

Key Characteristics of Leaders and Their Influence on Leadership Effectiveness: A Case Study of Private Companies in the Boeny Region, Madagascar

RANDRIANANDRASANA Odéon Urbain¹, RABEHAVANA Van Aldo²,
RABEMANANTSOA Judichael Yvon³

¹Doctoral School of Life Sciences and Modeling, University of Mahajanga, Madagascar

²University Institute of Management and Administration, University of Mahajanga, Madagascar

³Doctoral School of Life Sciences and Modeling, University of Mahajanga, Madagascar

Abstract—This study analyzes the main characteristics of leaders and their influence on leadership effectiveness in private companies in the Boeny Region, Madagascar. It adopts a descriptive and analytical approach based on a survey conducted among 200 employees from various private companies in the region. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a Likert scale and analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The results show that leaders are primarily characterized by communication skills, with a mean score of 4.12 out of 5, followed by self-confidence (4.05), decision-making ability (3.98), employee motivation (3.91), and integrity (3.87). The overall mean score across the five dimensions is 3.99, indicating a generally high level of appreciation of the characteristics studied. The correlation analysis reveals positive relationships among the different traits, particularly between communication and employee motivation ($r = 0.681$). These findings confirm the importance of interpersonal, decision-making, and personal skills in effective leadership. The study therefore recommends strengthening managers' leadership skills through training, internal communication, participatory management, and regular evaluation of leadership practices.

Keywords— Leadership, leaders, communication, self-confidence, private companies.

I. INTRODUCTION

In an organizational environment characterized by rapid economic, technological, and social transformations, leadership is a key factor in an organization's ability to achieve its objectives. Companies face increasing demands in terms of performance, adaptability, innovation, and human resource mobilization. In this context, the role of a leader is no longer limited to exercising hierarchical authority; it also involves the ability to guide, motivate, and unite employees around a common vision. Leadership can therefore be viewed as a process of influence through which an individual mobilizes group members toward the achievement of collective objectives [1].

Leadership effectiveness also depends on the leader's ability to translate personal characteristics into behaviors that promote employee engagement and mobilization. An effective leader should be able to communicate objectives clearly, build trust, make appropriate decisions, and encourage the participation of organizational members.

Leadership involves an intentional process of influence aimed at directing the activities and relationships of a group or organization. Thus, a leader's personal traits may constitute an important basis for leadership effectiveness; however, their contribution should be analyzed in relation to the behaviors adopted and the requirements of the situation.

In private companies, these issues are particularly important because of the need to maintain competitiveness, productivity, and the quality of the services or products offered. Managers and organizational leaders must manage employees with different profiles, expectations, and skills

while also dealing with economic and organizational constraints. The quality of leadership can therefore influence employee motivation, team cohesion, information flow, and the achievement of organizational objectives. Certain leadership practices foster employee engagement and can contribute to improving the organization's overall functioning [2].

Despite the importance given to leadership in human resource management, the characteristics that distinguish leaders and their contribution to leadership effectiveness remain insufficiently documented in the context of private companies in the Boeny Region. From this perspective, the present study seeks to identify the main characteristics of leaders and analyze their influence on leadership effectiveness in private companies in the Boeny Region, Madagascar.

Therefore, identifying the most characteristic traits of leaders and understanding their contribution to leadership effectiveness represent an important issue for private companies in the Boeny Region. To what extent do the main characteristics of leaders influence leadership effectiveness in private companies in the Boeny Region, Madagascar?

The present study is guided by the following two research questions: What are the main characteristics of leaders in private companies in the Boeny Region? To what extent do these characteristics influence leadership effectiveness in private companies in the Boeny Region?

To answer the research questions, two hypotheses are formulated. First, leaders in private companies in the Boeny Region are mainly characterized by traits related to self-confidence, communication, integrity, decision-making ability, and employee motivation. Second, the main

characteristics of leaders have a positive and significant influence on leadership effectiveness in private companies in the Boeny Region.

The general objective of this study is to analyze the main characteristics of leaders and their influence on leadership effectiveness in private companies in the Boeny Region, Madagascar.

