Leadership Style - Evidence from Manufacturing Industry in Northeastern Bulgaria

Miglena PENCHEVA
University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev"
mpencheva@uni-ruse.bg

Abstract
The purpose of that paper is to explore leadership style in manufacturing entities, located in Northeastern Bulgaria. The investigation grounds in Full range leadership model. Individual level of conceptualization is employed (n=58). More specifically, subject of study is managers' perception of transactional and transformational leadership style. Quantitative method of research has been adopted, more specifically 5X questionnaire. The survey targets manufacturing companies for a few reasons: the industry type put mark on the leadership style; that kind of studies are lagging behind in Bulgaria; usually the surveys are centered in the capital, nor in the "periphery". Thus, the survey outcomes would provide ground for better understanding of applied leadership style, either in the sector, or in the country. Moreover, the companies in hand are flagman in light industry, thus, survey outcomes could provide starting point for benchmarking. Statistical analysis are employed in order to reveal tendencies. Some implication with organizational culture are outlined and discussed, since both concepts are in close relationship.

Keywords: leadership style, manufacturing, full-range leadership model, organizational culture.

JEL classification: M14, M10, M54.

1. Introduction

Transformational and transactional leadership takes special place in contemporary management theory, since they meet the demands of an ever-changing, complex and global world.

Both practitioners and researchers have put the notion leadership under the spot. It has been examined from different perspectives, i.e. from the corner of leader, follower, and situation; on different levels, chronologically, functionally and etc. In latest years transactional and transformational leadership, i.e. Full range leadership model is widely employed in surveys. However, less attention is allocated to the specific the model in terms of industry type. Previous theories suggest that effective leadership behavior is closely connected to the elements of the situation. Manufacturing impose specific encumbrances on the workplace, e.g. precise planning and organizing, pressure to produce specific outcome, sometimes in force major circumstances. Thus, behavior of the leader is closely connected to productivity.

In terms of manufacturing, the constant improvement of production processes, resource base, introduction of module configurations, high logistic level and widely available information about all market players allows shortening of the pre-production period, which result in a strong competition (Kirova, 2010). Manufacturing poses informal but strong stereotypes (Payne, J. 2018) which impact organizational culture. Cultural and subcultural factors have a significant impact on behavior (Todorova et. al, 2018). Organizational culture and leadership are interconnected categories (Pencheva, 2018). Thus, presumably manufacturing postures informal and strong categories upon leadership. The current study is modest attempt to fill in the gap. The goal of the research is to examine transformational and transactional leadership in manufacturing companies located in Northeastern Bulgaria.

The purpose of this study is to explore the Full Range Leadership Model, i.e. transformational and transactional leadership of first line managers in leading manufacturing organizations, located in Northeastern Bulgaria.

The motivation for the study is grounded in following reasons: 1) To put a lite on leadership specifics in manufacturing companies. 2) The subjects of the study are flagman manufacturers in light industry, thus examining Full Range Leadership Model could provide ground for benchmarking. 3) The examined organizations are located in the Northeastern Bulgaria, which is a region with a dense concentration of production entities and lagging behind in terms of leadership surveys.

The survey presented here is part of a survey project examining leadership and organizational culture. The organizational culture part is presented in another paper in the same proceedings titled "Organizational Culture – Values and Practices, Evidence from Manufacturing Industry in Northeastern Bulgaria.

The aim of the study is perceived via qualitative method. Subject of survey is a perception of the first line managers towards their leadership behavior in the organization they work for. First line managers are engaged in the study for the following: a) their perspective of "proper" leadership behavior is reliable, since they have been promoted to managerial position; b) they are not in a position of CEO or owner of the company, thus their point of view is more likely to depict the "real picture" opposed to the "desired one". As a prerequisite of research selection, the companies are flagmans in the sectors they operate. One of the companies in hand operates in knitting socks, the second one is in electrical supplies manufacturing, the third one is in food and household chemical supplies. All their first line managers have been involved in the survey. The survey has been conducted in 2017.

