

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND MANAGERIAL BEHAVIOR IN ROMANIAN COMPANIES

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Abstract: The article aims to investigate the managers' leadership styles in the North-Eastern Romanian companies. The research is based on the questionnaire method, where 50 managers were questioned on how they communicate decisions and set conflicts in their companies. The collected data have been analysed from different angles of statistical methods in order to bring forward managers' dissimulated behaviors. Additionally, it presented the potential correlations between the leadership styles and implementation. It was showed that managers act dictatorially in decision communication and make compromises in disputes with employees. From the results of the research it was also argued that managers have a dissimulated behavior and provided desirable answers.

Key words: style, leadership, decision, influence, conflict, communication, behavior

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Introduction

This paper identifies the managers' dissimulated behavior giving expression to the discrepancy between the posted behavior (due to their desirable answers to the questions from questionnaires) and the real (true) behavior related to their employees. There are also showed correlations between decision communication and conflict resolution leadership styles, pointing out the higher or lower level of applying to reality practice.

Leadership is "the interpersonal influence carried out in the frame of a certain and guided circumstance, due to communication processes in order to accomplish an aim or specific aims" (Tannenbaum et al., 1961) or an „influencing process of the activities of an organized group to accomplish an aim" (Rauch and Behling, 1984) based on "interaction and communication among members" (Jacobs, 1970).

There are many ways and significations which regard the concept of leadership but all of them lie in a guiding activity of individual behaviors throughout specific processes of influence and communication in order to accomplish certain tasks (Tannenbaum et al., 1961; Newcomb et al., 1970; Neculau, 1977; Sîntion, 1979; Sîntion and Iliescu, 2007; Zlate, 1981, 2004, 2007).

The concept of social influence represents a form of interaction which leads to leader's transformation of perceptions related to his working group (Doise et al., 1995). Therefore, leadership started to be seen as a phenomenon of social influence many decades ago, the organizational psychology enlarging the aria of leadership concept, by including a lot of elements in it specific to management activity.

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If leadership theories talk about processes of influence and communication for modern management, Romanian reality is a little bit different than the others'. Romanian management covers different colors and shapes but the biggest part of our native leadership in practice is captive to a "classic" style, ignoring completely the innovating approach into the field. There is a lack of studies concerning the leadership styles of Romanian managers (particularly from the North-Eastern region of the country), due to impossibility to have access to the top management level or to their (at least) desirable answers, if not sincere ones. Therefore, the following questions might be raised: Do our managers practice a modern management in terms of decision communication and intervention in disputes?

By how managers communicate decisions into their working groups, there are generated different types of conflicts which affect directly or not, the intra organizational climate as well as the company's performance. Other authors talk about the "unclear" communication in organizations: *„the more modification of instructions (...) the more it creates dissatisfaction among subordinates, unfavorable highlighting the manager capacity and competence”* (Voinea et al., 2015).

This article aims to identify the leadership styles practiced by Romanian managers in companies from the North-Eastern region, based on how managers communicate decisions (decisional leadership styles), as well as how managers set conflicts (resolutive leadership styles) into their working staff. There was also a concern for potential correlations between leadership styles in order to identify if there is any correspondency among them (that is if they emerge one from the other).

Leadership Style Concept and Managerial Behavior

Most of the management theories start from the leadership style, „orbit" around it or reach at it. Some researchers consider the leadership style concept in a behaviorist manner (going forward with unidimensional, two-dimensional and tridimensional theories – Lewin et al., 1939; Maier, 1957; Brown, 1954; Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1958, bi-dimensional – Blake and Mouton, 1964 and tri-dimensional – Blake and Mouton, 1967; Reddin, 1970; Vlăsceanu, 1993), taking into consideration the different types of managerial behaviors that are acquired by learning and that are subject to change.

