

DIDACTICA



DANUBIENSIS

Studies Regarding Leadership Approaches in Training Offers in the Face-to-Face and Online Context

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Abstract: The digital transformations that were present in the society have also extended to the education domain, both methodological and structural changes that were followed by several effects in the training market. Economically, the training market consists in the demand and offer of training courses, which have been modified in the aspects of topic and relation with the needs of the potential users. This paper aims to extend a study regarding the effects of the leadership type of the manager of the courses offering institution on the structure of courses with several effects of the digital transformation in the last period. In previous researches, the authors have determined several implications of the leadership type on the courses offer using a methodology based on literature review, a point of reference for the present paper. The study was structured on three main aspects: the determination of the offer structure by topic by determining the clusters of courses based on leader personality traits, the determination of the connection between the leadership style with the offer structure and the main transformation of the courses in the offer based on face-to-face and online learning forms by direct observation and analysis. The research was made on a cluster of seven teacher training houses in Romania in the school year 2021-2022. The results showed that the influence of the leadership style on the courses offer is a defined one and the last period has brought a normal change in the offer structure based on the online form of organisation.

Keywords: online; training; courses

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1. Introduction

As every educational process, teacher training has to generate a great deal of efficiency, as the teachers are key factors of the national educational system. The courses offer has to comply with the needs of the trainees and to align with the external influential factors, such as technology and social phenomena, as well with the internal ones, such as the vision of the manager of the provider unit.

The particular characteristic of the structure of the Romanian training system in the educational area leads to the need of the existence of a great deal of efficiency, especially on the qualitative aspect of training. Thus, the offer must reflect the managerial competencies of the Teaching Staff Resource Centers (TSRC) administrators and their personal influence on the professional activity. The local and personal aspects include the educational background and the professional activity of the administrator and they indirectly influence the training dynamics of the institution and of the local training environment.

This paper presents an extension of a study whose purpose was to determine the influence of the leadership style of the TSRC managers on the structure of the training offer of the institution. The main additions to the original study are related to the determination of this influence based on the main categories of competencies of a leader stated in the literature, which will also take into consideration the digital competencies, and the study of the dynamics of the ICT-based courses within the offer.

2. Related Work

The literature shows various studies of the leadership traits and their influence on the leader activity within an organisation (Igbaekemen, 2014). The main directions were related to the leadership traits of a leader, which must be related to several aspects of personality, as shown by Goleman (Goleman, 1996), which emphasizes the importance of the emotional intelligence of a leader, or decision-based approached in a social context (Cremene, 2022). The development of the leader traits by key core values of an enterprise is also studied in several recent studied, as defined in 2022 in the European region (Puusa, Tuominen, & Ylönen, 2022). Directions in the work in the literature is also defined by the measurement of the leadership performance (Kanji, 2008). Also, special attention is drawn to the specific leadership of learning organisations, which has several particularities that form a special category of organisational leadership (Anastasiadou, 2019),

(Cawelti, 1981). A more specific form of leadership in educational organisations are related to training organisations, which tend to combine the educational purposes of the organisations with the novelty brought by social and technological development and also public and private aspects of institutional learning (Grant, 2007).

The studies from the literature also take into consideration the personality measurements of the leaders. The main instruments used to measure the personality traits of a leader are:

- The Multi-form Leadership Management Questionnaire MLQ-6S, adapted from the literature in (Bass & Avolio, 1990) and (Bass & Avolio, 2004) and used for the determination of the leader type. The structure consists in the existence of 21 items in the form of Likert scale.
- The Big Five Inventory (BFI / BFIQ / OCEAN) Questionnaire, also adapted from the literature ((Goldberg, 1993); (Costa & McCrae, 1992) (Rothmann & Coetzer, 2003); (John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991); (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008); (Benet-Martinez & John, 1998)) and used for the determination of the personality type. It is formed from 44 items in the form of a Likert scale.

In a previous paper elaborated by the authors (Tița, Bold, Popescu, & Nijloveanu, 2020), a methodology which presents the development of the study is presented. This methodology is presented in Figure 1.