The main findings are: Contingency reward is to some extend inconsistent with Transactional leadership. Leadership styles are not correlated to Power distance and Uncertainty avoidance. Masculinity is the values dimension, which is in a relationship with leadership styles. Form a point of view of organizational culture practices dimensions, Social responsibility in the one connected to the leadership styles.

The findings could be used either for management purposes with manufacturing entities in hand, or in educational process of business administration students with respect to their requirements and expectations towards their future jobs (Yordanova, 2018).

2. Literature Review
2.1. Transformational leadership

Most of the contemporary transformational leadership theories are based on the theory of the transformational leadership of James McGregor Burns (Burns 1978, quoted in Karastoyanov, 2005). They present two opposing leadership styles - the transactional one that motivates followers by appealing to their personal interest, and the transformational one that build on the moral values of the followers, provoking them to consider ethical problems and mobilizing them to reform the entity they work for.

The transformation group of theories explain the way the leader influences the others. According to House and Podsakoff (1994), transformational (neo-charismatic) theories focus attention on emotions, preferences, dedication to work by subordinates, as well as on the structure, culture and performance of organizations. Transformational leadership is described as a process of influence in which larders change their collaborators' perceptions towards what is meaningful; stimulate them to look inside themselves; perceive the opportunities and challenges of their environment in a new way.

According to Bass, Avolio and Goodheim (1987), transformational leadership motivates followers to pursue conceptual goals and to meet their higher levels needs i.e. self-

actualization, opposed to simply participating in the dual relationships. According to this definition, transformational leaders create a dynamic organizational vision that often requires alignment of cultural values to pursue change. Such leaders demonstrate an idealized influence (charisma), an individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspiring motivation. These four factors represent the main components of transformational leadership (Bass, 1997.) and are defined as follows:

- *Idealized influence (attributive and behavioral)*: Leaders represent a role model for their followers. They are deeply respected, admired and gained the trust of their followers (Northouse, 2001). Such kind of leaders are confident, persistent, very competent and willing to take risks. They usually stand by high standards of ethic and morality, and avoid imposing power and authority (Bass, 1997). The attributive idealized influence is articulated in communicating vision, referring to values, building trust. The behavioral part of the idealized influence consists in sharing risks between the team and the leader, adhering to ethical norms and morals, building integrity.

- *Individual consideration*: Leaders provide an atmosphere of support in which they give personal attention to each employee and their individual particularities. Such leaders listen to and share the doubts of the follower and building confidence in himself / herself (Avolio, Waldman & Yammarino, 1991). Such leaders relate employees' needs to the mission of the organization (Bass 1985, 1990, 1997).

- *Intellectual stimulation:* Leaders inspire followers for creativeness and innovation; question their beliefs and values, as well as their own and those adopted in the organization (Avolio et al., 1991, Northouse, 2001). This type of leadership behavior helps to improve intelligence, rational thinking, problem solving and decision making (Bass, 1990, Northouse, 2001). As a result, employees are encouraged to try new ways and develop innovative solutions to approach the organization's problems.

- *Inspiring motivation:* Leaders inspire and motivate by explaining and providing challenges to their followers using comprehensible language, symbols, and visualization (Bass, 1997). Leaders engage their followers in "outlining" an attractive future for the organization, formulate clear expectations that followers want to meet and show devotion to the common goals and vision (Avolio et al. 1991).

Transformational leadership is in a strong opposition to the status quo. Transformational leaders create a new vision of the organization. In the process of complete change, they build an innovative organizational culture and an atmosphere of satisfaction (Bass & Avolio 1993; Masood, Dani, Burns & Backhouse 2006). Transformational leaders change culture by first understanding it, then "aligning" it with the new vision, and revising common values and norms (Bass, 1985).

