

The Influence of Values on the Leadership Style

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Abstract. *The study of values has been an issue of interest for several subjects, such as philosophy, social sciences, ethics, axiology etc. Despite the fact that psychologists acknowledge the importance of values as orientation tools for every individual in their environment, generating attitudes which translate into behaviours, the empirical research on this topic has been rather scarce, given the complexity of the field, as well as the lack of a sensitive and valid tool able to allow the measurement of values. The academic research, however, cannot avoid an emphasis of (the) values in the study of leadership. Based on the complete leadership model (Bass & Avolio, 1997), the empirical research we propose aims at studying the influence of values on the informal leadership style. The lot of respondents is made up of students, master degree candidates and prisoners from Târgsor, Prahova county prison - totalling 135 persons, divided in 15 groups with one informal leader for each group. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass), Schwartz Value Inventory and the socio-metric techniques for identifying the informal leaders have been applied to all of them. The proposed hypotheses approach the congruence between the leader's fundamental values and those of the group's members, the way the values influence the leadership in the educational environment (students, master degree candidates) as opposed to the prison environment and, in perspective, the interactions of the members within and outside the group, determined by the degree of identification with the others' values.*

Keywords: *values, complete leadership model, informal leader, the congruence of the leader's values with the group's members, values in the educational environment versus the prison environment.*

Introduction

Values were approached from different perspectives. Psychology examines values at individual level and considers them essential for the latent orientation of the individual in his environment. Values influence attitudes and in their turn, attitudes are displayed through behaviors. Even though one's set of values is sometimes context-based, it hardly ever changes, as it often accompanies the individual throughout one's life.

The attempt to operationalize values proved to be extremely difficult. Therefore, empiric evidence on values from a psychological point of view is scarce. However, values provide valuable insights when included in research related to areas that have a highly social component, such as leadership.

The full range leadership model (Bass & Avolio, 1997) advances three leadership styles: transformational, transactional and laissez-faire. There is a large body of research on the factors that influence the transformational leadership style. Our claim is that, among these factors one is the congruence in terms of values of the leader and those of the group members and the current study seeks to investigate this issue.

At the core of transformational leadership is change. Change in organizations usually relates to optimization of information flows, updating old procedures, streamlining processes, careful distribution of resources, increasing productivity, lowering costs, savings etc. According to the transformational leadership theory, all these are rather effects of change than change as such. In other words, it is more efficient to change the mentality of the organization's members rather than specifically striving to improve performance. That is why James McGregor Burns (1978), who is considered to be the father of the transformational leadership, points out that: "Leaders are transformational when they raise awareness regarding to what is right, good, important or beautiful, when they assist their followers in displaying their achievement and self-actualization needs, when they cultivate within their followers high moral maturity and when they enable their followers to act beyond personal interests and in the benefit of the group, organization or society" (p.171).

Originated in organizational settings, Burns' view remains valid also in the case of groups. In this context, the informal leader is the one exerting moral influence. According to Denhardt and Campbell (2006) transformation can be of two types, namely: transformation as change and transformation as moral elevation. Burns certainly opts for the second type of transformation. Out of necessity, this particular transformation raises critical and inevitable questions about values. Burns (1978) does not believe in the long term effect of change unless transformational leaders enable change that is per se moral, in accordance with the higher level needs and the values of followers: "Moral leadership comes from and always goes back to the core needs, desires, aspirations and values of the followers. I refer to that kind of leadership that can produce social change which will satisfy the genuine needs of the followers" (p.4).

Therefore, Burns considers that transformational leadership has to do not only with change, but also with the search for the source and nature of core values. Moreover, when writing the preface for "Ethics, the Heart of Leadership" (1998), Burns states the normative foundation of leadership. In this respect, he identifies three types of leading values: ethical, modals and limitations. The ethical values are "old-fashioned character tests, such as sobriety, chastity, abstinence, kindness, altruism" and other "ten commandments of standards of personal conduct". Burns relates these values to the status-quo of leaders who activate in stable environments and need to preserve them and not cause change. The modal values are those like integrity, honesty and responsibility. These are the type of values that transactional leaders use. According to Burns, "limit values (such as liberty, equality, justice and common good) are at the core of transformational leadership, who seeks for fundamental changes within the society, like the intensification of individual freedom and the expansion of justice and equality of chances" (p.6). Not only are these values essential for the transformational leadership, but they are innate for those individuals who are striving for a substantial change, while exerting a strong moral structure, that will eliminate or mitigate most negative phenomena in the organization, particularly related to psychological or psychosocial factors. Concerning Burns view on the essence of change some remarks are to be made:

(1) Burns' model is idealized and even utopian. Acting upon basic needs and moral principles, the leader must assume simultaneously or gradually a multitude of roles: ethicist, educator, therapist, mentor, coach, confident. Malicious people would also add the confessor role. It is, of course, an exaggeration. What remains and is even emphasized in the modern sense of transformational leadership is the role of coach, mentor and leader.

(2) In order to inspire and nurture moral values and principles, leaders need to be themselves moral and clearly aware of the "good", the "justice", the "correctness", the "beautiful" etc. Realizing this, Burns (1998) mentioned that it is a mutual influence between the leader and his followers. In other words, the "moral elevation" occurs simultaneously in both cases. Avolio (2007) goes further and considers that this interaction represents a higher order integration within the triad leader, subordinates and context. In our view, the leader plays the main role. As holder of the

“power”, the leader can initiate and develop change. However, who trains the future leaders on values? Selecting leaders should also consider the moral profile of the candidates.

(3) The content of moral values and principles is strongly subjective. Each one has a personal understanding of what stands for “good”, “right”, “truth”. This is also known as relativity of values. And if the values are culture-specific, the meanings are even wider. The present study was conducted using the Schwartz Value Inventory in the case of students and inmates. It is difficult to establish what do students take for “stimulation”, “pleasure”, “universalism”, “benevolence”. Most definitely they do not attribute the same meaning as the inmates in Târgșor Prison. Therefore, the relativity of moral values and principles makes them harder to assess. That is why Bass and Avolio (1997) in the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire do not take any chances and remove the moral values and principles from the description of transformational leadership.

After a time of being disregarded, Burns model is once again considered. “Leading” has always to do with values” (Roco, 2007, p.79). Sternberg (2007) considers that an efficient leader should be a synthesis of wisdom, intelligence and creativity. He elaborated the so-called tridimensional model WICS (Wisdom, Intelligence, Creativity, Synthesis). From his model, considering the present endeavor, adding the concept of “wisdom” is relevant. Sternberg defines it as acting for the “common good” and balancing the personal interests with those of the others (intra and interpersonal). The leader uses creativity in generating new ideas, intelligence to analyze and implement the new ideas and wisdom to make sure that they are aimed towards the common good.

Roco (2007) conceptually synthesizes wisdom starting from various definitions (Beltes, Standinger, Sternberg), pointing out that it consists of five elements:

1. Being aware (direct and extensive life experience)
2. A rich procedural knowledge (on judgment and strategies to provide counseling on life issues)
3. The life expectancy contextualism (knowledge on life contexts and its temporal evolutionary relationships)
4. Relativism (knowledge on differences between values, goals and priorities)
5. Uncertainty (knowledge on the indeterminacy and unpredictability of life in terms of characteristics and the concrete ways to deal with it).

Zaccaro (2007) also developed a leadership model based on traits, with values playing a central role. In the attempt to establish the characteristic of a leader, the author proposes three distal attributes - personality, cognitive and motivational abilities and values, as well as three proximal attributes - social appraisal skills, problem solving skills and expertise or tacit knowledge. The explicit presence of values in this model proves that Burns theory is still in.

It was already mentioned that, realizing the difficulties in assessing the moral principles and values, Bass and Avolio (1993) did not include the morality of transformational change in their model. Instead, Bass and Avolio (1997) focus on “assessing transformational leadership and the way in which its factors should relate to various performance measures” (p.54). However, in his article from 1998 (“The Ethics of Transformational Leadership”) Bass reviews the model of transformational leadership and gets closer to Burns conceptualization. Therefore, Bass realizes that the transformational leadership can only be based on values, thus becoming a moral leadership.

