

## LEADERSHIP QUALITIES FOR STUDENTS' PROGRESS & CAREER SUCCESS

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**Abstract:** Leadership qualities are critical for students' progress and success. This study aims to investigate the innate and learned leadership qualities of university students in Oman and identify the leadership qualities that students primarily possess and those lacking among students. This study also compares the leadership qualities of male and female university students in Oman. Emotion, empathy, self-awareness, extroversion, and confidence were considered innate qualities, and goal setting, communication skills, networking skills, adaptability, and commitment were investigated as the variables of learned qualities. Further, in this article, researchers attempted to investigate the influence of students' innate leadership qualities on learned leadership qualities. Both primary and secondary data were gathered. Twenty questions on innate and learned leadership qualities were included in a structured questionnaire. The collected data was processed using SPSS Amos version 20 and then analyzed using various statistical tools. The result indicates that students' overall leadership quality score is 72%, which shows that they possess sufficient leadership qualities and are acquiring new ones through learning. Additionally, Male students scored higher on leadership qualities compared to female students. Finally, research has revealed a strong correlation between innate and learned leadership qualities.

**Keywords:** Leadership Qualities, Innate Qualities, Learned Qualities, University Students.

### 1. Introduction

Leadership is one of the most critical soft skills students should have to excel in academics and their careers. It is essential to students' overall progress, growth, and development (Smruti, Kirti, 2015). In today's competitive environment, students face numerous difficulties and challenges in excelling in their studies and achieving success in their careers (Bowman, 2014). Students go through many stages in their academic and professional lives where they require leadership skills. Those who develop or inherit leadership qualities are successful in facing academic and professional challenges and making the right decisions on their path to progress, growth, and success (Heller et al., 2004). A leader possesses many abilities and frequently employs them to influence and direct others (Maxwell, 1940). Leadership is a leader's abilities and qualities which will help him or her to influence others (William Blake). Leadership combines many qualities that will assist a person in taking the right direction and influencing others to take the right direction, especially in a critical situation. The modern leadership philosophy believes that no single quality defines a person as a leader (Dian, 1988). Kuh (1995) stated in his study that leadership skills and qualities are a foundation for developing motivation and enthusiasm that aid students in progressing with high energy and interest in their academics and employment towards effectively achieving their progress goals. Students with leadership skills will be able to take advantage of numerous opportunities for their academic development and advancement, and they will be able to use their school or university as a platform for personal and professional growth and development. Maxwell is an American author who wrote the best-selling book "21 Irrefutable Law of Leadership" He defined leader and leadership as someone who inspires others with his vision and guides and shows them the way and path... A leader also decides where people should go and what to do and sets and achieves goals.

Leadership is a leader's ability and quality to influence others. Leadership is all about knowing oneself and identifying one's own and others' untapped potential, and using it to one's advantage (Maxwell, 1940). Higher

education is critical today. According to Al-Sarmi, Abdulla bin Mohammed (2014), most jobs in the Omani economy will require higher education, such as a Diploma, Higher/Advance Diploma, Bachelor's, or master's degree. Oman's Ministry of Higher Education is committed to providing high-quality education to its youth to prepare them for higher-level positions in the country's industries. Leadership abilities are important factors that organizations look for in potential employees. As stated earlier, it has been observed from the literature that students who lack leadership frequently face challenges in their studies and careers.

