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MANAGER'S LEADERSHIP STYLE IN A SLOVENE LOGISTIC COMPANY

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Abstract:
In this paper we discuss about the leadership as a process in which the leader influences on his/her subordinates and carries out his/her objectives. The main holders of leading are leaders who play an important role in the company. A good leader knows how to listen to their subordinates, he/she can listen to their suggestions and ideas, and is able to make sovereign decisions when needed. Leadership style is basically a way, in which leader influences subordinates in order to achieve the objectives in a given period of time. For successful leading, it is important that the leader knows his/her own style of leadership and is able to adapt it according to the situation in which he/she finds himself/herself, to subordinates, to the environment of work. The purpose of our paper is to determine (by using an empirical research) whether in the logistics company dominates the task-oriented or people-oriented leadership style. By the means of our survey we found out that the leaders in this company are more task-oriented.

Keywords: leadership, leadership style, manager, logistic company, task-oriented style, people oriented style

1. INTRODUCTION

It is important to know how to run a company successfully, otherwise it can lead to inefficient management of employees and consequently ineffective and inefficient functioning of the company. Leadeship covers the process of social influence, whereby an individual or a group intentionally exercise influence over other people or groups to develop business and relationships within the organization (Koren, 2014, p. 33). Leadership is largely dependent on a single leader, therefore, on his knowledge, competence, experience, skills, as well as his personality. In the theoretical part of the paper we define the fundamental theoretical concepts that are key to understanding the issues addressed; in the second, empirical part, we will present the results of a survey that was conducted among managers and other employees in the company. With the results we will explain what leadership style prevails on the logistics company

2. LEADERSHIP STYLES

2.1. Definition of leadership

Leadership is actually one of the fundamental functions of management - in addition to planning, organizing and controlling activities. Influencing the staff to achieve the goals is the main function of the leader. The role of managing is only one of many tasks performed by the leader. In the literature, there are many different definitions of leadership. What all they have in common is the idea of leadership as mere exertion of influence over others. The management in different industries or different organizations can be significantly differently conceived - in the public sector is different as in manufacturing companies. This is also one of the main reasons why we cannot find a universal definition of a leadership. Managers have the knowledge and skills that are necessary for decision-making. Straub (2012, p. 485) lists several dimensions of leadership as a function of management: *establishing the objectives of the company, the division of tasks and co-ordination, giving instructions to colleagues, attaiing these goals, supervising the tasks, selection, appraisal, rewaring employees.*
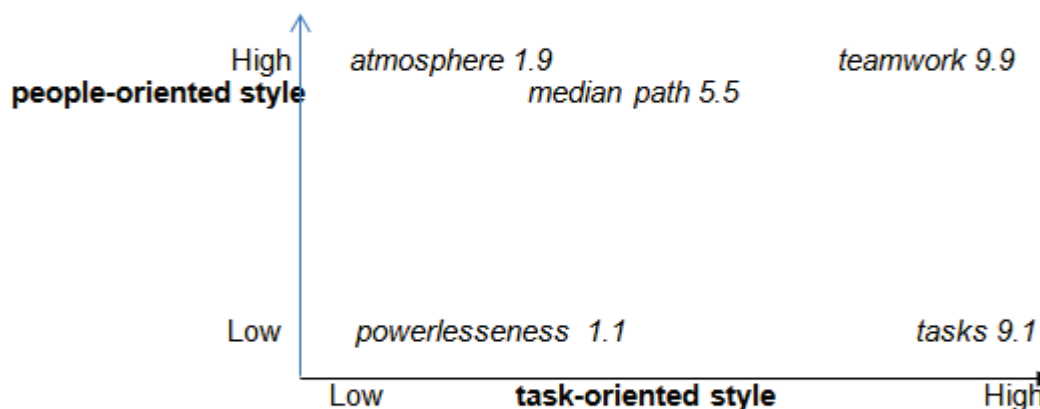
2.2. Leadership style

Leadership style is the way in which the leader exercises power and authority and the way he/she behaves towards members of the group. There are many factors that affect management style, particularly the philosophy of leadership situation, the nature of the tasks and characteristics of the control. Under the characteristics of the guidance are primarily understood beliefs, values, expectations, knowledge and work habits of guided workers. According to Everrarda and Morris (1996, p. 39) an important factor in influencing the management style is the amount of work experience. They believe that employees, who are at the beginning of their careers, (Phase 1) will be instructed by the leader in terms of what and how they should work. Later (Phase 2) employees search for a motivational behavior of the leaders, therefore their leader should explain his/her expectations. In the Phase 3 the employed people are only interested in feedback on their work, in the fourth Phase the employees should be sufficiently motivated for self-performing. Leadership style may be directed to the tasks or to the people. However, few leaders are focused entirely one-sided, so there are also combinations of both orientation to management. Otherwise, we distinguish further between autocratic and democratic style of leadership, management laissez-faire and many subtypes of these leadership styles (collaborative management, management consulting, Likert management model, ...).

