

LEADERSHIP AND GENDER IN THE ROMANIAN PREFECTURES

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Abstract

The present paper analyses the leadership styles practiced in Romania's Prefectures Institutions and the impact of gender on it. The purpose is to analyze if the leadership practiced by civil servants from top management is the effective one as well as if female leaders are perceived as being better leaders than men are. The main objective of the study is to establish which are the leadership styles practiced predominantly and the differences between men and women when occupying leadership positions. The methodology of research consists of an opinion survey conducted in the 42 Prefectures (the institutions that represent the Government in each County) of Romania using a questionnaire. The questionnaire measured two types of effective leadership behaviors: transformational and transactional and one ineffective style, namely laissez-faire (Howell, Avolio, 1993). The research revealed that the leaders from the studied institutions are presenting mostly transformational and transactional characteristics and lower scores at the passive leadership behaviors, which makes them effective leaders. A direct relation between gender and the leadership styles practiced could not be established due to the fact that the civil servants considered that men and women behave almost the same when occupying the same leadership position. The study also revealed that the majority of the respondents (over 70%) did not have a preference regarding leaders' gender. Even if the research did not show that women are better leaders than men, the fact that they are perceived as being transformational leaders leads to the idea that female leaders are effective leaders capable of making public institutions more modern, resilient and performant.

Keywords: public administration, gender, transformational leadership, transactional leadership.

1. INTRODUCTION

The European countries tried to adapt and adjust their legal framework in order to guarantee women's access to the labor market, including in positions which suppose high power of decision. Governments are trying to stop or limit women's discrimination in all its forms and to achieve fair access for women in all the labor fields as well as in all management positions, including the top management. If women have achieved equal rights as men regarding access to the labor market and level of remuneration, the gender issue on labor market should be approached from other perspectives. Thus, the attention should be focused inside the labor fields in order to observe if fair access to management positions was guaranteed to women and they managed to be represented in leadership positions in an equal or almost equal manner as men.

Also, female leaders' behaviors should be studied in order to observe if they exhibit the same behaviors as men or if they lead in a different manner, maybe better than men which should help them to gain an advantage when occupying leadership positions.

As in other countries in the world, in Romania, a high number of women are employed (over 60%), but not in a higher proportion than men (National Institute of Statistics, 2019). A massive presence of women in public institutions is encountered. Women represent almost 66% of the civil servants which leads to the overrepresentation of this gender in this labor field. This situation determines the idea that public administration is a feminine working field. If a working area is perceived as being feminine or masculine, in time, the gender gap will wider as the proportion of one gender will rise in detriment of the other. The ideal situation is to achieve

gender balance, with a representation of each gender of more than 40%. In this case, there is an equilibrium, the access of each gender is guaranteed and neither women nor men would be perceived in a negative manner because they would not occupy positions incongruent with their gender.

Observing the Romanian public administration, it is possible that in time, a higher proportion of women to be encountered due to the lack of attractiveness of this field for men. In this situation, the gender distribution on the management positions within public administration should be in equilibrium with a balanced representation of each gender. Previous studies (Profiroiu, Nastaca, 2018), showed that in the central administration of Romania, a certain level of gender equality has been reached as in the last seven years women occupied over 40% of the management positions. Even if women were better represented at the low levels of management positions as heads of office or heads of departments, their proportion was gender-balanced in the top management, too. If Romania's Central Public Administration presented a constant gender ratio and equitable at all levels, we could draw the conclusion that the position of women has improved. Thus, it is time to study the leadership styles exhibited by the top managers from other Romanian public institutions, such as Prefectural Institutions, due to the fact that Prefectures are the Government's representatives in every Romanian county. The Prefectural Institution has as mission to serve the Prefecture to accomplish its missions established by Constitution: guaranteeing the law application and the public order and management of deconcentrated public services of ministries and other central bodies. This analysis is important in order to observe the differences and similarities between the two types of leaders in order to establish if female leaders could gain advantage and become better leaders which could take decisions more needed and suited for reforming the public institutions. If women are visionary leaders with a changing vision, the female leadership advantage might appear in the case of public administration leaders. Effective leadership could also have a positive impact on both civil servants' and institutions' resilience, making them resistant to different shocks and difficult contexts. If female leaders exhibit characteristics of effective leadership styles, they could also play a major role in resilience of public institutions.

Given the current context, this subject is relevant as the leadership style practiced is closely linked to organizational performance. If women leaders lead differently, it could be established if they have the necessary qualities for being effective leaders capable of producing positive leadership outcomes and transforming the public institutions into resilient places characterized by performance, innovation, and modernization.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. *Transformational versus transactional leadership*

Research conducted between 1980 and 1990 concerning leadership (see Bass, 1985, 1998) created the premises of investigating also the gender issue in relation to leadership. Studies concluded that effective leaders inspire and motivate and this way of leading was named transformational leadership (Burns, 1978).