Ming Sing Chai (2015) studied the leadership qualities among Malaysian university students focused on variables including integrity, persistence, vision, empathy, and self-assurance and found that leadership qualities will help students achieve higher academic performance and choose the right career and make the right decisions. Artamonova, Tarasova, and Blagin (2019) studied university students' leadership qualities using the emotional intelligence competencies identified by American psychologist Daniel Goleman and concluded that emotionally intelligent students have more vital leadership abilities. Kalaivani C. and Pugalenth N. (2014) examined the leadership traits of university students in South India to determine how leadership qualities relate to academic performance. Additionally, they compare the differences in students' leadership abilities based on gender and leadership qualities of urban and rural students. This study aims to investigate the innate and learned leadership qualities of university students in Oman, identify leadership qualities where Oman's university students are good, and identify areas where students need to improve and develop. In innate qualities, variables such as emotion, empathy, self-awareness, extroversion, and confidence have been investigated, as have learned qualities variables such as goal setting, communication skills, networking skills, adaptability, and commitment been studied. This study also investigated the impact of innate leadership on learned qualities to understand how students' innate qualities influence their learned leadership qualities. This study's empirical data was gathered to comprehend the significance of leadership qualities and their impact on academic and professional performance. This study further suggests to university students how those leadership qualities can be developed to advance academically and professionally. Previous researchers have contributed their theoretical and empirical work to the field of leadership. Millions of research papers have been written and published in various national and international journals, and thousands of books on leadership have been published. However, the researcher feels a gap in this area because leadership qualities for student growth and career success were not given enough attention, particularly in the Sultanate of Oman. It has been observed from the literature that students who need more leadership skills struggle in their studies and careers. The most important is that they need help to set and achieve goals, as well as perform well in their academics. Finally, they need help from a university or college as a platform for their learning and development. Aside from that, they will face a variety of challenges in the workplace. This research aims to answer the following question. 1. What leadership qualities are expected of students? 2. Determine the link between innate and learned leadership qualities. 3. How can students contribute to workplace leadership? This study was conducted based on the following objectives: 1. To identify and measure students' leadership qualities (Innate and Learned). 2. To compare the leadership quality of male and female students. 3. To investigate the relationship between innate and learned leadership qualities. In this study, the researcher developed the hypotheses below and tested them using descriptive statistics (Mean, median, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics such as co-relation, T-test, and P-test. The hypotheses which have been tested and validated are as follows.  $H_{01}$ : There is no significant difference between Male and Female respondents concerning Leadership Qualities.  $H_{02}$ : There is no significant relationship between Innate Qualities and Learned Leadership Qualities.

## 2. Literature Review

Not all leadership qualities are innate, but they can be acquired through proper training (Mumford et al., 2000). Previous researchers mentioned that developing leadership skills benefits university students in many ways (Zilembo, Monterosso, 2004). It has been observed from the literature that it is critical for students to develop essential leadership qualities in order to excel academically and professionally (Gianina, 2020). The qualities that are important for students to possess can be obtained through training or regular practice. Once developed, they will help students excel in their studies and careers. Some of the essential skills that university students are required to develop include goal setting, time management, communication, decision making, networking, a growth mindset, and taking responsibility, to name a few. During formal interviews with students, it was discovered that some of the university students in Oman have a very relaxed attitude toward their studies and career, and it was also discovered that one-third of the students set no goals to achieve. Someone who knows

where they are going can arrive at their destination. Besides that, time management is an essential skill for leaders to have in today's competitive world, and time management is also essential for students to achieve efficiency and productivity in their daily activities at the university. According to Oubibi, Ram, and Krim (2017), time management is all about planning and controlling your time on various tasks and activities. Practical time management skills will assist students in setting and achieving goals, prioritizing essential activities, and, most importantly, managing stress. Aside from that, practical communication skills are essential for the growth and development of students. They must be practical and convincing communicators in order to achieve academic and professional success (Luthra, Dahiya, 2015). A leader should be able to direct, encourages, and motivates others, which is only possible with good communication skills. The researcher asked students in the questionnaire utilized for the current study to identify and suggest the three most essential leadership skills needed for students, and more than 80% of the students responded and agreed that communication is one of the essential skills to become and grow as a leader. Another essential leadership skill that the student must possess is decision-making ability. The decision involves selecting between options or alternatives. Students' decision to select one option over another may alter their future prospects in life. As a result, developing decision-making skills in students is critical. As stated by Darren, a Forbes Councils Member, given on the Forbes website, making the right decision will not only change the students' life but will also help students in many ways, such as boosting their confidence and providing an excellent way for learning.

Another essential leadership quality that students are expected to develop is their networking ability. Networking gathers information and ideas about the industry and the world at large (Suzanne, Monica, 2008). Employers expect their employees to stay updated on the industry and development happening in the market. Creating and maintaining a network of contacts with professors and colleagues will allow students to gain the right advice from others. Networking will help students learn about important upcoming events and news in their field and develop their personalities because it teaches them how to interact with others.

