# The Role of the Leader and the Manager in the Organizational Changes

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**Abstract**

*The COVID-19 pandemic has generated a series of changes in society so that we can say that this context generates a turning point in terms of management, leadership and concept of organizational culture.*

*Our main goal is to determine the best way to generate changes in the organizational culture of an entity in order to increase performance indicators.*

*In this regard, we defined the main working concepts, realized a logical model of the management system and highlighted the relational and informational links of different management levels. Moreover, we addressed the issue of the impact of management on human resources and finaly over specific activities for managing the change of organizational culture.*

*The nature of this paper is explorative and theoretical using rational deductive approach, aiming at providing a bibliographical tool for further research.*

## 1. Introduction

Within an organization, all levels of leadership (formal/informal leaders or top/middle/entry level management) can affect culture. The confusion that leadership and management are the same concept can sometimes lead to organizational dysfunctions. The management function is a more specific and stable one and has the role of planning, organizing and controlling the activities within the organization, while the leadership is more abstract. Its progressing and generates movement (Kotter, 1990). So we can say that all managers are leaders and vice versa (not all leaders are managers). Given that there are differences between the two, their impact on organizational culture can be just as strong.

Given the dynamic nature of the global economy; the inability to predict aspects that have a direct impact on the organization (such as the pandemic generated by the new Coronavirus), and the need for the organization to thrive in a volatile socio-economic context, leadership must be characterized by adaptability and emotional control. Therefore, the leadership style that will be approached must be of the adaptive type characterized by the separation of the technical aspects that imply the application of authority over the aspects related to the adaptation to the environment and situation. This type of approach has been taken, according to Heifetz et al. (2009) from the theory of biological evolutionism following three basic aspects:
  • preserves the essential aspects in the survival of the species;
  • eliminates the aspects that are no longer necessary or are outdated;
  • changes the structure by adapting to current needs.
Defining and understanding the notions of leadership and management is vital for determining roles within organizations.

## 2. Theoretical background

While the manager has the role of generating progress by organizing and using the resources at his disposal, leadership is meant to provide vision and motivation to staff, so as to lead to the expected progress. Management uses as a tool to achieve objectives the functions of planning, organization, monitoring and control, as well as human and budgetary resources, while leaders use less tangible tools such as communication skills, collaboration, motivation, so "soft" skills.

The two responsibilities must coexist in an organizational system to generate performance, the dissection of the two independently can create the premises of erroneous conclusions from reality.

If we talk about an organization in which leadership defines the lead without having developed a coherent management system we can say that idealism dominates that organization, and reality can be considered a constant in terms of goals and directions set. Thus only the organizational direction and visions are defined without emphasizing the intended results. These types of organizations are characteristic of young companies that are led by inexperienced staff.

When management takes over the entire leading structure without the involvement of leadership, we can say that they are only interested in achieving the planned results, but without emphasizing the vision, motivation or development of staff. In this case, the organization is characterized by rigidity, lack of motivation and involvement of employees, and a state of collective dissatisfaction.

We conclude by saying that in an organization the roles must be well defined, and the managers-leaders ties must be closely developed to generate performance and to lead the organization in the desired direction.

Bratton et al. (2014) conclude that for a balance in the organization it`s necessary for informal leaders to motivate staff, to know and support the organizational strategy and coordinate the directions of action, as well as line managers who must know how to implement and to apply the directives received for achieving the objectives.

Adaptive leadership can be characterized by the ability to detect problems at an early stage, and the debate of any aspect of the organization is encouraged. However, the environment in which the organization develops and operates is characterized by volatility, so adaptation in terms of organizational culture must be made from the perspective of chaos theory (Lorenz, 1967).

The best known aspect of chaos theory is the butterfly effect (Lorenz, 1967). The author rhetorically wondered in his paper whether the movement of a butterfly's wings in Brazil could trigger a tornado in Texas. The teacher referred to the fact that small variations related to some indicators can generate amazing results. Thus, Obolensky (1994) presents five cases in which small changes in policies have been made, but these changes have generated remarkable results. On the other hand, Obolensky (2016) presents four concepts of chaos theory that can be applied in management activities as follows: attractors, universality, factual and bifurcations.

