

# COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PERSONAL DIFFERENCE AND SIMILARITIES IN CREATIVE LEADERSHIP IN MACEDONIA, SLOVENIA AND SWEDEN

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of the paper is a better understanding the construct of creativity and creative leadership and the impact of social and institutional factors on individual and organizational physiognomy. The focus of the paper is examining differences in the manifestation of the components of creative leadership in various social macro and micro environments that have different socio- economic, socio-cultural and other status. In order to raise the scientific relevant labor few main points related to the explanation of the phenomenon of creativity and its essential role in creative leadership. The historical review of theoretical and empirical research and elaboration of creativity with special emphasis on Gilford's analysis on creativity is carried on.*

**KEYWORDS:** Leadership, Survey, Macedonia, Sweden, Slovenia

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Creativity or creative leadership in the 21st century represented with each individual, organizational attributes immediately become status symbols in contemporary management theory and practice. Observed in a retrospective relationship in socio-historical context and modern organizational trends we can discern an obvious continuum that ranges from a peripheral surface and skeptical conceptualization of becoming an affirmative, attractive and marketing organization designation. For these reasons, interest in individual operational and organizational efficiency initiate a number of theoretical and empirical scientific elaborations primarily because of their determination and multidimensional conditionality central focus in them directed at detecting personal and organizational top characteristics. Therefore, in modern scientific history interdisciplinary notion of creativity as a fundamental psychological trait of personality strengthens its scientific positioning primarily due to its social, institutional and individual implications and repercussions. Increased interest phenomenology of individual and organizational performance creativity leads her to the subject of intensified scientific interest especially in the organizational context.

Special focus highly calibrated scientific analysis from different scientific areas have problems in defining and identifying indicators of creativity that confront a range of traditional and modern concepts. It can be observed through the following approaches: creativity is something new, original, valuable, convenient, useful, applicable, unexpected (Sternberg, 1996, 1999), mental process that creates new ideas or products or a combination of existing (Gallagher 1986), divergent ability, (Renzulli & Reis 1985), a well-executed product (Arar i Racki, 2003), new ideas that are important for the overall other intellectual domain (DeHaan, 2009), fresh ideas to change Amabile i sur. (2005, which aim at achieving successful goals (DeHaan, 2009). The concept for development of creativity that interact with core scientific thesis about whether creativity is a victim of genetic determinism or stylized dominant social construct. Evolution of studies of creativity in inter-correlative relations with other psychological variables such as intelligence (Maker, Nielson & Rogers, 1997), emotional intelligence, styles of management ((Myers, McCaulley, Quenk i Hammer, 1998 according to Larsen i Buss, 2008 ) and certain personality traits, Gulford, Kaufman i Sternberg (2006), Studying the phases of the creative process (preparation, incubation, illumination verification) (Aleinikov, 1994) actualized scientific findings on whether there is a need of moving or redefining the standard scientific matrix. Structures manifest creativity, process, quality,

product, environment, (Rhodes), behavior (Guilford, Jackson i Messick,), thinking (Guilford): Developing creativity by using creative techniques: "The storm of ideas Alexa Osborna (1950 to present), theory of inventive problem solving Genrikha Altshullera (1950 to present) and" lateral thinking "Edwarda de Bona (1960 today) "cognitive maps" Tony Buzan. Characteristics of creative leadership, originality, flexibility, creative imagination, tolerance, creative generalization, fluency of ideas, discovery, formulation, problem solving and more. (Parnes) followed by: divergent production, affinity to a real risk, redefining the position, proactive, high degree of self-awareness and fondness for humor...Highlighting the importance of the functioning of the organizational climate (Runco, 2007) and culture as determinant of individual and organizational creativity (Glor, 1997; Tushman i O'Reilly, 1997 by Martins i Martins, 2002). And promote the access to organizational creativity Basadur (2005, towards Bear i Kaufman, 2006). Advertised focal points produced a number of scientific and lay divergent attitudes and prejudices that define individual and organizational sensibility to the manifest forms and developing creativity and creative leadership.