Several transformative and inspiring leadership theories are based on Burns' ideas, but the Bernard Bass version gains the most popularity and stimulates many empirical research. Bass creates, and later develops the "Full-range leadership model" together with Avoilo. He considers two main leadership styles - transformational and transactional. (Bass, 1985). According to this model, the constituent leadership styles complement each other. In combination, transformational and transactional leadership enlarge leadership effect either on effort or over outcome (Avolo et al. 1991, Bass 1985, 1990, Howell & Avolio 1993, Robbins 2006).

Full range leadership model involves six leadership styles combined in two groups: transactional leadership styles and transformational leadership styles.

2.2. Transactional leadership

The notion of transactional leadership is based on the leader style and behavior in interaction with behavior and performance of the subordinates. The leader tailor a unique relationship with each subordinate. These relationships can be good (with mutual trust and support, high performance of work and subordinates satisfaction), medium or bad (limited to performing duties). In general, in the transaction leadership style, the manager motivates the followers, appealing to their personal interest. The leader exchange money, approval, safety, or attention for performance meeting his/her expectation, loyalty or employee dedication (Bass, 1990). In practice, the transaction leaders define and communicate what followers have to do, how to do it, and what reward they will get if they achieve the goals. If they fail to do so, the transaction leader takes corrective action.

According to Bass (1997), there are three types of behaviors that construct transactional leadership, based on constructive and corrective exchanges (Figure 1). The constructive style is titled Contingency reward and the corrective - Management by exceptions. The latter behavior - Laissez-Faire is characterized by quite a lot of freedom and the delegation of authority and responsibility to the subordinates. The functions of the liberal leader are rather limited and focused mainly on relationships with members of the group. These three components of transactional leadership are defined as follows:

- *Contingency reward*: Leader provides a contingent reward for the efforts made and the results achieved, appreciate good performance in order to keep it.
- *Management by exceptions (active and passive)*: Leader maintains the status quo and interferes when employees do not achieve the required level of performance. This leadership behavior involves monitoring employees and taking corrective action. Whether the leader actively seeks for mistakes to prevent, or react to occurred deviations, are distinguished respectively active and passive management by exceptions.
- *Laissez-Faire*: This behavior consists of liberal delegating, avoiding leadership or lack/ abdication of leadership, i.e. no decision-making.
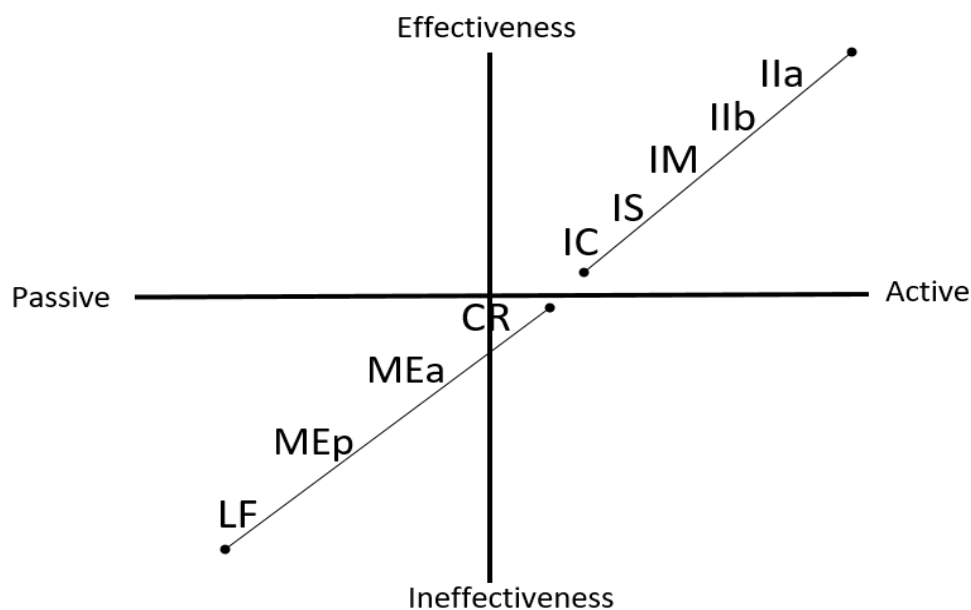

