

# LEADERSHIP VERSUS MANAGEMENT IN LOCAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FROM ROMANIA

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## Abstract

Work entitled "Leadership versus Management in local public administration from Romania" is focused mainly on a document research of general aspects of leadership and public management.

In this regard, both major concepts plays an essential role, in theory as in practice from public administration , the role of thesis it is to bring out relief a analyze comparing two of those, but with a trend of focusing in leadership, especially on delimitations of management leadership and exactly comparisons or report between manager and leader.

A clear image regarding the relation between both, with different and commune elements will help us understand their importance for a administrative system in reforming process , with a vision of developing a type of leadership for Romania.

*Key words:* leadership, management, public administration, leader vs. public manager, administrative reform

*Clasification JEL:* D73, H1, H83

## 1. Defining the terms of leadership and management

Leadership and management do not represent new or unique concepts in Romania. On the contrary, we come across them both in the state's private and public sector, but there appears to be an imbalance between approach, application and quantification, meaning that leadership was given more attention to in the private sector, being a topic which is continuously expanding, and less approached in the public sector, whereas management is met predominantly in the public sector.

Based on these facts, a comparative analysis of the two concepts will highlight the similarities and differences and will generate, why not, another reason for the current public administration, which talks about a deep reform, to accentuate idea of public leadership development.

Even if leadership is known worldwide as being efficient and is applied based on the characteristics of each country, in Romania, even though the issue of highlighting leadership during the process of administrative reform was addressed, nothing was done to cultivate the idea of leadership in the public administration, and even less when it came to finding a strategy in this regard.

Management, conceptually, as theory and applied science, is lawfully and indissolubly linked to the activity conducted by „the father of scientific management” – Frederik W. Taylor (1971), who really put his stamp on the thinking process and practice of management science, his contribution being thus recognized as a decisive input when it comes to applying science in the governance process.

The work of Henry Fayol (1916), known as „the father of management's modern theory”, is also remarkable through its outstanding valences, being dedicated to management's development. Thus, in his work entitled „General and industrial management”, which represents the base of his administrative views, he emphasizes the governance's role and functions, referring directly to: anticipation, organization, orders distribution, coordination and control.

In Romania, we talk about a public management which appeared as a separate field of the governance's science in the public sector after 1989 and which imposed the need for its rising, knowledge and development as a condition of solving the management crisis; it needed, obviously, to be formed and prepared accordingly in order to meet the Romanian

society's demands regarding the human resources from the public sector, meaning the permanent public officials and those selected who operate in the public administration institutions.

In the worldwide literature, which is rich when it comes to defining management, we come across more opinions, among which we can find that of Alexandru Puiu (2007), who said that the management, as a general meaning, „represents a system of concepts, methods and instruments which lead to orienting and leading an economic entity (national economy, company etc.) to achieve certain goals, in order to reach performances as high as possible”.

Peter Druker (1972) also said that „the manager directs the activity of others and achieves its activity by making others achieve theirs” or, summarized, „management equals the people who govern”.

We are still referring to Romania but, this time, we talk about a quite permissive leadership, meaning that it can have more meanings.

The explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language defines leadership as a governance activity or function. Even though this definition is pretty clear (if we talk about leadership, we talk about governance), it isn't enough to fully understand the concept.

Some definitions emphasize the governance as a process. For example, Jaques and Clement (1994) define leadership as a „process through which a person sets a goal or a direction for one or many people and makes them act together with competence and complete dedication in order to achieve them”.

Other definitions of leadership highlight the leader's capacity to make people to do something (which they wouldn't have done on their own) in order to achieve some goals or a common target. A third approach in defining leadership emphasizes the human relationships which form within it. This being said, Massarik, Tannenbaum and Wescheler (1961) define leadership as an „interpersonal influence, performed in a certain situation and directed through a process of communication towards achieving a goal or specific targets”.

Having said these, we can state that leadership and management actually represent distinct dimensions, even if they have common elements, meaning that leadership represents the capacity to determine people to act, whereas management ensures the achievement of goals through its functions.

