership development in family and school. Finally, it comes to the possibility and ways of early leadership development in family education, early leadership development in school education, and interaction between family education and school education.

**Keywords:** "Big Five" Personality; Child Leadership; Early Development; Approach Exploration

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## Introduction

Since the last century, the development of leadership science has promoted the research of educational leadership. The research of leadership has been concerned by educational circles, and also attracted the attention of educational managers and practical researchers. At present, the research on adult leadership development has made a lot of research results, which lay a foundation for further research on leadership in theory and practice. However, the research focusing only on adult leadership development is not comprehensive, and the research on leadership development in childhood is also necessary. As for the stage of leadership development, almost all scholars agree that leadership development is a gradual process. However, at present, most scholars' understanding of the stage of leadership development is concentrated after adults or after assuming leadership positions, but rarely mention the early stage of leadership development.

As a kind of human ability, if we all agree that this ability can be cultivated and developed in the adult stage, we should try to cultivate it early in the best period of human learning and development, that is, childhood. We should fully consider the possibility of early cultivation of children's leadership in the initial stage of personality, intelligence and character development, and explore the possibility of early cultivation of children's leadership through early leadership courses and cultivation, Advancing the trend of leadership research to childhood may help explain the process of leadership development and formation. Some empirical studies also show that the external factors that have the greatest impact on Teenagers' leadership development are mainly parents and teachers. Therefore, this topic focuses on the ways of early leadership development in both family and school. Finally, it comes to the possibility and ways of early leadership development in family education, early leadership development in school education, and interactive early leadership training in family education and school education.

# 1. Research background

Psychologist Edward Lee Thorndike once studied the curve of the relationship between age and learning ability and the influence of intelligence on the curve. This research shows that people's learning ability continues to grow from childhood until the age of 22, and then decreases after the age of 25. So, as a kind of human ability, does leadership follow the same development law? From some materials on the early development of leadership, most scholars pay attention to the development of leaders in leadership positions. Only a few scholars have mentioned the relationship between the emergence of leadership and early experience, but there are few studies on the early development of leadership. People's traditional understanding of leadership still stays in the concept of post leadership. Since human leadership can still be enhanced after adult training, trying to carry out early training in the best period of human learning and development, that is, childhood, may achieve twice the result with half the effort. Because compared with adults, children's learning and acceptance ability is amazing<sup>[1]</sup>.

In the research history of the basic factors of personality, researchers agree that the basic factors of personality include neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness. These five factors are also known as the "Big Five" personality factors. In recent years, researchers have formed a consensus on the personality description model and put forward the "Big Five" model of personality, which Goldberg (1992) called a revolution in personality psychology. At present, the "Big Five" personality theory is more representative in discussing the relationship between personality factors and leadership development. Through the method of lexicology, researchers found that about five traits can cover all aspects of personality description. In 1985, Chris and kubs developed the five factors of relative stability, and found that the five factors were significant in the questionnaire of personality. According to the definition in the test manual of cousta and McGonagall, which is also the most widely accepted definition, this theoretical model is called "Big Five" personality, because the initial letter is ocean, also known as the ocean of personality, which can be evaluated by neo-pi-r.

The trait view holds that leaders have special or natural characters and abilities that make them leaders. Therefore, traits can distinguish leaders from non leaders. So is leadership innate? Parents with leadership do not necessarily have children with leadership, which shows that leadership does not come from heredity. So, where does leadership come from? Since leadership is not an inherent personal ability, how do people slowly cultivate some traits and mature them into leadership traits in the process of growth? Then, we should fully consider the possibility of trait cultivation in the early stage of personality, intelligence and character development<sup>[2]</sup>.

## 2. Leadership related research

Personality: refers to the internal tendency and psychological characteristics of an individual's behavior in the social adaptation to people, things and oneself. It is manifested in the integration of ability, temperament, personality, needs, motivation, interest, ideal, values and physique. It is a self with dynamic consistency and continuity. It is a unique psychosomatic organization formed by individuals in the process of socialization.