Fred Fiedler thinks that the manager's behavior concept regards all specific actions a leader engages in while he directs the activity of his group whereas the leadership style notion regards the leader's basic and personal needs which ground his behavior. What changes along with the changing of a situation is the leader's behavior, while his basic needs – in this case the leadership style – continue to be constant (Fiedler, 1969). The leadership style becomes, this way, a person's absolute inner variable of personality configuration and, that is why, it is almost impossible to be changed.

Based on the constancy of personality features, we suppose that the leadership style is a relatively constant human ability where some temper and character features

(that hold a social origin) may find their articulation and give benefit to the manager, while others may be subject to the educational influences (abilities that develop and are acquired during lifetime, others than the operational-executive ones). Mielu Zlate believes that the most proper way of defining the leadership style could be done from a psychosocial perspective, being *“the practical way of a role playing, of factual transposition into a behaving manner, of the exigencies that proceed from a leader’s status”* (Zlate, 2004).

The tendency to understand the managerial behavior focused on a large range of leadership styles, coincides not only with a changing of perspective regarding the studies in leadership field, but with the radical mutations that take place within the kind of work. These changes transformed the organizational requirements as far as the leaders are concerned, asking them for more diverse and flexible behaviors. In other words, we do not talk about autocrat or democratic leadership anymore, or about making decisions in a directive or participatory way, or about focusing on a task or a relationship, but about the leader’s adaptation (or conformation?) to “a case that dictates” if a leadership style or another is more efficient or not.

Task Conflict vs. Interpersonal Conflict

Management of enterprises regards information and communications and it is aimed at supporting decision-making processes through solving all the problems. Problem it is seen as a task conflict and represents the trigger for escalating into an interpersonal one.

In a multidimensional scale analysis of groups’ interpretations of conflicts, Jehn (1995) discovered that group members differentiate between task focused conflicts and relationships focused conflicts, with different consequences on the participants’ performances. The author proved that a medium level of task focused conflict is constructive, stimulating the employees to get better performances. On the contrary, a high level of relationship focused conflict correlates negatively with task performing.

In a well-defined case it is possible that a task focused conflict to turn into a relationship one. If the participants do not agree on task performing, disagreements and attribution of task conflict to personal features occur, on the spot. In this way, the participants who express themselves judiciously, will be blamed for negativism and resistance reactions. Because those attributions are rather personal than situational, task focused conflicts are frequently perceived as personal aggressions (Ginzel, 1994).

Concerning the relationship focused conflicts, they interfere with certain efforts for performing tasks because the participants focus their attention rather on the threats they receive and on the growth of the available power, than on the specific task. The group uses better its members’ knowledge and abilities when there is a task focused conflict and less when conflict is absent or when there is a relationship focused conflict (Jehn, 1995).

In this context, the managers' way of intervention for fixing conflicts is defining and sets out the employees' performance, with consequences of the organization on market performing. According to the way the manager communicates decisions into his working group, there are generated different types of conflicts which affect, directly or not, the interorganizational climate and also the company's performance. More than that, the resolute leadership styles emerge from decisional leadership styles, being in correspondence or, better said, deriving from one another.

The Research Methodology

The quantitative research of this article relies on a sociological investigation, based on a questionnaire for a representative sample of 50 managers belonging to companies from different industry fields, and explores the decisional (decision communication) and resolute (conflict resolution) leadership styles, used by managers in organizations, through the following hypotheses:

H1. There are differences among the applying frequencies of those four decisional styles by the managers of the investigated group.

H2. There are differences among the applying frequencies of those four resolute styles, by the managers of the investigated group.

H3. There are significant correlations between decisional and resolute styles.

The design of the questionnaires has used specific items placed in an answering scale of Likert type because of the easiness of understanding by the most respondents, but also because of fidelity reasons regarding the answers received. For that purpose, we considered quite enough to phrase the psychological issue in terms of affirmations or interrogations and to attach a fitting answering scale with a particular number of ranks (6 ranks in order to avoid the medium scores) ranging between „total disagreement” and „total agreement” and between „never” and „always”.