### **Interdisciplinary observations to developing creative leadership**

Nowadays we can not agree with the conclusion that creativity is the most desired feature of the leaders in the business world in the 21st century. For these reasons the creative way of managing the leaders as a unique and distinctive artistic identity is positioned high in the theoretical, but especially in empirical studies of effective leadership. A number of studies suggest that the spectrum of behavior of leaders can greatly influence the creativity of employees Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, and Herron, 1996; Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, and Kramer) especially through their self concept creative power and their creative efficiency; Tierney & Farmer, 2002). by Steven M. Farmer, S. M & Tierney, P., (2007). Therefore, creative leadership is perceived as a multidimensional phenomenon conditioned and determined as a result of (un) predictable dynamic organization of cognitive, emotional, conative and other personality traits. But certainly we start from a general dilemma of how it works, whether it is a victim of genetic determinism or result of social determination, whether exist with creative individuals or their complex dynamic interaction of personal attributes define and model? We could say that this is the key issues when considering the perception of creativity in general functioning of the creative personality. Or more specifically we can start from a composite or a general assumption which has an apparent paradoxical connotation that creativity and the creative person can be found in many places,

but there are few such places. In revealing these dilemmas will start with simpler psychological and neurological interpretation of this complex phenomenon. Creativity is often used to function on a mysterious and paradoxical way since (more) call has atypical motivation beyond the usual motivational talk. It is because the motivation for creative inspiration and ideas are usually not visible because the result of complex cognitive abilities are different from ordinary thought processes. Neurological analyzes the emergence of creativity in the direction of the claim that it is much more complicated than the simple division and operation of the (rational and analytical) and right hemisphere (the creative and emotional). Even considered that there are a range of cognitive processes, neural connections that do not have a clear picture and idea of how the our creative mind. From a psychological point of view we can say that creative people are difficult to “tame” because habits and routines are hard to discern themselves and are often confused minds, “according Skot Beri Kaufman from University of New York, given the fact that there are no “typical” creative individuals, but part of the properties and behavior. Despite the existence of a thesis arising from the behavioral approach to leadership perception that successful leaders are not born, however, we can say that creative leadership is determined by having a certain genetic predisposition that subsequently activate modified social context.

## **THEORETICAL ANALYSIS**

### **Transformational leadership as an implicit basis of creative leadership**

*“Being a leader does not make you creative, but if you are creative, then you can be a leader.”*

The analysis of existing theoretical concepts of leadership that have a direct correlation about creative leadership indicate that transformational leading directly or indirectly affect the creativity and innovation in the organizational context. This kind of leadership inspire his followers to overcome the interests and direct collective organizational goals (Bass, & Avolio, 1990). This kind of management incentive allows employees to be innovative and creative, allows individual and organizational growth and development (Bass, 1999). Mamford and coworkers (2000) believe that creative problem solving means is essential for creative leadership and claim that complex problems won't be able to solve routine and

simple way without having to reshape and reform their knowledge into new units Mamford and coworkers(2000, p. 12).In this context we can postestime the definition of creativity according Vudman and coworkers (1993, p. 293), according to Stefanovic, A., (2015) who believe that is the “creation of valuable, useful, new products include several aspects : the creative process, product, person, situation, right who are in constant interaction. In this organizational construct is perceived according to three levels: the individual level of creativity, group creativity level and organizational level of creativity that need holistic observation. The paper puts special emphasis on the individual level of creativity which introduces a host of personal qualities cognitive level of functioning stimulated by social contextual factors. Famous authors (Wang, & Rode, 2010) in their empirical studies indicate that transfromational leading affect creativity especially the followers and other artists. These authors suggest that the transformation leaders have four positive traits that affect the creativity of employees, such as: charisma, others admire, respect and loyalty. Transformation leaders help their employees overcome the fear of statusa quo, situations leading to increased levels of creativity (Gong et al., 2009), but mechanisms that leaders influence creativity have not been sufficiently explored (Tierney, 2009).

### **Defining creative leadership**

Creativity as a psychological trait of the person was out of the constructive part of effective leadership. Specifically Stajr i Sandgren (2005) and other colleagues use the term creative leadership. Strenberg actually begins research on creative leadership describing it in it’s effective leadership that relies on intelligence or skills that he appointed as practical and creative intelligence. From here we conclude that creative leadership relies on the theory of the creative process and its application to individual, group and organizational levels. While Strenberg includes creativity as important fact for predicting efficient lidership, Mamford and his colleagues go a step further claiming that the main task of leadership is a creative problem-solving, in fact the skill to creatively solve problems is essential for effective leadership Mamford and workers ( 2000). Speaking of creative leaders, Alan Dz. Rou (2008, p. 36) points to several essential characteristics and behavior, namely: ease in solving problems, proneness to imagination, encouraging people, creating an environment that stimulates inovation, desire to develop their creativity, entuziasm, high self-esteem and others. Kuzes i Posner (2006) suggest that creative leaders have: perseverance, confidence, alertness, initiative, extraversion, trust,

tolerance, cooperation, integrity, intelligence, determination and others. Renowned author Pitera Drakera (2006) argues that they are not preachers but have their own vision, not afraid of diversity are aware of their creative potential, risk and fail. At the end of creative leadership we can view it as a dynamic interaction organized set of cognitive, socio-emotional, moral and other qualities that produce recognizable professional and personal character that has a real self-perception and identity of success.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Purpose and Objective**

The purpose of the research was to present and study the dominant personality traits of managers with respect to creative leading.