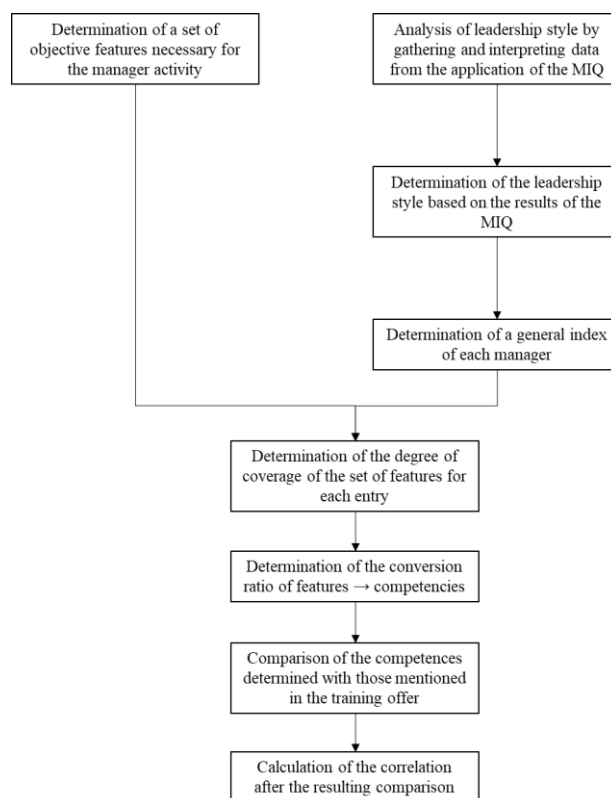


Figure 1. Methodology in Previous Work

The previous paper also uses, besides the MLQ-6S and BFI questionnaires, The Training Activity Questionnaire (TAQ), built from own structures and which refers to the perception on the training activity. It is formed from 5 multiple-question type items. The TAQ studies the direct opinion of the managers on the matter of training activity and its results. It is designed to validate the connections from the other two questionnaires, being based on several aspects involved in the formal analysis of the training programs.

Related work is based on the development of an index denoted by Training Management General Index (TMGI) for the leader, which shows the combined forms of several indicators:

- the MIQ index, described in the previous rows;
- the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level coefficient, denoted by ISCEDL;

- the educational background coefficient (depending on the number of years of educational activities, denoted by EBI);
- the coefficient of the score obtained at the submission within The National Body of Educational Management Experts (known as CNEME) and registered in the National Register of Educational Management Experts, which we will denote as EMEI;
- the number of professional credits of the training programs in the offer accredited in the period of management, denoted by ECI;
- the coefficient of the number of trainees formed in the institution in the period of management, denoted by ETI.

3. Problem Statement

We will describe in this section the mathematical model of the research, formed from the parameters of the model and the methodology used to obtain the desired results.

The purpose of the research is established on THREE results:

1. R1. The emphasis of the influence of the leadership styles on the training courses offer of the TSRC for the teachers
2. R2. The determination of the training needs based on the analyses resulted from the study of the TSRC training offers
3. R3. The determination of the ICT-based courses dynamic during and after the pandemic period.

4. Concepts and Terms

The parameters of this mathematical model are those described above and their mathematical description is as follows:

- MIQI ($0 < MIQI \leq 1$) is obtained as a mean from the values of the coefficients from the three sections of the questionnaire (MLQ-6S, BFIQ and TAQ), as follows:

$$MIQI = \frac{MLQI + BFIQI + MIQI}{3}$$

- ISCED level has values from 1 to 8, thus ISCEDL ($0 < ISCEDL \leq 1$) will be obtained as:

$$ISCEDL = \frac{ISCED}{8}$$

- EBI ($0 < EBI \leq 1$) is obtained as the ratio between the number of years of experience in the educational field and the maximum possible number of years that can be used as experience, calculated as difference between the retirement age (RA = 68) and the major age (MA = 18), as follows:

$$EBI = \frac{EB}{RA - MA}$$

- EMEI ($0 < EMEI \leq 1$) is obtained as the ratio between the score obtained at the submission within the CNEME (CNEMES) and the maximum score (100), as follows:

$$EMEI = \frac{CNEMES}{100}$$

- ECI ($0 < ECI \leq 1$) is obtained as a ratio between the average number of credits per course (calculated as the sum of credits of all accredited courses – SC – per number of courses – NC) and the maximum number of credits per course (CPT), as follows:

$$ECI = \frac{SC/NC}{CPT}$$

- ETI ($0 < ETI \leq 1$) is obtained as a ratio between the number of trainees formed in the institution on the period of management (T_T) and the number of teachers in Romania (T), as follows:

$$ETI = \frac{T_T}{T}$$

5. Solution Approach

In order to materialize the research on the leadership styles of the directors of the Teaching Staff Resource Centres and their influences on the continuous training offers for pre-university education, the methodology used is based on the existing specialized literature, adapted and completed for the research undertaken.

The approach consists in the determination of the next steps:

1. the determination of the TGMI index of each leader of the seven TSRCs taken into consideration based on the description shown above. Based on the index, the leadership style will be clustered in one of the categories determined in Table 1;
2. the determination of the offer structure for each TSRC taken into consideration;
3. the determination of the correlation of the leadership style with the offer structure.

Other results, such as the dynamics of the digital-based topics for the courses in the offer will be presented.

The main categories of leader traits taken into consideration for this study are based on works of ((Salvaggio, și alții, 2007); (Eeden, Cilliers, & Deventer, 2008)), according to these authors, in the literature there were established key features as consciousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion, openness and quality orientation. Also, another set of leader traits were considered as the ones presented in the studies of ((Khoshhal & Guraya, 2016)), who categorize these features in two classes: innate traits and learnable features. Also, (Goleman, 1998) was taken into consideration. The final categories are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The Determination of the Personality Traits of a Manager from the Literature

Criterion	Traits
based on achievement	charisma, vision, energy, caring, skills related to dealing with people, concepts regarding finance, policies and negotiation skills, networking, planning skills and organizational properties
based on leadership style	consciousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion, openness and quality orientation self-awareness: faith, self-confidence, realistic self-assessment and self-deprecating sense of humor; self-regulation: trustworthiness, integrity, comfort with ambiguity, openness to change;
based on emotional intelligence	motivation: strong drive to achieve, optimism, organizational commitment; empathy: expertise in building and retaining talent, cross-cultural sensitivity, service to clients and customers; social skills: effectiveness in leading change, persuasiveness, expertise in building and leading teams
digital competencies	usage of digital instruments instructional design using digital LMS (learning management systems)

6. Analysis of Results

For the determination of the general indexes for each TSRC manager, we have compiled a number of indicators which are presented in

Table 2. The TSRC taken into consideration were from Alba, Botoșani, Dâmbovița, Galați, Hunedoara, Prahova and Teleorman. Several aspects regarding ISCED level, number of work years, score at the managerial competencies national test (CNEME) and the year of the establishment as manager of the institution.

Table 2. Indicators of TSRC Managers

	AB	BT	DB	GL	HD	PH	TR
Specialization	Romanian-French	Chemistry-Physics	Automation	Romanian-French	Mathematics	Theology-Letters	Geography
ISCED level	8	7	7	8	7	7	7
Number of work years (EBI) Score at CNAME submission (EMEI)	22	25	21	19	33	22	20
Year of manager TSRC	2019	2020	2019	2020	2020	2009	2021

As seen in the table, with little exception, the managers have a limited time of implementing their vision and mark their leader personality on the courses offer, because the changes are made on a periodically base. Also, the average number of work years of all managers is situated at the value of approximately 23 years, which shows a great deal of experience in the training and educational field. Also, all the managers are extremely specialized on the managerial area, as shown by their CNAME score. The majority of them have BA studies, as shown by ISCED level.

Also, we have taken into consideration several offer indicators, which are presented in

Table 3. Amongst the indicators taken into consideration are the total number of courses, the number of accredited courses and the courses which have an ICT-based topic. Also, several derivative indicators such as the average number of hours per course and the sum of the number of credits for all the accredited courses.

