

Study of Leadership Roles Played by Tsunami Camp Volunteers

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify common personality characteristics, and contextual factors that lead to leadership behaviour in voluntary leaders who emerged in the Tsunami disaster. Goldberg's (1981) Big Five Personality Factors were selected to represent the personality factors whilst contextual factors were represented by Fiedler's (1964) Contingency Model. As the sample for the study, forty leaders were selected from fifteen camps in the area from Panadura to Matara in the southern coastal belt of Sri Lanka. The commonalities were evident where in the Big Five Personality Factor Analysis, all forty leaders obtained high scores for Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Emotional Stability and Openness to Experience. It was found that these leaders had to work in a situation where the task was unstructured, and to be effective, they needed to have either good leader-member relations and /or power. Further, it was seen that in a disaster, a leader has to be equally concerned about both the task and the people. The findings of the study shed light on understanding the role of leadership in a disaster and insights into better planning on post-disaster recovery.

Key Words: Contextual Factors, Disaster, Leadership, Personality Factors

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