Transformational leadership implies organizational change and also human resources development (Avolio, Waldman, Yammarino, 1991; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Tichy & Devanna, 1986; Tichy & Ulrich, 1984, Pacesila & Colesca, 2019). Transformational leaders will be concerned about employees' emotions, will teach them about ethics and values being visionary and establishing long-term goals. Also, they will use motivational techniques and will focus on meeting employees' needs, treating them accordingly to their personal aptitudes, trying to help them to evolve professionally. Transformational leadership implies acting more like a leader and less like a manager, inspiring subordinates and make them achieve more than is expected of them (Northouse, 2004).

In addition, transformational leaders will develop and use managerial practices which will lead to organizational performance. Also, these leaders will put beside their personal interests and will be involved in accomplishing tasks with their employees while focusing on developing and maintaining quality relationships with them (Bass and Avolio, 1994, Bass, 1985; 2008; Avolio, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

Authors (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, van Engen, 2003) have stated that transformational leaders will always inspire their subordinates to think about their long-term needs. Considering Maslow's motivational theory, it could be assumed that this type of leader helps subordinates to think about their superior needs. Also, these

leaders will encourage employees to embrace the vision and organizational goals through their involvement in the solving-problem process (Țiclău and Mora, 2013). These leaders motivate their' teams to do more than they initially assumed and even more than they thought it would be possible. They set higher, innovative and provocative goals and manage to achieve higher performance than other types of leaders (Hințea, 2015). Also, transformational leadership influences directly the organizational performance, being the main driver for positive results while laissez-faire leadership acts as a performance inhibitor (Hințea, 2015).

Starting from the transformational behaviors, authors (Burns, 1978, Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1998) discovered an opposite leadership style, namely the transactional one. Transactional leadership is based on a cost-benefit relationship between leaders and their teams. Transactional leaders set targets and reward employees who achieved them and sanction those who did not (Burns, 1978, Avolio, 1999 Bass, 1998). This relationship occurs only when leaders and employees accept their positions as well as when a system of rewards and sanctions exists. Bernard Bass (1998) explained transactional leaders know employees' expectations and try to reward them when they reach a certain level of performance. They promise to reward their employees in accordance with their efforts and they always do this. If employees achieve their targets, leaders will understand their needs and will meet their expectations. Summarizing these characteristics, the transactional leadership assumes that the relationship between leaders and their teams is based on a mutual exchange, where both sides want to satisfy their own interests. Also, it implies that the group members can be motivated by a reward-punishment system and the relationship between leaders and employees also depends on leaders' abilities to know their subordinates' needs and to establish clear conditions regarding the relationship between them and the group (Țiclău & Mora, 2013, Pacesila & Colesca, 2020).

The distinction between transactional and transformational leaders was firstly explained by James Burns (1978), who considered that the transactional leadership style implied a relationship between leader and employee, based on exchanges and transactions. The transactional leader rewards those who achieve performance and meet goals that have been previously defined. This type of leadership involves a relationship between leader and group members based on costs and benefits. On the contrary, transformational leaders try to encourage individuals to define and achieve higher goals, which will offer them deep satisfaction and combine their activities to moral and ethical values (Hințea, 2007). Both styles have been considered effective for all types of organizations. In order to complete these two styles, authors (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, van Engen, 2003) have described another style based on the leader's non-involvement in the managerial process. This style was named laissez-faire.

In conclusion, transactional leaders try to implement organizational changes by developing a relationship based on exchange, rewarding those who work hard through income increases or other benefits. In opposition, transformational leaders seek potential in every employee, want to satisfy the superior needs of their employees and involve totally in the managerial process leaving behind their personal interests (Burns, 1978). As it can be noticed, the two types of leadership are different and complement each other. In reality, the two leadership styles are not easily distinguished as a leader can have characteristics of both styles of leadership and even laissez-faire style. Even if a leader does not present characteristics of a single leadership style, this has no negative impact on the organizational performance as long as the non-involvement characteristics are missing or exhibited to a small extent.

2.2. The leadership styles of men and women

Many researchers approached the gender differences and similarities in the leadership process, in order to observe if women lead in a different manner than men (see Eagly and Johnson, 1990). Most authors have argued that there are no differences between women and men when occupying leadership positions (eg, Bartol & Martin, 1986; Nieva & Gutek, 1981; van Engen, van der Leeden, Willemsen, 2001) or downplayed any kind differences that have been identified by researchers (e.g. Powell, 1990).

The differences between the leadership styles practiced by men and women could be determined by the positions they occupy. Starting from this idea Kanter (1997) argued that female leaders behave differently when they occupy positions from the low levels of management. He also argued that when women and men occupy similar positions as power of decision, they behave in a similar manner (see also Ragins, 1991).

Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) analyzed a series of studies that compared women and men in management positions, in terms of transactional, transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles. The sample was formed by subordinates, groups, supervisors or leaders themselves (Eagly, Carli, 2003). The study's results showed that female leaders tend to behave in a more transformational manner and also exhibit transactional traits as rewarding subordinates who achieve performance. Furthermore, men exhibited more two characteristics of transactional leadership: active management (assist subordinates' mistakes and their failures to meet the standards) and passive management (expect problems to become very serious for to intervene). Men have also scored higher concerning laissez-faire behaviors, showing thus their lack of involvement in the management process. In conclusion, the study identified minor differences between men and women in leadership positions but these differences were present in many studies (Eagly, Carli, 2003).