More specifically, this study aims to identify and characterize the main personal and professional traits of leaders in private companies in the Boeny Region and to analyze the influence of these characteristics on leadership effectiveness in the companies studied.

To achieve these objectives and test the formulated hypotheses, the study is structured into several complementary sections. The first section presents the literature review, focusing on the main concepts related to leadership, leader characteristics, and leadership effectiveness. The second section describes the methodology adopted, including the study area, study population, data collection methods, and analytical techniques used. The third section presents the results obtained from the data collected from private companies in the Boeny Region. The fourth section focuses on the discussion, comparing the findings with previous studies and interpreting the main results of the research. The fifth section provides recommendations aimed at strengthening leadership effectiveness within the companies studied. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the main findings, provides answers to the research questions, and suggests directions for future research.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. Research Approach and Design

From a methodological perspective, this study adopts a descriptive and analytical approach. The descriptive approach is used to identify the main characteristics of leaders in private companies in the Boeny Region and to assess the extent to which these characteristics are expressed in the performance of their roles. The study focuses particularly on self-confidence, communication, integrity, decision-making ability, and employee motivation. This approach makes it possible to identify the dominant characteristics of leaders based on the perceptions of the respondents. The analytical approach is then used to examine the influence of these characteristics on leadership effectiveness through statistical models appropriate to the formulated hypotheses.

B. Survey Method and Sampling

The survey method was the main method used for data collection. A field survey was conducted among a sample of 200 respondents from private companies in the Boeny Region. Data were collected from several companies located in the different districts of the region in order to take into account the diversity of business sectors and organizational contexts.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to individuals involved in leadership activities within private companies. The questionnaire included several dimensions designed to assess leader characteristics and leadership effectiveness in the performance of their

responsibilities. Responses were measured using a Likert scale, allowing respondents to express their degree of agreement with the statements provided.

The diversity of the companies surveyed made it possible to cover several sectors of activity, including trade, services, administration, production, and other private-sector activities present in the Boeny Region. This diversity helps account for different organizational profiles and improves the relevance of the analysis of leadership characteristics in the context under study.

C. Data Processing and Analysis

The collected data were verified, coded, and entered into Microsoft Excel. Data processing made it possible to calculate frequencies, percentages, means, and other statistical indicators required for the analysis. The data were then organized according to the variables considered in the two research hypotheses.

Descriptive analysis was used to identify the levels of assessment of the different characteristics of leaders. Explanatory analysis was based on multiple linear regression, which was used to determine the influence of the different leader characteristics on leadership effectiveness.

D. Model for Testing the First Hypothesis

The first research hypothesis is formulated as follows:
H1: Leaders in private companies in the Boeny Region are mainly characterized by traits related to self-confidence, communication, integrity, decision-making ability, and employee motivation.

To test this hypothesis, five main dimensions were considered as explanatory variables: self-confidence, communication, integrity, decision-making ability, and employee motivation. A comparative analysis of the scores obtained for these dimensions makes it possible to identify the most characteristic traits of the leaders surveyed.

To strengthen the statistical analysis, an initial regression model can be used to determine the characteristics associated with the overall level of leadership observed:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y = Level of Leader Characteristics

β_0 = Model Constant

X_1 = Self-Confidence

X_2 = Communication Skills

X_3 = Integrity

X_4 = Decision-Making Ability

X_5 = Employee Motivation

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ et β_5 = Regression Coefficients Associated with the Independent Variables

ε = Error Term

This first model makes it possible to examine the relative contribution of the five dimensions considered in characterizing leaders. The regression coefficients make it possible to assess the contribution of each dimension to the overall level of leader characteristics. Hypothesis H1 is considered supported when the dimensions studied receive

high assessment scores and represent the dominant characteristics observed among the leaders surveyed.

D. Model for Testing the Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H2: The main characteristics of leaders have a positive and significant influence on leadership effectiveness in private companies in the Boeny Region.

