

R.M. Stogdill

Brief overview of work

- Personal factors associated with leadership: chronological age, weight, height, physique, energy, health, appearance, speech, intelligence, scholarship, knowledge, judgement and decision, insight, originality, adaptability, introversion/extraversion, dominance, initiative, ambition, responsibility, integrity, self-confidence, mood control, emotional control, social status, bio-social activity, popularity, cooperation, and situation
- Group organization is a social phenomenon in our culture
- Social group is a unit of people who have unity and ability to act in a certain manner to reach a unanimous goal
- Organization is a social group in which members have different responsibilities for the task of achieving a common goal
- A group may or not have leaders

Who did the work?

- Various researchers on the topic of leadership found the cases and provided the research to Ohio State Leadership Studies
- Ohio State Leadership Studies researched problems in military, business, industrial, educational, and civilian governmental organizations
- Various authors and researchers contributed to R.M. Stogdill's work

Why did he do this work?

- Stogdill felt that past attempts to find common traits that leaders shared had failed
- Moved away from focusing on the traits of effective leaders and instead studied the behaviours that leaders engaged in during the course of their interactions with followers
- His research work helped the focus to go from trait-oriented leadership to more of a behavioural approach

Potential limitations of the work

- Numerous studies show that patterns of leadership traits differ with the situation. Every situation is different, and therefore leadership traits and interactions with group members vary and make it difficult to formulate a general idea
- Leadership traits are important, but the group members' traits and the situation is also influential
- Based primarily on lower organizational levels (supervision or university students in labs) rather than observing higher level leaders (responsible for entire organizations)
- Questionnaires based on recall of what their leaders behaviour was
- Measurement limitations (different scales – Initiating Structure & Consideration developed by the Ohio State investigators)
- Little thought given to demands of the leaders, the context in which they worked or the different dispositions of leaders or followers (workers)

References

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