"Big Five" personality theory (Ocean): "Big Five" personality is also known as the ocean of personality, which can be assessed by NEO-PI-R, mainly referring to neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness. These five factors are also known as "Big Five" personality factors.

Leadership: at present, the academic circles of leadership research have no consistent concept of leadership, but the common view is that leadership refers to the ability to make full use of human and objective conditions within the jurisdiction and improve the efficiency of the whole group when doing the required things at the lowest cost<sup>[3]</sup>.

Leadership quality model: a combination of a series of different qualities required of the incumbent in order to complete a work and achieve a performance goal. The quality model is designed for a specific organization in a specific period of time.

Child Leadership: generally refers to the early development of leadership, which is based on "the possibility of unlimited growth of children", which is some of their qualities or abilities in a certain situation.

Leadership is a fundamental and strategic category in the leadership system. It is the personality cohesion and appeal of leaders to specific individuals or organizations under certain conditions by virtue of the comprehensive role of their personal

quality. It is an important driving force to maintain the growth and sustainable development of organizations. In contemporary society, leadership has become one of the indispensable factors of comprehensive leadership. In view of the great influence of leadership on organizations, researchers in various countries have conducted a lot of research on leadership and produced a variety of leadership theories.

The research on leadership and leadership development began in the 1990s, and the use of quality model has been greatly promoted. The most basic starting point of the leadership quality model of many organizations is based on professional development, especially the model established around a series of behavioral dimensions. In recent years, the quality model has been further extended to integrate enterprise values, learning ability and code of conduct to form leadership [4].

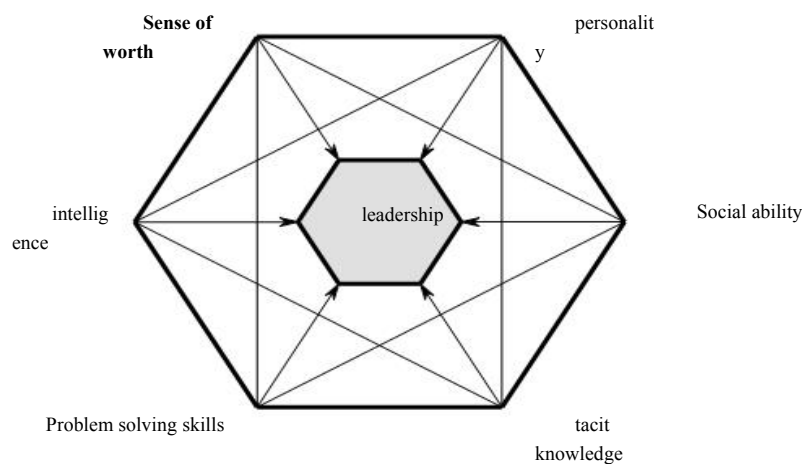
### 3. Discussion on the possibility of early training of children's leadership

#### 3.1 Theoretical model of children's leadership

Psychologists believe that children's initial psychological activities are only very simple reflection activities, which become more and more complex. This development trend is reflected in two aspects: from incomplete to complete, from general to differentiation, and from chaos or ambiguity to differentiation and clarity in both cognitive activities and emotional development trends. At first, children's psychological activities were very specific, and then they became more and more abstract and generalized.

Based on the understanding of the nature of leadership knowledge, it can be inferred that although some leadership knowledge gives knowledge a certain external form through language and has been widely recognized, it does not mean that different learners have the same understanding of this knowledge. Real understanding can only be constructed by learners themselves based on their own experience background. In addition to the knowledge that can be expressed in written words, there are also some knowledge that cannot be expressed in written words, such as leadership intuition in leadership decision-making. Intuition can not be logically explained through language, words or symbols. It is a perception that can not be clearly expressed by itself. Therefore, it can not be transmitted in a formal form in society. It is also because it is obtained through physical senses or rational intuition, and it can not be critically reflected [5].

Figure 1 theoretical model of early leadership development



According to the relationship between each trait and leadership development and the relationship between each trait development itself, the theoretical model of early leadership development can be preliminarily established. In the above model, leadership is a dark area in the center, surrounded by hexagons, representing six main characteristics: personality, values, intelligence, social ability, problem-solving skills and tacit knowledge. Leadership development is the comprehensive development of various abilities, which is externally manifested in six specific characteristics. There are links between six

trait development and leadership development, and between different trait development. The abilities of various characteristic elements of leadership are always interrelated and interact with each other (Wang Fang, 2010).

