

# Vladimir Putin's Leadership: Charisma, Power Dynamics, and Influence through the Lens of Leadership Traits and Theoretical Perspectives

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## Abstract

The paper explores the multifaceted leadership of Vladimir Putin, examining his rise to power, leadership traits, and the influence he exerts on both domestic and international stages. The primary objective is to identify and explore Putin's directive, charismatic, and Machiavellian tendencies, emphasizing his ability to consolidate power and exert influence during Russia's turbulent post-Soviet transition. The paper employs a qualitative method, utilizing both primary and secondary resources, including historical records, interviews with leading scholars and analysts of Putin's leadership, biographical sources, and leadership theories. It delves into Putin's background, tracing his journey from a KGB officer to the President of Russia, and analyzes his leadership through various theoretical lenses, including the Great Man Theory, trait theory, and charismatic leadership. The research identifies key traits such as intelligence, alertness, insight, responsibility, initiative, persistence, self-confidence, and sociability, which have been pivotal in Putin's enduring influence and control. Additionally, the study investigates the ideological construct of *Putinism*, comparing it to historical authoritarian regimes, and evaluates the power dynamics and coercive methods employed by Putin. While recognizing the potential biases and limitations inherent in historical and biographical analyses, this study provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Putin's leadership, highlighting its implications for Russia's political landscape and global interactions. While recognizing his significant impact, the paper refrains from moral judgment, instead focusing on the multifaceted nature of his leadership.

## Keywords

Vladimir Putin, Leadership Analysis, Charismatic Leadership, Directive Leadership, Leadership Traits, Pseudotransformational Leadership,

## 1. Putin's Background and Pathway to the Kremlin

Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin was born on October 7, 1952, in Leningrad (now Saint Petersburg), Russia, USSR (now the Russian Federation) (Ray, 2024). According to the Persons section of the Svobodnaya Pressa (Свободная Пресса, 2024) journal, Putin was a diligent student, described as “a bully, not a pioneer”. He had an excellent memory and a passion for the humanities, particularly the German language and history. Aspiring to become an intelligence agent, Putin trained in sambo, demonstrating a notable lack of fear. His coach, Anatoly Rakhlin, described him as an intellectual fighter who was never afraid to lose. The young man could throw an opponent in both directions and equally successfully, which is rare in sports. Putin became a master of sports in sambo in 1973 and in judo in 1975, winning the champion title of Leningrad in 1976.

Putin served 15 years as a foreign intelligence officer for the KGB (Committee for State Security, now FSB). Six years of his career were spent in Dresden, Germany. Upon retiring from the KGB, he returned to Russia to become vice-chancellor of Leningrad State University, responsible for external relations. Soon afterward, he became an adviser to Anatoly Sobchak, quickly gaining Sobchak's trust and becoming known for his ability to get things done. By 1994, Putin had risen to the post of first deputy mayor (Ray, 2024).

From July 1998 to August 1999, Vladimir Putin served as director of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation. Concurrently, from March to August 1999, he was Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation. On August 9, 1999, Russian President Boris Yeltsin requested the State Duma to approve Putin as Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, expressing his hope that Putin would “consolidate society”. On the same day, Putin was appointed First Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Head of the Cabinet of Ministers. On August 16, 1999, the State Duma approved Putin as prime minister (TACC, 2024).

From December 31, 1999, to May 7, 2000, Putin served as acting president of Russia. He won the early presidential elections on March 26, 2000, with 52.94% of the vote. He was re-elected for a second term on March 14, 2004, receiving 71.31% of the vote (TACC, 2024). The Russian Constitution required Putin to step down in 2008, and he passed his post to his longtime ally Dmitriy Medvedev (Ray, 2024). In 2012, newly elected President Medvedev signed laws increasing the presidential term from 4 to 6 years (TACC, 2012). This change paved the way for Putin's third presidency from 2012 to 2018. Constitutional amendments signed by Putin allow him to run for two more terms (BBC NEWS, 2021). For the fifth time, Vladimir Putin walked through the Grand Kremlin Palace to be sworn in as Russia's president for another six-year term. Addressing ministers

