

# Leadership Style and its Relation to Polychronicity and State Trait Anger Expression among College Students

Dharshinee S. K<sup>1</sup> and Shanmathi S. A<sup>2</sup>, Palanichamy Thamilselvan<sup>3</sup>, D. Sai Balasubramanian<sup>4</sup>,  
Palanichamy Senthilvadevel<sup>5</sup>, Varun M<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>B.Sc., Psychology and <sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, PSG College of Arts & Science,  
Coimbatore-641014, Tamilnadu, India

<sup>4</sup>Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, SRM Medical College Hospital & Research Centre,  
SRM Nagar, Potheri, Kattankulathur, Kancheepuram-603203

<sup>5</sup>Lecturer of Occupational Therapy, Saud Bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences, Ahsa, Kingdom  
of Saudi Arabia

<sup>6</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore-641014,  
Tamilnadu, India

**Abstract - Background:** Most people generally have traits of polychronicity, state anger, trait anger and anger expression but it is not yet known how these traits relate to people who are in leadership positions. And in doing this study we try to understand its effects on those people in accordance with their leadership styles. **Aim:** To find the relationship of leadership styles with polychronicity and state trait anger expression among college students. **Subject and Methods:** The study was conducted among 150 college students of age between 17 - 24 in the Coimbatore district using purposive sampling method. Socio demographic data such as gender, age, domicile, and socioeconomic status were assessed through online mode with informed consent from the college students. **Multitasking preference inventory, State trait anger expression and Shanahan leadership style questionnaire** were used. **Statistical Analysis:** Frequency, median, mean, standard deviation, Kolmogorov Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk test and bivariate analysis using spearman rank order correlation. **Results:** Leadership style of autocratic is significantly positively correlated to polychronicity, state trait anger expression and participative leadership is significantly negatively correlated to state anger. **Conclusions:** Polychronicity and state trait anger expression has its own effect on leaders based on the leadership styles they follow and it could also be seen as either a boon or a bane considering their style which they choose to govern as a leader. This could be used for the selection of the leaders accordingly in relation to the position and style needed in a work setting.

**Index Terms -** Leadership style, Polychronicity, State Anger, Trait anger, Anger expression.

## INTRODUCTION

Leadership involves itself in the process of influencing others either through promise of rewards, threats, technical and influential arguments or inspirational appeals. With diverse theories, leadership can be seen as a form of influence, effectiveness and performance of the group, a part of moral values, attainment of goals and so on.<sup>24</sup> A successful leader has the ability to be flexible, inspiring, creative, motivating, shaping and securing the goals etc.<sup>17</sup> In the context of definition, "A leader is one or more people who selects, equips, trains, and influences one or more follower(s) who have diverse gifts, abilities, and skills and focuses the follower(s) to the organization's mission and objectives causing the follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual, emotional, and physical energy in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives".<sup>27</sup>

Leadership being a social influence process, a leader influences their followers and delegates them to act and carry out specified objectives and to achieve the desired goals. The manner in which the leader influences them is known as leadership styles. These different leadership styles may affect the performance and effectiveness of the group or followers. Leadership embraces traditional beliefs, norms and values and makes the leader who he is.<sup>18</sup> Leadership styles include a combination of various characteristics,

traits and behaviours used by a leader to interact with the subordinates.<sup>1</sup> Based on the emphasis on people or performance, a leader can be categorised as human relations leader, laissez faire leader, democratic and autocratic leader. They engage in different roles, responsibly, views and actions towards the work environment, people and performance.<sup>26</sup> Autocratic, democratic and laissez faire styles of leadership has paved a way in the emergence of further styles. Based on the leader-follower relationship and impact of one's actions, additional leadership styles have been developed namely, situational leadership, delegative leadership, participative leadership, transactional leadership, transformational leadership and many more.<sup>9</sup>

In autocratic leadership style, the leader is known to be the one who dominates policies, dictates attitudes and work techniques, initiates actions, controls rewards, penalties and evaluates the subordinates in their work and attitude.<sup>6</sup> This style of leadership revolves around the leader retaining the decision making rights, forcing the followers to execute the services, promoting one sided conversation and dominating the work environment with the leader being bossy, narrow, domineering and less creative.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, democratic leadership style relates to higher morale and offers guidance to and allows input from subordinates. Participation of the leader plays a major role and they delegate authority to the subordinates and provide ongoing support to them.<sup>22</sup> This style of leadership is concerned with meaningful participation and decision making and establishes respectful relationships, active cooperation and collaborative associations within the members or followers.<sup>15</sup> Delegative leadership (laissez faire leadership style) can be associated with poorly defined roles, lack of motivation and power and decision making capabilities in the hands of group members or subordinates with little or no guidance from the leader. Here, members have the freedom to make decisions with their own ideas. This type of leadership is valuable when there is an experienced team with greater technical expertise than their leader in specific aspects. If this method is used too much, it may result in loss of control and authority, stress for team members and less respect for the leader.<sup>7</sup> Situational leadership style is based on the use of different leadership styles in relation with the demands of the situation. Leaders become successful when they adapt

themselves to their own unique situation. They benefit from combined strategies, maximise learning experience and satisfaction and respond to the challenges by being flexible, adaptable and effective. This style embraces flexibility, recognise new needs and situation change.<sup>25</sup>