Table 3. Indicators of Courses Offer

	AB	BT	DB	GL	HD	PH	TR
Number of total courses	49	64	34	40	53	44	57
Number of accredited courses (NC)	13	14	4	10	8	13	16
Proportion of accredited courses in the total offer	26,53%	21,88%	11,76%	25,00%	15,09%	29,55%	28,07%
Number of own accredited courses	2	1	2	4	6	4	0
Proportion of own accredited courses	15,38%	7,14%	50,00%	40,00%	75,00%	30,77%	0,00%
Number of total courses with ICT-based topic	10	4	7	4	6	13	9
Number of accredited courses with ICT-based topic	3	1	1	2	1	5	1
Number of accredited courses with ICT-based topic before 2020	3	0	1	2	0	4	0
Number of accredited courses after the year of manager	6	2	0	0	3	13	3
Sum of the number of credits (SC)	239	142	67	151	251	222	267
Average number of hours per course	74,00	31,68	36,23	32,65	27,98	31,89	37,72
Average number of hours per accredited course	74,00	71,25	68,00	60,20	100,88	68,38	66,88
Credits per hour	3,22973	1,992982	0,985294	2,508306	2,488105	3,246563	3,992225

As seen from the analysis of courses, the vast majority of the offer is comprised of approved courses, with a limited number of hours and without credits. The proportion of the accredited courses is situated between 15% and 30% of the total number of courses, which is a normal tendency, because the accredited courses consume more human and time resources. Also, the number of own accredited courses is variated (between 0% and 75%), which shows an oscillating elevated openness to partnerships with other institutions. A surprising conclusion is directed to the ICT-based courses, which were present in the offer even before the pandemic period in a vast majority for all the TSRCs taken into consideration. A graphical representation of the courses structure is shown in Figure 2.

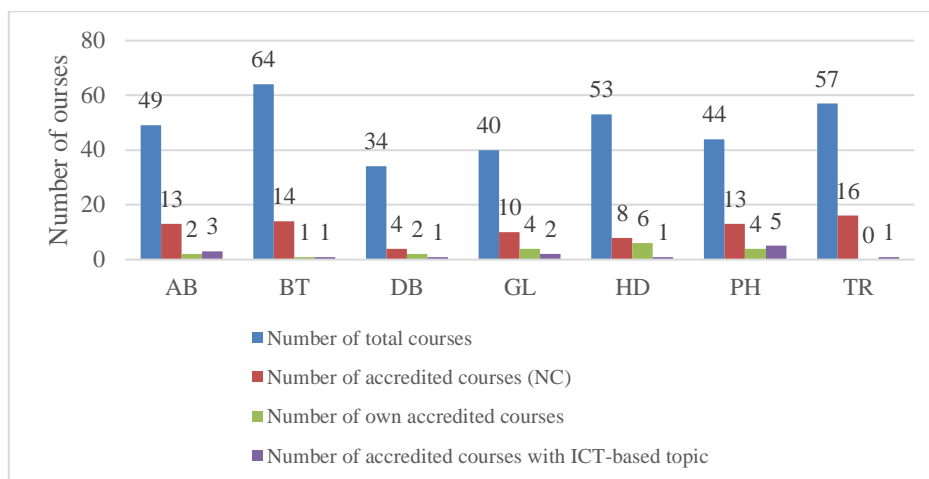


Figure 2. Offer Structure

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Furthermore, we have clustered the course offer on three main categories of courses presented in Table 1. The main categories were related to courses related to professional educational activity courses (PA), related to traits characteristic to the ones based on achievements criterium, management-centred courses (M), related to traits characteristic to the ones based on leadership styles criterium, and personal development-based courses (PD), such as those characteristics to the emotional intelligence criterium. All the criteria taken into consideration is extracted from Table 1. The clusters were formed based on the general competencies of each accredited course and their relation with each of the criteria.

Table 4. The Structure of the Courses Based on Course Competencies Criteria

	AB	BT	DB	GL	HD	PH	TR
PA	6	4	2	5	4	6	5
M	2	3	1	1	1	1	5
PD	5	1	1	4	3	6	6

The next table shows the partial TGMI index, calculated as the average of all the indexes except the MIQI, which has been set to be refined and used for a future work. As shown in Table 5, the values of the indexes of the manager depend on their activity, while the personality index is qualitatively considered in the form of specialization.