Similarly, developing a growth mindset is an essential internal leadership skill for students to advance in their studies and careers. The internal belief that our brain and mind are not static phenomena is called a growth mindset. When we properly train the brain, it can achieve excellence. According to Michele, Senior Students Advisor at XQ Institute in California, students with a growth mindset view challenges as a way to learn and grow. However, even when they begin at the same level as those with a fixed mindset, they learn and achieve higher. People with a fixed mindset will believe that they cannot achieve or be successful in areas where they are not skilled. Finally, taking responsibility is a critical skill that students are expected to possess. Those who lack skills are not to blame (Nader, Tanju, 2019). Students who complain about unclear assignment questions are simply playing the blame game. Students who are self-motivated and manage their activities and time effectively always win. These students will easily find the best jobs because they do what needs to be done, whereas students who require others to push them feel helpless, unable to find the right direction and blame their tutors. These students need help with succeeding in the real world.

## **2.1 How Can Students Contribute to Leadership in Their Careers?**

To find an answer to this question, the researcher conducted an extensive review of traditional and modern leadership philosophies and theories. The goal was to get a sense and idea of how students can become and grow as leaders. Traditional philosophies on leadership include Great Man Theory and Trait Theory, which Thomas developed; Blake and Jane developed style/Behavioral Theory; and Contingency and Situational Theory, constructed by Fiedler, were reviewed. Benmira et al. (2021) discussed these theories in their research article. The trait theory of leadership believes that leaders born with specific innate qualities, such as intelligence, initiation, courage, bravery, and so on, become and grow as successful leaders. However, many have criticized the idea of grand man/ trait theory, which led to the development of leadership style theory. The style theory creates a balance between psychological and behavioral aspects of the leader and believes that who the leader is as a person is unimportant, but what he does is.

According to the style theory, leaders have two types of concerns: concern for the task and people. Famous behavior theorists Blake and Jane, who researched a well-known manufacturing organization in the United States, have endorsed the behavior/ style theory of leadership. Many others, including Fiedler, have criticized the concept of style theory; their argument is that it only focuses on behavior and people but not the situation. Leaders in

organizations will face many different situations and need to adapt their leadership style to the situation, which is the basic assumption of the contingency theory of leadership. All of these traditional philosophies were rejected by modern philosophers, who stated that a leader is someone who can influence others in an essential and critical situation and that formal authority and power are not required for a person to become a leader (Dian,1988). So, regardless of their position or status in the organization, everyone can demonstrate and contribute to leadership. In addition, those students can demonstrate their leadership abilities by serving as an ambassador for the organization. They can promote the organization and its interests both internally and externally. Students can work to improve coordination and cooperation among team members for the organization's benefit, as well as develop and maintain a network of contacts for the organization's benefit. Finally, they can often come up with creative solutions to organizational problems. In this context, researchers believe that students can contribute to leadership in their early years of employment because they do not need formal authority and power to do so.

## 2.2 The Conceptual Framework

In this study, students' leadership qualities were divided into two categories, i.e., innate and learned. Innate qualities are a person's inherent characteristics, which a person possesses throughout his or her life—for example, being intelligent, smart, funny, and courageous. Learned qualities, on the other hand, are those that can be obtained through proper training, experience, or practice. The researcher asked each student 20 questions, ten about innate leadership qualities and ten about learned leadership qualities. The diagram below depicts the variables used to collect data via questionnaire.