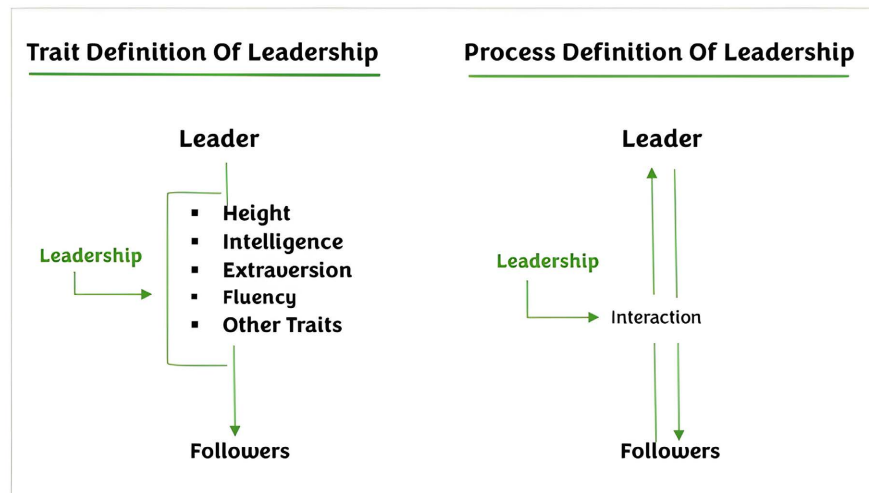
and dignitaries, he declared, “We are a united and great people. Together we will overcome all obstacles, achieve our goals, and win (Rosenberg, 2024).”

## 2. Analyzing Putin’s Leadership: Key Findings and Theoretical Insights

### 2.1. Leadership Traits and Charisma

The Great Man Theory posits that great leaders are born, not made. This theory suggests that certain individuals possess innate, exceptional qualities that destined them to be leaders (Gosling et al., 2012). Certain traits often include charisma, intelligence, confidence, and social skills, among others. Applying this theory to Vladimir Putin provides a framework for understanding his rise to power and the characteristics that have enabled him to maintain a dominant leadership role in Russia.

Understanding Vladimir Putin requires a deep comprehension of the history and culture of the Russian people and the Russian state. Given the often biased and interest-driven nature of media reports, distinguishing truth from misinformation can be challenging. Putin leads a nation that is the successor to both the Russian Empire (1721-1917) and the USSR (1922-1991). Governing such a vast and complex nation necessitates a strong leader, and Putin’s biography reveals a man who is talented, hardworking, and passionate about his work.



**Figure 1.** The different views of leadership. Source: Adapted from *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs From Management* (pp. 3-8), by J. P. Kotter, 1990, New York: Free Press.

From a leadership trait perspective, Vladimir Putin exhibits significant personal qualities and innate talents. The trait theory of leadership posits that certain inherent characteristics and qualities distinguish leaders from non-leaders, suggesting that leadership is a result of unique, inborn traits (Northouse, 2021).

This theory aligns with John P. Kotter's views in "A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management" (1990), where Kotter presents **Figure 1** to illustrate the distinct roles of leadership and management. According to Kotter, while management focuses on maintaining order and consistency, leadership drives change and inspires vision.

Kotter discusses the essence of effective leadership, which involves moving people to a place where they and their dependents are genuinely better off without infringing on others' rights. This process encompasses three key functions: establishing direction, aligning people, and motivating and inspiring. Establishing direction involves developing a future vision and strategies for achieving it. Aligning people requires communicating this vision to gain cooperation and commitment. Motivating and inspiring keeps people moving towards the vision despite obstacles by appealing to fundamental human needs and emotions.

Putin's leadership aligns with Kotter's concept of "Establishing Direction". His ability to develop a compelling vision for Russia's future and strategize towards achieving this vision reflects his inherent leadership traits. According to Northouse, these traits are inborn and distinguish leaders like Putin from non-leaders. Putin's knack for aligning people with his vision, through effective communication and coalition-building, echoes Kotter's leadership dimension of "Aligning People". Northouse's trait theory suggests that these abilities stem from Putin's inherent leadership qualities, enabling him to mobilize support and unify his team around common goals. The motivational aspect of Putin's leadership, which energizes and mobilizes his followers, aligns with Kotter's view of "Motivating and Inspiring". Northouse's theory posits that these leadership traits are inherent, allowing Putin to inspire and direct his followers effectively, even in challenging times.

Kotter also discusses how charismatic leaders often emerge during times of significant distress. These leaders typically dislike good managers due to their rational and controlling nature. Despite having a flawed vision that fails to create real value for the group and its key stakeholders, the absence of a strong management process allows this vision to go unchallenged. The leader's charisma fosters commitment and motivation towards this vision, eventually leading followers to disaster. Relying on such charismatic but ineffective leaders is not a solution to leadership crises. Overcoming this requires a clear understanding of true leadership in complex organizations, including its characteristics and origins.

