

THE MANAGER'S ROLE IN POLISH AND LIBYAN COMPANIES

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Abstract:

The issues of managerial roles in the management process constitute for one of the main research problems of management and organizational science. The manager is the element of company structure, who is responsible for an exceptional mission the realization of which determines effectiveness of the entire company. The aim of this paper is to analyse managerial roles in the selected small and medium-sized companies operating on the Polish and Libyan market. The analysis aims to indicate significant differences in the roles preferred by the managers. The study method, used in this publication is of both theoretical and practical character. Upon thorough content analysis the study attempts to systematize the professional literature concerning management, business administration, psychology of leadership, and the broadly defined organizational science. The practical nature of the publication corresponds to the conducted analysis of management roles in the selected Polish and Libyan companies.

Keywords: company management, management styles, types of managers, multiculturalism

1. INTRODUCTION

The issues of managerial roles in the management process constitute for one of the main research problems of management and organizational science. The manager is the element of company's structure responsible for an exceptional mission, the realization of which determines effectiveness of the entire company. The manager coordinates a number of management processes, such as: planning, organizational workflow, leadership, motivation, and monitoring the results of the subordinates. Insignificantly different roles of the manager may occur in various socio-economic conditions. More specifically, they may be dependent on a country's: culture, traditions, customs, religion, or even latitude and climate. Management roles may also be determined by: the type, profile and size of a business. Specialized literature presents a description of different management styles, and also describes in detail, individual managerial roles. Thus, the following questions should be asked. Do the described roles and styles occur in practice? Does their incidence depend on, e.g. the country's specifics, in which the company operates?

The aim of this paper was to: review management systems, present managers' classification, and consequently to verify the theoretical assumptions in certain examples. The study verifies whether the presented in the literature management styles are present in practice, and whether their occurrence depends on cultural conditions.

2. THE MANAGER IN THE COMPANY'S MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A company is referred to as: a system consisting of multiple components, linked to each other in a certain relationship (Czerminski, 1996, p 34). This fact is confirmed by many authors. Thus, according to the definition provided in the publication edited by Z. M. Szeloch: *organizational management system stands for an ordered set of instruments, rules and management procedures and the organizational management apparatus, which is associated with its environment through various relationships* (Gulski, 2000, p 145).

In contrast, B. Pelka believes that *a company is a system, which arrangement's is primarily based on the concept of functionally different part, which are mutually responsible for the success of the whole. Moreover, the success of the whole is a significant condition for the success of its parts.* (Pelka, 1996, p 9). The company is composed of three systems: organization, production and management. The last two subsystems however, can be defined as subsystems of the organizational system.

According to L. Krzyżanowski a company's management system is defined as: *highlighted set of elements, organized in a certain way* (Krzyżanowski, 1994, p 225). The management system is consequently associated with a structured and consistent set of tools, used for maintaining a functional balance of the company. The system affects adjustment and consistent functioning of such subsystems as: human resources, structure and technology.

2.1. Components of the company's management system

The management system is composed of a number of interconnected elements and components. L. Krzyżanowski distinguishes the following two classes of elements in the company's management system (Peszko, 2002, p 42):

- instruments, rules and procedures for the management, which are conceptual - referred to as intellectual components;
- managerial staff and its material - technical and technological equipment - referred to as real components.

Direct and indirect instruments can be listed within management instruments that affect the behaviour of other participants of the company. The former, directly affect behaviours of the people managed. The later however, focus on creating certain attitudes and values. Organizational behaviours of the participants are shaped by means of the indirect instruments. According to L. Krzyżanowski, direct instruments include dispositions and suggestions. Dispositions are categorical in nature. They relate to: legal, economic or technical norms, and are aimed at the execution of a specific command. Suggestions are less assertive, and their occurrence is not binding. These may include tips and recommendations. Indirect instruments can be divided to: political and ideological, socio-psychological and economic. The former refer to promotion of certain ideas and values - mainly emotional (e.g.

declarations, appeals), persuasive arguments. Socio-psychological instruments focus on shaping attitudes by using significant social and moral impulses. Economic instruments influence the behaviour of the company's members by shaping their businesses in the material background.

Rules of managerial systems consists of the principles for constructing plans and creating formal structure of a company. The former can be applied in both the long term and short term modifications of plans. They are developed in a number of multistage, subjective or objective schemes. The consequent rules refer mainly to deployment of decision-making powers, sales and maintenance, as well as the principles of horizontal and vertical division of labour and tasks.