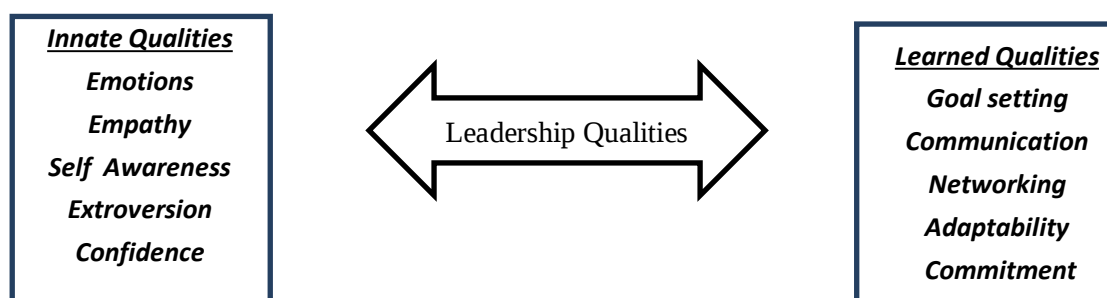


Figure 1- Leadership Qualities

Source: Developed by the authors

### 2.2.1 Natural/ Innate Leadership Capabilities

Emotions refer to the essential ability to control and evaluate emotions. Psychologists believe that controlling emotions is a critical skill for students to develop to succeed in life (Scherer, 2005). The majority of experts believe that this quality is innate in people. Empathy has been discovered to be an inherited rather than taught genetic trait (Selma, 2020). Women are more empathetic than men, but everyone has a genetic proclivity for emotional connection and sympathy. Self-awareness is a necessary component of a person's overall development and success in all aspects of life. According to Carden, Jones, and Passmore (2022), this can significantly improve one's life by promoting overall development, increased effectiveness, effective communication, and various other advantages. Furthermore, people are naturally drawn to extroverted people, making them good leaders. Extroverts, as mentioned by Farhan Uddin, Naeem, and Syed (2020), make better decisions when faced with difficult choices.

Self-assurance is frequently regarded as an innate leadership skill. Gerber, R (2005) stated that a good leader inspires people to believe in their leader, whereas a great leader inspires people to believe in themselves. Confidence is the ability to admit when you are wrong and clarity of purpose, values, and convictions (Greenacre et al., 2014). Confidence is often considered innate, but many experts believe people gain confidence in their learning process. Confidence will help students in many ways in their academic and career.

### 2.2.2 Learned Leadership Skills

Setting goals is a robust process for visualizing a better future and motivating oneself to realize that vision. Setting goals can assist students in determining where they want to go in life. Knowing what they want to achieve will undoubtedly help them focus their efforts. Goal setting is a learned leadership quality that students must have to be more aware of directions that can guide them away from deviation (Bronkhorst et al., 2015). A vital communication skill is a powerful leadership skill that every student should possess in order to develop a better understanding of others. Great leaders must be able to communicate effectively (Towler, 2003).

Similarly, developing communication skills will help students to achieve success not only in their studies but also in their careers. Students are expected to have networking skills to maintain academic and social contact. Networking is an essential skill for advancing in students' careers. Networking skills are required to establish and maintain relationships with new and existing contacts and use them for one's benefit and advantage. Adaptability is another critical leadership skill of students. Ericsson, A., & Pool, R. (2016). In their book "Peak: Secrets from the New Science of Expertise," mentioned that individuals who best leverage their ability to adapt by being purposeful and deliberate in getting better at what they do consistently improve at a higher and faster level than those who haphazardly go through the motions of repetition, doing task after task with no straightforward approach to getting better. Adapting to a situation strengthens individuals and gives them the confidence to survive various situations. Another essential skill that students are expected to develop is commitment. Commitment boosts student morale and promotes teamwork and cohesion (Paksoy et al., 2017). Students who collaborate and study together will learn more in their academics and have a more successful business.

## 4. Research Methodology

This study used a descriptive research approach. Primary and secondary data were collected. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data directly from student respondents. The questionnaire consists of 2 parts, Part 1 consists of three demographic questions: names, Gender, and age. Part 2 consists of 20 questions (Research constructs) of close-ended questions and offered responses "Yes" or "No." Research constructs intended to measure students' leadership qualities. Five key components (given above in the figure) of innate and learned leadership qualities have been carefully selected from the literature reviewed by keeping in mind their importance for university students. The research constructs in the questionnaire have been developed using literature relating to chosen elements of innate and learned leadership qualities.

A reliability and validity test was conducted to get expert opinions and feedback on the questions, and some of the research constructs were modified based on the opinion and suggestions given by the experts. Before collecting data, the questionnaire was submitted to the university's research ethics committee for their final approval. The collected data was analyzed using the SPSS Amos version 20 software application. A simple random sampling method was used, and data was collected during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the Academic year 2021-2022 at the Arab Open University, Oman. Approximately 160 questionnaires were distributed to students in various classes and faculties, but only 84 returned the filled questionnaire, and the total response rate is 52.5%. In this study, the data analysis is presented in four sections using four tables. The first and section part (Tables 1 and 2) analyzes the respondents' demographic information before employing descriptive statistics to assess the respondents' leadership capabilities. Additionally, an independent-sample t-test (Table 3) was utilized to determine and compare the gender differences in the students' leadership abilities. The fourth and last section of the analysis (Table 4) uses the bi-variate correlation method to assess the relationship between innate and learned leadership abilities.

