



Effects of Personality on Social Status: A Study on Perceived Social Dominance Among Adolescent Single Sex Social Groups

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Abstract: This study intends to ascertain the relationship between personality traits and perceived social dominance in a peer group setting among Senior High School Students. There are many factors that affect the perceived social dominance of individuals, and so the research aimed to solve which factors these are among the current generation of senior high students. A total of 46 participants answered a google forms survey. It was found that the personalities all had similar measures, such as agreeableness and openness, and conscientiousness and neuroticism. Extroversion gave the most interesting results, with a half and half split for introverted ($f=24$, $\%=52.2\%$) and extroverted ($f=22$, $\%=47.8\%$). It was found that communication ($m=3.24$, $sd=0.85$) and to be there when a friend is needed ($m=3.15$, $sd=0.87$) are the most important domains to peer relationship. Interestingly, there is no statistical relationship between age ($x^2=4.67$, $p=0.197$), and gender ($x^2=0.186$, $p=0.666$) with perceived social dominance. However statistical relationship is established between extraversion measure ($x^2=8.9$, $p=0.003$) and quality of peer relationship ($x^2=4.63$, $p=0.031$) and perceived dominance. The presented evidence warrants assumption that certain personality traits influence social dominance, and it is not related to age, gender, or quality of peer relationships.

Key Words: personality; peer relationship; social dominance; extraversion; adolescent

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

There are plenty of dynamics that happen inside social groups. These dynamics often involve the perceived social dominance within a group, or in other words the idea that a certain person is more dominant than other members of an informal group. This phenomenon is known as the Social Dominance Theory. However, what exactly influences the perceived social dominance in a group? Personality was hypothesized to be one of them, and so the researchers decided to make the study revolve around that. Using the Big Five Personalities taken from Soto's (2018) model, wherein the personalities were divided into five categories, extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness. The study in concept is heavily derived from Anderson and his peers' work (2001), wherein they studied which category of personalities affected the social status of certain individuals in a college setting.

The significance of this study is to create a better understanding for people about what exactly affects the relationship between them and their peers in a group. There are not many studies in the Philippines that are similar to this based on what the researchers searched for, so this will provide a good understanding of what the current generation in the Philippines values when looking at the hierarchy of their social groups.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study intends to ascertain the relationship between personality traits and perceived social dominance in a peer group setting among Senior High School Students. The following research questions are asked.

1. What is the profile of the respondents?
2. What is the type of personality traits of the respondents?
3. What is the level of quality of peer relationship of the respondents?
4. What is the perceived social dominance of the respondents?



5. What is the relationship of age, gender, personality traits and quality of peer relationship to perceived social dominance?

1.3 Conceptual Framework

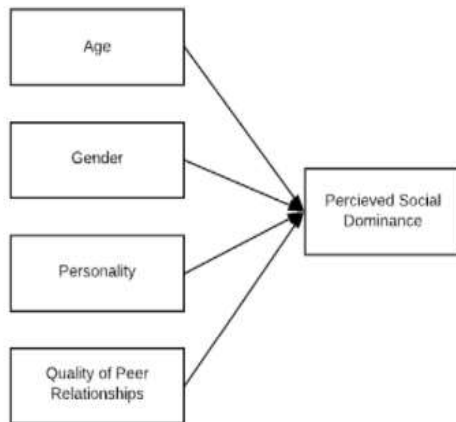


Figure 1: Perceived social dominance in peer groups.

The conceptual framework is meant to display the thought process for what the researchers aim to achieve. The Big Five Personalities, quality of the peer relationships, age, and gender are being used as separate factors that affect the perceived social dominance in a group. A perspective using each of the individual five personalities as well as the overall quality of the relationship between peers in a group and personal information of respondents are used as a basis for determining the perceived social dominance of an individual.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

The research is going to be making use of a quantitative research design. It will be making thorough usage of the Likert scale for each of the three main variables: personality traits, quality of peer relationships, and perceived social dominance.

2.2 Research Procedure

2.2.1 Sampling

This study intends to use empirical evidence to find the connection between personality traits, peer relationships, and the perceived social dominance among Senior High School students of De La Salle

University Integrated School in single-sex informal groups. A criteria was made to ensure that all of the respondents are what is needed to gain the needed results. The following are the selection criteria:
Senior High School Grade 12 from De La Salle University Integrated School
Enrolled in De La Salle University Integrated School
Belongs to a friend group which is either all male or all female
Belongs to a group with at least three (3) members.

