Charisma of Safety in Maritime

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Abstract

In most of maritime companies, safety requirements are wrongly perceived as mandatory obligations that must be obeyed and confirmed in order to avoid penalties, fines given by the port authorities or even ship's arrest. By contrary, maritime organizations striving for excellence perceive safety as a valuable asset that assures competitive advantage, and not as an obligation. How can we explain and size such difference of perception? We propose the new concept "charisma of safety" for answering the above. Studying charisma as leaders' quality emerged from 1920's when German sociologist Max Weber studied religious work of Rudolph Sohm, previously developed since 1892. Since then, definition of charisma and of charismatic authorities changed over time. Around 2000's charisma was focusing on emotional bonds between leaders and followers. Further, technological establishment of influential social networks advanced the perception over charisma, in line with changesets of people's core values. In the particular sector of maritime transport, safety incidents and conflicts occur when generations of seafarers unconsciously share traditional charisma (Weber's concept) while other generations of seafarers are expecting updated, emotional leadership behaviors (emotional bonds) in the same enclosed environment (the ship). While comparing the evolution of charisma perceptions and behaviors across generations, what remains a constant in the maritime is the necessity of keeping the safety standards at the highest level when operating ships. In such context, the authors introduce the concept of "charisma of safety" in the maritime, emphasizing the idea of a participative, innovative and exploratory approach for enhancing the safety culture and increasing the performance of safety drills.

Key words: ISM code, leadership, seafarers, ships, autonomous shipping
J.E.L. classification: J28, M14, M54, R41

1. Introduction

In case of persons, charisma was first defined by the German sociologist Max Weber as "certain quality of an individual's personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities." (Weber, 1922, 48).

Max Weber, alongside Karl Marx and Emile Durkheim are considered the "founding fathers of sociology" and Weber's text "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" was considered a founding text in sociology. (Crossman, 2020).

In the case of products, an Industrial Design teacher explored how the right expressions in a product contribute to its attractiveness or "charisma" (Gotzsch, 2002) and how products can transmit meaningful messages to users, for example, "by communicating status or by evoking personal memories" (Gotzsch et al, 2006).

The question raised within this paper is, beside products, whether intangible services, as the service of providing maritime safety on board vessel, can also be tracked for charisma.

2. Literature review

Max Weber also developed the leadership concept of charismatic authority and detailed the routinization of charisma into authority forms, emphasizing that traditional authority rests on "old rules and powers" and on their sanctity (Weber, 1978). In the biased maritime, the „old rules" still have an impact in the „old school's" generation, impacting the behaviour of the „younger generation" of maritime leaders striving for mentorship and coaching.

Opposed to the concept described by Webber is a modern concept of establishing emotional bonds between leaders and followers as further emphasized by contemporary researchers and reflected in the new generation of seafarers in certain zones of the maritime world.

According to Weber's definition of charismatic authority, "charisma is a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These as such are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader." (Weber, 1924/1947)

In 1978, D. Barnes delivered a cross-cultural and cross-time historical analysis in charisma and religious leadership, questioning the origins of charisma. He proposed a theory regarding charismatic leadership exploring social conditions leading to charisma emergence. His study was based on examination of biographical data for 15 religious founders recognized by historians as charismatic leaders and their successors from various periods of history and from different parts of the world (Barnes, 1978, pp. 1-18). Barnes also emphasized the distinction between charisma and charismatic leadership, noting that charisma is limited to a particular relationship of authority between leaders and followers, as Weber suggested previously. His theory had foundation on four basic assumptions stipulating connections between charisma as authority and other social and psychological variables:

1. charismatic leaders will perceive sacred symbols as subject to change or verification by their own personal experience with the divine;
2. leaders live during a social change periods or are members of a minority group;
3. leaders have an innovative set of teachings;
4. leaders can exist either within or outside of traditional religion context.

The findings of Barnes study indicate that „charisma is not an individualistic phenomenon hinging only on the extraordinary quality of a leader's personality. Rather, charisma stems from a complex of factors meeting in and around the same individual."