## 5. Analysis of Data & Findings:

### Descriptive Statistical Analysis: Demography of the respondents.

**Table 1. GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS**

| Particulars | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Male        | 45        | 53.60      |
| Female      | 39        | 46.40      |
| TOTAL       | 84        | 100.00     |

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table provides the Gender of the respondents. It is inferred from the above table that male respondents (53.60%, 45) are more than female respondents (46.40%, 39). The “Table 2” statements are about innate and learned leadership qualities. These were by considering chosen variables, such as emotions, empathy, self-awareness, extroversion, and confidence for innate leadership qualities and goal setting, communication, networking, adaptability, and commitment for learned leadership qualities, as stated in Figure 1 in the literature review.

**Table 2. LEADERSHIP QUALITIES**

**Descriptive Statistics (Sample Size = 84)**

| VARIABLES                                                                | Sum         | Mean         | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| Are you interested in getting power?                                     | 82          | .98          | .153           |
| Do you feel comfortable socializing with others                          | 72          | .86          | .352           |
| Are you a self-assured individual?                                       | 69          | .82          | .385           |
| Are you a trustworthy person?                                            | 72          | .86          | .352           |
| Do you not fear facing challenges in life?                               | 37          | .44          | .499           |
| The complex situation only bothers you. a little                         | 38          | .45          | .501           |
| Do you enjoy it when you are helping others?                             | 79          | .94          | .238           |
| Can you spend your valuable time with others?                            | 66          | .79          | .413           |
| Do you feel offended when someone criticizes you?                        | 35          | .42          | .496           |
| Do you feel difficult to forgive others?                                 | 28          | .33          | .474           |
| <b>INNATE QUALITIES FOR LEADERSHIP</b>                                   | <b>578</b>  | <b>6.88</b>  | <b>1.348</b>   |
| Do you enjoy taking on new responsibilities?                             | 60          | .71          | .454           |
| Do you like and enjoy working with others?                               | 65          | .77          | .421           |
| Do you frequently apply what you’ve learned in the past?                 | 83          | .99          | .109           |
| Do you enjoy constantly learning new things and gaining new experiences? | 76          | .90          | .295           |
| Are you comfortable in a new situation?                                  | 66          | .79          | .413           |
| Do you enjoy setting and achieving goals?                                | 75          | .89          | .311           |
| Are you comfortable interacting and working with strangers?              | 63          | .75          | .436           |
| Are you comfortable in have tough conversation?                          | 42          | .50          | .503           |
| Do you like to responsibility of others in group/teamwork if needed?     | 63          | .75          | .436           |
| Do you like to dominate, control, and influence your colleague?          | 54          | .64          | .482           |
| <b>LEARNED QUALITIES FOR LEADERSHIP</b>                                  | <b>647</b>  | <b>7.70</b>  | <b>1.795</b>   |
| <b>OVERALL LEADERSHIP QUALITIES</b>                                      | <b>1225</b> | <b>14.58</b> | <b>2.552</b>   |

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 provides information about the respondents who agreed with the Leadership Qualities they possessed/developed (Innate and Learned Qualities). From the above table, it is inferred that out of 'Innate Qualities for leadership,' the mean value for "Are you interested in getting power?" ( $M = 0.98$ ) is more than other qualities. The mean value for "It is easy for you to forgive others?" ( $M = 0.33$ ) is lesser than other innate qualities for leadership. From the above table, it is inferred that out of 'Learned Qualities for leadership,' the mean value for "Do you frequently apply what you have learned in the past?" ( $M = 0.99$ ) is more than others. The mean value for "Are you comfortable in have a tough conversation?" ( $M = 0.50$ ) is lesser than other learned qualities for leadership. It is inferred that the respondents are showing interest in getting power ( $M = 0.98$ ) concerning Innate Qualities for leadership and want to apply what they learned in the past ( $M = 0.99$ ) concerning Learned Qualities for leadership. The respondents are lacking in the qualities of "Forgiving others" ( $M = 0.33$ ) and "Comfortableness in tough conversation" ( $M = 0.50$ ) concerning Innate and Learned Qualities for leadership. The above table shows that the mean value of 'Learned Qualities for Leadership' ( $M = 647$  or  $77.02\%$ ) is more than the 'Innate Qualities for Leadership' ( $M = 578$  or  $68.81\%$ ). The overall mean value is  $1225$ , which is  $72.92\%$  ( $1225/1680 \times 100$ ). It is indicated that the respondents are developing their leadership qualities through learning ( $77\%$ ), and overall, they have possessed adequate leadership qualities (more than  $72\%$ ).