In Putin's case, his charisma and leadership style have been pivotal in navigating Russia through various crises, yet they also highlight the risks associated with such strong, centralized leadership. His ability to inspire and mobilize followers has been both a strength and a potential source of downfall, illustrating the dual-edged nature of charismatic leadership as described by Kotter.

Northouse (2021) conceptualizes two common forms of leadership: *assigned leadership* and *emergent leadership*. Assigned leadership refers to leaders who

hold a formal position of authority within an organization, while emergent leadership is recognized through the leader's influence and ability to rise to prominence during critical situations. Maxwell (2011) categorizes assigned leaders as positional leaders who prioritize control over contribution, and rights over responsibilities. Vladimir Putin exemplifies both forms of leadership. He is an assigned leader due to his formal position as President of Russia. However, he is also an emergent leader who rose to prominence during Russia's challenging times following the breakup of the Soviet Union. By restoring Russia's status and global power prestige, Putin became a hero and a role model for his admirers and the rising generation (Rachman, 2022).

Northouse (2021) highlighted that the survey results conducted by Stogdill (1948, 1974) on trait studies, identified eight traits of effective leaders: intelligence, alertness, insight, responsibility, initiative, persistence, self-confidence, and sociability. Stogdill's findings also indicated that along with certain traits leaders possess, their traits must be relevant to situations where the leaders function.

**Intelligence**—Putin's intelligence is evident in his academic achievements and his ability to navigate complex political and geopolitical landscapes. His educational background in law from Leningrad State University and his proficiency in multiple languages (TASS, 2021) underscore his intellectual capabilities. This intelligence has been crucial in understanding and addressing the multifaceted issues facing Russia, from economic challenges to international diplomacy.

**Alertness**—or the ability to be aware of and responsive to changes in the environment, is a critical trait for any leader. Putin's alertness is demonstrated through his keen understanding of both domestic and international political climates. The consistency of Putin's approach to the Syrian conflict, growing respect from leaders in the Middle East (Parker, 2015), the partnership with China (Fong & Maizland, 2024), NATO member Turkiye (Bechev, 2024), and growing influence in Africa (PBS, 2024) could be considered as strategic alertness of Putin for the diversification of his power and influence through various geo-locations.

**Insight**—involves the ability to understand the underlying causes of complex issues. Putin has shown significant insight into the socio-political dynamics of Russia and the post-Soviet states. His policies often reflect a deep understanding of historical contexts, national identity, and the geopolitical interests of Russia. This insight has allowed him to craft strategies that resonate with the Russian populace and bolster his position. As Putin stated, "Russia has been a great power for centuries, and remains so. It has always had and still has legitimate zones of interest... We should not drop our guard in this respect, neither should we allow our opinion to be ignored" (BBC NEWS, 2014).

**Responsibility**—Putin's sense of responsibility is evident in his commitment to restoring Russia's stature on the global stage. He has taken ownership of Russia's political and economic direction, often portraying himself as the guardian

of Russian interests. This sense of responsibility has helped him gain and maintain public support, despite various controversies and challenges. A key example of this is his justification for military action against Ukraine, which stems from a longstanding view of Russia as a pivotal foreign and security policy player. By aiming to reunite Russian ethnic communities and reclaim former imperial territories in Eurasia, Putin aligns his actions with a broader strategy of reasserting Russia's influence in the region (Melvin, 2022).

**Initiative**—refers to the ability to act independently and proactively. Putin's career, from his early days in the KGB to his rise in the political arena, showcases his initiative. He has consistently taken bold steps, whether it was restructuring the government, pursuing military interventions, or implementing significant economic and law reforms. His proactive approach has been a defining feature of his leadership.

**Persistence**—is crucial in overcoming obstacles and achieving long-term goals. Putin's persistence is evident in his ability to maintain power and influence over two decades, despite numerous political, economic, and social challenges. His unwavering commitment to his vision for Russia and his ability to persevere through adversity has solidified his leadership. Putin's tight control over Russia's security services makes a palace coup unlikely. He has crushed rivals and dominated the media, judiciary, regional leaders, parliament, and community groups. In extreme cases, he has been implicated in the murders of opposition figures, such as Boris Nemtsov and, more recently, the prison death of Alexei Navalny (Person, 2024).