2.2.2 Instrumentation

The first section is a simple profile survey. It will contain personal and educational information that is needed by the researchers. The following three tests make use of a five point Likert scale. The Big Five personality test used was designed and used by Goldberg(1992) in his study "The Development of Markers for the Big-Five Factor Structure", a psychological assessment which measures an individual's level of personality. The test to measure the quality of peer relationship among the respondents, Terzian's (2012) assessing peer relationship test was adopted and modified, which is meant to assess the bond between two individuals, and thus has been chosen to determine the quality of peer relationship in the group. A perceived social dominance test was constructed which adopted and modified the SDO-7 Scale by Ho et al. (2015)t to fit the background of the participants. In each item, a statement is mentioned concerning whether or not they are in support of the question.

2.2.3 Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering process was divided into five major steps: participant recruitment, securing informed consent, sharing the link to the google survey forms, the audit of the individual responses, and data preparation for statistical analysis.

2.2.4 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was utilized to provide demographics, measure of peer relationship, and perceived social dominance. Kruskal Wallis test was utilized to ascertain statistical relationship between age, gender, and personality trait to perceived social dominance. While Spearman Rho test was utilized to ascertain statistical relationship between quality of peer relationship and perceived social dominance.

2.2.5 Ethical Considerations

This study complied with the ethical guidelines set by the De La Salle University Integrated School and the De La Salle University Research Ethics Office, which includes securing informed consent and voluntary participation.



3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Data Analysis

3.1.1 Profile of the Respondents

Most of the respondents are between the ages of 17 and 18 years, with a large number coming from HUMSS strand. There is almost an equal number of male and female participants.

Table 1: Personal and Educational Characteristics of the Participants

Profile	f	%		f	%		f	%
Age			Sex			Strand		
16	1	2.2	Male	25	54.3	ABM	8	17.4
17	25	54.3	Female	21	45.7	STEM	14	30.4
18	19	41.3				HUMSS	24	52.2
19	1	2.2						

The majority of the participants are 17 years old (f=25, f%=54.3%) and 18 years old (f=19, f%=41.3%). There are slightly more male (f=25, f%=54.3%) than female participants (f=21, f%=45.7%). As for the educational profile of the respondents, a majority were from the HUMSS (f=24, f%=52.2%), while the remaining number come from ABM (f=8, f%=17.4%) and STEM (f=14, f%=30.4%). The large number of HUMSS students participating was a result of the researchers being able to contact more students from the said strand.

3.1.2 Personality Test

All personalities with the exception of extroversion showed very contrasting results, with the respondents leaning towards one than the other, with the exception of extroversion, which showed a somewhat clear split.

Table 2: Personality Test Result

Personality	f	%		Conscientiousness	
Extroversion				Non-Conscientious	13 28.3%
Introverted	24	52.2%		Conscientious	33 71.7%
Extroverted	22	47.8%		Neuroticism	
Agreeableness				Neurotic	40 87.0%
Not Agreeable	1	2.2%		Low-Neuroticism	6 13.0%
Agreeable	45	97.8%		Openness	
				Not open	1 2.2%
				Open	45 97.8%

There is an almost equal distribution on the extroversion result of the participants of the study: introverted (f=24, f%=52.2%) and extroverted (f=22, f%=47.8%), indicating that the generation of the De La Salle University Integrated School Senior High School students were roughly equal in numbers between introverted and extroverted people. This contrasts strongly with the results of the remaining personalities. Neuroticism has more high neuroticism (f=40, f%=87.0%) than low neuroticism (f=6, f%=13.0%). Similar results are found for conscientiousness wherein there are more conscientious people (f=33, f%=71.7%) than not conscientious people (f=13, f%=28.3%). This indicates that there is a notable amount of the minority, but it is not so drastic that it can be considered an equal distribution as extraversion/introversion is. The respondents were considerably more likely to be neurotic and/or conscientious than not. Openness and agreeableness showed results that were almost unanimous, with being open and agreeable (f=45, f%=97.8%) being an overwhelming majority as compared to not being not open and not agreeable (f=1, f%=2.2%). This indicates that it is plausible to call the generation in De La Salle University Integrated School Senior High School "Agreeable" and "Open" based on the data at hand.