Figure 1. Full Range of leadership model

Source: Bass & Avoilio, 2004
Legend: LF – Laissez-Faire, MEp - Management by exceptions (passive), MEa - Management by exceptions (active), CR – Contingency reward, IC - Individual consideration, IS – Intellectual stimulation, IM - Inspiring motivation, IIb - Idealized influence behavioral, IIa - Idealized influence attributive

2.3. Leadership and Culture

One distinction between transaction and transformation style is that the first one is associated with tradition, the latter - with of innovation. A significant distinction between those two styles is that the transactional leader operates within current culture, while the transformational one creates change it culture. Transformational style is a developing one. It focuses either on individual growth (not only professional but also personal) or organizational development.

2.4. Research question

What are the characteristic of leadership in the manufacturing organizations in the sample? Is there relationship between leadership and organizational culture in the manufacturing organization employed in the survey?

3. Research Method, Results and Discussion

3.1. Sample

There were 58 respondents in this survey, comprise of tree companies, leaders in the sector they operate in. First one operates in knitting socks, the second one is in electrical supplies manufacturing, the third one is in food and household chemical supplies. All their first line managers have been involved in the survey. The respondents have been enrolled in Management training programs.

3.2. Questionnaire

Multi Factor Leadership Questionnaire (5X form) is employed in the study to examine the constructs of Full range of leadership model. 5X form contains 45 items: 36 - represents nine leadership factors (each factor consists of four statements) and 9 statements assess three leadership results. For the purpose of this study, thirty-six statements are used because they represent the key aspects of transformational and transactional leadership. In the preferred version here, they are statements of self-assessment by a first line management respondent.

The questionnaire is based on a five-point Likert scale with scores ranging from 0 to 4, respectively 0 - never and 4 - always. For consistency with the Organizational culture modules of the questionnaire, in order to facilitate the respondent, as well as for unambiguous analysis of the mean values, in the present study they are marked with a scale of 1 to 5, 1 - never, 5 - always.

In terms of reliability, the Full range leadership questionnaire has recognized as a reliable and valid tool (Antonakis et al. 2003, Avolio, Bass & Jung 1999). The reliability of the scales varies from 0.74 to 0.94 for each individual substructure (Avolio et al., 1999).

Background module consists of 5 statements i.e. sex, age, years within organization, occupation, education.

3.3. Background information

On the table below are presented outcomes of the background module. They provide general information about the sample.

Table 1. Background information about the sample

	Number	%
Sex		
Females	28	50
Males	28	48.30
Missing	1	1.7
Age		
20-29 years	8	13.8
30-39 years	15	25.9

40-49 years	18	31
50-59 years	14	24.1
Missing	3	5.2
Years within organization		
Less than 1 year	3	5.2
1 to 3 years	3	5.2
3 to 7 years	3	5.2
7 to 15 years	12	20.7
More than 15 years	30	51.7
Missing	7	12.1
Occupation		
Director	21	36.2
Middle manager	11	19
First line manager	20	34.5
Missing	6	10.3
Education		
Hi school	28	48.3
University degree	26	44.8
Missing	4	6.9
Organization (manufacturing type)		
Knitting socks	11	19
Electrical supplies manufacturing	26	45
Food and household chemical supplies	21	36

Source: own research results.

As shown on a Table 1, the majority (72%) of the respondents in the sample work for their current employer more than 7 years, thus their statements are supposed to depict the real situation in the company. With respect to gender, man and women are almost equally represented.