**Self-confidence**—allows leaders to make decisions and lead effectively. Putin's self-confidence is palpable in his public appearances and speeches. His assured demeanor and assertive communication style project confidence, which in turn inspires trust and loyalty among his supporters. This trait has been instrumental in his ability to lead with authority and command respect.

**Sociability**—involves the ability to interact well with others and build relationships. Putin's sociability is reflected in his ability to network and form strategic alliances both within Russia and internationally. His relationships with other world leaders and his engagement with various domestic groups demonstrate his capacity to connect and build rapport, a vital aspect of effective leadership.

Putin exemplifies the traits identified by Stogdill as essential for effective leadership. His ability to apply these traits in a manner relevant to Russia's unique situational demands has been a key factor in his enduring influence and control. This alignment of personal characteristics with situational needs underscores the validity of Stogdill's findings and provides a nuanced understanding of Putin's leadership.

Analysis in the context of Putin's actions highlights that how Stogdill's effective eight traits can be used for purposes that do not necessarily contribute to the common good. The analysis of Putin's personal traits, such as intelligence,

alertness, and persistence, demonstrates how these attributes can be effectively utilized to gain and maintain power. However, the same traits that contribute to his effective leadership also enable his manipulative and coercive actions. This duality shows that while the traits are valuable assets for leading, they do not inherently ensure a positive contribution to society.

Northouse (2021) highlighted that the founder of the Theory of Charismatic Leadership, House (1976) proposed that charismatic leaders possess traits such as dominance, a strong desire to influence others, and high self-confidence. These characteristics (Figure 2) enable them to act in unique ways that significantly impact their followers. According to House's theory, charismatic leadership is effective when followers trust the leader's ideology, align with their beliefs, accept the leader unquestioningly, become emotionally invested in the leader's goals, and gain increased confidence in achieving those goals. This phenomenon is clearly visible in Russia, where a distinct ideology known as *Putinism* has taken shape. Putin's personal characteristics—dominance, influence, and self-confidence—exemplify House's traits of charismatic leadership, and his ability to inspire trust, foster alignment with his beliefs, and emotionally engage his followers underscores the profound impact of charismatic leadership in Russia.

Personality Characteristics	Behaviors	Effects on Followers
Dominant	Sets strong role model	Trust in leader's ideology
Desire to influence	Shows competence	Belief similarity between leader and follower
Self-confident	Articulates goals	Unquestioning acceptance
Strong moral values	Communicates high expectations	Affection toward leader
	Expresses confidence	Obedience
	Arouses motives	Identification with leader
		Emotional involvement
		Heightened goals
		Increased confidence

**Figure 2.** Personality characteristics, behaviors, and effects on followers of charismatic leadership. Source: Adapted from House, R. J. (1976). A 1976 Theory of Charismatic Leadership. Working Paper Series 76-06. *University of Toronto, Faculty of Management Studies*, 38.

Building on the traits of charismatic leadership, *Putinism* is an ideology closely associated with Vladimir Putin's personality and leadership style, characterized by strong central authority and traditionalist principles. It bears simi-

larities to the ideologies of fascist Italy in the 1920s and early 1930s, Francoist Spain, Portugal under Salazar, and Hungary under Horthy. Eydman (2019) argues that Putinism transcends ethnic boundaries, attracting followers from various nationalities, including some individuals from Western countries. This broad appeal highlights how charismatic leadership, when coupled with a compelling ideological framework, can significantly influence diverse groups and reinforce a leader's power on an international scale.

## 2.2. Power Analysis

After the collapse of the USSR, the Russian Federation and its people faced challenging times as they transitioned towards democracy and capitalism. While the USSR ceased to exist, its spirit was alive, and its influence persisted. Despite formal independence, post-Soviet countries remained dependent on the “Big Brother”. The nation, plagued by starvation, refused to abandon its imperialist ambitions.

In this turbulent period, a wave of privatization swept through the post-Soviet space, leading to the looting of state enterprises worth millions and billions of dollars. The wealth from oil and gas, food, marine resources, engineering, railway, and defense industries was concentrated in the hands of a few oligarchs. Chaos reigned, with criminals and “legal thieves” flourishing. Notable oligarchs like Berezovsky and Abramovich exploited Boris Yeltsin's weak leadership and alcohol addiction, rapidly becoming some of the world's richest individuals. To safeguard their assets, they chose a former KGB officer to serve as their protector (Eydman, 2019).