2.3. Task-oriented and people- oriented leadership style

Leaders who are task-oriented are directed towards the achievement of results, success, efficiency and, of course, the related profits in the company. Such a leader presents colleagues clearly his/her views, he/she explains all the procedures, tells what the company expects of them as well as their position in the company. The errors are not tolerated, co-workers are punished for poor work. Leader who is people-oriented, is concerned for the welfare of employees and for good and orderly working conditions. All employees are treated equally, the leader tries to help as much as possible, he/she is tolerant to errors made by colleagues, he/she is attentive, respects the opinion of other staff and generally maintains friendly relations with them. The results are less important to him/her, which is in contradiction to the fundamental economic doctrine in the business - making profit. In practice, it rarely

happens that a leader of an organization is directed only to the tasks or to people. Mostly it comes to the combination of these two leadership styles. Figure 2.1 represents the management model, developed by Balek and Mouton, and refers to two dimensions of behavior, namely people or production (tasks) orientation. Each dimension has 9 stages, which gives us 81 different leadership styles. This model describes five different types of behavior (climate, teamwork, midway, helplessness, tasks). From Figure 2.1 it is seen that on the lower left side (1.1) there is low orientation to tasks. In this case the leader is not active, he/she is afraid to command, avoids responsibility, in short, is helpless and blames others for everything. In the upper left part of the figure (1.9) the leader is very people-oriented and very little to the tasks. The atmosphere in such a work team is a pleasant one, but does not necessarily lead to improved productivity. Such a leader is very popular, helpful, avoids conflict. Leadership, marked with a 9.1 means high orientation towards tasks and low to the people. Such a leader especially urges employees to achieve the set goals and ignores wishes and needs of employees. If his authority is provoked, he might become aggressive. 5.5 designation means the median path. Such a leader does not want any changes obeys regulations and is very conscientious. Mark 9.9 indicates a high orientation towards people and at the same time to the tasks - teamwork. Možina (2002, p. 521) states that the leader forms a team of employees who are connected to each other, have trust and cooperate in the implementation of tasks. The employees are involved in making business decisions. Work and interpersonal relations in such a style bring about good working results and at the same time the satisfaction of the employees in the company.

Picture 1*:* Model of Network Leadership

Source: Koren (2014)

Since almost both leadership styles are present, this theory tends to be imaginative and provides a concept for understanding the complexity of the management. In the literature there are a few approaches that connect the two styles; authoritive, worry about, passive / political, bureaucratic, motivating (Koren, 2014, p. 42-43). Reddin has specifically analyzed the styles of leadership, so we shall look in detail 3D model of leadership styles.

2.4. Reddin's 3D Leadership Theory

Reddin has developed a theory of 3D, which is particularly concerned with the effectiveness of management. It does not matter how much effort has been invested in the work of the leader, but what has been achieved. The 3D theory is based on a number of previous studies, which revealed two main elements in the behavior of leaders - orientation tasks and focus on the people. However, it can happen that sometimes prevails one element, once the other, but both on a small or large scale, therefore we get four basic styles of leadership. Reddin's theory consists of four leadership styles (Kovač, Mayer, Jesenko 2004, p. 44-45), namely *ethusiastic*, *integrating* style, *restrained* style, *agile* style. We want to present the main characteristics of leaders corresponding the above-mentioned styles (Nemec, 2005, p. 159-160). The leader is primarily people-oriented, accepts staff just as they are, likes talking to colleagues and encourages others to speak. He/she is suitable for conducting professional works, which are dominated by professional standards, he/she is afraid of conflicts with

colleagues, co-workers are punished by ignoring them. Integrated leader is largely people- and tasks-oriented, often calls for meetings, is focused on the future, emphasizes teamwork and behaves to the subordinates equally. Reserved leader is, to a lesser extent, people- and tasks-oriented; he/she is oriented to writing instruction. Being less communicative, he/she is more suitable for accounting and administrative work. He/she underestimates the needs for innovation. Diligent leader is mainly tasks-oriented. He/she is suitable for production and sales management. His/her behavior is dominating, in conflicts he/she asserts his views, believes that punishment is the best way to prevent employees' malfunction.

3. ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP STYLE IN A COMPANY

3.1. Short introduction of the logistic company

Orbico Group is the leading distributor for a large number of quality goods - globally known brands ranging from beauty care products through food and non food products, technical and electrical appliances to pharmaceuticals, toys, textile, cigarettes as well as motor oil products. Such extensive and diversified range of brands and products portfolio demands high flexibility, openess to constant change, flexible organization and investing in people development and in brands. Its aim is to generate sustainable business growth and to create added value for our business partners and for brands in our portfolio. The customers are all relevant and renowned market participants ranging from large multinational chains, local retail chains to wholesale stores, drugstores, pharmacies, independent local traders, B2B entrepreneurs and specialized sales channels. Therefore, Orbico is a partner of choice who best meets the needs of its business partners with optimal mix of product offering, services, flexibility and local expertise. With a team of passionate professional experts Orbico offers complete and comprehensive business solutions for sales, logistics services, marketing and brand management for brands in our portfolio.

3.2. Analysis of data and research methodology

After preparing the questionnaires, we decided to divide the sample into two groups (leaderers and other employees) and for each group we prepared their own questionnaire. Due to space limitations we only commented on the answers of the last question, where leaders and employees were asked tomark the degree of agreement with argument (on a 5-point Likert scale). This part was (due to a clearer determination of leadership style and transparent interpretation of results) further divided into two parts, namely, the first 10 claims relating to the leadership style, tasks-oriented, the other 10 of leadership style, people-oriented. The respondents were ignorant of the aim in advance, because we wanted to avoid that respondents may be dishonest, give higher ratings to the arguments, specific for people-oriented style, for example. The questionnaires were completely personalized because we wanted to know how the leaders and the employees personally assess the written arguments and not what the general opinion (just-this may be also subject to rumors) regarding the conduct and relations between managers and employees in the company may be.

Data were collected by means of an online survey. The questionnaire was developed on the basis of different questionnaires found in the literature. The questionnaires were distributed by e-mail. The most used measurement technique was five-grade Likert scale (1-strongly disagree; 5- strongly agree).

Statistical analysis was performed by using the tools of MS Office (MS Word and MS Excel) and SPSS. On the following pages we will look at the results of the survey and analyzed them. Due to space limitations we have only presented an analysis of answers to questions relating leadership style**.**

3.3. Analysis of the questionnaires – Leaders

We analyzed the responses of 11 leaders. The survey involved all managers, from the low – range managers to CEO. All of them have obtained university degrees and were aged from 35 - 50 years and male. In Tables 1 and 2 we presented mean values and standard deviations, which were calculated based on estimated claims regarding leadership styles in the company. In the first table the

allegations in our oppinion conform to the task-oriented style, in the second table, the arguments conform to the people-oriented style.

Table 1: Task-oriented style

Number	Claim	Mean	Standard deviation
1	I carefully organize my activities.	4,46	0,23
2	I clearly explain my views to my colleagues.	4,48	0,34
3	I clearly explain to my colleagues rules and procedures to be followed at their work	4,43	0,35
4	I carefully inspect if my colleagues perform their work on time in accordance with all the procedures.	4,01	0,23
5	I carefully plan all work obligations.	4,24	0,41
6	I inform my colleagues about my expectations.	4,31	0,33
7	I inform my colleagues about the degree of their working performance	4,11	0,69
8	I explain my colleagues their role inj teamwork.	4,17	0,33
9	I assign my colleagues the task I believe they are able to perform efficiently and on time.	4,22	0,38
10	Colleagues should be awarded if their tasks are performed sucessfully.	4,40	0,38
	Total	**4,26**	**0,39**

The lowest mean value was calculated according to claim "At work closely monitor whether the staff perform tasks on time and in accordance with all procedures." The mean value at 5-degree scale is still quite high, reaching 4.01. The highest estimated claim is the claim under the number 2. So we conclude that the leaders present their views clearly. The largest standard deviation, namely 0.69, is noticed at the claim that staff is kept informed whether they are successful at work. Obviously, the leaders have different oppinions with respect to other claims. The total mean value of the argument that reveals the task-oriented leadership style, is 4.26.

