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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MANAGEMENT STYLES IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

ANALIZA PORÓWNAWCZA STYLÓW ZARZĄDZANIA W KRAJACH EUROPEJSKICH

Streszczenie: W środowisku handlowym, konkurencja przekracza granice takich obszarów jak produkty, usługi, technologie czy narzędzia marketingowe. Aby zapewnić ciągłość rozwoju, produkcji oraz wprowadzania na rynek wysokiej jakości produktów (usług), firmy (organizacje) muszą umieć rozwijać potencjał swojej kadry biorąc pod uwagę nowe wyzwania jakie stawia przed nami społeczeństwo informacyjne i procesy globalizacyjne. Strukturalne i funkcjonalne podejście do zasobów ludzkich opiera się na wykorzystaniu zasad zarządzania naukowego i biurokracji oraz przewiduje raczej autorytarny styl zarządzania. Planowanie działań jest jedną z najważniejszych funkcji menadżera.

Słowa kluczowe: konkurencja, firmy, organizacje, menadżer, zarządzanie

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Abstract. In a market environment, competition exceeds the limits of such areas as goods, services, technologies, and marketing instruments. To ensure continuity in development, production, and marketing of new high-quality goods (services), companies (organizations) have to be able to develop and use the potential of their staff in accordance with the new challenges of the information society and globalization processes. Structural and functional approach in human resources management is based on the use of the principles of scientific management and bureaucracy and envisages a rather authoritarian management style. Activity planning is one of the most important functions of a manager.

Key words: competition, companies, organizations, manager, management

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In a market environment, competition exceeds the limits of such areas as goods, services, technologies, and marketing instruments. Such factors as organizational structure of management and staff are becoming the keys to success of any organization (enterprise).

To ensure continuity in development, production, and marketing of new high-quality goods (services), companies (organizations) have to be able to develop and use the potential of their staff in accordance with the new challenges of the information society and globalization processes. This, in its turn, presents new demands the personality of the leader, and the choice of methods and management style. The development of the economic system and society, national customs and cultural traditions also have a role to play in molding of the manager's personality.

To receive comprehensive data on the system of values of the managers, as well as to compare regional cultural characteristics of management, the department of business administration of the Institute of Economics of the Technical University of Braunschweig (Germany) put forward an initiative to conduct an international research in 2005-2006. Within the framework of this research, 850 managers of private enterprises from such European countries as Bulgaria, Macedonia, Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic and Ukraine were surveyed.

The survey was held using a single questionnaire that consisted of 6 parts:

1. general information about a person
2. life values of a manager
3. management style
4. management concepts
5. work style
6. manager's satisfaction.

The analysis of 56 questionnaire items related to life values of a manager became the subject of a separate publication [Human Resources Management 2006]. The present paper focuses upon the comparison of styles of managers from the countries selected for the survey.

Management style is a way in which the manager performs his/her duties, as well as his/her attitude to personnel. To describe management styles, the following characteristics were used:

- level of participation in management
- level of orientation at structural and functional management

The “Management style” chapter of the questionnaire included 18 items. Managers selected their answers according to the 9-point scale: from (-1), i. e. “it contradicts my values” to (+7), i. e. “this value is of special importance for me”. For the purposes of this article the results of assessment were usually divided into three groups: especially important (5 ÷ +7), important (+2 ÷ +4) and not important (-1 ÷ +1).

Participative management presupposes participation of the hired labor in company (organization) management, partnership relations between the managers and staff, and involvement of the latter into taking management decisions. In practice, the level of participation is often the main criterion of the democratic management style.

To research the level of management participativity, the following characteristics were selected: equality in relations, communication, use of powers, further development of an employee, recognition of his/her achievements, facilitating satisfaction with work, compassion, correction of behavior, trainings, and promotion of optimism.

70.8% of Macedonian, 63.2% of Bulgarian, 52.2% of German, 44.7% of Polish, 43.7% of Ukrainian, and 40.0% of Czech managers are especially ready to perceive their employees as equal partners. Average points were selected by 60.0% of the surveyed Czechs, 50.6% of Ukrainians, 48.9% of Poles, 45.3% of Germans, 31.2% of Bulgarians, and 24.7% of Macedonians. Among those, for whom it is not characteristic, the highest percentage belongs to the Poles – 6.4%.

