THE 7TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES

The Role of Sustainable Leadership
in Public Administration

Ionica Oncioiu[1], Mihail-Silviu Pocora[2]

Abstract: This study aims to investigate the role of leadership in creating a sustainable and realistic administrative organizations in Romania based on the idea that any institutional or organizational change starts from its employees who realize that something goes wrong and report it. We used as research method the descriptive questionnaire of leader behavior, adapted from LBDQ (Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire) and SPSS program. The LBDQ questionnaire has 100 items and 11 dimensions, and the sample consists of 150 subjects, civil servants, average age 35, most of them having university studies, employees of the Public Service Taxes and Fees and other Local Budget Revenues in Ploiesti and Brasov. The results of the study show that, in terms of representation outside the organization, there are differences between the behaviors of the two leaders, but there are also significant differences between the two groups of subjects in terms of employee perceptions.

Keywords: leadership; sustainability; administrative organizations; change

JEL Classification: H83; L38; Q56

1. Introduction

What is a sustainable development policy implemented by the administrative organization and how is it defined? "Our Common Future," also known as the Brundtland Report, defines sustainable development as "ensuring that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Sustainable development policy comprises institutional and environmental safeguards that will protect the environment and the economy as a whole, as well as another set of guidelines and principles on economic and social sustainability.

Many authors and researchers argued that economists have to take ecosystems seriously. Some suggested a focus on 'qualitative growth' rather than exclusively pointing to the quantitative monetary aspect (Leipert, 1983), Ignacy Sachs coined the term 'eco-development' in the sense of ecological development (Sachs, 1976, 1984) and in Eastern Europe, Hristo Marinov (1984), among others, argued in favor of 'greening the economy', Al Gore made very often reference to the 'ecological imperatives for public policy', i.e. principles for decision-making primarily formulated in negative terms such as: non-degradation of the natural resource base in your own region, non-degradation in other regions, observing a precautionary principle, etc..

Sustainability economics can be described as economics for sustainable development or economics for sustainability. It represents a broad interpretation of ecological economics where environmental and ecological variables and issues are basic, but also part of a multidimensional perspective. Social, cultural, health related and monetary/financial aspects have to be integrated into the analysis.

[1]Associate Professor, "Tomis" University of Constanta, Romania, Corresponding author: nelly_oncioiu@yahoo.com.
[2] PhD in progress, "Al.I. Cuza" Police Academy, Romania, Address: 1A Privighetorilor Alley, sector 1, Bucharest 014031, Tel: 021/317.55.23, Fax: 021/317.55.17, e-mail: silviupocora@univ-danubius.ro.

Looking from the perspective of organizational change, sustainability process of an administrative organization is determined to a very large extent by the quality and accuracy of strategic decisions that the leadership implements. Therefore, to know the essential elements of a successful strategy means to have sustainable and realistic basic skills for an organization that wants a bright future.

It is important to point out that this process of increasing the administrative organization participation has important limits that are against the sustainability of urban development. The limits that threaten the sustainable development of cities are led by trends in a chaotic and disorderly urban growth which is specified in the Kyoto project. But which elements are behind sustainable administrative organizations?

The first element we can consider as essential in an administrative organization's sustainability is knowledge. In modern society, and consequently in the cities, there is a new paradigm based on the incapacity of the leadership of administrative organizations because of the impossibility to process and transmit knowledge. As stated by Castells (1995), in the same way that new energy sources emerged from the different industrial revolutions and fuelled diverse societies, today we find that knowledge is the dominant raw material. This is the most important asset that a society possesses. The administrative organizations are part of this asset because they facilitate the transmission of knowledge regarding the realization of a balance between short-term priorities and long-term vision from the perspective of sustainability.

Besides, sustainable administrative organizations must be flexible and diversified, with the existence of an integrated plan regarding land uses, transportation and the urban environment. However, we must remember that the administrative organizations' sustainability directly links with the broad concepts of solidarity, equity and tolerance, and the assumption that public and subordinates' participation is central to a sustainable city.