R. Khurana (2004) is one of the many researchers that observed the implications of charisma in the business environment, and in particular, a rise in hiring business leaders based on their charisma, not their skills, aiming to employ persons who can inspire trust and through their charisma push their employees to higher performance.

According to Lindholm C. (2013), the "entrance of charisma into the public vocabulary indicates a need for a word that can account for individual success within a system where status is achieved, not ascribed, but where the reasons for achievement are opaque", explaining the correlation between charisma and the set of updated values and principles, are reasons of drawing new sense to the "star quality" impact, instead of the societal action impact. Such values explain why politicians, sharing same ideologies, will receive different fame and mass recognition, "why one athlete is sought out to endorse products while another, equally talented, remains obscure; why one actor is a celebrity, another a journeyman; why one person lights up a room, another dims it". It is most the visual that counts, the image, no matter if authentic or not, instead of the action, ideologies, valuable principles or the impact of doing awarding things. Although such observation can be taken into account as an emerging trend, however, it cannot be generalized, if we consider

Lehmijoki-Gardner (2014) study on modern African American faith communities in Baltimore where „spiritually visionary leadership continues to be relevant religiously, socially, and politically", no matter the gender. We note that Corcoran and Wellman study made in 2016 on 12 American megachurches suggest the ordinary side of leadership continues to be perceived by attendees as part of the charisma.

Charismatic leaders do smile a lot and their smile was analyzed and explained in various studies, many of them delivered by multinational teams of experts. A small number of facial expressions, i.e. the smile, produced by the same basic affective states, are universally recognized throughout the cultures, while „other aspects of emotionally expressive behavior vary widely across culture", as resulted from an analysis of cultural display rules from 32 countries The study shows „historical heterogeneity is associated with norms favoring greater emotional expressivity" (Rychlowska et al, 2015).

Also relevant are the conclusions of three studies of delivered Stanford psychologist Jeanne Tsai et al (2016) examining whether leaders' smiles reflect cultural differences in ideal affect. The studies confirm the assumption that „cultures differ in the emotions they teach their members to value". Such findings are relevant for in-depth understanding on the way leaders can use simple visual gestures for enhanced communication and, further, how such findings can be applied and integrated in increasing safety culture on board vessel. Another interesting social aspect is observed in countries with lots of immigrants (as comparable to the case of multinational crew vessels) historically relying more on nonverbal communication as using the smile to bond socially (Khazan, 2017).

Beside smiling as natural resource of expressing empowerment, charismatic leaders are best in identifying other appropriate channels of for delivering their messages, effectively, to a large number of people. They encapsulate attention of the masses, while naturally avoiding alienation of communication (Steinbrecher, 2017).

An aspect that should be taken into account is that, similar to interpretation of smile, interpretation of eye contact may lead to ambiguities, which is not the case of charismatic leaders showing self-confidence. Depending on the context, eye contact might express communication openness, superiority or physical attraction while misinterpretation can lead to severe conflicts or unappropriated situations on board vessels.

3. Research methodology

Fundamentals for the „safety charisma" concept emerge from exploratory scientific literature review, observations and informal discussions made between 2018-2020 by the authors of the paper with Eastern European (Romanian, Bulgarian, Moldavian, Ukrainian) respondents from two categories: experienced professionals in navigation, of various age segments and recently graduated BSc in maritime engineering (Navigation, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering). It is acknowledged that an educational twist was manifested around 1990's, after the Eastern European countries have substituted the communist political regime with a democratic one. The change happened gradually, but with no delay, within Eastern maritime educational institutions, as the contact with Western universities, employers and suppliers has evolved. The transfer from state centralization to market-led decisional systems inside maritime universities came with mind-sets in process of updating to capitalism ideologies and new types of leadership, in cases still of traditional authority, while in other cases more emotional bonded. Teaching leadership or doing mentoring was not a new subject in the maritime of communism. Such concepts had been also taught in communism, in various forms but what brought a visible change was manifested by elasticity in Hofstede's power distance authority hierarchies' levels. In communism, the authority has been intangible by definition, an unsafe ground for the un-obedient. Creativity was kept under methodical control and censorship.