To investigate the decisional leadership styles, it was used a questionnaire based on Tannenbaum and Schmidt's typology (1958), by operationalizing those four leadership styles through relevant behaviors, as these authors described them. The instrument has 7 items and each one includes an affirmation for which the manager has to estimate the frequency of how he proceeded in decisional cases with employees, by choosing an answer from 1 = „never” to 6 = „always”. The items of those four decisional leadership styles are the following:

a. *Dictatorial style:*

1. I make the decision on my own and I communicate it to employees.

b. *Negotiator style:*

2. I make the decision and then I try to convince the employees to accept it.

c. *Consultative style:*

3. I share with employees the basic reasons of my decision and I answer every question they ask.

4. I suggest to employees a variety of decisions that can be adjusted to their needs.

5. I share the issue with employees, I am open to any suggestion they have and then I make the final decision.

d. *Implication style:*

6. I set the limits for my decision and then I ask the employees to take the final decision.

7. I allow my group of employees to decide freely.

The investigation of resolute leadership styles was carried out by applying a questionnaire adjusted on the instrument designed by Koza and Dant (2007). The instrument has 16 items and each one regards a leadership style of the four: „problem solving”, „compromise”, „passive-aggressive” and „active-aggressive”. The items include an affirmation for which the manager has to estimate the frequency of how he reacted „against” employees in conflict matters, by choosing an answer from 1 = „never” to 6 = „always”. The items are as follows:

a. *Problem solving:*

1. I am inclined to have a straight discussion of the issue with employees.

2. I try to demonstrate the logic and benefits of my position.

3. I make myself clear regarding the priorities of the case, the way I see them.

4. I try to share my reasons and arguments of my position as frankly as possible.

b. *Compromise:*

1. I try to find the middle way between my position and theirs.

2. I try to spare their feelings and to protect the relationship with them by finding a middle way of resolution.

3. I try to find a fair combination of costs and benefits, for me and for them.

4. I satisfy certain requirements if there is an opportunity to me to impose my demands, this way.

c. *Passive-aggressive:*

1. I build up arguments, as convincing as possible, in order to achieve my objectives.

2. I stick to my initial position along the conflict.

3. I try to dissemble that they have no chance to convince me of the reasonableness of their position.

4. I insist that my position is the best of all I heard.

d. *Active-aggressive:*

1. I threaten them that our relationship will go from bad to worse if they refuse to accept my position.

2. I make elusive threats of bad effects if they decline to accept my position.

3. I clearly express my negative feelings concerning their resistance behavior.

4. I try to make them accept my position by all means.

The analysis of the above instruments fidelity related to the respondents' answers accomplished through the coefficient of internal consistency alfa Cronbach revealed satisfying levels of fidelity of 0.71.

The Research Results

H1. There are differences among the applying frequencies of those four decisional leadership styles of the managers belonging to the investigated group.

In the first stage of the analysis for H1, it was calculated the score for every manager for each of those four decisional styles in order to get a profile of importance or frequency for each style regarding the questioned group. The average scores for each decisional leadership style are represented below (Table 1):

Table 1. Differences among decisional leadership styles

No.crt.	Decisional styles	Obtained averages	Standard deviation
1.	Dictatorial	4.04	1.28
2.	Negotiator	3.08	1.32
3.	Consultative	2.75	0.69
4.	Implication	4.54	0.97

We observe that the decisional style which comes in sight most frequently in managers' practice is *implication*, followed by *dictatorial* as second frequency, and then the *negotiator* one, while the lowest frequent is the *consultative* style. Considering the significances of the answering scale concerning the items of the questionnaire, the obtained results suggest that decisional styles of *implication* and *dictatorial* are applied at least often on average, the *negotiator* one is applied rather rare, while the *consultative* style tends to be used with a lower frequency.