Kanungo (2001) provides a useful conceptual framework in approaching the different ethical standards related to the transformational leadership, starting with teleology (“Philosophical doctrine which implies that everything in nature is organized according to a certain goal or to some final cause.”) and deontology (“doctrine concerning the rules of conduct and ethical obligations of a profession”). The author underlines the fact that teleology deals with results and

limits, whereas the deontology is related to the inner moral status of an action. Thus, “the two perspectives on leadership behaviors should be judged for their moral position by using two basically different ethical approaches” (p.263). Kanungo (2001) claims that the behavior of transactional leaders can be morally probed when they are examined based on teleology, while the behavior of the transformational leader can be morally supported based on deontology. Although each perspective is distinct in determining the means and limits of the leader’s actions, each one also includes an ethical component, which has to be present in order to provide a moral warrant. Similarly, Aronson (2001) states: “The ethical leading does not depend on the leadership style as such, but rather on his level of moral development and on the extent to which the influence exerted over the employees is motivated by ethical values” (p.248).

We consider that without a congruency between the values of the leaders and those of the subordinates we cannot speak of transformational leadership. For thousands of years, leaders (military, political, religious) were rather autocratic, despotic, tyrannical, abusive, neglecting the values of their subjects. Even in the case of early capitalism we can identify similar leading styles. The democratic values, the common good, the equality of chances, tolerance and many others are more up-to-date and are highly recommended. It is a difficult process, which takes a lot of time. For a long time, the transactional style that appeared at the beginning of capitalism, when the working force was sold as goods, represented a considerable upgrade, since a transaction can involve morality and some values. The transformational leadership is rather an exception, a goal, which only seldom appears spontaneously, emerging naturally. Some may claim that the charismatic leader has existed forever. That is true, but the charismatic leaders are equally uncommon and, most often, using charisma abusively led to a despotic and adventurous leadership style. The transformational leadership needs charisma to provide a vision and an unconditional emotional support to his followers. After emerging, the two leadership styles split. Charisma fades, in order not to fail as manipulation, persuasion and propaganda, whereas the transformational leader becomes a genuine moral leader, as advanced by Burns (1978). But if the charisma fades, how can the leader keep his followers? Essentially, the moral leader strives for the common good, and especially for that of his followers. This is, of course, a vague assumption, that sounds purely normative and can hardly be supported by evidence. Using inspirational motivation, individual attention and personal development, the transformational leader stimulates his employees to achieve high goals that they could not even imagine as achievable before. Once sequentially achieving this goal, that is achieving great performances together, the employees’ satisfaction with themselves (self-esteem, self-confidence etc.) and with the leader, mainly with his leading style increases. The charisma decreases and the satisfaction of the followers becomes the key factor in the success of the transformational style. There is a switch from the idealized attributes and behaviors of the charismatic leader to the performance-oriented behavior that leads to satisfaction and personal elevation, emotional comfort, personal good and therefore, the common good.

Methodology

Objectives

The main objective of the present empirical endeavor is to investigate the potential influences of the core values on the leadership style, in the case of informal leaders. In order to ensure the validity of the study, the relationship was analyzed both within the groups of BA and MA students and within the groups of inmates in Târgșor prison.

Hypotheses

Hy1. If the core values are determined by culture, at large, then we expect that students (BA and MA students) will score higher than inmates at the SVI.

Hy2. If the core values of the group determine the leadership style of the informal leader, we expect that the congruence between the two sets of values will be specific to the transformational leadership style, whereas in the case of the other leadership styles there will be significant differences between the average scores of the leader and the average scores of the group members.

Identifying the informal leaders

On the one hand, identifying the informal leaders in the case of inmates is not difficult, since they are well known by the prison staff (Gheorghe, 2006, 2009). Therefore, every detention room has a very well established informal leader. On the other hand, in the case of the groups of BA and MA students, the informal leaders can be identified only by using a classical method, although not that up to date – that is the sociometric test (Mureşan, 1980). The instrument was used simulating quite a professional situation – choosing team members for developing a project. The data thus gathered were analyzed using the sociometric techniques.