Management procedures are divided into several types. Primarily, these include the procedures of decision making and optimization of management decisions. They focus on many areas including: planning, forecasting, research and marketing. As the name suggests, these decisions are made, in particular on higher levels of an organizational hierarchy. Subsequent procedures are of technological and technical nature. These relate to the design of structures involved in the implementation of innovative solutions and problem solving. Organizational procedures are published as labour regulations, instructions and business pragmatics. They enable efficient operation of the company. HR and payroll procedures apply to the evaluation and self-evaluation of the staff. They also correspond to finance related systems, such as wages, salaries and staffing. Other procedures that have not been precisely formulated, aim at elimination of conflicts and influencing the behaviour of the company's members.

Managerial stuff constitutes for another element of the company's management system. This set includes real and tangible objects. Managerial stuff is a kind of psycho-physical entity, which according to the developed norms, values and ideas, and in accordance with the competencies and skills, play a specific role in the company. This type of staff, implement specific tools in work that are often necessary to complete a certain task. The tools are defined as: managerial equipment (Bielski, 1997, p 68).

Management system, like any other system, is composed of several components (subsystems). The implementation of this highly complex management process requires a significant number of components that have been only indicated in this paper. L. Krzyzanowski distinguishes elements of company's management system, whereas B. Pelka treats the system as a set of subsystems. The subsystems include:

- the company's policy;
- development strategy of the company;
- management functions;
- management structure;
- management methods;
- management techniques;
- management style.

2.2. Manager as a component of the company's management system

For a long period of time, many theorists and practitioners have been looking for reasons of success of certain companies. The manager's importance in the company's development was also studied for this purpose (Kieżun, 1997, p 23). The manager is one of the most important components of the company's management system. It is a person responsible for smooth implementation of four functions of management.

R. Griffin believes that the manager is *someone who is primarily responsible for the implementation of management process. More specifically, a person, who plans and makes decisions, organizes and leads the people to control human, financial, material and information capital.* (Sudoł, 2007, p 37). Moreover, the manager is the person responsible for proper conduction of the activities of their subordinates. Which, in turn, allows to achieve the objectives of the company. The person should also be in charge of the tasks, impossible to be exercised by himself. He has the ability, or even the need to evaluate the results of his subordinates and to enforce improvement of inefficient work. (Walczak, 2010, p 46).

The lowest level of management, in which managers bear the responsibility for the work of other workers, is referred to as: the first level or the lowest level management. The managers of this level, control mainly the contractors' duties. A manager of the lowest level is never superior to another manager. The most common first-line managers may include: a foreman or department manager.

Middle management is responsible for maintaining more than just one level of management within the company. Mid-level managers primarily supervise the work of subordinate lower-level managers. In some circumstances, this type of management supervises the contractors. Their tasks include mainly: implementation of tasks aimed at effective introduction of the company's policy.

Top management is considered to be the smallest group of managers. This is because it is responsible for the company as a whole. Naturally, only a limited number of people can be granted power. As a rule, these people are called top managers. Their work is focused on determining the operational policy of the company.

B. Pelka defines foremen and masters as the most important in the hierarchy. To support his claim he refers to the following arguments:

- the analysis of the masters work in the high employment company showed the need of strengthening their role as supervisors and organizers of production. It also presented the need of further employment of permanent instructors, who would be responsible for implementing new ways of work;
- stabilization in the masters' group has been observed. They are treated as supervisors of subordinate manufacturing segments. They also care for the introduction of information and modern methods of production management;
- sufficient training of the masters, in modern management systems, should ensure the improvement of both the managers' and the workers' qualifications.

Managers and supervisors play many important roles for the functioning of the company. Thanks to their personality, skills and predispositions they are able to "get the company back on track". The importance of managers in the company's management system has always been significant, but it is still growing (Zimkiewicz, 1984, p 15).

3. MANAGEMENT ROLES

Today, very modern, advanced companies increasingly recognize that many leadership roles must be re-enacted not only by the traditional types of managers. Along with the growth in the level of competitiveness, companies seek ways to improve quality of products and the interest in their assortment. Therefore, the ordinary employees, who often specialize in one area, are required to extend their skills necessary for the company's development. The employees used to focus only on a strictly defined (often one) activity. Today, they are required to expand skills and increase their duties. Independent work, networking with customers and suppliers, allows to improve the company's efficiency and performance. This justifies the observation that versatility is essential for managers. A good manager is a versatile manager. More specifically in interpersonal relations (Zieleniewski, 1982, p 393). Every manager in any company, should be responsible for a specific role. The factors that affect determination of the manager's position in the organizational structure - all the tasks, skills and competencies, directly affect the determination of the role. It can be said the manager's role includes: shaping of all the skills, competencies and personality traits, which in effect create rules, standards or guidelines.