Simultaneously, wars erupted in regions inhabited by national minorities, including the autonomous provinces, seeking liberation from Russian domination. The Chechen Republic of Ichkeria witnessed some of the most brutal conflicts. Moscow experienced terrorist acts, in which Shamil Basayev, a Chechen activist, denied involvement. According to some, these events were orchestrated by the FSB (Federal Security Service), headed by Putin, to justify military intervention in Chechnya. Putin famously uttered, “we will pee them in the toilet” as the bombing of Chechnya commenced. All of Russia was mobilized to fight small Chechnya. Meanwhile, the invasion of militants in Dagestan was organized by oligarch Boris Berezovsky, according to journalist Andrey Piontkovsky. All this was carried out as part of the special operation “Successor”—to increase the rating and influence of Putin. Following Putin's rise to power, the second Russian-Chechen war ensued, followed by the 2008 Russian-Georgian war, during which Russia recognized the puppet governments of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In 2014, Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine (Eydman, 2019).

Over two decades, Putin's power grew significantly. Power and leadership are often synonymous, with both involving influence (Northouse, 2021). Kellerman, in “The End of Leadership” (2012) (Kellerman, 2012), argues that power now lies more with followers than leaders. However, this shift is not evident in the

cases of Putin and other modern leaders.

Northouse, in his book on leadership, differentiates between coercion and leadership, defining leadership as influencing a group towards a common goal. Despite his coercive methods, Putin has effectively worked with his followers and allies to achieve common objectives. Sociologist, and researcher in the field of electronic democracy, as well as a major researcher of Putinism, Igor Eidman argues that, “Putin, in my opinion, plays the role of such a godfather, a thief in law, who breeds and judges, distributes resources, arranges other, smaller, thieves in a row and says: this is for you, this part is for you, Gazprom is for you, you own Rosneft, we are expelling you, you are bad, you are rattling, you are stealing from your own people, you will go to jail or leave our thieves’ circle. And he is very important in this sense because there is a rabble of people, groups that hate each other, and petty thieves around him. They are nothing of themselves and are ready at any moment to rush at each other and gnaw each other’s throats. But there is a thief in law-Putin.”

This dynamic underscores the importance of Putin’s presence, as his removal could lead to widespread conflict (Eydman, 2019). Nevertheless, Northouse conceptualizes path-goal theory as facilitating a healthy and productive work environment to propel followers. This theory can be observed in the relationship between Putin and his followers, who were motivated by the incentives and interests identified by Eydman.



**Figure 3.** The basic idea behind path-goal theory. Source: Adapted from Northouse, P. G. (2021). *Leadership: Theory and Practice Ninth Edition*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.

The path-goal approach (Figure 3) suggests that a directive style of leadership is best in situations in which followers are dogmatic and authoritarian, organizational rules are unclear, and the task is complex. In this style, a leader provides guidance and psychological structure for followers (Northouse, 2021). We can say that we can consider Putin’s leadership style as directive, but his influence diapason is not limited to guidance and psychological structure.

The next interesting approach conceptualized by Northouse is the definition of leadership as a neutral process and contrary leadership as a moral process.

Machiavellianism suggests that moral values do not play a role in the decision-making process, instead, leaders should concentrate on using power and even fear and deception to accomplish goals (Northouse, 2021). A recent study compared 14 leaders with autocratic tendencies (Putin, Trump, Bolsonaro, Erdoğan, Orbán, Duterte, Netanyahu and several others) showed that autocrats score significantly lower on agreeableness and emotional stability, and higher on the Dark Triad (narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism) (Nai & Toros, 2020). It is totally clear that Putin is a genuine example of a Machiavellian trait type personality (he is prone to all traits of The Dark Triad) who did and does destructive things that took thousands of innocent people in the current Russian-Ukraine war, and other conflicts which were escalated within interests of his and his government's ambitions toward the "greatness". Putin's actions reflect these traits, marking him as a destructive yet influential charismatic leader.

The power analysis highlights how Putin's consolidation of power and influence often involves coercive methods and manipulation. This underscores that leadership traits and skills, while beneficial in achieving control and influence, can also be used to further personal or authoritarian agendas, which may not align with the common good.

### 2.3. Influence Analysis

Meanwhile, Putin's leadership could be considered as *pseudotransformational* leadership which refers to leaders who are self-consumed, exploitative, and power-oriented with warped moral values, but have the strong inspirational talent to dominantly and manipulatively direct their followers toward the leader's values as defined by Northouse. Putin is a "strong man" who lacks regret or remorse for his unethical decisions impacting the lives of innocent people (The Conversation, 2022).