Other instruments used within the current research are:

- *The Schwartz's Value Inventory (SVI, Schwartz, 1992)*. The inventory describes how individuals appraise some values as core values. The test is comprised of 40 items distinguished by gender and the respondent has to indicate, on a scale ranging from 0 (*nothing like me*) to 5 (*very much like me*) the extent to which one identifies with the typical individual in designating the values that act as guiding principles for one's life. The ten value types identified by Schwartz as basic are: conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power and security.

- *The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ, Bass & Avolio, 1997)*. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire is a widely appreciated instrument for evaluating the leadership style in terms of behavior: transformational, transactional and laissez-faire. The MLQ scales are grouped in four categories, the first three of them being related to the leadership style as such, whereas the last to the results of the leader. The questionnaire can be self and peer (follower) administered and in the current study both forms were employed. The latest version of the instrument was used (MLQ 5x), consisting in 36 standardized items assessed on a scale ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 4 (*frequently, if not always*) (www.testcentral.ro).

Participants

The current research was conducted on a convenience sample consisting in 135 participants, divided into 15 groups, each having an informal leader. Regarding the characteristics of the participants, 42 of them were second year BA students enrolled in Psychology classes within the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (NUPSPA) from Bucharest. Following the administering of the sociometric test five groups with a well- established informal leader were identified (GS1 – GS5).

Other 52 participants were MA students, enrolled in the first and second year at the Managerial communication and Human resources Master (College of Communication and Public Relations, NUPSPA). By employing the same procedure, five more groups were identified (GM6 – GM10), with the respective informal leaders. Since in the case of both samples the great majority of participants were women (83.33% from the BA students, 90.38% from the MA students), in order

not to have to add another independent variable to the research, the third and last sample was formed by 41 women inmates from the Târgșor prison (five detention rooms – groups GD11 – GD15). Establishing the informal leaders of these groups was enabled by the collaboration with the prison staff, as due to the low educational level of the inmates and the specific slang and subculture, most of the items from the tests required detailed explications in order to obtain valid answers.

Data analysis

The first hypothesis (Hy1) addresses the existence of significant differences between the means of the value types in the case of the BA and MA students and the inmates.

Results (Fig. 1) show that in the case of the inmates the mean for tradition is higher than the reference average (the overall average of the sample). A possible explanation in this respect could be related to the fact that tradition, defined as compliance to customs, conservatism and rejection of change is further associated with age. More precisely, older people are usually more traditionalist than younger individuals, being more engaged in rituals and showing stronger religious beliefs. Furthermore, this tendency is even clearer in the case of women who live in a hostile and coercive environment.

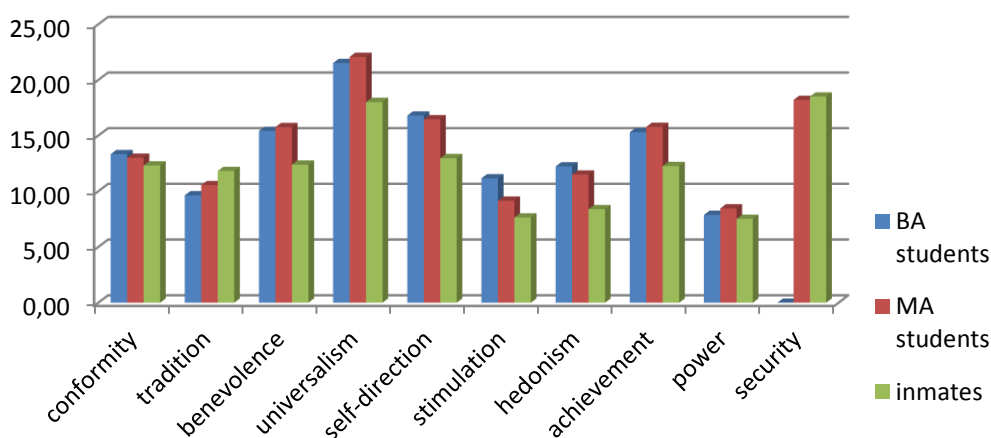


Figure 1. Means and standard deviations for value types (Schwartz) for each sample (BA and MA students, inmates)