**Table 3. GENDER – LEADERSHIP QUALITIES**

| VARIABLES                   | GENDER    |              |              |           |              |              | t - value    | p – value     |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
|                             | MALE      |              |              | FEMALE    |              |              |              |               |
|                             | N         | Mean         | SD           | N         | Mean         | SD           |              |               |
| Innate Qualities            | 45        | 6.98         | 1.288        | 39        | 6.77         | 1.423        | 0.705        | 0.483         |
| Learned Qualities           | 45        | 8.18         | 1.749        | 39        | 7.15         | 1.710        | 2.704        | 0.008**       |
| <b>LEADERSHIP QUALITIES</b> | <b>45</b> | <b>15.16</b> | <b>2.593</b> | <b>39</b> | <b>13.92</b> | <b>2.366</b> | <b>2.262</b> | <b>0.026*</b> |

Source: Primary Data:(\*\*1% level of Significance) (\*5% level of Significance)

Since the  $P$  value of the Independent Sample "t" test is lesser than Sig. Value ( $0.01$ ) in the above Leadership Qualities score ( $0.026$ ), the Null Hypothesis is rejected. From the above table, it is inferred that Male respondents have scored more on the 'Learned Qualities' ( $M = 8.18$ ) and have scored lesser on the 'Innate Qualities' ( $M = 6.98$ ) than others. Similarly, the Female respondents scored more on the 'Learned Qualities' ( $M = 7.15$ ) and scored lesser on the 'Innate Qualities' ( $M = 6.77$ ) than others. It is inferred that there is no significant and much difference between the mean score of the 'Innate Qualities' for leadership between male ( $M = 6.98$ ) and female ( $M = 6.77$ ) respondents. It is also inferred that Male respondents ( $M = 8.18$ ) have scored more on 'Learned Qualities' for leadership than their counterparts ( $M = 7.15$ ). Based on the overall mean score of the Leadership Qualities, the mean score of the Male respondents ( $M = 15.16$ ) is more than the Female respondents ( $M = 13.93$ ). This indicates that the Male respondents scored more on Leadership Qualities than the Female respondents. Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the Male and Female respondents concerning Leadership Qualities.

**Table 4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INNATE AND LEARNED QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP**

| VARIABLE                                 | N  | r' VALUE | P VALUE | - RELATIO NSHIP | REMARKS SIGNIFICANT | RESULT   |
|------------------------------------------|----|----------|---------|-----------------|---------------------|----------|
| Innate – Learned Qualities of Leadership | 84 | 0.404**  | 0.005   | Positive        | Significant         | Rejected |

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

Since the  $P$  value ( $0.005$ ) of the Bi-variate Correlation test is lesser than the Sig value ( $0.01$ ) in the above relationship, the Null Hypothesis is rejected. A moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.404$ ) exists between Innate and Learned Qualities of Leadership. The relationship between them is also highly significant. The above

correlation analysis indicates a significant relationship between Innate Qualities and Learned Leadership Qualities.