It is important for all the surveyed managers to have continuing intensive dialogue with the staff in the process of their work. Thus, communication is considered of special importance by 88.8% of Bulgarian, 84.6% of Macedonian, 78.1% of German, 71.4% of Czech, 61.7% of Polish, and 59.1% of Ukrainian managers. The percentage of those, for whom it is unimportant is in the range of 0% (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic) ÷ 3,1% (Ukraine).

77.6% of Bulgarian, 75.1% of German, 73.6% of Macedonian, 65.7% of Czech, 51.7% of Polish, and 50.3% of Ukrainian managers claimed that they support and encourage further development of their employees. At that, the maximum point (+7 – especially characteristic) was indicated by 17.6% of the surveyed Bulgarians, 15.6% Macedonians, 8.6% of Czechs, 8.1% of Germans, 4.4% of Ukrainians, and 3.2% of Poles. The majority of those who selected average and lowest points consisted of Ukrainian managers (46.6% and 3.1% respectively) [Osidach 2011].

Bulgarian and Macedonian managers appeared to be the most lavish with praise for a job well done: for 80.8% and 80.1% respectively this is especially characteristic, and for 19.2% and 19.1% of the surveyed – moderately characteristic. Special attention to recognition of a job well done is paid by 71.9% of German, 58.5% of Polish, 52.8% of Czech and 39% of Ukrainian managers. The majority of ‘characteristic’ (value: +5 ÷ +7) and ‘little characteristic’ (value: -1 ÷ +1) points were marked by Ukrainians: 49.1% and 12.0% respectively. It is worth noting that points -1 (it contradicts my values) and 0 (not characteristic) was not marked by anyone but Ukrainians. Are these severe consequences of the command and administration system where an employee was just a “cog in the big machine”?

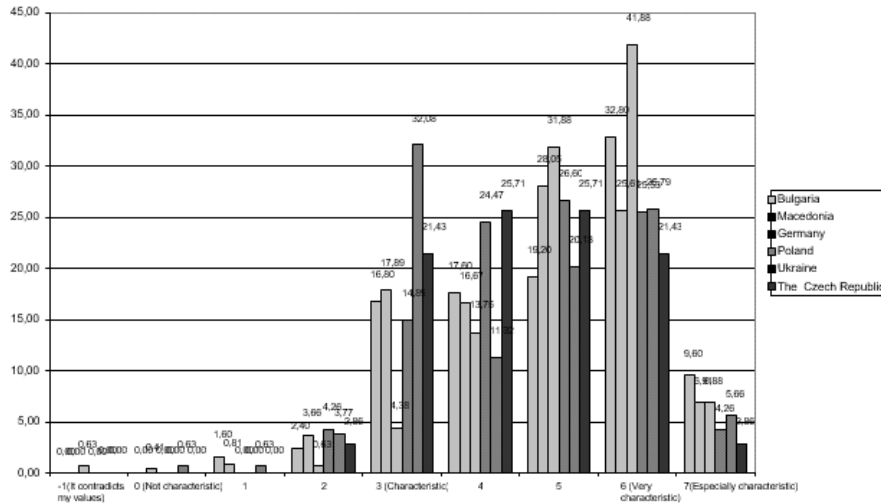


Fig. 1. The use of their powers by managers for the purposes of staff training

The results on the use of the managers’ powers for improvement of employees’ competence and their training are interesting (Fig. 1). The highest percentage of those for whom it is typical to use this principle in manage-

ment was found among German managers (80.6%). For comparison, it is worth noting that, as it has been mentioned by the authors elsewhere, only 8.8% of the German managers consider power as the ability to dominate people and control them, and 18.1% - as the right to take decisions [Human Resources Management, p. 252]. The fact that it is characteristic for them to use their powers for development of their employees was declared also by 61.1% of the surveyed Bulgarians, 60.6% of Macedonians, 56.4% of Poles, 51.6% of Ukrainians, and 50.0% of Czechs. Almost all other answers have mean values.

The use of the principles of participative management envisages targeted efforts of the manager to form a favorable microclimate among staff members and satisfaction of employees. Almost all the surveyed managers from the countries that participated in the project pay much attention to this management principle. Among those for whom it is especially characteristic the highest percentage belongs to Macedonian (74.4%), Bulgarian (72%), and German (65.6%) managers. Leaders among the mean values were the Czech (45.7%), Polish (39.4%), and Ukrainian managers (38.4%).