In order to determine whether there are significant differences between the three sample groups (BA students, MA students, inmates) in terms of value types, the *t* test for independent samples was used (pairing the three groups). Findings reveal that BA and MA students' answers to the SVI vary only in the case of stimulation (BA students: $M=11.16$, $SD=2.74$ and MA students: $M=9.15$, $SD=3.39$, $t(92)=3.108$, $p=.003$) and security ((BA students: $M=15.90$, $SD=3.93$ and MA students: $M=18.21$, $SD=3.61$, $t(92)= -2.958$, $p=.004$). Regarding the differences between the BA students and the inmates, the hypothesis is confirmed by the results, since except for conformity, there were identified significant differences for all the values proposed as core values by Schwartz. Finally, there are no significant differences between MA students and inmates in the case of conformity, tradition, power and security. Therefore, the first hypothesis is partially confirmed by the statistical analysis performed, while strengthening the assumption that the particularities of the cultural environment either stimulate or do not stimulate whether and to what extent individuals choose certain values as core values.

The second hypothesis (Hy2) assumes that there is a correspondence between the values of the group and those of the transformational leader. This congruence is not assumed in the case of the transactional, respectively the laissez-faire leader (that is the informal leader). In order to test this hypothesis, the first step consisted in determining the structure of the student groups (BA and MA students) and identifying the informal leader thorough the sociometric test. The procedure was not employed in the case of inmates, since the groups were defined by the distribution in detention rooms and the informal leaders in each detention room were identified with the assistance of the prison staff.

The second step in testing Hy2 was to assess the dominant leadership style of the informal leaders. Both the self-reported (their own evaluation) and the peer reported (the evaluation of the leader by all the other members of his group) form of the MLQ test were used. The analysis of the scores thus obtained (Table 1) reveals the tendencies related to the leadership style of the informal leader:

1. The only informal leader whose prevailing leadership style is transformational (although at the bottom line) is CMI from GM7. The self-evaluation (54.12% transformational) is consistent with the peer evaluation (50.72% transformational).
2. There are also four other informal leaders who show a strong tendency towards the transformational leadership style: (44.10%); ROC (42.29%); TAL (44.41%) and CMA (44.39%).
3. Since there are no significant percentage differences between CIM and the other four informal leaders, henceforth they will all be considered as being mainly transformational leaders.
4. Most of the informal leaders are seen by the group members as being mainly transactional: BZA, SGE and DAG among the BA students groups; BAA and ROA among the MA students groups, respectively NLU, SRA and RVI among the inmates groups. Results show that the transactional leadership style is the prevalent one, being almost equally distributed among the sample groups.

Table 1. The distribution of leadership styles

Group	Form of evaluation	Leader code	Leadership style				Leadership results	
			Transformational	Transactional	Laissez-faire	Extra effort	Leadership style efficiency	Satisfaction
BA students	Leader self-evaluation	CVD	41.95	41.20	16.85	75.00	68.75	25.00
			Leader peer evaluation	N=9	44.10	39.17	16.73	68.52
	Leader self-evaluation	BZA	37.17	47.12	15.71	76.04	50.00	50.00
			Leader peer evaluation	N=7	25.78	40.65	33.57	59.52
	Leader self-evaluation	SGE	31.73	48.19	20.08	66.67	75.00	62.50
			Leader peer evaluation	N=7	35.44	42.84	21.72	59.52
	Leader self-evaluation	ROC	47.81	40.40	11.79	100	75.00	87.50
			Leader peer evaluation	N=7	42.29	39.01	18.70	69.79
	Leader self-evaluation	DAG	40.01	43.64	16.35	66.67	75.00	75.00
			Leader peer evaluation	N=7	34.40	42.72	22.88	66.67
MA students	Leader self-evaluation	TAL	42.83	35.76	21.41	75.00	68.75	75.00
			Leader peer evaluation	N=13	44.41	38.71	16.88	85.25
	Leader self-evaluation	CMI	54.12	32.11	13.77	75.00	62.50	75.00
			Leader peer evaluation	N=11	50.72	32.43	16.85	75.75
	Leader self-evaluation	BAA	44.01	36.68	19.31	58.33	75.00	75.00
			Leader peer evaluation	N=6	37.18	45.79	17.03	66.67
	Leader self-evaluation	CMA	40.30	35.45	24.25	58.33	68.75	62.50
			Leader peer evaluation	N=8	44.39	35.71	19.90	63.58
	Leader self-evaluation	ROA	33.93	45.51	20.69	50.00	75.00	25.00
			Leader peer evaluation	N=9	31.67	46.84	21.49	36.81
Inmates	Leader self-evaluation	CRA	16.67	36.12	47.21	0	12.55	0
			Leader peer evaluation	N=7	30.19	30.58	39.23	36.90
	Leader self-evaluation	NLU	24.63	47.66	27.71	100	100	100
			Leader peer evaluation	N=6	27.88	45.36	26.76	54.17
	Leader self-evaluation	MCA	29.69	29.30	41.01	50.00	50.00	50.00
			Leader peer evaluation	N=10	25.34	29.44	45.22	34.17
	Leader self-evaluation	SRA	45.23	37.10	17.67	76.04	93.75	75.00
			Leader peer evaluation	N=6	34.49	43.57	21.94	75.00
	Leader self-evaluation	RVI	37.12	40.42	22.46	83.33	87.50	100
			Leader peer evaluation	N=7	30.76	40.36	28.88	51.19