### **3.2 Curriculum design principles of children's leadership**

When designing children's leadership curriculum, we should pay attention to two principles: one is student-centered. Teaching is not a simple process for teachers to transfer leadership knowledge to students, but a process to help students construct leadership knowledge themselves. Leadership instructional design should also stimulate students' thinking, stimulate students to solve problems by themselves, and give students the autonomy to solve problems. Encourage students to actively collect and analyze relevant information and materials, put forward various assumptions about the problems they have learned and try to verify them, and try to connect the current learning content with what students already know. The second is the principle of team cooperative learning. Due to the differences of students' experience background, students' views and understanding of problems are often very different. Students can be encouraged to negotiate with each other and make analysis and comments on other people's views. Through such teamwork learning, students' thinking and wisdom can be shared by the whole group. Therefore, the curriculum design should make the team cooperation activities run through the whole process of learning activities, including the cooperation and communication between teachers and students, and between students and students. To some extent, cooperation reflects the awareness of participation, and communication is the most basic way in the process of cooperation<sup>[6]</sup>.

## **4. Conclusion: the way of children's leadership development**

Since the Chinese government announced the full opening of the "three child" policy in June 2021, the advantages of preschool education policy have made preschool education face huge development space, and children's education is particularly important.

### **4.1 Early development of children's leadership in family education**

The family is the first place for children's socialization (Li Junqing, 2021). Parents can consciously create a healthy and positive atmosphere in their families, guide their children to pay attention to, imitate, try and experience leadership behavior through their own positive learning experience and acquisition, and effectively stimulate their children's interest in learning, so as to help their children realize the development of leadership. Infiltrating the learning of leadership knowledge and basic skills in the family and improving children's leadership cognition is an important way to improve children's leadership cognition. Parents should cultivate their children's interest in leadership learning. A good family environment is not only necessary to cultivate leadership, but also indispensable for all children's development<sup>[7]</sup>.

### **4.2 Early development of children's leadership in school education**

Some basic views on the development of leadership among middle school students in schools believe that every child has leadership, and all teachers, whether kindergarten or primary school, no matter what courses they teach, have the opportunity to discover and strengthen children's leadership potential in the classroom. Developing leadership in organizations or schools requires a democratic and open atmosphere. Children's leadership should be developed as early as possible in schools, preferably from the age of 5 (Wang Fang, 2012). In school life, with the gradual reduction of children's communication with their parents and the gradual increase of communication with teachers, the important influence of teacher-student relationship gradually emerges. The teacher-student relationship not only has a certain impact on students' parent-child relationship and peer communication, but also has a very important and unique impact on students' school adaptation, especially on their psychology, emotion, behavior and learning adaptation (Pan Xueliang, 2013).

### 4.3 Early training of children's leadership based on the interaction between family education and school education

The organic combination of family education and school education is an effective way to cultivate children's leadership. Constructing a lifelong education system integrating family and school is the main direction of educational development. Lifelong education should include all aspects of education, which requires that all stages and fields of education should complement and penetrate each other, so that everyone can make full use of the expanding educational environment in his life and arrange around lifelong development. The harmonious interaction between family education and school education is the basic guarantee for the lifelong development of individual leadership<sup>[8]</sup>.

School education is a group education behavior, which is more reflected in the education of scientific and cultural quality and civic education, while families pay more attention to students' individual education and the cultivation of living habits. These characteristics show that family education and school education are indispensable parts. In the cultivation of leadership, we should also start from the whole, and comprehensively cultivate leadership in three factors: values, personality and intelligence. The individual's social ability, problem-solving skills and knowledge problem-solving ability will directly affect the individual's leadership level.

**Fund Project:** Mianyang social science research base-Sichuan early childhood education and Development Research Center 2021 "special research project on early childhood education and development", No.: SCYJ2021YB04.

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