Expression of feelings and care about the problems of their employees is characteristic of 65.0% of Macedonian, 56.88% of German, 49.6% of Bulgarian, 41.43% of Czech, 38.3% of Polish, and 33.4% of Ukrainian managers. The percentage of those, who do not share these principles is as follows: 0% of the surveyed Czechs, 0.63% of Germans, 2.0% of Macedonians, 2.4% of Bulgarians, 3.19% of Poles, and 5.03% of Ukrainians. Among the managers who selected mean values, the highest percentage is attributed to Ukrainian and Czech managers – 61.4% and 58.4% respectively. Thereat, 42.1% of Ukrainians selected +3 (according to -1÷+7 scale).

Those, for whom it is especially characteristic to pay scrupulous attention to employees' mistakes and correct their behavior, include: 74.4% of Bulgarian, 67.8% of Macedonian, 49.3% of German, 33.0% of Polish, 29.0% of Ukrainian and 27.1% of Czech managers. Mean values were chosen by: 68.6% of Czechs, 61.7% of Poles, 61.0% of Ukrainians, 49.7% of Germans, 30.1% of Macedonians and 24.0% of Bulgarians. The majority of those for whom this trait is not characteristic at all consists of Ukrainian managers (10.0%).

All managers recognized that it is important for them to hold trainings and consultations for their staff, however, the range of the selected points is quite wide. This

trait is very characteristic of: 80.0% of German, 75.6% of Macedonian, 75.2% of Bulgarian, 74.3% of Czech, 50.0% of Polish and 44.0% of Ukrainian managers. Almost all others selected mean values. Maximum percentage of those for whom the application of this principle in human resources management is not characteristic is constituted by Ukrainian managers (6.9%).

The results of the surveyed managers concerning optimism, and maintenance of good mood of the employees turned out to be interesting and unexpected. Maximum +7 points were selected by 24.8% of Bulgarian, 16.7% of Macedonian, and 14.5% of Ukrainian managers. If we combine, as it was done in previous cases, the data into three groups, then those for whom optimism and good mood are especially important include: Macedonians – 80.5%, Bulgarians – 77.6%, Czechs – 73.4%, Germans – 63.7%, Ukrainians – 55.3%, and Poles – 53.2%. Those, for whom it is not important are in the range from 0% (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic) to ÷ 3.8% (Ukraine). The others selected mean values.

Structural and functional approach in human resources management is based on the use of the principles of scientific management and bureaucracy and envisages a rather authoritarian management style. To research the level of use of the structural and functional principle by managers, the developers of the questionnaire selected such items – status, activity planning, team work, clear division of tasks and functions, observance of rules, delegation of powers and responsibilities, and control.

It is worth noting that in assessment of the questionnaire concerning status, a wide range of answers can be observed even within one country. That it is especially important for them to stress their superiority was claimed by 58.1% of Macedonian, 30.4% of Bulgarian, 10.1% of Ukrainian, 9.4% of German, 8.6% of Czech and 8.5% of Polish managers. Among those, for whom this approach to human resources management is not important, the highest percentage is made up of Ukrainians (52.2%), Poles (41.5%) and Germans (31.3%).

Activity planning is one of the most important functions of a manager. Attention to analysis and detailed activity planning is paid by 87.2% of the surveyed Bulgarian, 83.9% of Macedonian, 61.7% of Polish, 55.6% of German, 51.4% of Czech and 50.9% of Ukrainian managers. Other respondents chose mean values.

As far as the use of team work is concerned, 87.2% of the surveyed Bulgarians, 76.8% of Macedonians, 68.7% of Czechs, 63.1% of Germans, 52.2% of Ukrainians

and 51.1% of Poles declared that distribution of tasks and result oriented team work is especially characteristic of them. Those for whom it is almost not characteristic are in the range from 0.0% (the Czech Republic) to 5.7% (Ukraine).