Gender differences in transformational and transactional leadership have implications in women's benefit because researchers defined these styles in an effort to identify effective leadership. Based on this fact, a meta-analysis of 39 studies showed positive correlations between efficiency and all components of transformational leadership and the rewarding behavior, the only aspect related to transactional leadership where women scored higher than men (Lowe, Kroeck and Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

In conclusion, researchers have different opinions regarding the influence of gender on leadership styles. Some argued that men and women lead in similar ways while others claimed that women lead differently and could become better leaders than their male counterparts. This divergence of views can be explained by the way society apprehends women and their roles.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Aim and research' objectives

The purpose of the study is to analyze if the leadership styles practiced by the top managers from Romanian Prefectures are the effective ones as well as if female leaders are perceived as being better leaders than men.

The main objectives of the study are:

Ob.1: To establish which are the leadership styles practiced predominantly in the Romanian Prefecture institutions.

Ob.2: To investigate the gender differences and similarities in the leadership styles practiced by the top managers from Romania's Prefecture institutions.

Ob.3: To explore if gender is a variable that influences civil servants' perception of their leaders' behaviors.

The research started with the following research hypothesis:

H1: The top managers from Romania's Prefecture institutions are presenting mostly transformational characteristics which makes them effective leaders capable of achieving performance.

H2: There are no significant differences between the leadership styles practiced by men and women occupying top management positions from the studied institutions.

H3. Gender is a variable that influences civil servants' perceptions regarding the leadership styles practiced by their leaders.

3.2. Research design and data collection

The research presents the results of a study conducted in Romania's Prefecture Institutions, the institutions which represent the Romanian Government in each County. The research methodology consists of an opinion survey conducted using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed by the authors having the purpose of exploring civil servants' perception of the leadership styles practiced by the top managers (named Directors) from the studied institutions.

The study's participants were selected through the convenience sampling method. The questionnaire was administrated via email between August and September 2019 in all the 42 Prefecture Institutions. It has been sent to the institutional email addresses as well as on email addresses of the departments assigned to public relations. The civil servants responded voluntarily online. From the selected sample we received 100 responses from 26 Prefecture Institutions. The collected data were processed in Microsoft Excel and SPSS and the results were used for hypothesis validation.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first part contained five identification questions regarding the hierarchic position, age, gender, seniority into the institution and the Directors' gender. Another two questions were designed in order to find if the civil servants preferred their department as well as their institution to be led by women or by men.

The second section contained 40 items that measured three leadership styles: the transformational, transactional and laissez-faire styles. The mentioned items were built accordingly to the theories of Burns, (1978), Bass and Avolio (1985) regarding these three leadership styles. From all items, 26 behaviors were characteristic to transformational leaders, ten behaviors to transactional leaders and four behaviors described non-leadership attitudes.

The civil servants were asked to express their opinion regarding the frequency of those behaviors in their leaders' attitudes, using Likert scales. They were asked to rate their leaders' behavior in the mentioned situations on a scale from one to five where the scale meant: 1-not at all, 2- to a small extent, 3- to a medium extent, 4- to a high extent, 5-to the highest extent. The civil servants evaluated their Directors/General Directors/Deputy Executive Directors/Executive Directors, in order to create a comprehensive view of the leaders from Romania's Prefecture Institutions.

The results were analyzed in a comparative manner by the top managers' gender in order to observe if female leaders lead differently as their male counterparts as well as exhibit the characteristics of the effective leadership styles in their leading behaviors, more than men.

3.3. The main characteristics of the sample

The questionnaire was addressed only to the civil servants from the Romanian Prefectures and was filled by 100 civil servants, from 26 Prefectures. The participants were executive civil servants as well as civil servants in management positions, occupying positions of head of office and head of departments.

Concerning respondents' responsibilities, 85 (85 %) were executive civil servants and 15 (15%) were civil servants in management positions. Regarding respondents' professional expertise, only four (4%) respondents were beginners, 16 (16%) were assistants, six (6%) were middle officers and the majority (74%) were senior officers with more than 7 years of experience in public institutions.

Regarding the gender distribution of the respondents, 65% (65) were women and 35% (35) were men. The gender distribution of the sample was in accordance with the gender structure of the total number of civil servants from Romanian public administration. 44% of the respondents (44) had women as Directors and in 56% (56) case the position was occupied by a man.

4. MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In the following section, the results of the study, as well as the hypothesis validation, will be presented. The 40 behaviors which measured the three leadership styles (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire) were grouped in scales. The 26 items measuring the transformational leadership were grouped in six scales: active management, the attitude with regard to human resources involvement in the problem-solving process, the attitude with regard to daily problems, charisma, the attitude towards human resources and the attitude regarding organizational changes. The transactional behaviors were grouped in three scales: the involvement in the managerial process, the attitude towards irregularities and sanctions and the rewarding attitude. Also, the laissez-faire traits were grouped on two scales: passive management and the attitude towards the decision-making process.