In the second stage of the analysis for H2, we have included each of the investigated managers in style that provides him the best describing, based on standard scores (z), because they take into consideration the difference between his score and the average of his group for that style, and also the standard deviation of his group, I mean the diversity of managers to the frequency of style applying.

In this manner, we have calculated for every manager a standard score for each of those four decisional styles, and then we include the managers in the most defining style, based on the criterion of maximum standard score of those four ones. This kind of operation is useful because it lets us know about each manager's specific decisional style, in comparison with the others managers from the investigated group. The image we got is more proper (the validity of comparisons is higher) than the common average of gross scores on the frequency of each of those four styles at a certain manager. As a result of this investigation, the number and percent of managers for each of all the four categories are as follows (Table 2).

It is interesting to notice that there are certain differences between the results belonging to those two types of analyses: for instance, the average of the *dictatorial* style (4.04) – from the first stage of the analysis – is lower than the *implication* style (4.54), while the second stage results points that the percent of managers with the *dictatorial* style (30%) is higher than that of the managers with the *implication* one (28%).

Table 2. Frequencies and percent of decisional leadership styles, standing on standard deviation

No.crt.	Decisional styles	Frequency	Percent
1.	Dictatorial	15	30.0
2.	Negotiator	11	22.0
3.	Consultative	10	20.0
4.	Implication	14	28.0
5.	Total	50	100.0

This apparent disaccord is due to different significance of those two sets of results: the averages indicate the frequency of using in practice of a specific decisional style by the entire group of managers; the distribution in categories is based on each manager's distinctiveness, I mean it is based on the style he tends to use more in comparison with the others managers from the investigated group.

As such, although for the majority of the respondents those two results are similar, it is possible for a manager to use the *implication* style more frequently than the *dictatorial* one, but to be characterized by the *dictatorial* style (I mean to be included in this category). This case would occur because he tends to apply this style more frequently than the other managers and the difference between his *dictatorial* behavior and the group's one to be much higher than the difference belonging to the *implication* style. So, we are able to say that *dictatorial* style fits more to this manager.

H2. There are differences among the applying frequencies of those four resolute leadership styles of the managers belonging to the investigated group.

In the first stage of analysis for H2, we calculated the score of every manager for each of those four resolute styles, using the average of the items which regards the respective style. The differences between the averages of those four resolute leadership styles are represented into the following Table 3:

Table 3. Differences among resolute leadership styles

No.crt.	Resolute styles	Obtained averages	Standard deviation
1.	Problem solving	4.78	0.77
2.	Compromise	4.03	0.89
3.	Passive-aggressive	3.26	0.90
4.	Active-aggressive	2.03	0.92

We observe that the resolute style used most frequently in managers' practice is *problem solving*, followed by *compromise* as second frequency, and then the *passive-aggressive* one, while the lowest frequently applied is the *active-aggressive* style. Considering the significances of the answering scale concerning the items of the questionnaire, from 1 = „never” to 6 = „always”, the obtained results suggest that the resolute styles of *problem solving* and *compromise* are applied at least

often, the *passive-aggressive* one is applied rather rare, while the *active-aggressive* style tends to be used very rare.

In the second stage of analysis for H2, we have included each of investigated managers to the style that provides him the best describing, based on standard scores (z) for each of those four resolute styles. The same as above, we have calculated for every manager a standard score for each of those four resolute styles, and then we included the managers in the most defining style, based on the maximum standard score of those four ones. The number and percent of managers for each of those four categories are as follows (Table 4):

Table 4. Frequencies and percent of resolute leadership styles, standing on standard deviation

No.crt.	Resolute styles	Frequency	Percent
1.	Problem solving	11	22.0
2.	Compromise	15	30.0
3.	Passive-aggressive	11	22.0
4.	Active-aggressive	13	26.0
5.	Total	50	100.0

We observe that there is a different proportion between the averages and standard scores for those four resolute styles. If the averages obtained show that the *dictatorial* style (4.78) and *compromise* (4.04) are used with a higher frequency by the entire group of managers, the distribution in categories based on the calculation of standard scores reflects that the managers use the *compromise* (30%) style and behave *active-aggressively* (26%) in settling conflicts with employees. This apparent disaccord is due to the different significance of those two sets of results: the averages indicate the frequency of using in practice of a specific resolute style by the entire group of managers; the distribution in categories is based on each manager's distinctiveness, I mean it is based on the style he tends to use more in comparison with the others managers from the investigated group.