Polychronicity is known as “a preference for doing several tasks simultaneously”. Engaging in different tasks at the same time, multitasking and multi communication are based on Polychronicity. In the words of Bluedorn et al. (1999) polychronicity is defined “as the extent to which people in a culture: (1) prefer to be engaged in two or more tasks or events simultaneously, and (2) believe their preference is the best way to do things”.<sup>16</sup> Here simultaneously can refer to engaging at two tasks at the same time or back and forth engagement with several tasks. Polychronicity being a fundamental aspect in most relationships, awareness and understanding of the term can enhance the leader-follower relationship and performance. With Polychronicity, people can demonstrate flexibility and allow them to adjust and adapt to different situations and a leader's Polychronicity may have an impact on the follower in completing the task.<sup>3</sup> In order to seek efficiency and effectiveness in a time constricted environment, the leaders tend to prefer Polychronicity in which the person involved can do and think multiple things simultaneously. With the time frame the leader must be responsible to mentally capture and divide future blocks, allot schedules and ensure that activities are run parallel to each other, and coordinate events and tasks that occur at the same time. Since most activities faced by the leaders are polychronic in nature, they should have the ability to operate and act on a number of tactical levels at the same time.<sup>23</sup>

Anger when expressed poorly by a leader may result in destructive leadership behaviour that leads to a hostile environment at work. Trait anger might cause interpersonal aggression when not controlled in the right time and makes the leader perceive situations annoying or frustrating.<sup>13</sup> Experience of anger is measured with the dimensions of state anger and trait anger. While state anger is a temporary state of anger, trait anger is a more stable response for a wider range of stimuli. State anger is a temporary reaction to the characteristics of an immediate situation. Trait anger consists of an angry temperament and an angry reaction. Experience and expression of anger without

general provocation is known as angry temperament and angry reaction refers to the expression when criticised or treated in an unfair manner. Anger expression is the reaction to anger or how one expresses their anger. It includes anger-in: suppression of the anger internally, anger-out: external expression of anger towards people or objects, anger-control: exerting control over anger expression.<sup>8</sup> Anger being a negative social behaviour causes actions such as alienation, hostility, blaming and abstention. The followers have high chances of feeling alienated when the leader expresses angry behaviour and in turn results in negative follower outcomes. It is perceived that the leader is inadequate in emotion control and self-confidence. People who work with angry leaders also tend to express lower levels of attachment and negative emotions that affect their performance. Anger neutral leader is described as an authentic leader who promotes affective follower commitment and maintains a positive regard.<sup>2</sup> Leaders with positive traits show positive affective states that influence the follower's emotion in a positive light. It enhances the relationship between the leader and the follower, promotes leadership effectiveness and conveys important functional information.<sup>12</sup>

## METHODOLOGY

### Aim

To find the relationship of leadership styles with polychronicity and state trait anger expression among college students.

### Objectives

- To assess the relationship between polychronicity and leadership styles such as autocratic leadership, participative leadership, delegative leadership and situational leadership among college students
- To find out the relationship between state anger, trait anger and anger expression on the four leadership styles among college students.

### Hypothesis

- There is a significant relationship between Leadership Style (autocratic leadership, participative leadership, delegative leadership and situational leadership) with polychronicity.

- There is a significant relationship between Leadership Style (autocratic leadership, participative leadership, delegative leadership and situational leadership) with state anger, trait anger and anger expression.

### Sample

Samples of 150 leaders (Class Representatives) were collected from Arts & Science college at Coimbatore. Those who have signed in the informed consent and who are leaders (Class Representatives) for at least a minimum period of one year were selected for the study. The sample belonged to the age group ranging between 17 years to 24 years (Female (n) = 102 and male(n) = 48). Purposive sampling technique was used. In each class, students who are working as leaders were selected purposively for the study based on the position of the students. This is a correlational study among college students (17- 24) studying in the Arts & Science college of Coimbatore district in Tamil Nadu.

### Procedure

The questionnaires were collected through online mode and the description about the questionnaires were given at the top of each questionnaire. The subjects are selected carefully in a selective manner i.e. the samples who were working as a leader are only selected. Informed consent was obtained from each participant and if the participant wished, they were allowed to leave the study at any point of time. The data of the subjects were maintained confidentially.