Table 2: People- oriented style

Number	Claim	Mean	Standard deviation
1	I take care of my employees' well-being.	4,29	0,32
2	I take care of beneficial work conditions.	4,30	0,34
3	I help my colleagues at work.	4,41	0,29
4	I appreciate my colleagues' oppinion.	4,43	0,25

5	At decision-making I take in consideration other people's oppinions.	4,30	0,40
6	I treat all the staff equally.	4,42	0,21
7	I show tact and respect form my colleagues.	4,28	0,32
8	I cherish informal contacts with my colleagues as well.	3,99	0,50
9	I discuss possible changes with my colleagues in advance.	4,19	0,49
10	I try not to spoil pleasant atmosphere at work.	4,02	0,41
	Total	**4,26**	**0,35**

The claim that the leader respects the opinion of colleagues, was highly estimated between leaders, namely the mean was 4.43. Also the standard deviation here was quite low, amounting to only 0.25. This means that leaders were generally convinced they respected the opinion of colleagues, The lowest estimation reffered to the claims of informal socializing with colleagues (3.99), but there was also the highest standard deviation (0.50), which can be explained by the fact that some leaders socialize with co-workers more and others less. The total mean value was 4.26, which was the same as in the previous table. After analyzing the questionnaire it can be concluded that the leadership style of this company, according to leaders, is in the same proportion oriented to tasks as to people.

3.4. Analysis of the questionnaire - other employees

In this part of our paper we analyzed the responses of 20 employees, which represented a tenth of the company's workforce (excluding the heads). In this way and by diversifying the survey at individual departments, we wanted to get a representative sample for this company. In the same way as with the leaders we analyzed the results. Tables 3 and 4 represent an assessment of leadership styles by the employees. Questions were (due comparability) almost identical to the leaders' questionnaire , but because of other target group (employees) and for easier understanding slightly different formulated.

Table 3: Task-oriented style

Number	Claim	Mean	Standard deviation
1	Work activities are carefully organized by the leader.	3,83	0,45
2	The leader clearly states his views.	3,56	0,43
3	The leader carefully presents rules and procedures I have to follow at my work.	3,79	0,33
4	The leader checks if I perform my tasks in accordance with the stated procedures..	4,24	0,23
5	The leader organizes work activities.	4,00	0,34
6	The leader explains clearly what he expects from me.	3,66	0,41
7	The leader keeps me informed of my work succes..	3,70	0,27

8	The leader explains to me my duty in teamwork.	3,55	0,45
9	The leader assignes the tasks I am capable of performing them efficiently and on time.	3,44	0,31
10	The leader awards my thorough performance.	3,99	0,25
	Total	**3,78**	**0,35**

Respondents rated highest the assertion (4.24) »The leader checks how they meet the tasks«. Also, the standard deviation with the value of 0.23 was the lowest in this assertion, which confirmed that employees experienced the leader primarily as a "controller" of their work. The lowest estimated assertion (3.44) »The leader gives to employees the tasks they are capable to perform efficiently, effectively and timely«. Employees apparently believed that they were given the tasks that they could not deal with. The total mean value was 3.78, the standard deviation is 0.35. The values are slightly lower than in the analysis of the questionnaire for leaders. This can be explained partly by the fact that some leaders are not enough self-critical, and employees too critical of leaders; On the other hand, there is a substantial probability that some employees may not be sufficiently familiar with the tasks of the leaders or, despite our efforts do not understand all the arguments well.

Table 4: People- oriented style

Number	Claim	Mean	Standard deviation
1	The leader takes care of employees' well-being.	3,59	0,48
2	The leader takes care of pleasant work conditions.	3,77	0,45
3	The leader helps me with my work.	3,71	0,41
4	The leader respects my oppinion..	3,59	0,34
5	The leader takes in cosideration my oppinion while decision making.	2,88	0,20
6	The leader treats all the staff equally.	3,60	0,40
7	The leader is tactful and thoughtful.	3,52	0,32
8	The leader socializes informally.	3,01	0,41
9	The leader discusses possible changes with me in advance.	2,93	0,25
10	The leader tries not to spoil pleasant atmosphere at work..	3,05	0,55
	Total	**3,37**	**0,38**

The respondents rated highest (3,77) the assertion that the leader was responsible for favorable working conditions. This means that they were obviously fairly satisfied with the order of the workplace, workplace equipment, ... The lowest (2.88) evaluated argument was that the leader respected their opinion in the decision making. There was also the lowest standard deviation (0.20), which demonstrated a high degree of consensus on the claims among employees. Such an opinion

may be explained by the fact that employees apparently feel that their opinion does not really have significant impact, or no impact at all on the decision taken by the leader.