## 6. Discussion & Conclusion.

The findings of this study will assist us in understanding the areas of students' strengths and weaknesses in terms of leadership qualities. It has been discovered that most students are interested in having power and leadership positions, and they are also confident in interacting and socializing with others; however, descriptive analysis reveals that most students lack emotional intelligence and empathy. Most students responded that they feel extremely unhappy when others criticize them, and the majority of students respondents, especially female respondents, stated that it is extremely difficult for them to forget and forgive others. The total mean value of the empathy-related question or statement is also well below 50%. Emotional intelligence and empathy are innate qualities of leaders required for effective leadership. Experts and psychologists believe that they can be developed with proper training and practice. Hence, it is suggested that university students in Oman should work on improving their emotional intelligence and empathy skills. The findings confirm that students are keen to take on leadership roles and have a high level of self-confidence; however, to be more successful in their leadership roles and grow as influential leaders, they must develop more social skills such as empathy and emotional intelligence. It has been observed that some of the students need more ability to set goals. Some have no future plans or career goals, which is very concerning for the university student. How will they get to their destination if they need to know where they are going? As per the researchers' observations, students in Oman need more English communication skills. It is recommended that students concentrate on improving their business English communication skills. This will help them in various ways when dealing with, managing, and influencing others.

The originality of this study stems from creating a new framework for investigating and studying student leadership qualities. This study helps us understand students' leadership qualities and gives us an idea of which types of leadership qualities students have and where they are weak. Previous research should have focused more on leadership qualities for student growth and success. Another significant contribution is the identification of innate and learned variables. This study also discovered a positive relationship between learned and innate leadership qualities. Students with more innate leadership qualities will be able to learn and develop leadership skills more effectively than those with less innate leadership qualities. This study also benefits academia by providing a theoretical framework for understanding the importance of leadership and its impact on academic performance and career development. It can be used as a realistic tool to promote leadership activities and programs for university students. This study encountered several challenges. As a result, some guidelines and suggestions for future researchers were developed. The study suggests that potential researchers investigate students' leadership qualities and their impact on academic grades, behavior, performance, and getting employment. This is descriptive research, and researchers believe this study will undoubtedly add value to the knowledge base about student leadership qualities. However, more research like this is needed to make any generalizations. This study assessed students' leadership qualities and was conducted among university students in Muscat, Oman. Similar studies can be carried out in other parts of Oman for comparison and comparative analysis in other parts of the world. More research is needed to investigate the role of leadership qualities in obtaining and maintaining employment, and more extensive sample-size studies must be used in future studies. Finally, the research variable chosen for this study was based on existing literature on student leadership qualities. The replication of this study in other GCC countries, such as Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia, will help to improve our understanding of students' leadership qualities.

To recap, leadership qualities are critical for students' growth and success. Students should practice improving their leadership skills to gain momentum in their studies and work. While not all leadership qualities can be acquired through training, many can be easily acquired through proper training to enhance their strengths. The experts have accepted and agreed that having more strengths will help a person overcome his or her weaknesses.

## Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research:

This study's outcome has given the researchers some valuable insight, but a few limitations accompany it. Because of limited time availability and financial resource, this research survey covers only the students from the faculty of Business Arab Open University, Oman. Some of the students' respondents were only somewhat willing to participate in the survey, and convincing them to participate was difficult due to their busy schedules. The 84

respondents may not fully represent the leadership qualities of the students at Arab Open University and other universities in Oman. This research is restricted to higher education institutions and does not apply to other high and higher secondary schools. This study had a small sample size.

Furthermore, the chosen respondents may need to reflect genuine responses to their leadership qualities accurately. According to the findings of one study, when students are asked to self-assess their abilities, they are more likely to underestimate them (Spratt, Turrentine, 2001). Hence, the study was conducted in one semester of the academic year 2021-2022, leadership qualities develop over time, and one semester may need to reflect university students' leadership qualities accurately. Furthermore, the findings of this study were influenced by individuals' perceptions of their leadership abilities and skills. Participants were chosen at random, and some declined to take the survey. These limitations may decrease the ability to generalize the results of this research. Therefore, the conceptual and methodological limitations of this research need to be considered when doing research in the future, and these limitations provide possible avenues for future research. To arrive at any generalization, conducting more analytical research on the leadership qualities of university students with a bigger sample size in the future is highly necessary.

## 7. Declaration about funding, conflict of interest, and competing interest

We hereby testify that neither people nor organizations provided any funding for the author to carry out this research. Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, publishing this paper will not result in any conflicts of interest. This descriptive research concerns "Leadership qualities for students' growth and career success." "There is no third-party involvement in this study, and the data collection process and instruments were approved in compliance with the authors' employer ethical standards.

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