As such, although for the majority of the respondents those two results are similar, it is possible for a manager to use the *problem solving* style more frequently, but to be characterized by the *compromise* one (I mean to be included in this category). The case occurs because he tends to apply this style more frequently than the other managers and the difference between his *compromise* behavior and the group's one to be much higher than the difference belonging to *problem solving* style. So, the *compromise* style fits more to this manager.

H3. There are significant correlations between the decisional and resolute leadership styles.

In order to check this hypothesis, we calculated the Pearson correlation between the variables for all the four decisional styles and also for all the four resolute styles. The results indicate significant correlations, as follows:

- There is a significant positive and high level correlation between the frequency of using the decisional style of the *dictatorial* and resolutive style of the *compromise*: $r = 0.54$; $p < 0.01$. So, managers who communicate decisions in a *dictatorial* style, tend to cut conflicts mainly by *compromise*.
- There is a significant positive and medium level correlation between the frequency of using the decisional style of the *negotiator* and resolutive style of the *passive-aggressive*: $r = 0.31$; $p = 0.02 < 0.05$.
- There is a significant positive and medium level correlation between the frequency of using the decisional style of the *negotiator* and resolutive style of the *active-aggressive*: $r = 0.41$; $p = 0.003 < 0.01$. These two results point that managers, who communicate decisions in a *negotiator* style, tend to settle conflicts mainly by aggressive styles – *passive and active*.
- There is a significant positive and at a medium level correlation between the frequency of using the decisional style of the *consultative* and resolutive style of the *passive-aggressive*: $r = 0.45$; $p = 0.001 < 0.01$.
- There is a significant positive and medium level correlation between the frequency of using the decisional style of the *consultative* and resolutive style of the *active-aggressive*: $r = 0.49$; $p = 0.003 < 0.01$. These two results indicate that managers, who communicate decisions in a *consultative* style, tend to settle conflicts mainly by aggressive styles – *passive and active*.
- For that matter, the results of correlation calculations showed us also a significant positive and medium level correlation between those two decisional styles previously mentioned: the *negotiator* and the *consultative* ($r = 0.39$; $p = 0.005 < 0.01$).
- here is a significant positive and medium level correlation between the frequency of using the decisional style of the *implication* and resolutive style of the *problem solving*: $r = 0.29$; $p = 0.04 < 0.05$. Therefore, managers, who communicate decisions in an *implication* style, tend to burn conflicts down mainly by *problem solving*.

Conclusions

The differences resulted from the investigation of the decisional styles reflect a different behavior: the *implication* style (obtained as an average for the group of managers) is a dissimulated one, actually hiding a *dictatorial* style which takes delight in decision communication without taking into consideration the employees' opinion, and limiting, this way, their liberty degree (a continuum line with different degrees of liberty, with an entire range of managerial behaviors of different degrees of liberty and authority, managers pegging out between extreme peaks). Generally speaking, we are able to make the assumption that this kind of managerial behavior defines the present decisional leadership style, where the managers do not own the culture of negotiation, thinking that one-sided decision is fair enough for a proper implementation of decisions in their „own” companies.

The investigation of the resolute styles of managers from companies shows that managers act weakly and not prevailingly with a particular distinguished style in conflict resolution. The weak resolute behavior, dissimulated by the group of managers for the *problem solving* and *compromise* leadership styles, actually hides the extreme styles they use - *compromise* vs. *passive-aggressive* (if we can imagine a continuum line with different assertive degrees, pegging out between negotiation and mutual needs and interests regarding the disputes with employees).