Table 5: Comparison of the results

Leadership style	Leaders (M/SD)	Employees (M/SD)	Mean in total (M/SD)
Task-oriented	**4,26**/0,39	**3,78**/0,35	**4,02/0,37**
People-oriented	**4,26**/0,35	3,37/**0,38**	3,82/**0,37**

M-Mean SD- Standard Deviation

When comparing the results (Table 5) we can see that both styles of leadership (questionniare for leaders) represent the same mean value (M) of 4,26. Considering yet another statistical parameter we used, namely standard deviation, here is the difference between the two values only 0.04 in favor of people-oriented style. So we can conclude that leaders estimate that both company's leadership styles are uniformly represented, so that the leaders use tasks and work to people-oriented leadership style (with a slight tendency towards people-oriented management style, taking into account the standard deviation). We can assume that such results were expected because the focus on the duties is very important for the logistic company, since minor errors in the logistics field (incorrect calculations, difficulties in transportation, lack of timely completed tasks, problems with "just in time "supply inconsistency in storage, ...) cause enormous additional logistics costs. On the other hand, a successful logistics company has to take care of its staff (employees) because only qualified and satisfied employees can contribute significantly to the successful operation and profit making of the company. We believe that the leaders therefore (with minor variations) were quite realistic in assessing the way in logistics management company. In the analysis of the questionnaires of other employees, the difference is already significant. Based on our survey results, staff estimate that the leaders of the company are task-oriented (3.78) than people-oriented(3.37). This could be explained by the fact that the relation employee-leader slightly differs from therelation leader-employee. Employees, therefore, see the leaders as those in the business, who require from them to carry out timely and quality work assignments, and control them as well. In the final sentence column, for statistical reasons, we compared the mean and standard deviation, calculated on the average survey responses of leaders and employees. There is notable an understandable tendence toward leadership style, oriented to the tasks since there are more employees, and more, of course, completed surveys. In the end, the results were still administered on theoretical models that have been identified in the first, theoretical part. We found that the results can best be explained by using the analogy of Reddin's 3D Theory. In accordance with the model the leaders are defined as *integrated leaders* who are directed equally to both tasks and people committed to the team management, are forward-looking and also to the consistent performance of their duties. Leaders are evaluated as aspiring leaders by their employees. Such leaders are more task-oriented, in behavior rather bossy and in conflicts they exercise their opinion.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper we wanted (on the basis of empirical findings) to present what kind of leadership style is prevalent in the choosen logistic company. We wanted to determine whether the leaders in this company are more task-or people-oriented. By analyzing the questionnaire, we could answer which leadership style was prevalent in this company and the survey results explained the differences in how the company's management assessed the leader and how the employees. The analysis showed that in the leaders' oppinion both styles were equally represented- the employees predominant task-oriented style. In our opinion, it is good for logistics company to combine both styles because it is very important to enforce duties as well as relationships with people. From the results we can also conclude that the relationship between employees and leaders was relatively good, especially in regard to general situation in the Slovenian economy. When applying the results in Reddin's 3D Theory it can be said that the leaders (according to their oppinion) were integrated leaders and according to the assessment of employees agile leaders. However, if the results are applied to the theoretical model of network management, we find out that the leaders according to the survey results were "halfway 5.5" (interviews with leaders) or more "mission-oriented 9.1" (employee survey). In the end, we made some recommendations for possible improvements in the management process in this company. We believe that the leader should put a little bit more attention to motivating employees.

Leader should always take enough time to explain to colleagues, how and what to do, when employee does not understand the instructions of the leader, he/she needs to give additional explanations how to perform them. If an employee believes that he was improperly rewarded (whether financial or non-financial), the leader should talk to him carefully, and in this way determine the needs of the employee in order to be able to give an appropriate reward. Such a reward of course has an incentive effect. If work no longer represents a challenge for the employee, the leader should get new targets and more demanding tasks. Given the orientation towards tasks, we believe that the company managers can eliminate some procedures or simplify them (less paperwork, for example). We also believe that the company should upgrade information systems, particularly in the area of the data warehouse server solutions, and use mora data mining. Leadership is therefore really a very demanding and at the same time one of the key processes in the company. Effective and efficient management contributes significantly to the successful operation of the company, which benefits all stakeholders, owners, management and employees of course.

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