Also, Obolensky (2016) concludes that a minor change in the activity / behavior of the leader generates a disproportionate results. It starts from the idea of repeating the behavior of the leader within the organization, as well as from the theory of chaos.

Management can be defined as a system determined by diversity, relationships and complexity that with the help of hierarchical relationships uses the available resources to achieve the set objectives. Hierarchical relationships can be categorized from a structural point of view as follows: the level of top management, the functional level of management (management superior / middle) and the operational level of management (line / entry level). Within the hierarchical structure of the managerial system, both the decision-making process and the informational one are used, a relationship presented in figure no. 8.

The role of the top management team is to establish the main objectives and to draw the direction in which the organization is heading. It usually uses limited resources, but the results of the limited work of the team are of vital importance to the entire organization. They are responsible for anticipating the environment in which the organization operates and for taking measures to synchronize actions, so that the organization (as a whole) is correlated with the existing socio-political and economic-financial reality.

*Figure no. 1 – Graphic representation of the organizational management system*



Source: own processing
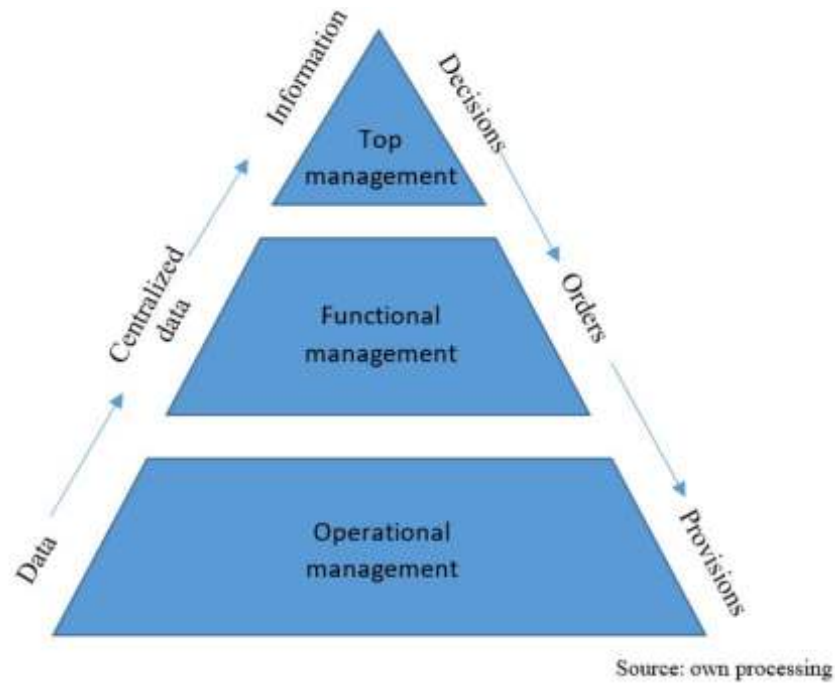
The top management team is supported in making decisions by the functional management level which is composed of decision-making, informational, methodological and organizational elements. Finally, the level of operational management has the role of using most of the resources using methods and tools in order to meet the objectives set by the higher echelons.

In order to be able to form an overview of the relations between the three levels of management and to easily visualize the valences (forms of manifestation) of the same roles with respect to different echelons, we made a synthesis of them and presented them in the table. no. 9.

Năstase (2004) defines the managerial culture as part of the organizational culture responsible for the managerial processes in accordance with the variants from the internal and external environment, aiming to achieve the established objectives. Nicolescu and Verboncu (2008) consider that this type of culture has valences in terms of values, beliefs, behaviors and expectations of managers of an entity, determining the characteristics of the type of management practiced and profoundly affecting the organizational culture and its results. According to Năstase (2004), the managerial culture has the role of monitoring the internal and external environment in order to achieve the necessary changes in the organization, encouraging and supporting the involvement of leadership in all areas of management and execution.