4. Research discussion

In the maritime, relationships between leader and followers is not uncommon to exceed hierarchies. In some cases, the informal leader might be other than the ship master. The follower hopes to attain a specific goal, a certain gain analogical to a transaction, either physical or psychological, by supporting the leader. The estimated goal might be the status gained within the enclosed space of the ship or possible a state of wellbeing so desired during the dull long voyages. Leader's charisma would enhance abstract values, perceived as highly precious within the multinational crew, where Maslow's belonging needs are at high challenge. In return, the leader either nurture accomplishment and self-fulfillment, eithers deploy the followers to gain more influence and power.

Traditionally, charismatic leaders would be associated either to religious worshiped characters (Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed), either to political "deities" moving masses of people during social revolutionary times of critical constraint or beyond (Hitler, Stalin, Lenin, Mussolini, Che Guevara, Kennedy). „Many if not most religions have been founded on the basis of charismatic authority" while charisma is „stemming from divine favor, spiritual possession, or any number of sources" (Cline, 2018). Charisma magnetism is not gender biased, both being associated either to visual attractiveness (Princess Diana) or to hierarchical authority and power (Queen Elizabeth II), either way, classic charisma of the few most charismatic icons had influential impact for mass of people. Until now. Accessibility to social online networks, especially during COVID 19 pandemics when the use of online ICT resources and tools exploded, enable for more regular citizens to become famous to large masses of people.

In-depth anthropological analysis reveals a switching mechanism from wide-known high-status magnetism confirmed over time within biographies of historical characters, to more recent charisma highlighted in ordinary public environments, appealing to common individuals mostly mediatized from the category of contemporary actors, sport stars, regional politicians). This situation reflects a transcending process of acknowledging charisma, from times when expressing leadership was dedicated only to the selected and the most-gifted instead of the common and ordinary. Selective leadership might be the result of periods when mass communication was based on the power of the unwritten word and mouth-to-mouth messaging, while few published materials where accessible to the most. In contemporaneity media communication has exponentially increased, enabling the access of more ordinary persons, gifted or not, to the edges of becoming visible for the mass. If charismatic leaders, passing the rigorous exam of time, deserve their mention within the pages of history books due to actions of high impact on the course of the society (adhering or not to the ethical principles of the period), we observe that, in contemporaneity, leadership charisma is more associated to an updated motivational system of people and less to the impact of leader's action within the society. A reversed set of values bring a reverse scale for fame and recognition. For example, the decreased value awarded to religious beliefs and decreased political engagement in citizenship would switch the attraction of young generations from charisma of religious leaders and politicians to charisma of famous actors, sport persons and influencers of all kinds, once with the raise of wide access to social networks, no matter nationalities, age or cultural background.

Once with experience through years of learning, many seafarers develop an intuition for safety issues, as cited across many safety critical industries including the military, clinical practice, emergency services, and aviation. This sense is developed over many years at sea, with more experienced officers and ratings often appearing to be able to spot emerging safety issues before they fully develop (Chubb, 2020, p.10)

5. Charisma of safety on board vessel (as ship service)

For understanding and exploring charisma of safety we have considered the nine dimensions of the safety culture presented by Ek et al (2000) pilot study testing a questionnaire constructed for measuring safety culture onboard Swedish passenger/cargo ship. The questionnaire was constructed as to determine whether the safety culture dimensions differ for deck/engine departments versus catering department; supervisors versus the supervised; women versus men;

different age groups and in groups with varying numbers of years onboard the ship. The study approached a number of nine dimensions of the safety culture, as listed below, out of which the first four dimensions were proposed by Reason (1997):

- reporting culture (existence of trust and commitment resulting in transparent and proper reporting of safety incidents);
- flexible culture (respect for individuals' skills and experience, with control and decision making transferred to the most experienced and knowledgeable person in an emergency case);
- just culture (clear lines between acceptable behaviour and the non-acceptable, with reasonable consequences after a reporting of a near-miss);
- learning culture (the desire and ability to learn about safety from experience; readiness to implement improvements);
- working conditions (time pressure, fatigue, work training, safety training, clarity in rules);
- safety related behavior (individual and organizational behaviors concerning priorities, responsibilities, risks taking, encouragement of orderliness and pressure to take short curs);
- attitudes towards safety (individual and organizational attitudes concerning the importance of safety, distribution of work and responsibilities, encouragement toward safety practices);
- communication (the amount and clarity of the communication between work groups and different levels of the organization);
- risk perception (the individual's perception of risk and safety on board).