The results were presented in a comparative manner, by the Directors' gender in order to observe if there are differences in perception of men's and women's leadership styles.

4.1. TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ROMANIA'S PREFECTURE INSTITUTIONS

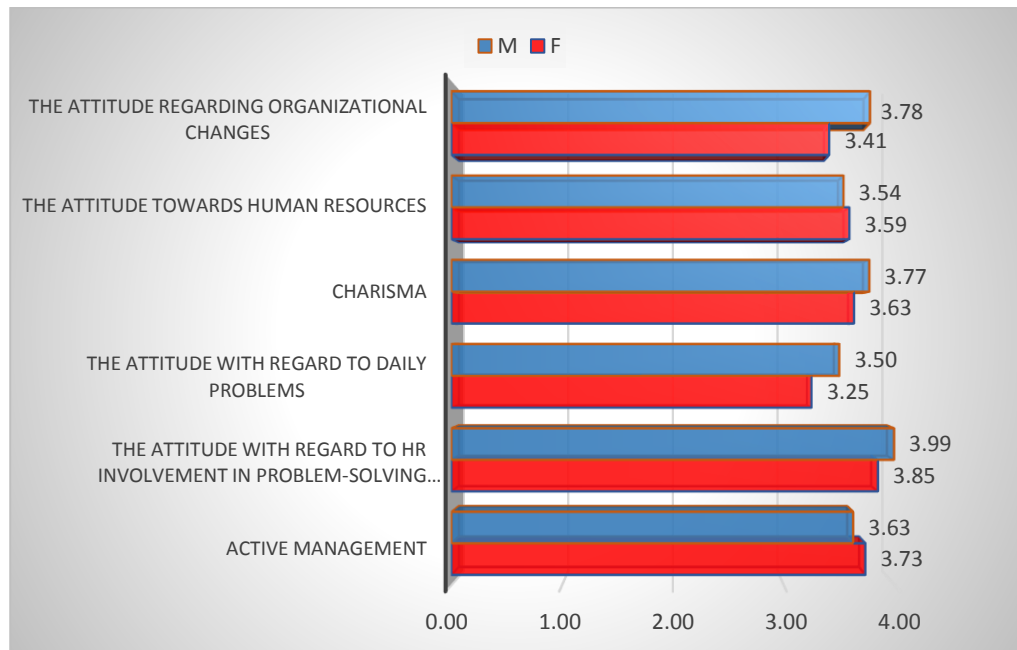


FIGURE 1 - THE AVERAGE TRANSFORMATIONAL SCALES DISTRIBUTION BY DIRECTORS' GENDER

The average scales distribution of the transformational dimensions by Directors' gender showed that the evaluated leaders exhibited transformational traits from a medium to a high extent. It could be observed that both types of leaders were perceived in a positive manner by their subordinates, but male leaders were considered as being more transformational as women in the majority of cases. Female leaders scored higher at only two subscales, namely leaders' attitude regarding human resources (3.59 vs. 3.54) and active management (3.73 vs. 3.63). The differences of perception were not significant but in four of six cases, there were in men's favor.

The findings have a positive impact on both men and women occupying leadership positions in the studied institutions as they present in their leading behaviors the characteristics of the most effective leadership style. The evaluated Directors are leading in a modern and innovative manner, showing a high level of involvement in the problem-solving process while developing the intellectual stimulation of their subordinates, inspiring and building subordinates' trust. Both types of leaders encourage civil servants to develop their skills and competencies and treat them accordingly to their needs and expectations. Even if they could improve these behaviors and exert them mostly between a high and the highest extent, it could be affirmed that the evaluated leaders exhibit transformational traits that could have a positive impact on organizational performance and also on building institutional resilience.

Regarding leaders' attitude towards organizational changes, male leaders were considered more opened towards change, suggesting new methods of completing assignments and trying to use innovation in the managerial process. Both types of leaders displayed behaviors related to the organizational change from a medium to a high extent.

Concerning leaders' attitudes with regard to human resources, both types of leaders tried to pay attention to subordinates' needs and encouraged them to develop their careers by strengthening their skills and competencies. The evaluated leaders treated their subordinates according to their needs, expectations, and abilities, listened to their complaints as well as trying to solve them. They exhibit these behaviors almost in the same manner, from a medium to a high extent.

As far as charisma was concerned, male leaders were considered more charismatic even if the differences in the evaluation were not significant. Charisma is one of the most important features of transformational leadership as charismatic leaders have many followers who will embrace organizational mission and vision, will work harder in order to achieve organizational goals and will show a higher level of performance only due to leaders' inspiring and trustful behaviors. The findings revealed that the evaluated leaders tried to gain subordinates' and colleagues' trust, used empathy in the leading process, having an understanding attitude while inspiring as well as building subordinates' confidence.

Concerning leaders' attitude towards problems, female leaders scored less than men obtaining the lowest score among all the evaluated scales (3.25). Even if male leaders scored higher (3.50) the score was also the lowest, in their case, too. Regarding leaders' attitudes towards daily problems, the civil servants considered that the Directors preferred to prevent problems rather than solve them and tried to use modern methods of solving problems from a medium to almost a high extent.