3.4. Calculation and Statistical analyses
Full range leadership model scores are calculated according to the 5X form. Further data manipulation are done with changed scoring, i.e. 1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree for consistency with the items of organizational culture. Calculation and statistical techniques are performed via SPSS (19) – Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

3.5. Descriptives
3.5.1. Trend, based on average values
The highest and the lowest average value of the leadership items are shown on Table 2. This scores illustrate that majority of responds have stated high importance of items referring to Contingency reward. The lowest scores are committed to LF.

Table 2. Highest and lowest average item values

Item	Mean
L1 – helping subordinates if they put an effort (CR)	4,6552
L5 – avoid major problem solving (LF)	1,7586
L7 – I am busy when team needs me (LF)	1,9483
L12 – wait till things worsen to interfere (MEp)	1,6034
L19 – individual approach (IC)	4,3448
L20 – show that problems needs to get permanent to react (MEp)	1,5690
L21 – gains subordinates' trust (IIa)	4,4655
L28 – avoid decision making process (LF)	1,3793
L33 – postpone urgent matters (LF)	1,7759
L35 – provide positive feedback upon met expectations (CR)	4,5690

Source: own research results.

In terms of aggregated values - depicted on Table 3, the highest scores are attached to CR, which could be interpret like this, the respondents value CR above all, which is a bit inconsistent with the theoretical model. Individual consideration and Inspiring motivation are also high valued variables with more respect than in the theoretical model.

Table 3. Average variable values

Item	Mean
CR – Contingency reward	17,31
IC - Individual consideration	16,67
IM – Inspiring motivation	16,22
IIb – Idealized influence (behavioral)	16
IS – Intellectual stimulation	15,68
IIa – Idealized influence (attributive)	15,47
MEa – Management by exceptions (active)	12,67
MEp – Management by exceptions (passive)	9,12
LF – Laissez - Faire	6,86

Source: own research results.

3.5.2. Normality
Widely popular way to assess normality is to run Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Unfortunately, in this case it is not that appropriate due to the small sample size. Skewness and kurtosis are engaged instead. With respect the normal distribution indices of acceptable limits of ± 2 are considered as adequate (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006; Field, 2000 & 2009; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2014). On Table 4 are depicted items that deviate from this acceptable limits. Kurtosis indexes definitely indicates non-normal distribution, thus further manipulation would be grounded in non-parametrical techniques, since assumptions for parametrical methods could be violated.

Table 4. 5X Items exceeding ± 2 of skewness and kurtosis

Item	Skewness	Kurtosis
L4 – focus on mistakes (MEa)	1,11594	2,305
L8 – looking for diverse perceptions in problem solving (IS)	1,05562	4,498
L11 – clarify who is responsible for what (CR)	1,01412	5,362
L12 – wait till things worsen to interfere (MEp)	,72402	2,372
L16 – articulate the expected stimuli for achieving the goal (CR)	1,18176	2,411
L19 – individual approach (IC)	1,05218	6,741
L21 – gains subordinates' trust (IIa)	,90254	10,118
L28 – avoid decision making process (LF)	,76840	3,608
L34 – underline the importance of common mission understanding (IIb)	,93400	4,377
L36 – articulate confidence for goal achievement (IM)	,77096	5,269

Source: own research results.

3.5.3. Measures
Leadership scores are gained via well-established instrument – Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (5X form). In the current study the Cronbach alpha coefficient for Transformational leadership is .737. According to Pallant (2005) value above .7 can be considered reliable with the sample.

Cronbach alpha coefficient for Transactional leadership is .497. In this case Cronbach alpha coefficient is low. Thus, Corrected Item-Total Correlation is calculated to give an indication of the degree to which item correlates with the total score. The results are shown on Table 5.

Table 5. Item-Total Statistics for Transactional leadership variables

Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Contingency reward	,191	,505
Management by exceptions (active)	,271	,455
Management by exceptions (passive)	,474	,249
Laissez - Faire	,252	,459

Source: own research results.