The definition of the safety culture used in the pilot study was the one proposed by the Health and Safety Commission in 1993: „The safety culture of an organisation is the product of individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies and patterns of behaviour that determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of, an organisation's health and safety management" (HMSO, 1993)

Safety culture is best measured „through a cross-referencing of methodologies involving case studies, comparative studies and psychometric surveys" (Cox and Flin, 1998)

Safety on board vessel is the visual identity of the Shipping Company. In 1957, the French philosopher R. Barthes suggested that images express a "meaning" beside their basic function. In 2002 researcher Jose Gotzsch from Grenoble École de Management, France has published the research paper discussing on "product charisma" and the attraction of consumers to buy products with designs transmitting emotions and expressions. So far, studies on charisma discovered and analyzed in services are not available, however, if compared to charisma of products, charisma of services should be also a mean of expressing information and meanings of the culture developed by the issuing entity. The concept of "charisma of safety" is defined as the state of expressing encouragement, responsibility and other non-visible meanings, all necessary when implementing safety procedures and safety culture on board vessel. The transmission of intangible, hidden meanings is delivered unconsciously, beside the basic perception. In the above definition safety should be continuously perceived as a service that is provided on board vessel, complementary to the service of transporting cargo or people. Is a service provided and delivered by the same crew, as encouraged and monitored by the shipping company. The rationale would imply that, in a shipping company where clear policies of safety management stand as fundamentals for growing a safety culture, such culture will be communicated and learned from the shore company to the vessel's environment. Safety culture is trained to seafarers and shore personnel, either formally in training sessions, workshops, external classes, either is perceived informally, through team-building activities or through the care and visible responsibility showed by the Designated Person Ashore (DPA) or other key contacts from the company. Further, a properly communicated and encourage safety culture from shore to ship, has the purpose to nurture a healthy place for developing professional and social bonds between the crew members, thus improving professional productivity and crew performance. A method of stimulating safety culture on board ship is by coaching maritime leaders for enabling positive and participative perception regarding safety. We

suggest maritime leaders expressing "charisma of safety" are expected to share the behavioral aspects necessary to transform the entire maritime organisation in an institution where safety is perceived as a valuable asset, assuring competitive advantage, not as an obligation. listed in Table no. 1 below. The table represents a useful tool for leaders wishing to pass through the transformational experience of becoming leaders with safety charisma. In the table we enlist nine behavioral aspects expected from safety leaders and two key questions for each behavioral aspect useful for mapping and assessing the transformational map for becoming a maritime leader sharing charisma pf safety.

Table no. 1 Behavioral aspects of maritime leaders sharing charisma of safety

No.	How does maritime leaders with charisma of safety behave?	Key questions for mapping transformational roadmap
1	Establish and share a mission of safety and clear safety goals	• What is our company's mission of safety? • What are our company's safety goals?
2	Are responsible to educate seafarers on the company's safety goals	• How can I educate seafarers with the company's safety goals? • How can I manage the levels of my responsibility?
3	Raise awareness about the safety mission	• How can I raise awareness about the company's safety mission? • How effectively did I raised the awareness about the safety mission [*during x-y period of time*]
4	Motivate seafarers (followers) to assume and enjoy safety	• How can I assume and enjoy safety? • How can I motivate seafarers to assume and enjoy safety?
5	Increase safety commitment	• What safety commitment is in the context of my company? • How can I increase the safety commitment?
6	Work together with other leaders and seafarers for the accomplishment of joint safety goals	• Which are the joint safety goals (shared/ common with other leaders)? • With what other leaders should I work together?
7	Identifies new opportunities to improve safety	• Which are the new opportunities to improve safety? • How can I identify new opportunities for safety improvement?
8	Focus on safety continuous improvement	• How can I manage (plan, organize, coordinate, motivate and assess) the continuous improvement of safety? • What resources are needed for continuous improvement of safety?
9	Accepts responsibility for safety incidents and makes sure it never happens again	• Why did the safety incident happen? • How should I proceed to make sure the incident will never happen again?