The second component concerns the incapacity of the politicians to sacrifices their voters today in favor of tomorrow's results. The puzzle of leadership in the public sector is truly intriguing. In a sustainable organization or in a post-New Public management regime, leadership becomes even more essential than in a bureaucratic organization. Moreover, a change in the public service is welcomed because is expected that public managers will take the initiative in leading improvements in public service delivery. Leadership as strategic management involves taking key decisions about the structure of team provision of services in the context of ensuring a viable sustainability. Many teams have bad or unsuccessful leaders and some leaders do have capable teams. Failure is a common theme in organizational analysis.

These deficits make difficult a generalization of the culture of urban sustainability, as a process of collective learning, without which any undertaking is deemed to fail. Perhaps at this point it would be reasonable for administrative organizations to intensify their efforts for a city to become sustainable.

Chasek, Downie and Brown (2010) report that few countries have lived up to their Rio Summit commitments, stating that National Agenda 21 efforts led to "increased academic debate, heightened public awareness and minor adjustments in the system of national accounts and taxation rules, but they have not fundamentally altered the way we mange and measure our national economy."

Current developments further complicate the process of change in the public organizations by promoting a leadership able to keep its employees active and creative in sustainability. This article discusses, on one hand, the theory that decisively influenced the sustainability process and, on the other hand, the issue of leadership role in creating sustainable and realistic administrative organizations in Romania. The model takes into account the changes that they induce leadership at the organizational structure design process in administrative organizations.

2. Theoretical Guidelines on Public Leadership

Leadership has been defined in terms of individual traits, behavior, influence over other people, interaction patterns, role relationships, occupation of an administrative position, and perception by others regarding legitimacy of influence. There are several definitions of leadership depends on many factors such as: "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their shared purposes." (Daft, 1999). Also, "Leadership is both a process and a property. As a process, leadership involves the use of influence. As a property, leadership is the set of characteristics attributed to someone who is perceived to use influence successfully." (Griffin, 1998).

Things are more complex in public organizations. Leaders do not have a single title and are clearly separable from other employees in terms of remuneration. What still reinforces the formal-informal separation is the public law framework for public organizations. Since, in principle, all decisions taken by a public organization can be contested by means of filing up a complaint of some sort, the confusion between formal and informal leadership will be minimized.

Public leaders will in some way weigh up the relative advantages of 'credit-claiming' with 'blame-shifting' and give autonomy to other institutions and actors when the expected advantages of blame-shifting exceed those of credit-claiming. Hood and Lodge (2006) argue that under the 'directed agency' form of a 'public service bargain', public servants undertake to be loyal to whoever holds elected office at any time in exchange 'for access to the confidential counsels of those politicians and a measure of anonymity when it comes to public praise or blame'. The trust relationships that are established over time through such arrangements may be jeopardized where (1) the public servant take credit for leadership of a successful policy initiative, or (2) the politician shift the blame on to public servants for its perceived failure. Responsibility for the leadership of a public service delivery team would thus be assumed by politicians even if, in practice, public servants performed important but 'invisible' leadership functions on the perspective of sustainability.

Leadership is also related to the type of motivation that 'revisionist' economists (Sen 1977; Schelling 1980; Hirschman 1982, 1985; Sugden 1984; Rose-Ackerman 1996) identify as 'commitment'. They take their lead from Sen (1977), who challenged the mainstream economic assumption that individual actions are shaped by a 'single all-purpose preference ordering' by distinguishing 'commitment' from 'sympathy' in that it involves individuals choosing acts that involve some sacrifice in personal welfare. Altruists with interpersonal sources of utility (Collard 1975) or individuals who derive 'in-process' benefits (Buchanan 1979) from the process of striving towards the realization of a group's goals, may thus be said to be motivated by sympathy rather than commitment. Commitment requires the formation of 'second order meta-preferences' (Hirschman 1982) through which individuals evaluate their preference of what they want to prefer. It may also involve an 'intimate contest for self-command' (Schelling 1980) through which individuals struggle to impose a 'second order' preference to keep a commitment over first order preferences.

