

Chapter 19

Alpha Generation and New Generation Charismatic Leadership for Greener Futures

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ABSTRACT

This study shows that the reviews conducted in the literature indicate a significant interaction between these two concepts, but there is a lack of comprehensive studies on how this interaction is shaped. In this context, the chapter aims to contribute to the literature and lay the groundwork for future research. The focus will be on how the social and individual characteristics of the new generation overlap with and influence the traits of charismatic leadership. The main purpose of the chapter is to compare the social values, individual characteristics, and leadership approaches of Generation Alpha with charismatic leadership theories. The new generation, growing up intertwined with technology, shaped as a value-oriented and socially aware generation, is creating new dynamics that could influence the charismatic leadership style.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the social, cultural, and economic transformations occurring on a global scale have been reshaping the understanding of leadership. Especially the emergence of a generation called Generation Alpha, which is sensitive to social events and has grown up intertwined with technology, constitutes an important turning point in terms of its impact on leadership theories. This generation, while growing up in the rapidly changing digital world, is developing a value-oriented perspective with a sense of social

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responsibility. Therefore, examining how the understanding of charismatic leadership aligns with and transforms the societal and individual values of this generation will fill an important gap in the literature.

The concept of leadership has been addressed within different approaches and paradigms throughout history. While traditional leadership concepts are more authoritarian, hierarchical, and command-and-control oriented, contemporary leadership approaches emphasize the individual's uniqueness, innovation capability, and interactive aspects. Charismatic leadership ensures that individuals see their leaders not only as authoritative figures but also as inspiring, guiding, and unifying figures. It is known that charismatic leaders establish a strong emotional bond with their followers, increasing their motivation and creating a collective consciousness. A generation like Generation Alpha, which values individuality and freedom, approaches traditional authoritarian leadership with distance, making the impact of charismatic leaders on this generation even more pronounced.

This study examines how the individual characteristics of Generation Alpha align with the understanding of charismatic leadership and how they influence each other. The close relationship of Generation Alpha with the digital world, their expectations for instant feedback, innovative perspective, and social responsibility awareness lead them to expect the same dynamism from their leaders. The authoritarian and hierarchical structure seen in traditional leadership models may fall short of meeting the expectations of this generation. In this context, the understanding of charismatic leadership offers a leadership model that can meet the expectations of Generation Alpha, align with their values, and be shaped within the framework of social sustainability.

The study will also address how living in a digitized and technology-focused world has changed Generation Alpha's expectations of leadership. This generation, which is inherently integrated with technology, consumes information quickly and expects to receive responses at the same speed. Having developed the ability to communicate directly through digital platforms, Alpha individuals expect their leaders to possess this communication skill as well. Leaders who demonstrate effective leadership on social media and digital platforms, engage directly with their followers, and express themselves transparently are more embraced by Generation Alpha. In an era where digital interaction is so important, it is clear that leaders need to be present not only in the physical world but also in the virtual world.

Additionally, the Alpha Generation's sensitivity to sustainability is another important factor related to charismatic leadership. This generation places great importance on issues such as environmental sustainability, ethical consumption, and social justice. They expect their leaders to be sensitive to these issues and to take concrete steps. The visionary perspectives and inspiring stances of charismatic leaders can enable them to establish a strong bond with Generation Alpha in line with sustainability goals. Especially charismatic leaders who embrace environmental sustainability and act accordingly may receive more support from Generation Alpha.

On the other hand, the fact that Generation Alpha individuals start exploring their own learning paths from an early age contributes to their development as independent thinkers with an inquisitive and critical perspective. This leads them to expect not only charisma and vision from their leaders but also intellectual and ethical values. Leaders need to gain the trust of this generation not only through traditional rhetoric but also through their actions. For example, individuals who lead in sustainability can gain the trust of this generation not just through words, but by producing concrete projects.

In this study, the characteristics of Generation Alpha that are developing in individual, social, and technological contexts and how they align with the understanding of charismatic leadership are discussed. It focuses on how digital interactions, individual freedoms, and societal values can transform the understanding of leadership. This research, aimed at filling the gaps in the literature, has been designed to

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