The identification of the posted leadership styles and the really used styles makes us feel that managers provided desirable answers to the questions, being „eager” to dissimulate their authoritarian manner regarding the decision communication and conflict resolution in companies. The correlations between the frequency of the decisional leadership styles and resolute leadership styles revealed only one significant, positive and high level correlation: managers who use a *dictatorial* leadership style (tone), carry into effect a „soft” intervention, by applying to the resolute style of *compromise*. So, managers are unable to follow up and accomplish the (authoritarian) manner they chose for decision communication and implementation within companies.

Although some studies have been made by Zlate, 1972; Ursu et al., 1978 and Sîntion 2000, their researches regarded different companies in different fields of activities and located in different regions of Romania. Our research is valid for small and medium-sized enterprises from the industry field belonging to North-East region of Romania. For that purpose, we think that the danger of the „alienated” management pattern, which the Moldavian entrepreneurs seem to prefer, could bring about the „arrest” of the companies’ long term development. Managers from the Moldavian region need to learn fast how to configure their activities in organizations, and also how to adopt democratic tools of decision making for a proper implementation.

In conclusion, regarding the managerial behavior in North-East organizations, we identified the leadership profile of a „tough” (*dictatorial*) manager in terms of decision communication to his employees, but „soft” in terms of conflict resolution, by referring to the *compromise* style more frequently.

Summary

This article identifies the managers’ dissimulated behavior, revealing the discrepancy between the posted behavior (due to their desirable answers to the questions from questionnaires) and the real (true) behavior towards their employees. There are also showed correlations between decision communication and conflict resolution leadership styles, pointing out the higher or lower level of applying in reality practice. A certain alternative for a modern manager in Romania is to explore a larger range of leadership styles, as well as to gain and to develop adapting skills to the continuous changing of the organizational environment.

Finally, the entrepreneurs from other regions of our country (such as the center and/or western area) could embrace a different kind of managerial mentality

(inferable from our own experience, and also from economic development numbers), which may be an interesting subject for future researches.

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STYLE PRZYWÓDZTA I ZACHOWANIA ZARZĄDCZE W RUMUŃSKICH FIRMACH

Streszczenie: Celem artykułu jest zbadanie wiodących stylów menedżerów w północno-wschodnich firmach Rumunii. Badanie opiera się na metodzie kwestionariuszowej, gdzie 50 menedżerów było pytanych o to, jak komunikują decyzje i rozwiązują konflikty w swoich firmach. Zgromadzone dane zostały przeanalizowane pod różnymi kątami z wykorzystaniem metod statystycznych w celu uchwycenia udawanych zachowań menedżerów. Dodatkowo przedstawiono potencjalne korelacje między wiodącymi stylami i ich stosowaniem w praktyce. Wykazano, że menedżerowie działają w sposób dyktatorski w komunikowaniu decyzji i osiągają kompromisy w sporach z pracownikami. Na podstawie wyników badań stwierdzono również, że menedżerowie wykazują udawane zachowania i dostarczają oczekiwanych odpowiedzi.

Słowa kluczowe: styl, decyzja, wpływ, konflikt, komunikacja, zachowanie, organizacja

射線照相對領導風格在羅馬尼亞公司

摘要：本文的目的是探討在東北羅馬尼亞公司的主導風格經理。該調查是基於問卷調查的方法，其中管理人員50進行了調查，有關如何溝通的決定，並設置衝突，他們的公司。所收集的數據是從不同的角度的統計方法分析，以捕獲管理者的模擬行為。此外，它提出的龍頭的樣式和其在實踐中的應用程序之間的電勢關係。它已經表明，管理者獨裁工作在溝通的決定，並與員工的糾紛達成妥協。根據調查的結果也得出結論認為管理者有模擬的行為，並提供預期的答案。

關鍵詞：風格，決策，影響力，衝突，溝通，行為，組織