Leon C. Megginson, Donald C. Mosley and Paul H. Pietri, Jr. (1989) said that there are many interrelated variables affecting a leader's behavior. The most significant ones can be classified as general and specific factors.

Subordinates consider leadership to be valuable, but leaders become an integral part of an organization, group, or team only after proving their competence and value. Leadership grants people power over others; with this power, people believe that they can influence to some extent the well being of others and can affect their own destinies. Leaders receive their authority from subordinates because the subordinates have accepted them as leaders. To maintain a leadership position, a person must enable others to gain satisfactions that are otherwise beyond their reach (DuBrin, 1995; Russ and Velsor, 1998).

3. Method of the Research

The research used a descriptive questionnaire on leader behavior, adapted from LBDQ (Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire) and SPSS software. LBDQ questionnaire has 100 items and 11 dimensions, structured as follows:

1. Consideration - concerns the extent to which leader is concerned about the general condition and status of subordinates;
2. Initiating structure - the extent to which the leader defines its own role and subordinates them to know what is expected of them;
3. Representativeness - the extent to which the leader speaks and acts as a representative of the group;
4. Reconciliation - reconciliation requirements - the extent to which leader reconciles conflicting organizational requirements and reduce clutter in the system (entropy of the system);
5. Tolerance to uncertainty - the extent to which leader is able to bear the uncertainty and postponement without becoming nervous or anxious;
6. Persuasion - persuasion - the extent to which the leader uses persuasion and discussion effectively and strongly believes;
7. Tolerance to liberty - the extent to which leader gives subordinates the opportunity to take initiative, make decisions and act;
8. Retention role - playing the role - the extent to which the leader actively exercises leadership and authority not delegated to others;
9. The accuracy of predictions - predictions accuracy - the extent to which the leader demonstrates foresight, the ability to provide correct results;
10. Integration - the extent to which leader maintain the unity of the group he leads, resolve conflicts arising between group members;
11. Relationship with superiors - the extent to which leader maintain good relations with superiors, has influence over them, and struggling to raise his status.

Rating is achieved by assigning each item a scale of 1-5 and adding the score to each dimension separately.

The questionnaires contain 10 leadership factors as following: communication skill, motivation skill, decision-making skill, empowerment skill, emotional skill, negotiation skill, teamwork skill, planning skill, human skill and innovation skill. In the questionnaire, each question comprises into 3 questions, one for each factor. The question asked subordinates for opinions and answers about leadership behaviors and characteristics. There are 5 scale for each question as follow; 1 is strongly disagree, 2 is disagree, 3 is neither agree nor disagree, 4 is agree and 5 is strongly agree. The strategic formula to measure the mean value of class interval is width of class interval.

At the same time, the target group consists of 150 subjects, civil servants, average aged 35, most of them having university studies, employees of the Public Service tax and other revenues of local budgets from Ploiesti and Brasov

The data obtained were processed in Excel, SPSS, resulting in interpreting frequency tables and graphics in the form of histograms.

4. Results and Debates

For the first lot of subjects (employees of the Public Service tax and other revenues of local budgets from Ploiesti) the minimum score is 133, the maximum is 193, hence amplitude equals to 60. For consideration the average scores were compared with LBDQ standard, resulting in an average valuation of the leader. We can see in Figure no. 1 that employers do not consider that this is a charismatic leader, due to the statute, but do not appreciate that particular person (values are

concentrated in the left side of distribution). Moreover, the relationship between the average (125.48), median (122.00) and method (114) show a positive asymmetry.
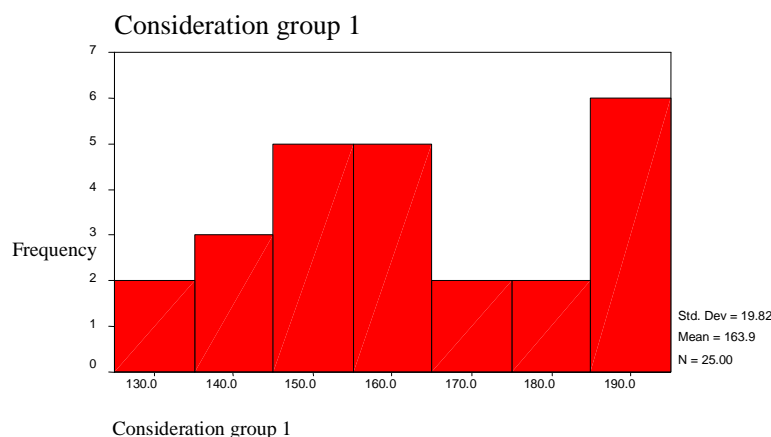
Consideration group 1