3.1.3 Quality of Peer Relationship Test.

The results overall showed that the quality of peer relationship is determined more by the social interactions rather than physical interactions.

Table 3: Quality of Peer Relationship test

Peer Relationship Items	M	SD	Interpretation
Peer Relationship	2.0	0.4	Average
Communicate via social media	3.2	0.8	High
Count on your friend when in need of help	3.1	0.8	High
Visits to friend's house	0.5	0.8	Low

The results suggest that the main thing that keeps the relationship among the respondents and their peers is emotional support, and it is maintained mainly through the use of online resources. However, it should be noted that the study takes place during the pandemic, and so relationships between peers



have been drastically affected due to being unable to go out of their home. This takes form in the high measure on communication and interaction through social media and low measure on going to each other's houses and interactions outside of home. Interestingly, friendships are not held together by having good relations, as evidenced by the low report on it. It could likely be a result of a presence of dominance in the group.

3.1.3 Social Dominance Order Test

The table below details the results of the reactions of the respondents to each of the questions pertaining to social dominance. It all averaged out to "fair", however the values themselves were quite spread out, with statements pertaining to perceiving oneself as the leader of the group being higher in value than others.

Table 4: Social Dominance Order test

Social Dominance Order Items	M	SD	Interpretation
Social Dominance Order	2.64	0.73	Fair
<i>Assumes to be the leader of the group</i>	2.83	1.27	Fair
<i>has high level of influence towards friends</i>	1.96	0.94	Fair
<i>Exerts more authority</i>	3.22	1.15	Fair
<i>Exerts influence and change friend's opinion</i>	3.11	1.14	Fair
<i>Keeps friendship in-tact</i>	3.30	1.11	Fair
<i>Believes to be the leader of the group</i>	2.37	1.22	Fair
<i>Believes they have the most respect in the group.</i>	2.70	0.89	Fair
<i>Believes in the existence of hierarchy in group</i>	1.67	1.01	Fair

A deeper examination of the table shows the dynamics of the generation represented by the participants as to have lower emotional stability and to have higher levels of insecurity. Social relationships are observed to be valued as items regarding their relationships with their peers are located in the top 3 highest scored items. The data on their views of their leadership and authority over their peers also reflect their neurotic personalities, the best example of this would be their high levels of beliefs over their authority but only believing that the influence over them to be minimal.

3.2 Interpretation of the Results

3.2.1 Participant's Profile and Perceived Social Dominance

Based on the results, the gender, age, and strands hold no effect on the perceived social dominance within the group. Likely due to the way the current generation maintains their relationships.

3.2.2 Personality Trait and Perceived Social Dominance

Observations from the researchers conclude that the more extroverted and outgoing an individual is, the more likely they are to be held and recognized by their peers as their leader. While such results may differ from each generation, This result could have been caused by the more social personality of those classified as Generation Z. Extroverted individuals are more likely to initiate conversations giving them the opportunity to strengthen their relationships and allow their peers to get to know more about these extroverted individuals. Furthermore, Similar to the results of Anderson and Shikaro (2008). By attracting more attention to themselves, Extroverted individuals could gather the focus of their peers and allow themselves to have their opinions and ideas heard by the plenty. While another possibility for this connection could be because of the ability for extroverted individuals to initiate outings and take responsibility for deciding for the group, no such data was obtained from the personality of Neuroticism.

3.2.3 Peer Relationship and Perceived Social Dominance

A spearman rho correlation was conducted to ascertain the correlation between the variables of Peer Relationships and Social dominance order. The results suggest that there is a significant correlation among people who maintain a good quality of peer relationships and people who do not ($p=0.031, x^2=4.63$). An interpretation of this would be that an extroverted personality may increase the chances of an individual to reach out and maintain a relationship among his peers. This resulting



correlation may be an extension of the extroversion personality's effects on an individual's dominance.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, gender, age, and quality of peer relationships are not relevant to the perceived social dominance. Rather, certain personality traits had a significant correlation with one's status. Furthermore, higher extraversion was discovered to positively influence the levels of their perceived dominance levels ($p=0.003$, $\eta^2=8.99$).

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers suggest a more comprehensive study with a wider and more diverse sample. Adjustments of the scope used in this study is also hypothesized to change the results significantly due to the different background and participants. Additionally, a blend of quantitative and qualitative may be beneficial so as to understand the rationale behind the thinking of certain respondents that may aid in analyzing the statistical data.

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