In a recent statement about leadership, Putin emphasized: "Leaders should be fans of their work, be able to sensibly and objectively assess the results of their work, and treat the team with respect. Second, the leader needs to be flexible, be able to reasonably and objectively evaluate the results of his/her work, and respect the people with whom he/she solves tasks together, to whom he has dedicated his life. Critical, but with respect. Hence, the leader mobilizes the work of the team, and the ability to work in a team is one of the key elements of success" (Ilyina, 2022). This statement underscores Putin's belief in the importance of flexibility, objective assessment, and respect within a team, aligning with his broader leadership approach that combines directive, charismatic, and pseudo-transformational styles.

Putin's leadership is a blend of *pseudotransformational*, directive, and charismatic styles. This combination allows him to maintain a strong grip on power, effectively guide his followers, and inspire loyalty and commitment, despite the ethical concerns and manipulative tactics involved. Understanding these dynamics provides valuable insights into the complexities of Putin's influence and

the broader implications for leadership in similar contexts. His use of *pseudo-transformational* leadership highlights how charismatic and directive styles can be exploited to serve personal or authoritarian goals rather than the collective benefit. This reinforces the idea that leadership, while a powerful tool, can be applied in ways that either promote or harm the well-being of an organization or society, depending on the leader's ethical stance and objectives.

### 3. Conclusion

This paper has comprehensively analyzed Vladimir Putin's leadership, tracing his journey from a KGB officer to the President of Russia. Utilizing qualitative methods and drawing from primary and secondary sources, historical records, interviews with scholars, and leadership theories, this study has explored Putin's directive, charismatic, and Machiavellian tendencies.

Putin's leadership is characterized by a blend of *pseudotransformational*, directive, and charismatic styles. His ability to consolidate power and exert influence during Russia's post-Soviet transition highlights his skill in mobilizing and guiding his followers towards his vision for Russia. Despite ethical concerns, Putin has effectively maintained power and inspired loyalty among his supporters.

The findings underscore the complex dynamics of Putin's leadership, offering insights into how he has restored Russia's global status and developed the ideology of *Putinism*. His leadership style, marked by a mix of directive guidance, charismatic influence, and Machiavellian strategies, has had significant socio-political impacts both within Russia and internationally.

However, it is important to emphasize that the purpose of this paper is not to exemplify Putin as a role model. While acknowledging the significant influence he wields, the analysis highlights the controversial and often destructive aspects of his rule. Ultimately, Putin's leadership exemplifies a powerful, though contentious, model of modern governance that continues to shape Russia's domestic and international landscape, serving as a case study rather than an ideal to emulate.

The work highlights that while the literature and findings on leadership offer valuable assets and tools for effectively exploiting by leaders, they do not inherently guarantee a contribution to the common good. Leadership, while a powerful tool, can be deployed in ways that either support or undermine organizations and societies, depending on the intentions of the leader. Therefore, while these scholarly contributions provide a robust framework for understanding leadership, the paper underscores the importance of the leader's ethical stance and objectives in determining the overall impact on society.

Despite the study's limitations, including potential biases in sources and the evolving nature of Putin's leadership, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of leadership's multifaceted nature and its effects. By focusing on objective analysis, this paper provides a balanced view of Putin's leadership, recognizing its complexities and significant impact.

Vladimir Putin's leadership exemplifies the interplay of personal traits, historical context, and strategic acumen. His navigation of Russia's political landscape, restoration of national pride, and assertion of global influence demonstrate the enduring relevance of leadership theories in analyzing contemporary political figures. This study underscores the importance of understanding leadership dynamics to grasp the evolving nature of governance, power, and influence in the modern world.

### Limitations

This study on Vladimir Putin's leadership has several limitations. First, the reliance on historical records, biographical sources, and interviews means that the analysis is dependent on the availability and accuracy of these sources. There may be biases or gaps in the data that could affect the findings. Second, while interviews with leading scholars and analysts provide valuable insights, they also reflect the subjective interpretations and perspectives of the interviewees. Third, the complexity and evolving nature of Putin's leadership and the political landscape in Russia may result in the omission of recent developments and shifts in his leadership style. Finally, this research refrains from making moral judgments, focusing instead on an objective analysis of leadership traits and strategies. This approach may limit the exploration of ethical considerations and the broader human impact of his policies. Despite these limitations, the study aims to offer a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Vladimir Putin's leadership and its implications.

### Contributions

This work includes contributions completed during the author's pursuit of a master's degree at the University of Maryland, School of Public Policy.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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