Among the main functions defined in the literature for managerial culture we can list:

- motivates managers at all levels in order to achieve performance and achieve organizational goals

- contributes to organizational modernization by implementing technologies in the activities carried out

- supports the strategic activity of organizational learning

- starts and leads the activities specific to the management of the change of the organizational culture in order to align the entity with the reality and the socio-economic actuality

The management principles considered by Nastase (2004) essential to lead the organization to performance are:

• the principle of concordance (keeping the organization aligned with the reality and socio-economic topicality)

• the principle of participation (involvement in the management activity of representatives from all organizational levels)

• the principle of motivation (use of sanctions and rewards so that the interests of all parties involved are met)

• the principle of effectiveness and efficiency (organizing the entity's activities so that they have economy and an increased impact on social aspects)

*Table no. 1 - Interdependence of managerial functions in relation to hierarchical levels*

| FUNCTIONAL MANAGEMENT | TOP MANAGEMENT | OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT |
|---|---|---|
| **DECISIONAL** | - performs an overall evaluation of the activity | - performs an operational evaluation for regulatory purposes |
| | - sets out directions for action based on long-term objectives | - sets out directions for action based on short-term objectives |
| | - implements long-term strategies and action plans | - performs planning and establishes short-term implementation measures |
| | - training / motivation role | - coordination role |
| **INFORMATIONAL** | role of information and communication of data | - role of data collection and synthesis |
| **ORGANIZATIONAL** | - general organization and establishment of the method of communication through synthesis and then reporting activities | - organization of operational activities through control and accounting activities |
| **METODOLOGIC** | - definește cadrul metodologic de desfășurare a activităților | - operaționalizează cadrul metodologic de desfășurare a activităților |

*Source:* own processing

In this context, it can be seen that the emphasis is on aligning the entity with the reality and socio-economic relevance through changes in organizational culture.

Ursachi (2001) concludes that the lack of knowledge of the principles and foundations of management by managers generates a series of strictly random events and marked by errors, such as learning as a result of their own events, being very costly.

Therefore, human capital plays a decisive role in terms of the quality of the managerial act, and in order to measure the level of quality, the literature uses the rate of return on human capital.

This rate has direct implications in the sphere of organizational culture and employee motivation (Niculescu, 2016). In this context, leadership plays a key role in the organization that wants to apply a knowledge-based management. Thus, the leadership will have to instill in the followers the desire for personal development and accumulation of new knowledge that will be beneficial to the organization in the future. Moreover, the role of these leaders will be complemented by the need to be involved in the activity of changing the organizational culture and implementing visions / objectives based on innovation or collective decision-making (Senge, 2006).

In the banking financial sector, Niculescu (2016) argues that there is a need to change management style by adopting specific measures to increase transparency, but also flexibility and innovation to determine changes in attitudes and behaviors among staff on the basis of their motivation. Thus, it is recommended to be aware of the need to adapt management to the specifics and variations of the economic market and the socio-political context, to develop a performance-based organizational culture, to align management with the fundamental values and principles of promoted culture and to develop innovation as an organizational culture. Therefore, we want a series of activities based on knowledge-based management and more precisely the accumulation, development and transfer of information.

In this context, Hamel (2012) states that leaders will be responsible by creating the necessary framework that will generate innovation, value, passion, adaptability and last but not least will inspire the ideology of the organization. Given the regulatory framework of financial-banking activities as well as the strong male context generated by them, Hamel (2012) concludes that it is not necessary to enrich the skills of employees, but only a readjustment of their activities. In the absence of an accountability system, innovative capacity can be decisively affected. Thus, when an

atypical, out-of-the-ordinary situation occurs, staff may be driven by emotional reactions, such as resistance to change, fear of the unknown, denial, passivity, and so on.

The speed of development and modernization of all branches that impact the banking financial sphere undoubtedly leads to the need to adapt the organizational culture of entities, as well as the adoption of organizational measures of resilience in case of shocks or unforeseen situations, as well as continuous adaptation. To achieve this goal the only possibility is to make profound changes and develop knowledge-based management.

## 3. Research methodology

In order to achieve our research goals we will use the deductive method as well as the inductive one by approaching the organizational culture both from the perspective of the dependent variable and from the perspective of the independent variable. The study was approached using the rational research method (positivist approach), this being corroborated and affected by some constructivist approaches in order to impregnate the scientific approach the note of adaptability necessary for both the specifics of the organization and the socio-political context in the economy.

## 4. Findings

Understanding the relationship between leadership style and organizational culture becomes paramount in creating change within the organization. Change will lead to employees being willing to do what they are asked to do, rather than do it because they are asked to (Armandi et al., 2003).