5. CRA and MCA, two informal leaders from the inmates groups show a preference for the laissez-faire leadership style. In the case of CRA, although the evaluation of the group members (GD11) reveals a slight preference (39.23%) for the laissez-faire style, the self-report indicates a strong tendency in this direction (47.21%). As for MCA (GD1) the self and group evaluations are consistent, both showing a strong preference for the laissez-faire leadership style. A possible

explanation for the prevalence of the laissez-faire leadership style in the particular case of these two informal leaders could be the fact that being incarcerated for violent crimes, their leadership is based rather on a reversed prestige.

The third step consisted in administering the SVI. The data thus gathered was analyzed in order to determine the central tendency measures, more precisely the means and standard deviations for each leadership style (Fig. 2). Results indicate the fact that for the transformational style the means reported are higher than the reference average (the overall mean for the three leadership styles) in the case of seven out of the ten values assessed. Informal leaders with a strong preference for the transactional style reported means higher than the reference only for conformity and stimulation, and informal leaders with a laissez-faire leadership style reported the same tendency for tradition and security.

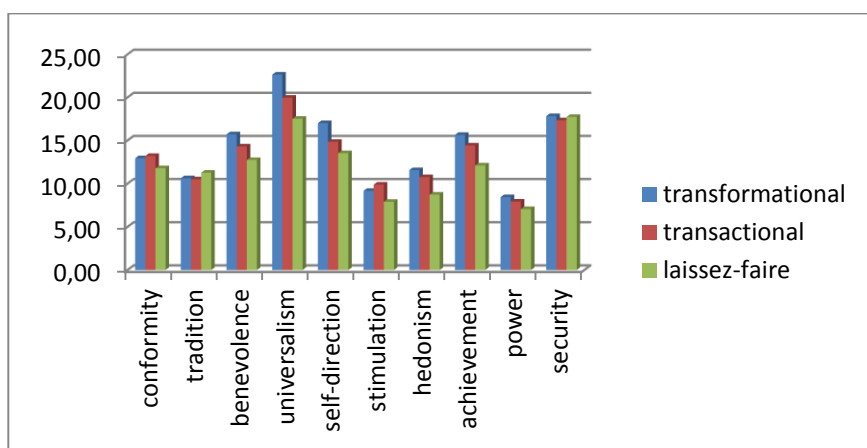


Figure 2. Means and standard deviations for value types (Schwartz) for each leadership style

The final step in testing Hy2, which assumed that the values of the transformational leader and those of his followers are congruent, whereas in the case of the other two leadership styles there will be significant differences between the two sets of values (negative differences for the laissez-faire style), consisted in determining the means and standard deviations of values for leaders and followers, according to each leadership style. The results are presented below only for the transformational style.