Regarding human resources involvement in the solving-problem process, the evaluated leaders displayed behaviors related to this scale to a high extent. The civil servants considered that male leaders involved more their subordinates in this process, but the results were similar for both types of leaders. Overall, both types of leaders encouraged subordinates to work in teams, organized brainstorming sessions and encouraged subordinates to express their opinion while considering them in the problem-solving process. The leaders exhibited these behaviors to a high extent which can have a positive impact on the civil servants because leaders make them feel involved in the decision-making process and do not treat them as simply executives.

Regarding the active management scale, female leaders were considered more involved in the managerial process as men. On a whole, even if men scored less (3.63) than women (3.73) the evaluated leaders were involved in the daily activities, appointed explicit assignments and supported subordinates in solving their tasks, almost to a high extent.

Computing the mean for all the six dimensions, the evaluated leaders obtained a score of 3.65 at the transformational leadership style. The result was higher compared with the findings from similar studies conducted in the Romanian public institutions. In research regarding administrative leadership in Romania (Țiclău, Hințea, 2016) the evaluated leaders scored 3.15 at the transformational behaviors. In other studies (Filip, 2015, Țiclău, Balica, Mora, 2013, Stănescu, Roșca, 2010) the leaders scored between 3.15 and 3.4.

4.2. Transactional leadership in Romania's Prefecture Institutions

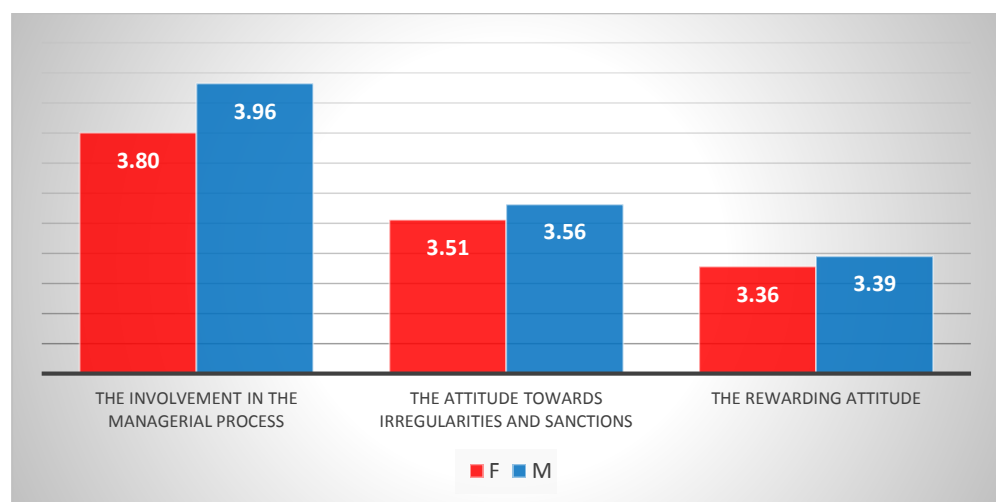


FIGURE 2 - THE AVERAGE TRANSACTIONAL SCALES DISTRIBUTION BY DIRECTORS' GENDER

The questions regarding the transactional behaviors were grouped in three scales: the leader's involvement in the managerial process, the attitude towards irregularities and sanctions and the leaders' rewarding attitude.

The data revealed that both types of leaders behaved in similar ways, as in all cases the leaders obtained almost the same scores.

Regarding the first scale, both types of leaders are perceived as being highly involved in the managerial process. The civil servants considered that their leaders involved in solving all types of problems despite the level of complexity and appointed assignments using delegation to a high extent. Even if the gender differences are very low, the result is not in women's favor as they are not considered more involved in the managerial process as men are.

The data concerning leaders' attitudes with regard to sanctions and irregularities revealed that both types of leaders exerted these behaviors from a medium to a high extent. Even if female leaders scored less (3.51) than men (3.56) the perception was similar and was not in favor of the evaluated leaders. The civil servants considered that their leaders sanctioned those who did not accomplish assignments and pursued errors, mistakes, irregularities, and deviations almost to a high extent. These results are in contradiction to the high scores achieved by leaders at the transformational scales and at the previous scale. If leaders were involved in the managerial process, they should have had a proactive attitude and supported those who committed errors and mistakes. If leaders are using sanctions and exert a high level of control by pursuing errors and irregularities, the relationship between leaders and subordinates will not be strengthened and civil servants will not work in an effective manner.

Regarding the rewarding attitude, both men and women scored in similar ways, even if the difference was in men's favor (3.39 vs. 3.36). The results showed that the evaluated leaders tried to use both financial and non-financial motivation techniques from a medium to a high extent.

The computed mean for all the transactional behaviors revealed that the evaluated leaders scored 3.57, a higher result compared with the findings from other studies conducted in the Romanian public institutions where leaders scored between 2.87 and 2.98 (Țiclău, Hîntea, 2016, Filip, 2015, Țiclău, Balica, Mora, 2013, Stănescu, Roșca, 2010).