The research objectives were:

- to obtain the opinion of managers about whether they feel like
- creative leaders;
- to establish whether they are using creative methods in leading;
- to examine whether they are resolving stressful situations in a
- creative way;
- to research whether managers are given freedom to lead creatively.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were asked:

- Do managers feel like creative leaders?
- Are managers using creative methods in their work?
- Are managers resolving stressful situations in a creative way?
- To what extent are managers leading their organizations creatively?

## **Data Collection Methods and Techniques**

The research was based on a quantitative work method. A descriptive method was used to explain and understand the topic of discussion. The data was collected using a survey technique. A questionnaire with closed-ended questions was used, which had been prepared based on a review of literature. The first set of questions refers to the demographic data of the respondents (gender, age, country, position, number of employees in the organization, the type of organization in which they are employed). The second set of questions refers to the personality traits of managers that are predominant in creative leading.

## **Sample Description**

The survey sample consists of 98 managers, of whom 38 (38.8%) are from Macedonia, 30 (30.6%) from Slovenia and 30 (30.6%) from Sweden. Among them are 45 women (46%) and 53 men (54%). As regards age structure, the survey encompassed 33% of respondents aged 46 to 50, followed by 20% of respondents aged 51 to 55, 19% aged 56 and over, 15% of respondents aged 41 to 45, 12% aged 34 to 40, and 1% of those who were between 29 and 33 at the time of the survey. 45% of them are top-level managers, 32% are middle-level managers, and 23% are lower-level managers. Slightly over half of the respondents (51%) are employed in organizations with up to 50 employees; 20% are working in organizations with 51 to 99 employees; 13% with 100 to 199 employees; 9% with 200 to 399 employees; and 4% of managers are employed in organizations with 400 employees or more. 44% are employed in education, 18% in industry, 11% in catering, 7% in banking, and 20% elsewhere (commerce, construction, culture, media, healthcare); 51% are employed in public institutes and 49% in private institutes.

## **Description of Data Processing**

The data was processed using the SPSS 19.0 statistical software package. The survey was conducted via the online questionnaire [www.1ka.si](http://www.1ka.si); the link to the questionnaire was sent to contacts via e-mail and published on social networks. All of the respondents participated in the survey voluntarily and anonymously in the first half of February 2017.

## Research Results and Interpretation

We wished to determine to what extent managers use creativity in leading. The respondents were offered 15 claims, which they answered with numbers ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning “I strongly disagree”, 2 “I disagree”, 3 “I agree somewhat”, 4 “I agree”, and 5 “I strongly agree”.

Table 1: Claims about creative leading (N=98)

Claim	Answers					Mean	Standard deviation
	1	2	3	4	5		
I always strive to find more solutions to one problem.	0%	3%	18%	33%	46%	4.2	0.9
I think I am flexible in many work situations.	0%	1%	18%	44%	37%	4.2	0.8
I usually use creative methods with employees and myself.	0%	4%	33%	36%	27%	3.9	0.9
I think I have a high sense of humor in management.	0%	7%	28%	38%	28%	3.9	0.9
I possess a high level of confidence.	1%	8%	21%	38%	32%	3.9	1.0
I possess enough courage to take risks.	2%	8%	18%	39%	33%	3.9	1.0
Emotions are important for successful leading.	6%	12%	30%	25%	27%	3.6	1.2
I am flexible in solving communication problems with employees.	0%	6%	26%	37%	32%	4.0	0.9
I always resolve stressful situations in an original way.	2%	14%	37%	29%	17%	3.5	1.0
I have freedom in our organization to lead creatively.	4%	11%	22%	33%	29%	3.7	1.1
I possess a strong desire for self-affirmation.	3%	15%	29%	31%	21%	3.5	1.1