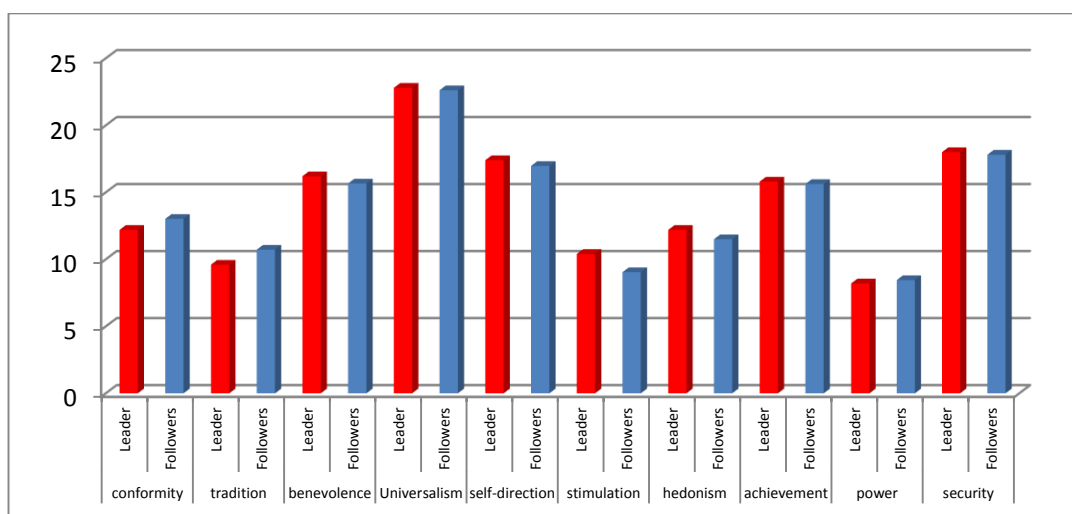


Figure 3. Means and standard deviations for value types (Schwartz) for leaders and followers. The transformational style

The statistical significance indicates that the extent to which the values of the leader and those of his followers vary/do not vary is sufficient in that the differences are not due to random factors related to sampling. In other words, the *t* test provides an answer to the question concerning the possible differences between the means of the values for the three leadership styles and those of the group members.

Findings show that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the values in the case of the transformational leadership and those of the followers, which further means that the values are congruent. On the other hand, significant differences were reported in the case of the transactional leadership for such values as universalism ($t(22.76)=3.62, p=.001$) and power ($t(11.79)=3.88, p=.002$) and for hedonism ($t(3.04)=3.57, p=.037$) and power ($t(1.36)=-2.61, p=.037$) in the case of the laissez-faire leadership style. Thus, the second hypothesis is also confirmed by the results.

Conclusions and main limitations

The study of values, at large, and that of values associated with the leadership style represents a complex and yet under-investigated area of research, thus lacking strong empirical evidence. This is one of the reasons why the current research was a challenge.

We consider that the objectives assumed were reached. The data analysis confirmed the fact that values are the product of a specific culture and this further determines differences between the educational environment and prison. Reality shows that more often than not there is a leveling of the values towards the bottom line, and sometimes even a reversing process.

One of the aims for the present study was to draft a value inventory tailored for the prison environment, based on the fact that this kind of initiatives were also identified in previous research (Gheorghe, 2009; Puşcaş, 2009). The main assumption in this respect was that in prison the value system is often reversed. More precisely, the bigger the crime (murder, mugs, rapes, robbery, etc.), the greater the prestige and the chance to become a leader in the detention room. The attempt to draft and administer an inventory focused mainly on moral values (honor, dignity, justice, truth, etc.) did not provide relevant insights on the difference between the student groups and the prison groups. Furthermore, we concluded that the general tendency in the contemporary Romanian society is for values to depreciate and even reverse and thus we have abandoned this project. Instead, we have used Schwartz's Value Inventory.