4.3. Passive leadership behaviors in Romania's Prefecture Institutions

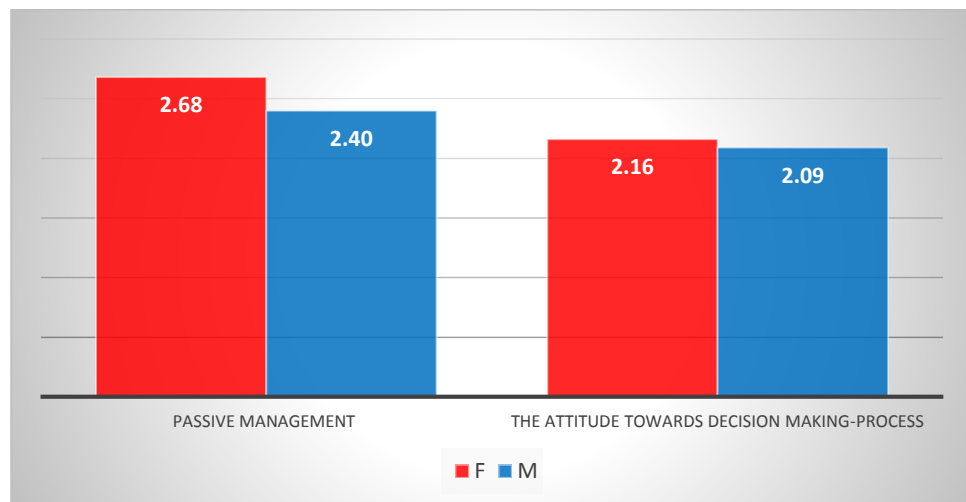


FIGURE 3 - THE AVERAGE LAISSEZ-FAIRE SCALES DISTRIBUTION BY DIRECTORS' GENDER

Regarding passive leadership behaviors, the evaluated leaders scored lower as in the other leadership behaviors, presenting a non-involvement attitude from a low to a medium extent. Regarding the passive management, female leaders scored higher (2.68 vs. 2.40) meaning that the civil servants considered them less involved in the managerial process as men. Also, regarding the attitude towards the decision-making process, the female leaders were considered to avoid making decisions, more than their male counterparts (2.16 vs. 2.09). Even if the differences in the evaluation are low, they are not in women's favor as they are not perceived in a more positive manner as men.

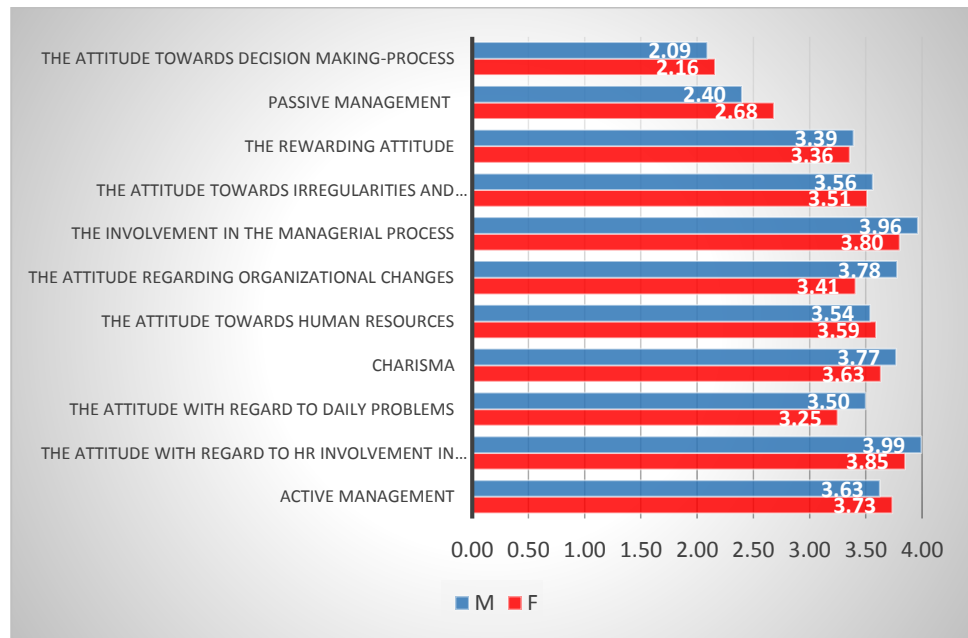


FIGURE 4 - COMPARISON BETWEEN THE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS BY DIRECTORS' GENDER

Comparing the means for all the studied scales it could be observed that female leaders scored higher at four scales. Two scales were related to the passive forms of leadership. Even if the differences between the two types of leaders were not significant, the result is not in women's favor. The result is not in accordance with Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) findings which observed that men usual score higher at the laissez-faire style. In the studied sample, the situation is the opposite. The negative perception could be explained by the fact that women tend to behave in a manner that is not in accordance with their gender roles (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, van Engen, 2003). The other two scales where women scored higher, were related to transformational behaviors. The results are in accordance with Eagly and Carli, (2003), which stated that women tend to exhibit transformational behaviors, more than men do. Even if the female leaders were not perceived as being more transformational in all the evaluated behaviors, they were perceived in a positive manner, as being transformational leaders almost to a high extent. They are considered capable of implementing changes, are visionary leaders who support and assist subordinates' in performing their activities in an efficient manner as well as in developing their careers. The results also revealed that both types of leaders are perceived as behaving in similar ways. The findings are in accordance with Kanter's (1977) theory which stated that men and women behave differently only when they occupy different management positions. If they are situated on the same managerial level, the gender differences in the leadership styles practiced, should not exist.