The relationship between leadership and organizational culture has been studied in public and private organizations (Block (2003), Kest (2007), Walsh (2004)). The number of studies has increased and expanded to include other organizational interests, namely change and development. While leadership can influence organizational culture, organizational culture can also influence leadership behavior (Karahanna, Evaristo & Srite, 2005). Although there are many debates about the most effective type of leadership, creating change in the organizational sphere requires a change in organizational culture (Lakomski, 2001).

Many studies have shown a direct correlation between transformational leadership and organizational culture. DeBerry's (2010) work aimed to study the impact of changing the leadership style from the transactional to the transformational style or to adopt a mixed / combined style to facilitate a change in the existing organizational culture. The result determined the existence of a relationship between transformational leadership and human resource traits regarding the degree of involvement, consistency, adaptability and focus on the mission.

Bass (1999) defines two dimensions of transformational leadership, namely active exception management (MBEA) and passive exceptional management (MBEP). The first dimension refers to the fact that the leader takes measures in order to prevent the occurrence of mistakes and helps the staff in case of difficulties, while MBEP approaches the problem reactive in the sense that the leader reacts to the occurrence of mistakes and the employees are held accountable for those.

Transformational leadership determines a high positive correlation with effectiveness, extra effort and satisfaction. The contingent reward of transactional leadership had a high positive correlation, while active exception management had a low positive correlation and passive exception management had a negative correlation, thus demonstrating that transactional leadership generates lower results (Bass, 1985).

Some organizational environments are more conducive to a pure transformative atmosphere (Bass, 1985). "Leaders need to do more than manage their day-to-day activities. Leaders need to provide guidance that encourages employees to focus more on the issues and difficulties they face, to approach issues in an innovative style, and to demonstrate a spirit of sacrifice for the good of the team and the company" (Bennett, 2009, p. 2). At present, leaders need to adopt transactional techniques with a transformative mood, creating a mixed leadership behavior.

"Culture affects leadership, but so does leadership affect culture" (Bass and Avolio, 1993, p. 113). If the organization has a strong negative culture, then it can be very difficult for the leader to make essential changes that could lead the organization in a more positive direction (Lakomski, 2001). Also, the wrong leadership style can be an impediment to the necessary change in

organizational culture (Bakotic, 2008). There are different dimensions (physiological, social and behavioral) related to organizational culture that should be taken into account when seeking to align culture with the goals and direction of the organization. Each dimension affects the organizational culture individually, but concurrently.

McLaurin and Al Amri (2008, p. 18) noted that "transformational leadership can be described as complementary to the effectiveness of transactional leadership and a substitute for it". Therefore, the two types of leadership should not be viewed from the perspective of mutual exclusion. The strengths of both types of leadership can be used to produce beneficial effects for the organization.

Kest's (2007) study concluded that a transformational leadership style leads to better outcomes in terms of employee effectiveness, satisfaction, and extra effort.

Can there be gender qualities associated with transformational leadership? Mathis (2007) suggested that transformational leadership is a feminine style of leadership. She argued that "unlike more masculine forms of leadership (which emphasize tasks and efficiency), transformational style emphasizes feminine characteristics, such as relational knowledge, problem solving, and influence" (Mathis, 2007, p. 200). The film "The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Fraternity" is used to explore the gender leadership role. The story "presents an example of unceasing support, trust, respect, loyalty, charisma, inspiration, stimulation and consideration that define women as leaders in both their personal and professional spheres" (Mathis, 2007, p. 200). The article presents the feminine characteristics of women leaders and links them to transformational leadership.

Tremaine (2000) followed in the article the study of the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership regarding the gender affiliation of the leader in the context of Burns' (1978) theory.

In this study, ten women in charge of City Halls were interviewed about their motivation, perception of the job and the differences between the leadership style of men and women. The results of the study showed that women invested in the position of mayor are successful, because the approached leadership tends more towards transformational than towards transactional. According to Mathis (2007), "Burns believes that women in comparison with men are more likely to adopt a transformational leadership style because they tend to see themselves as representatives of the group they lead and not independent of it". (p. 246).