In his research, H. Mintzberg has made numerous observations on leadership roles. Due to his publications, the importance of managerial roles has been recognized. According to his observations, there are ten essential roles that can be assigned to certain groups. Each of them possesses authority over organizational units. Consequently, all this affects interpersonal communication necessary for the proper decision-making processes. The distinguished aspects of the manager's work affect the multiplicity of the roles performed.

Three basic roles of leadership can be enumerated (Griffin, p 52):

- interpersonal roles;
- informational roles;
- decisional roles.

The performance of an interpersonal role is primarily related to personal contact with both the employees of the company, as well as of the people outside the environment. The manager ensures that relations between him and his subordinates remain at the highest level. Of course, his duties also include ensuring, at least acceptable, relations between the staff. Thus, work atmosphere considerably facilitates cooperation. Because of good relations, the results of the company may be higher than expected. Logically, the manager should continually monitor and ensure positive atmosphere at work. Although, such actions may seem boring, they are certainly significant. Thus, it is immensely important that they are not overlooked in the daily routine of the manager.

The group of interpersonal roles mainly include the following three (Griffin, p 52):

- the figurehead role;
- the leader role;
- the liaison role.

The role of the figurehead has been linked with the necessity of being a representative of the company. The purpose of this type of manager is constantly taking care not only of their image, but above all, of the company's image. The person in this position, should represent the company in external environment. They have to take care of the image and be perceived in the best light. The figurehead is a showcase of the company. In order to achieve the above, the company has to primarily choose a communicative and open-minded candidate. Positive external image would be an additional asset. Some people insist on the belief that *clothes do not make the man*. However, during the first meeting, special attention is paid precisely to clothing and the overall appearance. To prevent unwanted situations, the manager-representative is prepared for this. In addition to the specialized training that help him to highlight the company, figurehead manager receives financial bonuses to purchase appropriate clothing. Besides the impeccable appearance and interpersonal skills, the figurehead should stand out in knowledge. As a showcase of the company he should be familiar with every conditions of work, activities, and projects taken by the company. The figurehead's role is immensely responsible. Therefore, not everyone is suitable for the position. Normally, the employees with many years of experience and expertise, extraordinary skills and high ambition are assigned to this job.

Another role is the leader of the group. A manager destined to take up the role bears significant responsibility. His tasks are primarily based on the management of a group of people. Leader is required to determine goals both for himself, and his group. In addition, he also controls the effects, monitors the manner and time, in which the above are achieved. He should also effectively motivate his team. Apart from the responsibilities mentioned above, some conflicts may arise in the group. The task of a leader is to ensure that such situations were rare. In case they occurred he should ensure they were solved as soon as possible. The leader and his employees create a group that must work together in order to achieve effects. However, final decisions should be made by the leader. He decides on the implementation of certain ideas and further actions. Despite of the support he receives from the group, in such circumstances the manager himself must make the final decision. Furthermore, the leader develops and prepares drafts for each member of the group. It is believed that, to some degree, each manager performs leadership roles. However, some of them are weak and limit their actions to coordination of the processes that had already started. Leadership means influence on employees that motivates them to achieve the objectives set by the leader, and create both social, and material work conditions.

The last of the interpersonal roles is the liaison. The manager in this position must be communicative and open-minded. His work is primarily based on establishing relationships with entities such as customers, suppliers, customers, government officials, bankers, etc. The liaison ensures that the relationships between the company and the environment are at a high level. Certainly, this will result in the signing of new contracts, agreements, upon which the functioning of the company depends. In addition to the duties associated with external environment, liaison cares about the appropriate flow of information and materials both externally and within the company. On behalf of the group, he communicates with other individuals, groups, boards of directors, etc. His position is related to the role of figurehead. But in this case he represents only his group. The role of the liaison is manifested primarily in coordination of interpersonal, intergroup, and inter-organizational relationships.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SELECTED POLISH AND LIBYAN COMPANIES

Comparative analysis included the selected four companies operating in the economic and social conditions in Poland and Libya. The presented companies operate in different markets and in different industries. The aim of this part of the study was to show the similarities and possible differences in business profile of the selected companies, in the context of the thesis's topic. It must be assumed that the characteristics of the functioning of Polish companies should strongly differ from the Libyan company. This is primarily determined by factors in the field of culture, religion, geography, customs, etc. However, one common denominator can be described, which is certainly the superior goal of business. This factor is of course profit. Regardless of socio-economic conditions, all companies operate in the free market. They also function in order to achieve competitive advantage over rivals. The immediate effect of these business processes is to achieve revenue advantage over costs. In other words: development of the profitability of business.