Source: (Authors' study)

Besides the usual features of "classic" leaders (e.g. identifying and sharing the mission and the goals with their followers) in the case of maritime leaders with "charisma of safety", most notably would be the multiplicative result of training safety charisma to other seafarers that are expected to become, in their turn, safety ambassadors. Especially, the concept is to be applied in case of safety drills where crew participants should be encouraged by the drill coordinator and the safety officer. Crew participating to the drill should be stimulated to deliver their own analyze of the drill performance and to propose innovation for drill's performance increase.

6. The place of charisma in the age of autonomous maritime operations

A maritime autonomous surface ship is defined by the International Maritime Organization as „a ship which, to a varying degree, can operate independent of human interaction" (IMO, 2018), meaning the vessel can provide 100% remote operations or less. Leadership knowledge, understanding and proficiencies required now in one of the most relevant international regulation for safety in the maritime, the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping 1978, as amended (STCW 1978), may change in the context of accelerated

advancement of automated operation of ships. Several studies were published on the topic of legislation changes occurred by the autonomous maritime operations, remotely controlled and operated, e.g. challenges of regulating autonomous ships (Ringbom, 2019) and perspectives of automation impacting employment (WMU and ITF, 2019). A recent Delphi-Analytic Hierarchy Process study on leadership STCW competences in future ship operations indicate that STCW legislation has to be updated, as well as the maritime education and training. „Leadership remains an essential ingredient for future ship operations under both unmanned and manned" ships, while „knowledge of shipboard personnel management and training and (…) ability to apply effective resource management, (...) except the ability to obtain and maintain situation awareness, were deem no longer relevant and important for remote control operators". Further, „the results revealed that the knowledge and ability to apply decision-making techniques (…) to acquire, handle and comprehend large amount of system information, and (..) to obtain and maintain situation awareness could be the main determinants for safe and efficient operation of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (Kim and Mallam, 2020, p.172, 179).

So, where will be the place of "charisma of safety" in such context?

As previously mentioned in the definition of the concept, "charisma of safety" has fundamentals in the safety culture which appears, grows and is develops, as a foundation, at the headquarters of the shipping company, being further transmitted, communicated, trained and educated to the ship's crew. In the case of unmanned ships, safety culture and "charisma of safety" remains locally, at the place where it has emerged: the headquarters of the shipping company. Therefore, not only that is still room for charisma of safety in the case of autonomous shipping, but in fact, the actual context of Industry 4.0 and beyond, empowers more the propagation of safety charisma at all stages of designing, delivering and improving the services of transport by the shipping company. Safety culture contribute in establishing patterns of the same routing and means of communication of the safety approach, between both employers and personnel, no matter if the object of work is based on remote control of vessels or classical navigation.

7. Conclusions

This paper had the purpose of establishing diverse pathways for the understanding and enhancement of safety culture on board vessel. Authors consider that not only persons and products have charisma, but also intangible services, as the service of providing safety on board vessel. In the first part of the paper is described and analyzed theoretically the charismatic leader's characteristics, emphasizing the role of the smile and other facial expressions for enhanced communication. Further, based on the research methodology, is presented an exploratory study on developing charisma of safety on board vessels. In the last part of the paper was discussed the necessity of promoting charisma of safety in the context of autonomous shipping, the actual context of Industry 4.0 encouraging, in fact, the on-shore development and propagation of safety charisma at all stages of creating the services of transport. Further analysis is necessary to validate the proposed concept of "charisma of safety" on board vessel.

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