Furthermore, the data showed that it cannot be affirmed that the studied leaders practiced a certain leadership style as they scored similarly at both transformational and transactional behaviors. Therefore, it could be assumed that both men and women in leadership positions presented a mix of characteristics of both transformational and transactional styles.

4.4. Hypothesis validation

To test the first hypothesis of the study (The top managers from the Romanian Prefectures are presenting mostly transformational characteristics which makes them effective leaders capable of achieving performance) three composite variables were computed for each analyzed leadership style from the means of the analyzed scales (VTR- variable transformational style, VTZ- variable transactional style and VLF- variable Laissez-Faire style). The purpose was to compare the scores obtained by the two types of leaders and to establish the leadership styles exhibited mostly by the leaders from the Romanian Prefectures.

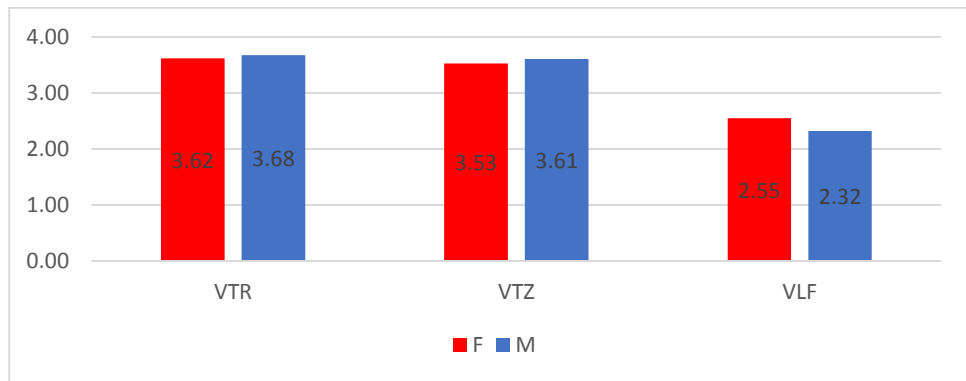


FIGURE 5 - THE LEADERSHIP STYLES IN ROMANIA'S PREFECTURE INSTITUTIONS, BY GENDER

The results validated the first hypothesis as the evaluated leaders scored higher at the transformational behaviors as they did to the other leadership styles. Nevertheless, it could not be stated that they presented transformational traits to the highest extent as the results showed that they exhibited both transformational and transactional styles almost to the same extent.

TABLE 1 - THE INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
VTR	Equal variances assumed	.731	.395	-.343	98	.732	-.05831	.17008	-.39582	.27921
	Equal variances not assumed			-.348	96.813	.728	-.05831	.16737	-.39050	.27389
VTZ	Equal variances assumed	.036	.850	-.693	98	.490	-.07982	.11512	-.30827	.14864
	Equal variances not assumed			-.701	95.650	.485	-.07982	.11391	-.30594	.14631
VLF	Equal variances assumed	.008	.927	1.294	98	.199	.22971	.17745	-.12244	.58185
	Equal variances not assumed			1.297	93.215	.198	.22971	.17707	-.12190	.58132

In order to test the second hypothesis (There are no significant differences between the leadership styles practiced by men and women occupying top management positions from the studied institutions), the Independent Samples T-Test was used. The results validated the hypothesis as no significant differences between the exhibited leadership behaviors have been found. As the value of Sig. was higher than 0.05, the test showed that both men and women are perceived as practicing the same leadership styles.

TABLE 2 - CORRELATION BETWEEN GENDER AND THE PRACTICED LEADERSHIP STYLES

		Correlations			
		Directors' Gender	VTR	VTZ	VLF
Directors' Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	.035	.070	-.130
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.732	.490	.199
	N	100	100	100	100
VTR	Pearson Correlation	.035	1	.787**	-.316**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.732		.000	.001
	N	100	100	100	100
VTZ	Pearson Correlation	.070	.787**	1	-.027
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.490	.000		.791
	N	100	100	100	100
VLF	Pearson Correlation	-.130	-.316**	-.027	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.199	.001	.791	
	N	100	100	100	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The third hypothesis (Gender is a variable that influences civil servants' perceptions regarding the leadership styles practiced by their leaders) was tested by computing a correlation between gender and the leadership styles practiced. The hypothesis did not validate as the value of Sig. was higher than 0.05 resulting that gender is not a variable that could influence civil servants' perception.