Studies on transformational leadership generally have a positive impact on employee performance, job satisfaction, attitude and behavior (eg Armandi et al. (2003), Bromley and Kirschiner-Bromley (2007) and Shivers-Blackwell (2004)). Transformational leadership is presented as having several advantages, among which we can list: motivation, inspiration, charisma, promoting goals, generating change and empowerment. Tucker and Russell (2004) identified a number of potential dangers and abuses that the application of transformational leadership can generate. The authors highlighted two types of factors in this regard as follows: personal factors and organizational factors. Personal factors include: lack of integrity on the part of leaders, they may rely on deceptive, manipulative methods to influence followers; power becomes dangerous if leaders focus only on themselves rather than motivating their staff and gaining more followers, but also the obvious dangers of pride and selfishness. Organizational factors include: perpetuating conflicting relationships among people by abusively using power to their advantage and allowing bureaucracy to manipulate people to gain power.

The multitude of research on transformational leadership from the political sphere to various private organizations, non-profit organizations and governmental organizations is based on the study of Burns (1978). This type of leadership has been examined in parallel with: aspects of organizational culture (Block, 2003); best practice of 360-degree feedback (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2006); Total quality management (Rago, 1996); governmental organizations (Trottier et al., 2008) and also the gender affiliation of leaders (Mathis, 2007; Tremaine, 2000). Pearce et al. (2003) conducted an exploratory study that extends the transactional-transformational model of leadership by developing four theoretical types of leadership. The study used a historical analysis of the literature regarding leadership and identified four behavioral types: directive, transactional, transformational, and delegation.

The research was built on different theories (X Theory, Initiation Structure Theory, Expectation Theory, Path-Objective Theory, Charismatic Theory and Social Cognitive Theory) which led to the following types of behavior-based leadership:

1. Directive leadership - (excerpt from theory X, initiation structure and task-oriented behavior). Leadership is based primarily on the position of power. It includes "direction, command, assigned objectives, intimidation, and rebuke as the main mechanisms for influencing the behavior of subordinates" (Pearce et al., 2003, p. 275).

2. Transactional leadership - (extract from the theory of expectations, the theory of the path-objective, the theory of consolidation and the theory of exchange / equity). Leadership expects rewards as a result of performance. It is "focused on developing the effort-reward relationship using reward systems to achieve maximum motivation" (Pearce et al., 2003, p. 279).

3. Transformational Leadership - (extracted from the sociology of charisma and charismatic theory. Leadership focuses on transforming the motivational state of followers into higher level needs. "Leader behavior included in the transformational leadership model defined by Bass: conveying a sense of mission; delegation authority, training, coaching and focusing on problem solving through the use of reasoning "(Pearce et al., 2003 p. 281).

4. Empowering Leadership - (excerpt from behavioral self-management, social cognitive theory, cognitive behavior change and research to establish participatory goals). Leadership "emphasizes the development of followers' self-management or self-leadership skills" (Pearce et al., 2003, p. 282).

In developing a comprehensive understanding of leadership, it is important to address a comprehensive view of how leadership theories have progressed. Pearce et al. (2007) argue that "one of the major problems in the study of leadership is the existence of the tendency to abandon previous theories in order to introduce a new way of thinking" (p. 283).

## 5. Conclusions

The current pandemic context corroborated with the evolutions from the socio-political and economic-financial spectrum at global level, the organizations are forced to reanalyze their management and the activity carried out by the leaders within the entities, as well as all the characteristics of the promoted organizational culture. Thus, the need to determine the concordance of the three major spheres of influence with reality is realized, and the increase of organizational sustainability and the generation of performance among staff can be achieved by correlating them.

The adoption of organizational measures of resilience in case of shocks or unforeseen situations, as well as of continuous adaptation can be achieved through a series of profound organizational changes and the development of knowledge-based management.

Regarding that human capital plays a decisive role in terms of the quality of the management act but also of the results of the entity as part of the operational sphere, the managers - leaders links should be closely developed to generate performance and to lead the organization in the desired direction.

Currently, the literature considers that leaders need to adopt transactional techniques with a transformative mood, creating a mixed leadership behavior. Aspects of transformational leadership (a feminine style of leadership) lead to better results in terms of efficiency, satisfaction and extra effort of employees.

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