Low values of Corrected Item-Total Correlation, less than .3 indicate that the variable is measuring something different from the scale as a whole (Pallant, 2005.). The lowest value on Corrected Item-Total Correlation is CR value. This finding is consistent with trend based on average values which states highest preference on CR, as if it were a part of the Transformational continuum. The only one Corrected Item-Total Correlation (above .3) is attached to MEp. Thus, this sub construct depicts the nature of the scale. For the luck of constancy between sub constructs and the scale, future manipulation for relationship would be done by sub constructs.

3.6. Relationship (correlation)

The notion of existence of close connection between leadership and organizational culture is very popular and explored. With respect to organizational culture, transformational leaders firstly understand culture, secondly align it with the new vision along with revision of commonly accepted values and norms. Transactional leader works within existing culture, with no attempts to change it (Pencheva, 2018.). For better understanding of leadership, a relationship between leadership sub constructs and organizational culture dimensions both values and practices is explored.

As it was mentioned in the previous paragraph, non-parametric techniques will be used to explore the relationship between leadership sub constructs and organizational culture dimensions. They do not have strict requirements and assumptions for population distribution. What is more, they could be useful for small samples. Spearman Rank Order Correlation is employed here. The results are shown on Table 6.

Table 6. Spearman Rank Order Correlation between Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire dimensions and cultural dimensions

	IIa	IIb	IM	IS	PC	CR	MEa	MEp	LF
I	,063	,443**	,241	,423*	,297*	,468**	,081	,018	-,001
PD	,160	,016	,083	-,147	-,079	,061	-,146	-,006	-,074
M	,159	,613**	,348**	,330*	,307*	,535**	,295*	,292**	,124
UA	-,086	,147	,315*	,235	,132	,093	,070	-,073	,057
FO	,123	,344**	,081	,324*	,379**	,451**	,254	,133	-,092
Competitive-ness	-,007	,016	,074	,095	,103	,224	-,092	-,199	-,057
Social Responsibility	,120	,534**	,336*	,452**	,309*	,558**	,116	,095	-,075
Supportive ness	,143	,012	,042	-,003	-,074	-,086	-,052	-,040	-,081
Innovation	,101	,136	,218	,076	,228	,033	,019	,037	-,011
Rewards	,173	,107	,057	,068	-,133	,042	,028	-,006	,149
Performance	,119	,128	,064	,138	-,044	,068	,128	-,062	,013
Stability	,085	-,010	,018	-,119	-,138	-,117	-,108	-,076	,233

Source: own research results.

Contingency reward and Idealized influence (behavioral) are the leadership sub constructs with strong relationship with cultural dimensions. From the values perspective, Masculinity dimension is in relationship with almost each of leadership sub dimensions (except IIa and LF). From the organizational culture practices perspective, Social responsibility dimension is in relationship with IIb, IM, IS, PC and CR.

4. Conclusions and implications

Even though the small sample size impose limitations on the data manipulation, some conclusions could be drown out. Firstly, Transactional leadership should be explored deeper, with respect to the inconsistences found. Contingency reward is sub construct which does not fit Transactional leadership as the theoretical model postulates. CR is either recognized as important and desired, or it does not fit the scale. It is an issue for further exploration.

Secondly, the relationship between Transformational leadership and values poses some remarks. Idealized influence (behavioral) is in close relationship with the values dimensions. Surprisingly, Power distance and Uncertainty avoidance are non-correlated dimensions. With PD, it could be interpret as follows: the firs line managers accept huge PD (see Organizational Culture – Values and Practices, Evidence from Manufacturing Industry in Northeastern Bulgaria in this Proceedings), but they are not willing to take advantage of it, i.e. they prefer not to be authoritarian bosses. Masculinity dimension is the values dimension mostly involved in relationship with the leadership sub constructs. It is also an issue for further exploration. From the point of view of practices dimension, Social responsibility is the dimension related to 5 leadership sub constructs. It could be suggested those firs line managers perceive people orientation. It also raises questions for further investigation.

Acknowledgments

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