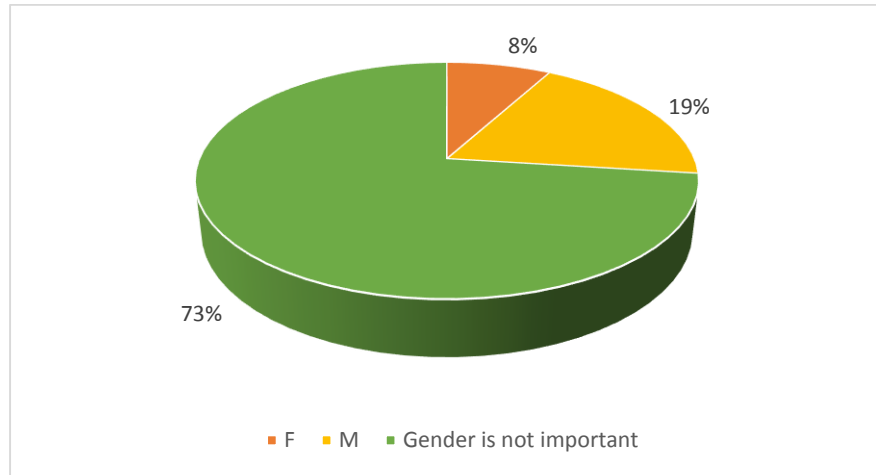


FIGURE 6 - CIVIL SERVANTS' PREFERENCE REGARDING THE DIRECTOR'S GENDER

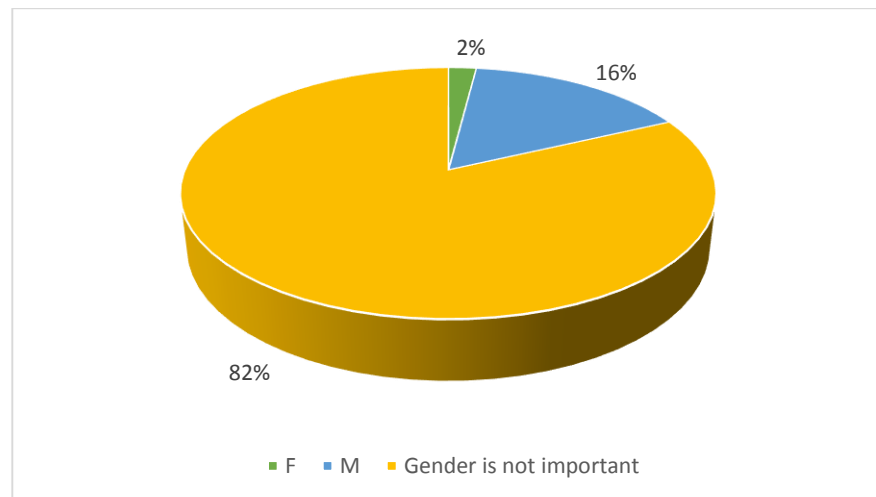


FIGURE 7 - CIVIL SERVANTS' PREFERENCE REGARDING THE GENDER OF THE INSTITUTION LEADERS

The civil servants were also asked if they had any preference regarding their leaders' gender. It could be noticed that over 70% considered that the Directors' gender was not important. Regarding the head of the institution's gender, they also stated in a high proportion (82%) that they had no preference. The data supports the correlation results because if the civil servants are not interested in their leaders' gender it is unlikely that this variable would influence their perception regarding the practiced leadership styles.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research revealed that the leaders from the studied institutions are presenting mostly transformational and transactional characteristics and lower scores at the passive leadership behaviors, which makes them effective leaders. It could not be strongly affirmed that the evaluated leaders are transformational leaders but rather that they presented a mix of characteristics from both leadership styles.

The female leaders were perceived in a positive manner, but not in a better manner than men were. They scored almost equally at both transformational and transactional behaviors but lower than male leaders did.

The Independents Samples T-Test showed that there were no significant differences by gender between the perception about the two types of leaders.

Moreover, the study revealed that female leaders possessed the necessary qualities to inspire subordinates and build their trust. Furthermore, the civil servants considered that the female leaders motivated them, encouraged them to work in teams and tried to develop a strong relationship with them. They also inspired their subordinates, were optimistic, helped them to see the future in a positive manner and were confident that the organizational goals could be achieved if every civil servant was involved.

Both types of leaders should try to involve more in the managerial process and support their subordinates in their activities. They should try to pursue errors and mistakes to a less extent and to have a more encouraging attitude. They also should motivate their teams more, even through non-financial motivation techniques. The leaders should avoid to take decisions to a lower extent and should be more present when they are needed. Female leaders should be more opened toward organizational change and they should be more decided when making important decisions.

The research could not establish a direct relationship between gender and the leadership styles practiced due to the fact that the civil servants considered that men and women behave almost the same when occupying the same leadership position. The study also revealed that the majority of the respondents (over 70%) did not have a preference regarding leaders' gender. Even if the research did not show that women are better leaders than men, the fact that they are perceived as being transformational leaders means that they have the necessary qualities of the effective leaders and are capable of modernizing the public institutions making them more resilient and more performant.

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