To test this hypothesis, leadership effectiveness is considered the dependent variable. The five main leader characteristics identified in the first hypothesis are considered the independent variables. The second multiple linear regression model is formulated as follows:

Where:

Y = Leadership Effectiveness;

β_0 = Model Constant;

X_1 = Self-Confidence;

X_2 = Communication Skills;

X_3 = Integrity;

X_4 = Decision-Making Ability;

X_5 = Employee Motivation;

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$, and β_5 = Regression Coefficients of the

Independent Variables;

ε = Error Term.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \varepsilon$$

This model makes it possible to simultaneously assess the influence of the five characteristics on leadership effectiveness. The interpretation is based mainly on the coefficient of determination R^2 , which measures the proportion of the variation in leadership effectiveness explained by the independent variables. The β coefficients indicate the direction and magnitude of the influence of each characteristic, while the p -value is used to determine whether this influence is statistically significant.

The significance level is set at 5% ($p < 0.05$). Thus, a positive β coefficient associated with a p -value below 0.05 indicates that the characteristic concerned has a positive and statistically significant influence on leadership effectiveness. Hypothesis H2 will therefore be supported if the main leader characteristics, taken as a whole, have a positive and statistically significant influence on leadership effectiveness.

III. RESULTS

A. Main Characteristics of Leaders in Private Companies in the Boeny Region

The analysis of the main characteristics of leaders makes it possible to identify the dimensions most strongly associated with the exercise of leadership in the private companies studied. The five dimensions considered are self-confidence, communication skills, integrity, decision-making ability, and employee motivation.

The results presented in Table 1 show that the five dimensions studied received relatively high ratings, with an overall mean of 3.99 on a five-point scale. Communication is the characteristic most strongly associated with leaders, with a mean score of 4.12, followed by self-confidence with a mean of 4.05. Decision-making ability ranks third, with a mean of 3.98, while employee motivation and integrity have mean

scores of 3.91 and 3.87, respectively. These results indicate that the leaders in the companies studied are mainly characterized by their communication skills, self-confidence, and ability to make decisions. They therefore provide initial support for the verification of Hypothesis H1.

TABLE I. Level of Appreciation of the Main Characteristics of Leaders

Leader Characteristics	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Communication Skills	4.12	0.61	1
Self-Confidence	4.05	0.66	2
Decision-Making Ability	3.98	0.69	3
Employee Motivation	3.91	0.72	4
Integrity	3.87	0.70	5
Overall Mean	3.99	0.68	-

Source: Author, 2026

B. Correlation Between the Main Characteristics of Leaders

To examine the relationships among the different characteristics of leaders, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. The correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1. A positive value indicates a relationship in which two variables change in the same direction.

TABLE II. Correlation Matrix of the Main Characteristics of Leaders

Variables	Self-Confidence	Communication Skills	Integrity	Decision-Making Ability	Employee Motivation
Self-Confidence	1.000	0.542**	0.481**	0.623**	0.574**
Communication Skills	0.542**	1.000	0.516**	0.587**	0.681**
Integrity	0.481**	0.516**	1.000	0.552**	0.493**
Decision-Making Ability	0.623**	0.587**	0.552**	1.000	0.647**
Employee Motivation	0.574**	0.681**	0.493**	0.647**	1.000

Source: Author, 2026

The correlation matrix shows that the five characteristics have positive and statistically significant relationships. The strongest relationship is observed between communication skills and employee motivation ($r = 0.681$), indicating that better communication skills are associated with a greater ability to motivate employees. Decision-making ability also shows a relatively strong relationship with employee motivation ($r = 0.647$) and self-confidence ($r = 0.623$). Integrity presents positive but relatively moderate correlations with the other dimensions. Overall, these results show that the characteristics studied are interrelated and may jointly contribute to shaping the leader's profile.

IV. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Discussion

The results of this study show that leaders in private companies in the Boeny Region are mainly characterized by communication skills, self-confidence, decision-making ability, employee motivation, and integrity. Communication skills emerge as the dominant characteristic, with a mean score of 4.12, followed by self-confidence (4.05) and decision-making ability (3.98). These results are consistent with the work of Northouse, who considers self-confidence, determination, integrity, intelligence, and sociability as

important characteristics for understanding the emergence and exercise of leadership [3]. They are also consistent with the work of Yukl, according to whom effective leadership requires, among other things, the ability to communicate a vision, influence employees, and make decisions that are appropriate to organizational objectives[4]. However, the predominance of communication skills observed in private companies in the Boeny Region suggests that the relational dimension plays a particularly important role in the context studied.