Table 5. Values of the Indexes of Managers

	AB	BT	DB	GL	HD	PH	TR
Specialization	Romanian-French	Chemistry-Physics	Automation	Romanian-French	Mathematics	Theology-Letters	Geography
ISCEDL	1,00	0,88	0,88	1,00	0,88	0,88	0,88
EBI	0,44	0,50	0,42	0,38	0,66	0,44	0,40
EMEI	0,96	0,93	0,93	0,93	0,95	0,95	0,91
ECI	0,61	0,34	0,56	0,50	1,05	0,57	0,56
ETI	1,00	0,59	0,53	0,54	0,55	0,58	1,58
Partial TGMI	0,80	0,65	0,66	0,67	0,82	0,68	0,86

For a clearer view, the data was presented in Figure 3.

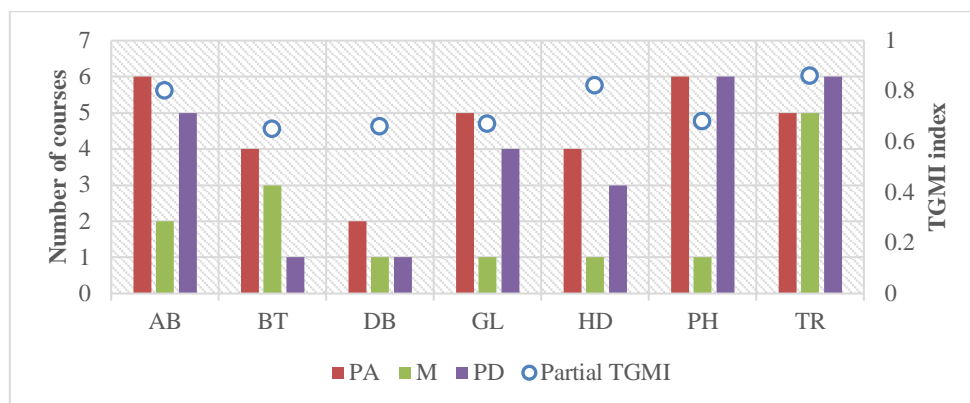


Figure 3. The relationship between the Manager General Index (TGMI) and the Structure of Courses

Table 4 and Table 5 show that a higher value of the TGMI index is related to a higher activity regarding the accredited courses. Also, a linkage between the PA type of courses and the TGMI index can be drawn, as the values of these variables appear to have a similar dynamic. Also, the analysis of the specialisation and the structure of courses shows that a specialisation related to social sciences leads to a greater number of PD-type courses and, in general, a lower number of own accredited courses, which leads to the conclusion that the initial specialisation regarding the Bachelor's degree influences the partnerships regarding the offered courses.

7. Conclusions and Future Work

The main conclusions that can be drawn from the research are based on the fact that the decisions related to educational background of the managers can also be reflected on the relations with other institutions, which is the main finding on this part of research. Also, another main conclusion is that the managers of the TSRC centers were preparing teachers for the development of ICT competencies, in the pandemic period being approved by The Ministry of Education only short, very specific instrument-based courses (usage of specific learning management systems, such as Google Workspace, educational applications or methods). In short, the research consists in establishing and studying the leadership styles at the level of the management of the Teaching Staff Resource Centers, in parallel with the analysis of the training offer provided by them, in relation to how to manage and generate these offers of the decision makers, following the results of the documentation and the analyzes should be correlated in order to provide relevant

conclusions for the quantitative and qualitative development of the training process at the level of the state providers of continuous training within the pre-university education system. The documentations and analyses will use general, traditional scientific instruments, offered by the specialized, innovative literature, which are being explored in similar researches, but also specific tools, generated especially for obtaining results extracted from particular situations. A future direction of work would be the creation of the model including the MQI index and the usage of cluster analysis for a better approximation of the desired outcome and for finer results regarding the influence of the leadership style on the TSRC centers courses offer.

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