Consideration group 1

Figure 1. Distribution on "consideration" factor

If reconciliation dimension represented by the width resulting from the difference between maximum score (124) and the minimum score (79) is equal to 45, Compared to standard LBDQ, it results a higher valuation.

The leader announces changes in time to come, is skilled in discussions, making sure group work is coordinated. He is willing to make changes and help group members to resolve differences.

He is a leader who is involved, puts pressure to increase productivity and scheduled work to be done.

From the analysis of the media comparison table 1, there are significant differences between the two groups of subjects considered. If the size comparison, this is confirmed by the endoscope indicator value t (4,376), which is higher than tabular values of t statistics (2,014 for a threshold of 0,05 and 2.690 for a threshold of 0,01).

Table 1. Environments for size comparison "consideration."

T test for independent samples

Consideration	t	t test for equality media		
		Degrees of liberty	The significance of bilateral	Mean difference
Common variants	-4,376	48	0,000	- 18,04

Indicator value is equal to 5,104 t for integration. This means there are significant differences between the results obtained from subjects of both groups of subjects analyzed. The t statistic is greater than 2,014 for a threshold of 0,05 and 2,690 for a threshold of 0,01.

Unlike the leader of the first group questioned, the one of the second group (employees of the Public Service tax and other revenues of local budgets from Brasov) maintained a greater unity, he led the group and resolved conflicts occurred between group members more effectively. This resort to all kinds of small gestures to make you feel better as a member of the group makes the group work in close unity, as a team, group members implementing proposals.

Indicator value t is equal to 5,006 for tolerance dimension to freedom as you seen in table 2. This means there are significant differences between the results obtained from subjects of both groups of subjects analyzed. So, t statistic is greater than 2,014 for a threshold of 0,05 and 2,690 for a threshold of 0,01.

Table 2. Environments for size comparison "tolerance of liberty"

T test for independent samples

Tolerance of liberty	t test for equality media			
	t	Degrees of liberty	The significance of bilateral	Mean difference
Common variants	-5,006	48	0,000	- 6,32

Members of the first group of subjects perceived their leader as having a behavior that does not allow them the opportunity to take initiative to take decisions and act. While the leader of the second group of subjects is perceived differently: he lets his subordinates work full freedom, allowing them to use their own problem-solving court, an initiative encouraging group members and leaving them many times to do the work as they think best.

The leader of the second organization is definitely perceived by his employees as charismatic, professionally competent with communication and relationship skills. Able to maintain an organizational climate without any conflicts, he valorizes his employees, motivates them to optimize and streamline their activities. He is concerned about the general condition of the organization and status of his subordinates.

As it can be seen from table 3, the first group leader is a nervous person, anxious all the time, worried a little, while the second leader is perceived as being more able to bear the uncertainty and postponement without becoming nervous or anxious.

Table 3. Compare leadership factors between 2 groups

Nr. crt.	Leadership factors	Group 1 Ploiesti	Group 2 Brasov	t	Dif.	Sig.
1.	Communication skill	1,74	1,94	1,592	42,674	0,001
2.	Motivation skill	1,57	1,83	2,219	44,877	0,000
3.	Decision-making skill	1,57	1,60	0,276	44,244	0,292
4.	Empowerment skill	1,68	1,78	0,938	44,097	0,032
5.	Emotional skill	1,56	1,64	0,800	44,766	0,057
6.	Negotiation skill	1,62	1,79	1,333	44,610	0,005
7.	Teamwork skill	1,69	1,75	0,602	44,778	0,116
8.	Planning skill	1,69	1,94	1,790	44,995	0,001
9.	Human skill	1,76	0,19	1,345	42,499	0,005
10.	Innovation skill	1,60	1,76	1,058	44,975	0,019

The significant difference between leadership factors and leadership perspective from the two groups is communication skill, motivation skill, negotiation skill, planning skill, human skill and innovation skill. For example, the significant value of communication skill was 0,001 that was lower than 0,05, it means leadership from the two groups have significantly different perspectives. At the same time, decision-making skill, empowerment skill, emotional skill and teamwork skill are non-significant difference leadership factors perspective.