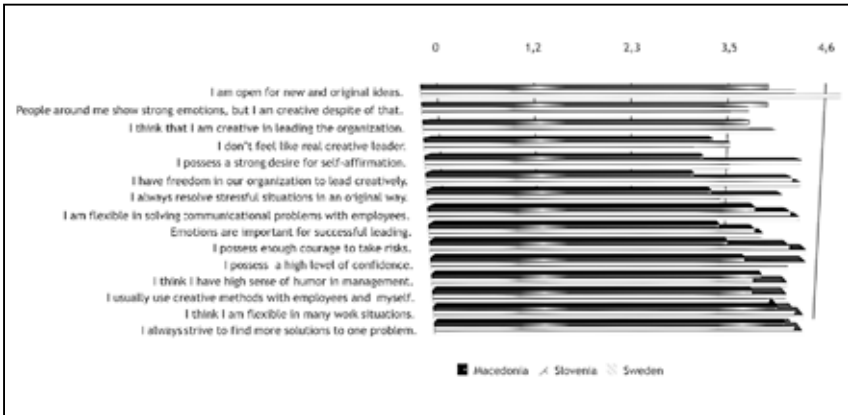
continued Table 1

Claim	Answers					Mean	Standard deviation
	1	2	3	4	5		
I don't feel like a truecreative leader.	16%	27%	30%	17%	10%	2.8	1.2
I think that I am creative in leading the organization.	1%	8%	31%	42%	18%	3.7	0.9
People around me show strong emotions, but I am creative despite of that.	0%	11%	26%	47%	16%	3.7	0.9
I am open tonew and original ideas.	1%	6%	17%	28%	49%	4.2	1.0

It has been established that managers always strive to find solutions to problems (= 4.2); that they can be flexible in many situations (= 4.2), especially when solving communication problems (= 4.2); and that they are open to new ideas (= 4.2). They do their job confidently (= 3.9); they often use creative methods (= 3.9), and in the process often resort to humor (= 3.9) and take risks (= 3.9). Managers have also stated that they are given enough freedom to lead creatively (= 3.7); they believe that they are leading their organization and employees with a great deal of creativity (= 3.7); and that they allow their co-workers to show their emotions, which does not interfere with their creative leading (= 3.7). They also believe that emotions are important for successful leading (= 3.6). They are capable of resolving stressful situations relatively well and in an original way (= 3.5). As it turns out, they have a relatively strong desire for self-affirmation (= 3.5). They disagree or agree somewhat with the claim that they do not feel like true creative leaders (= 2.8).

In the next stage of the survey, we wished to see how the managers answered claims with regard to their country of origin, because we wanted to check if their questions differed based on that.

Graph 1: Claims about creative leading – results by countries



The results of Graph 1 show no significant differences in the answers to the claims, judging from the average scores, except for the following claims:

- I am open for new and original ideas: Macedonia 3.8, Slovenia 4.1, Sweden 4.6),
- Possess high motive for self-affirmation: Macedonia 3.1, Slovenia 4.2, Sweden 3.4,
- I have freedom in our organization for creative leading: Macedonia 3.0, Slovenia 4.1, Sweden 4.2,
- I always solve stressful situations on the original way: Macedonia 3.2, Slovenia 4.0, Sweden 3.3,
- I possess enough courage for taking risks: Macedonia 3.4, Slovenia 4.1, Sweden 4.3.

## CONCLUSION

Managers who want to do their job successfully, must realize that in order to be efficient, they must, above all, employ rational and administrative approaches. Nevertheless, they must not ignore the fact that their success is also facilitated by the possibility to make free decisions, by creativity, by creating things that border on the impossible, and by tearing down existing patterns and obstacles, all of which are entirely creative values.

The results of the survey conducted on a sample of 98 managers from Macedonia, Slovenia and Sweden have shown that managers feel like creative leaders, because they have been given the opportunity to employ creative leading methods, and that they have enough freedom in their organizations to lead creatively.

It can be said that creative managers are idea managers, who should allow their co-workers freedom, creativity, networking, humor and risk-taking, and should by no means create an atmosphere of fear and restrictions. Such managers must, first and foremost, promote thinking about new ideas and, simultaneously, teach their co-workers suitable thinking skills. They must encourage employees to be creative, full of ideas, which they say out loud, and to know exactly who to turn to in order to make their ideas heard. A creative manager listens to ideas and in the next step also brings them to life. Thus every idea gets its turn and is discussed, no matter how small or even if it is so big that it transcends the current company framework. An idea is not necessarily a new product or an entirely new application; it can be a simplified work process, which would consequently be more efficient. Nowadays, the ability to think outside the box, to give fresh ideas and promote creativity within teams is the key skill of the modern, successful and creative manager.

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