The aim of this study was to determine the frequency of implementation of leadership roles in Poland and Libya. This allowed to explore the nature of: management style, scope of responsibilities, competencies system and skills - expected of a manager in a specific socio-economic realities. The author has made an independent assessment of the frequency of the roles performed by managers, based on his own experience and observation. Substantive knowledge necessary to carry out this type of process was gained from professional literature. The chosen method was named observation. The role of observation in the company plays an important role. The main feature of this experiential method is primarily the immediacy (Frankfort-Nachmias, 2001, p 223). It allows to analyse the behaviour in process. In this circumstances, the researcher does not have to consult the examined people. On the basis of observations, he is able to draw conclusions. In the case of other research methods, some artificiality can occur, which will interfere with the course of the study. Controlled observation allows to describe the phenomenon, as it occurs in natural conditions, e.g. during work (Czakoń, 2011, p 13). The manager using this method, in the initial phase, should decide what is his area of exploration. The author of the following paper decided to investigate the incidence of various management roles in the work process.

The author designed a 4-point rating scale, which has been used to analyse the frequency of occurrence of individual management roles:

- 0 - absent
- 1-3 - low frequency
- 4-7 - moderate frequency
- 8-10 - high frequency

The frequency is determined according to the incidence of particular leadership roles in a one week test. Depending on the number of the observed behaviour the frequency was determined. A frequency of ten was determined the maximum amount, whereas no incidence was considered the minimum. Analysis of incidence of interpersonal, information and decision-making roles was presented in the following tables.

Table 1: Analysis of the incidence of interpersonal roles in the selected companies

Types of interpersonal roles	Libyan companies		Polish companies
	Serine	Alarad altiba	Techstal
Figurehead	2	2	10
Leader	8	10	8
Liaison	10	10	2

Source: own analysis.

The above results indicate that, especially in the case of Libyan businesses, it is important to establish direct contact with the client. The owners of these companies literally come out with their offers to the potential customers. One of the most important elements of the trade in the Serine shop and the analysed bakery was direct sales and positive relationships linking the customers with the sellers. This

is the way the overall image of the company and brand creation is achieved. Both in case of Polish and Libyan companies, the important role of the manager in the process of motivating and leading a team was recognized. In case of the figurehead's role, the author recognizes importance of this managerial type, primarily in relation to Polish companies. This is where the owner directly represents the company outside the company, e.g. in dealing with the public administration, investors, etc. Consequently, all members of Libyan companies are responsible for building its brand outside the company. The liaison's role seems to be more characteristic for the Libyan companies. In case of Polish managers, most companies preferred the role of figurehead. It should also be emphasized that the interpersonal roles are more likely to be found in Libyan companies. The group leader was an integral element regardless of the performed activity and geographical location.

5. CONCLUSION

The key objective of this study was to analyse the roles of managers in the selected companies of small and medium-sized sector, operating on the Polish and Libyan market. For the purpose of the above process, four companies from different sectors were presented. The author aimed to analyse the representatives of commercial companies and production services. On the basis of the performed analysis, it has been noted that the roles described in the literature are present in practice. However, some differences in the roles preferred by managers in Libyan and Polish companies were also noticed. The nature of these differences, is primarily associated with the system of social, religious, geographical, economic and cultural factors. The factors determine certain role's incidence. Libyan managers more frequently perform interpersonal roles, perhaps due to the centuries-old tradition of direct contact between the seller and the customer. Polish managers, who operate in the formal organizational structures, prefer decision-making roles. The results of the analysis confirmed multivariate differences not only in the management of the company, but also in the general, social context. However, it should be noticed, that regardless of geographic location the tasks of managers are similar and come down to the most efficient possible use of scarce resources. The tasks are implemented in order to achieve the highest level of benefits (profits) and market share.

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