The leader of the second group is much better seen in terms of assuming the role than in the one in the first group. He acts like a spokesman for the group, speaking as a representative of the group,

maintaining intensive work in groups, organizes group meetings outside the institution, while the leader of the other group is the leader in name only.

5. Conclusions

Sustainable development is a visionary development paradigm. Over the past 20 years governments, businesses, and civil society have accepted sustainable development as a guiding principle and try to made progress on this way. According with Moyo (2009) the world has made little progress in implementing programs and policies to improve the lives of the poor, and the integration of the three pillars of economic development, social development, and environmental improvements remains a challenge. Sustainable development is not easy and will take considerable time and effort. Public leadership may involve both politicians and managers organizations in creating a sustainable and realistic. On the other hand strategic management is not without relevance in the new organization and should be a key focus when debating the direction of public sector reform. As a normative concept, it complements the traditional focus of public administration upon bureaucracy and the rule of law by emphasizing the achievement of objectives through organizational design and the handling of contracts with the team responsible for public service provision.

Comparative analysis of the results of subjects following administration of the questionnaire LBDQ the following conclusions:

- The research hypothesis is confirmed, there are different perceptions of behaviors as leaders in the two organizations studied.
- All dimensions are characterized by the existence of significant differences between the two organizations. In other words, the perception of employees on the behavior of the leader of the second group of respondents is much higher than the corresponding subjects in the first organization. This means that the leader of the second organization has a democratic behavior, knows how to motivate and appreciate his employees, compared to the leader of the first organization, whose behavior approaches that of an autocratic leader.
- The leader of the second organization is definitely perceived by his employees as charismatic, professionally competent, having communication and relationship skills. Able to maintain an organizational climate without climates, he values his employees, motivates them to optimize and streamline their activities.
- The leader of the first organization should learn how to motivate your subordinates to do the job well, try to understand what your subordinate want and know and what is the most important influence to motivate your subordinates for success goal. He should give more opportunities to his subordinates to make decision some job by them and always assign job to your subordinate to improve their skill and their ability to make good performance.
- In terms of representation outside the organization, there are differences between the behaviors of the two leaders, between the perceptions of their employees accordingly. Thus, the first is concerned with his image more than the organization he represents, compared with the second, who is the organization itself and the people who compose it.
- A larger number of subjects of the second group perceive their leader the way he speaks and acts as a representative of the group. He acts as spokesman for the group, speaking as a representative of the group.

Our results are useful for administrative organizations wishing to develop their own policies on sustainability and to acknowledge responsibility for the environment and society. Moreover, the specific characteristics of different administrative units provide information for future research on the shaping of guidelines to generate a possible model for leader's assessment by his employees. Based on this, sustainability can be achieved in terms of changes in those organizations. The benefit of this research is that employees can achieve and gain more knowledge about leadership behavior and leadership styles. Education and experience are major have influence and effect to leadership behavior and leadership development. This research will be benefit to leaderships how to improve leadership behavior to be change in organization. It could be a reference for further study for a person who was

interested in public leadership. The further study could use this study for other research for example, the different leadership behavior between leadership and employees as perceived by taxpayers. The main limitations of our research are related, on one hand, to the evaluation of sample size and bias responses, which can be subjects of debate for and against. On the other hand, it may be that the extension and the homogeneity of the sample imply greater emphasis on information obtained through interviews. In conclusion, today, strong public leadership is required to address the difficult challenges. Therefore we believe that restoring confidence in leadership in administrative organizations can only be done by assessing primarily by its own employees to pursue the creation of long-term sustainable value.

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