### Tools

1. Personal Data Sheet: Demographic details were collected which includes age, gender, domicile and socio-economic status.
2. Multitasking Preference Inventory: It contains the 14 questionnaires and responses are in the form of five-point Likert scale with the responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Among the 14 items, seven were reversely scored before computing the scale score. The MPI scale was administered to assess an aspect of Polychronicity. Polychronicity is the inclination to engage in multiple tasks simultaneously. The reliability of this inventory is 0.91 and content validity is 0.85.<sup>20</sup>
3. State Trait Anger Expression Questionnaire

State trait anger expression which is commonly known as STAXI, contains three parts in which the first part contains the scoring such as Never, Sometimes, Moderate and Always whereas part two and three contains the scoring such as almost never, sometimes, often and almost always. The part of the scale contains 44 items and three categories, state anger, trait anger and anger expression. The reliability of the questionnaire found by conducting Cronbach alpha test is 0.648. For validity, Pearson correlation value was used between State anger, trait anger and anger expression with a total score of 0.732, 0.829, and 0.787 which are more than 0.159 of r table product moment at 5% level of significance. Hence, it can be concluded that the variables of the state trait anger expression questionnaire are valid.

4. Shanahan Leadership Style Questionnaire

The leadership style questionnaire developed by Shanahan contains 12 items with four leadership styles: authoritarian leadership, participative leadership, delegate leadership and situational leadership and the dominant score is taken as the individual’s leadership style. The reliability of the questionnaire calculated using Cronbach alpha test is 0.762. For validity Pearson correlation value was used between autocratic leadership to situational leadership with a total score of 0.586, 0.718, 0.879, and 0.855 which are more than 0.159 of r table product moment at 5% level of significance. Hence, it can be concluded that the variables of the leadership style questionnaire are valid.

Statistical Analysis

SPSS version 20.0 is used for statistical analysis. Frequency and Percentage were used to represent the categorical variables and mean, standard deviation, median is used to represent the data of the continuous variable. Kolmogorov Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk tests were used to test the normality. Spearman correlation is used to find the leadership styles with the polychronicity and state trait anger expression.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the Frequency and Percentage of the Socio Demographic data among the participants (N = 150)

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Gender	Female	102	68.0
	Male	48	32.0
Age	17	11	7.3
	18	45	30.0
	19	50	33.3
	20	21	14.0
	21	12	8.0
	22	7	4.7
	23	2	1.3
	24	2	1.3
Domicile	Urban	86	57.3
	Rural	64	42.7
Socio Economic Status	Upper	7	4.7
	Middle	140	93.3
	Lower	3	2

Table 1 shows the socio demographic data of the participants. The maximum age was considered as 24 and the minimum was 17 years. In the gender category, there were 102 females and 48 Males. In socioeconomic status, maximum numbers of respondents belong to the category of middle class (93.3%), and the respondents in lower and upper class were very low (2% and 4.7%, respectively). In the domicile, 57.3% of the participants belonged to urban and 42.7% of the participants were from rural.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the sample distribution includes Mean, SD, Median

Study Variables	Mean	S.D	Median
Autocratic	10.24	2.036	10
Participative	11.32	2.153	11
Delegative	10.95	2.265	11
Situational	9.63	1.947	10
Polychronicity	39.25	5.281	39
State Anger	9.78	5.266	9
Trait Anger	10.27	5.025	10

The mean of the autocratic leadership, participative leadership, Delegative leadership and situational leadership are 10.24, 11.32, 10.95, and 9.63 respectively. Standard deviations of the above-mentioned leadership variables are 2.03, 2.15, 2.26, 1.94 respectively and median values are 10, 11, 10, and 10 respectively.

The mean of the polychronicity is 39.25. Standard deviations and median of the polychronicity are 5.28 and 39 respectively.

The mean of the state anger, trait anger and anger expression are 9.78, 10.27, and 31.27 respectively. Standard deviations of the above-mentioned variables are 5.26, 5.02, 7.77 respectively and median values are 9, 10, 32 respectively.

Table 3 shows the Normality test of Kolmogorov Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk for the study variables

Study Variables	Kolmogorov Smirnov		Shapiro wilk	
	Statistic	Sig.	Statistic	Sig.
Autocratic	.106	.000	.971	.003
Participative	.117	.000	.973	.004
Delegative	.098	.001	.970	.002
Situational	.115	.000	.975	.009
Polychronicity	.071	.064	.988	.214
State Anger	.121	.000	.936	.000
Trait Anger	.108	.000	.965	.001
Anger Expression	.071	.063	.983	.062

Table 3 consists of the results of the Kolmogorov Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk test conducted to test the normality of the study. From the results, it is found that most of the values lie below 0.05, hence it is a skewed distribution. Therefore, median and non-parametric tests were used.