Self-confidence is also a strongly present characteristic among the leaders surveyed. With a mean score of 4.05, it ranks second among the characteristics identified. This result is consistent with the findings of Judge, Bono, Ilies, and Gerhardt, whose meta-analysis shows that several personality characteristics are significantly associated with leadership, particularly extraversion and emotional stability, which may foster self-assurance and the ability to influence others [5]. Self-confidence can facilitate decision-making, the communication of directions, and the leader's ability to mobilize employees. However, unlike some studies that emphasize extraversion as a central trait, the results obtained in the Boeny Region give greater importance to dimensions more directly related to managerial practices, particularly communication skills and decision-making ability. This difference may be explained by the characteristics of the organizational context studied and by employees' specific expectations of their managers.

Decision-making ability and employee motivation also occupy an important position in the results, with mean scores of 3.98 and 3.91, respectively. This finding is consistent with the work of Bass and Riggio on transformational leadership, according to which an effective leader must be able to inspire, provide intellectual stimulation, and mobilize employees around a shared vision and common objectives. Similarly, Goleman emphasizes the importance of emotional and relational competencies in a leader's ability to understand employees, manage interpersonal relationships, and create conditions that foster their engagement [6]. Our findings are therefore broadly consistent with these studies, as motivation appears to be an important characteristic of the leadership observed. Nevertheless, its ranking below communication skills and self-confidence suggests that, in the companies studied, the ability to communicate and demonstrate self-confidence may constitute prerequisites for effectively mobilizing employees.

Finally, although integrity has the lowest mean score among the five dimensions studied (3.87), it remains at a relatively high level. This finding nevertheless confirms the importance of ethical values in the exercise of leadership. Northouse considers integrity an essential characteristic of a leader because it refers to consistency between the leader's values, words, and behaviors. Furthermore, Fiedler's contingency approach emphasizes that leadership effectiveness does not depend exclusively on the leader's personal characteristics, but also on the fit between the leader's style and the conditions under which responsibilities are exercised[7]. Thus, the findings of this study broadly

confirm the main conclusions of the international literature while highlighting a specific feature of private companies in the Boeny Region: communication skills, self-confidence, and decision-making ability appear to be the characteristics most strongly associated with the perception of effective leadership.

B. Recommendations

In light of the results obtained, private companies in the Boeny Region are recommended to strengthen the skills of managers in the areas that appear to be most important for effective leadership, particularly communication skills, self-confidence, and decision-making ability. Companies could provide regular training on managerial communication, team management, decision-making, and conflict resolution. It would also be appropriate to promote internal communication mechanisms that enable leaders to interact regularly with their employees, understand their concerns, and clarify organizational objectives. Strengthening these skills should be accompanied by particular attention to professional integrity, transparency in decision-making, and respect for employees in order to foster a climate of trust within teams.

Furthermore, private companies should establish mechanisms that enable leaders to better mobilize and motivate their employees. It is recommended to develop participatory management practices that encourage employee involvement in certain decisions, recognition of work performed, and appreciation of individual and collective initiatives. Managers could also benefit from periodic evaluations of their leadership practices to identify their strengths and areas requiring improvement. Finally, establishing a work environment based on listening, recognition, accountability, and regular communication would help sustainably strengthen leadership effectiveness and, consequently, contribute to improving the performance of private companies in the Boeny Region.

V. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the main characteristics of leaders and their influence on leadership effectiveness in private companies in the Boeny Region, Madagascar. The results show that the leaders studied are mainly characterized by communication skills, self-confidence, decision-making ability, employee motivation, and integrity, with communication skills and self-confidence being the most prominent characteristics. The analysis of the relationships among these dimensions reveals positive associations between the different characteristics, highlighting their complementarity in the exercise of leadership. The first hypothesis is therefore supported, while the analysis of the influence of these characteristics on leadership effectiveness confirms the importance of the leader's individual and relational qualities in the functioning of companies. These findings highlight the need for private companies to strengthen the managerial skills of their leaders, particularly in communication, decision-making, employee motivation, and integrity, in order to promote more effective leadership and contribute sustainably to improved organizational performance in the Boeny Region.

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