The results of the survey concerning the exact distribution of tasks among the staff members (who does what) somewhat go beyond the traditional clichés. According to this position, percentage in the highest-point category is as follows (i. e. values: +5 ÷ +7): 86.4% - Bulgarian, 69.1% - Macedonian, 55.3% - Ukrainian, 44.7% - Polish, 44.3% - Czech and 32.5% - German managers. "Especially characteristic" item (i.e. +7) was chosen by 28.0% Bulgarian, 12.2% Macedonian, 8.8% Ukrainian, 8.5% Polish, 1.9 % German and 0% Czech managers. The opposite extreme values are equally interesting. The percentage of those who declared that this approach is not characteristic of them (i. e. values: -1 ÷ +1) is as follows: 15.0% of the surveyed German, 5.3% of Polish, 4.3% of Czech, 3.7% of Macedonian, 1.9% of Ukrainian, and 0.0% of Bulgarian managers.

Special attention to the combination of an employee's abilities and requirements to him/her is paid by 89.6% of the surveyed Bulgarians, 83.3% Macedonians, 78.6% Czechs, 76.3% Germans, and 66.0% Poles, and 60.4% Ukrainians. That is, the majority of managers consider personnel selection important and follow the principle of correspondence of an employee to the tasks he/she is supposed to perform.

Observance of the set rules and standards is especially characteristic of 78.4% of Bulgarian, 76.8% of Macedonian, 58.5% of Polish, 50.0% of Czech, 43.4% of Ukrainian, and 32.5% of German managers. The highest percentage of those, for whom the application of this principle is not characteristic, is among the German (9.4%) and Ukrainian (3.2%) managers.

It has been established that delegation of powers boosts the responsibility and motivation of staff, as well as the level of innovation in their work. Special importance of this management principle for them was declared by 72.5% of the surveyed Germans, 64.4% of Macedonians, 64.0% of Bulgarians, 55.7% of Czechs, 45.7% of Poles and only 23.9% of Ukrainians. A substantial percentage of Ukrainian managers cannot delegate their powers (18.2%). This is in conditions where the range of answers of managers from other countries for -1÷ +1 points was within 1,3%÷3,2%.

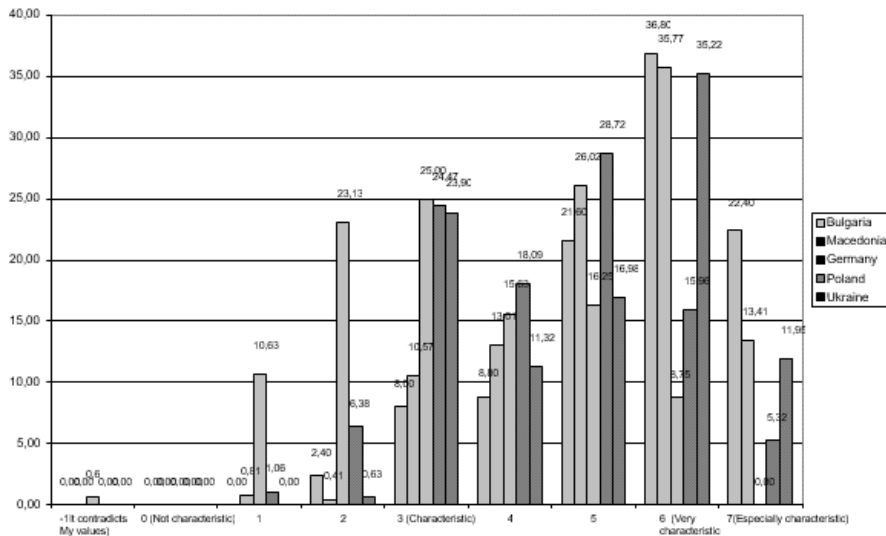


Fig. 2. The use of control function by managers

Especially great significance of controlling the employees’ work and its results was chosen by 80.8% of Bulgarian, 75.2% of Macedonian, 64.2% of Ukrainian, 48.6% of Czech, 50.0% of Polish and 25.0% of German managers. We should note that this function is not characteristic of 11.3% of German managers. For the rest of the surveyed it is of medium importance.

Judging from the results of the survey, we may conclude that the surveyed do not tend to have one particular management style, but use the principles of both democratic and authoritarian styles. Obviously, their choice in a particular situation may depend on a variety of factors: personality of the manager him-/herself, their motivation, qualifications and expectations of the staff, work conditions and company culture. No small share belongs to the system of values accepted in the society and to the spirit of time. Therefore, it is important for a manager to show flexibility and responsiveness in the choice of management style based on the situation [Bonn 2002].

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