Table 4 shows the spearman rho correlation of leadership styles relation with the Polychronicity, State anger, Trait anger and Anger expression

Study Variables	Polychronicity	State anger	Trait anger	Anger Expression
Autocratic	0.182*	0.182*	0.271**	0.179*
Participative	-0.067	-0.268**	-0.122	0.024
Delegative	0.070	-0.11	0.006	0.150
Situational	0.137	0.022	0.096	0.111

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 shows spearman rho correlation, it is found that the autocratic leadership has a significant positive correlation with the Polychronicity, state anger, trait anger and anger expression. Participative leadership has a significant negative correlation with the state anger.

### DISCUSSION

The study indicates a positive correlation of autocratic leadership with state anger, trait anger and anger expression, which shows that the leaders who follow the autocratic style openly deal with and express their anger more than other types of leaders. With the power to make decisions in their hands there are instances where leaders use anger as a form of authority when faced by the complexities of life to instil fear or as a

product of fear and to show their authoritarian personality.<sup>4</sup> Trait anger identified with the autocratic style can be related with frequency, duration and intensity of state anger. It can also be said that a person with trait anger tends to experience lengthy state anger and can be associated with the cause of state anger. Persons inhibiting trait anger seem to be easily angered, express stronger reactions and are likely to experience more severe, frequent or negative anger related consequences. The individuals get angry with a number of things with high frequencies in their everyday life and they also seem to not cope well with anger.<sup>5</sup> Anger being expressed differently by various individuals and through various modes, trait anger is also positively related to the anger expression.<sup>21</sup> These could also be the reason for the autocratic style to be positively correlated to state anger, trait anger and anger expression.

Autocratic leaders with a positive correlation with Polychronicity can be seen to prefer to take part in multiple works simultaneously to bring efficient results. Polychronicity can help the leaders fulfil their tasks spontaneously and in effective time and resources. In the current dynamic world polychronic approach supports time, efficiency, management of workloads and multiple task engagements.<sup>19</sup> With the increase in competition, rapid change in technological advances, modernised organisational culture and globalisation polychronicity proves to be beneficial in the aspects of performance and constrictive time. Tasks with complexities are better suited by high levels of Polychronicity than those tasks/situations that require coordinated activities.<sup>14</sup> Autocratic leadership can also be associated with the polychronic cultures of high context cultural societies. It is expressed with unequal distribution of power, power distance and differences in many hierarchical levels.<sup>28</sup> The negative correlation of the participative leadership with the state anger indicates that participative leaders in their situation to feel or experience anger, they choose to not express it but try to empathise and understand better. A leader who follows a democratic style involves the members in decision making and its execution, praises and encourages their subordinates, offers choice and support, distributes responsibility and empower members and inspires trust and respect. They don't criticize the members when faced by the issue and instead of using force or showing disappointment or shouting at them they try to

understand the situation and turn it around.<sup>11</sup> Here, the views and opinions of the individuals are valued with objective praise and restrained criticism, a sense of responsibility is developed among the members.<sup>1</sup>With the possession of these characteristics, a participative leader does not use anger in motivating or completion of tasks. Participative leadership style tends to have a negative relationship with the group member's cynicism in which anger is included as an important component.<sup>10</sup> These could be possible reasons for the inverse relationship of participative leadership with state anger.

The limitations of the study could include that the study was done only for polychronicity and not monochronicity. Conducting this research along with monochronicity as a variable could have a better understanding of the leadership styles. The accuracy of the data cannot be assured as the data collected were self-reported and might be biased. The vast gender difference between the males and females used in this research could have an effect on the result. The statistical tests could have failed due to the small sample size used for the research. There is a chance of better results if the research had been conducted in an organisation population. There were only few studies that related to this area, and so future studies could bridge the gap by also conducting research in the field of leadership style, polychronicity and monochronicity. This research could be useful for further studies in this area and help the readers understand about leadership, the concept of polychronicity and state trait anger, and its effects on leadership styles. This research also helps to select leaders wisely based on the need, position and traits which are expected out of a job. The students and leaders can use this study to up bring their leadership qualities and learn how different variables enhance or inhibit the leader's / leadership dynamics. This study can also be useful in the fields of management, entrepreneurship and administration where the leader is expected to manage time and target the team and maintain his emotional stability hand in hand.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Polychronicity and state trait anger expression has its own effect on leaders based on the leadership styles they follow and it could also be seen as either a boon or a bane considering their style which they choose to

govern as a leader. It is found that leaders with autocratic style show more polychronic behaviours along with a direct relationship with state anger, trait anger and anger expression and participative leadership showing inverse relationship with state anger. Leaders could be selected in relation to their positioning and style needed for the respective work. Leaders choosing their style that match with the needs and demands must learn to maintain and control their anger to have an effective performance.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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