The first hypothesis was partially confirmed and highlighted the features of the detention environment. Testing the second hypothesis we have also encountered peculiarities in the case of the inmate groups: the informal leader laissez-faire (the laissez-faire leader is rather formal than informal). Essentially, the laissez-faire style is a non-leadership style, where the leader lacks any interest in leading. However, such an informal leader exists. In order to further investigate this, special attention must be paid to the interaction between the different group structures. From this point of view, apart from the formal, the informal and the communication structure, there can also be identified two more structures: the power structure and the prestige structure, respectively. These new structures can determine new hierarchies compared to the previous ones. And this aspect is visible mainly in the detention environment, which serves two functions: custodial care and education (Gheorghe, 2006). The groups of inmates are formed by detention rooms, where there are only women/men, varying in age and convictions (different periods, different causes, repeat offenders). In each room there is an informal leader, who plays a very important role at group level. Basically, the informal leader manages the relationship with the guardians or the professionals who provide educational or psychological support (social workers, psychologists).

Similarly, the informal group initiates, ensures, develops, stops or tolerates any events or group phenomena that may appear in the detention room. The interaction norms between inmates differ from those between people outside the prison. As the informal leader in prison is usually chosen based on the gravity of the sentence, he can abandon the managing tasks and take advantage only of the attention provided by the guardians. In other words, the complexity of the leadership styles is more visible in atypical groups, rather than in those from educational environments (pupils, students) which were extensively studied.

The importance of acknowledging the core values of the group members by the leader varies according to the leadership style. Namely, it can be neglected by the laissez-faire leader, it can weigh pretty much in the case of the transactional leader and it is imperative for the leader who strives to become transformational. The laissez-faire leader is reluctant to take the lead, does not provide information or feedback to his followers, "being unable to identify and meet the employees' needs" (Avolio & Bass, 1997, p.113). On a regular basis, the laissez-faire leader scarcely interacts with his group members, is interested in meeting individual rather than common goals and does not pay attention to efficiency issues or the satisfaction of his followers.

The efficient transactional leader (with high scores on the EE, EFF and SAT scales from the MLQ) is interested in identifying the value set of his group members. Based on the item "rewards" results, the transactional leader must "actively establish the responsibilities, performance standards and ultimately the rewards" (Avolio & Bass, 1997, p.103). An efficient leader will identify the potential of the subordinates and will assign the tasks accordingly.

Finally, the transformational leader must be accepted by the group and the most appropriate way to earn the group recognition is to identify the set of core values of the group. Through the group cohesion process, the group members will adhere to the same value set in time. If the group is underperforming, then the values of the leader will not correspond to those of the group. But in order to earn the group's acceptance and trust, in the beginning the leader must simulate the identification with the group's values. Subsequently, while consolidating his status within the group, the leader may start the process of changing attitudes and altering the set of values. From this point forward the leader can be seen as a transformational leader. When the values of the followers are consistent with those of the leaders, followers will no longer be motivated to pursue their own interests. Instead, they will focus on pursuing group or organizational interests. By providing and devising a desirable vision, transformational leaders can influence the perspectives of the followers and positively mobilize and engage them towards embracing a set of common goals.

The transformational leadership style is scarce in everyday life. Without sustained efforts to develop the skills and acquire the knowledge typical of this style - emotional intelligence, charisma, leader - followers value match and followers' satisfaction etc. - this particular leadership style is hard to attain. In this context, organizations seem to acknowledge the need to provide specific programs aimed at developing the transformational leadership style.

The main limitations of the current research refer to:

(1) Using an overly general approach in assessing values in educational and penitentiary settings. The endeavor to elaborate a specially-designed questionnaire in order to emphasize the values specific to each of the two environments was not successful, therefore, the Schwartz Value Inventory was employed.

(2) There was no genuine leader identified nor in the educational settings, neither in the prison. One may ask: Why should there be a transformational leader in the groups of students, but mainly in the groups of inmates. Although such perspective may seem far-fetched, the two groups are

alike in that they both are based on a formative/educative process. In this respect, the existence of an informal leader with an ethical vision would benefit the group. Specifically, the group members would assimilate the moral values that come from within the group rather than those from outside the group. The above conclusions are valid provided that the informal leader is an upright person. As for Burns, the father of the transformational leadership, this type of leader can only be oriented towards the common good, as shown in the theoretical conclusions of the present study.

(3) The restricted size of this paper did not enable a more thorough comparative approach of the differences between the transformational style and the other leadership styles when values are considered.

Being aware of the above mentioned limitations we will continue the research in a future study.

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