### **1.1. Conceptual boundaries leadership - management**

This subchapter doesn't aim to highlight different aspects that could put one of the two domains of activity on a pedestal at the expense of the other, on the contrary, even if leadership and management are totally different activities, they do not exclude each other, even more, they complete one another.

If the concept of management refers to “taking up responsibilities in order to achieve a goal and efficiently assigning resources (physical and human) to this end” and the concept of leadership refers to “the process of influencing and directing the members of an organisation towards achieving the goal”, Bennis and Nanus (1985) managed to summarize the difference between leadership and management into one phrase: “Managers are people who do things as they need to be done, and leaders are people who do the right things”.

Given the complexity and ambiguity of the concept of leadership, a confusion appears. Thus, the concept of leadership overlaps, for many people, with the process of management. In reality, the two, even if they have common features, are different concepts, and mentioning this difference is very important in order to describe the elements which define the ruling act (Clegg and Birch, 2002).

The two processes are different from each other, starting from their final aim.

When it comes to management, we talk about more efficiency and stability, whereas, in leadership, these goals are secondary, because the main attention is paid towards motivating and leading people in order to achieve the targets (effectiveness).

### **1.2. Managers and Leaders: Are they different?**

The leaders represent managers or any other type of people who have a special capacity of leading collectives as broad as possible, including nations, who powerfully motivate their subordinates and channel them in order to achieve a certain goal; they are the people who possess the gift of influencing the faith of as many people as possible. Leaders are not always managers, they can simply be the first in their branch of activity. For example, we can say that Mihai Eminescu is the leader of Romania's poets or, as they say, „the Evening star of Romanian poetry” .

„A leader is born or formed?”

This is a question whose answer consists in the fact that these alternatives aren't necessarily exclusive. In order to become a leader one needs, without a doubt, innate special qualities, but these need to be cultivated and developed.

A powerful ruling requires innate talent, thus being an art, but it also needs some special skills and complex techniques, which can be achieved through school, experience, thus being also a science.

The same thing could also be said about the manager, you are not born a manager, you develop as a human and a specialist in this certain field through deep study, work, thus through experience.

A manager does not need to be brilliant, he must prove he is tough, consistent, intelligent, that he has strength of character, analytical skills, tolerance and benevolence (Zaleznik, 1977).

Even though Zaleznik perceives the leader and the management as complementary entities, they differentiate through motivation, way of thinking and manner of action.

Here are a few significant differences between a manager and a leader:

- The attitude they have when it comes to goals – managers tend to adopt impersonal, and even passive attitudes towards the proposed goals and see the fulfillment of these goals as a necessity rather than a desire; on the other hand, the leader is dynamic and adopts an open attitude, is active when it comes to goals, him being the one who determines the direction in which the entity is heading.
- How they perceive the work process – for managers, the instinct of conservation is the one which dictates the activities, they choose pragmatism most of the time, routine and safety when it comes to new situations which imply major changes; leaders, on the other hand, in order to be more efficient, awaken people's interest, adopt strategies which imply a higher risk and, when the chance of an opportunity and a reward seems promising, they are willing to seek risk or danger.
- Their relations with the organization's members – the manager's attitude towards human interactions can have different aspects, the desire for interrelationship, but also the preference of a lower degree of emotional involvement in these relations. Leaders interact in a more intuitive and emphatic manner. The difference arises between the manager's attention towards the manner in which the events happen and the leader's attention towards the event's semnification, as seen by the participants. An interesting feature is the way in which the subordinates characterize their managers or leaders. In their opinion, the manager is relentless, detached and manipulative, whereas the leader is described using adjectives with a highly emotional content.

For example, Alexandru Puiu (2007) makes a comparison in (table nr. 1) between the main characteristics of a manager-leader and a manager (regular), which doesn't interfere with the qualities that justify the leader.

**Table nr. 1 : Comparison manager – leader and regular manager**

<b>MANAGER - LEADER</b>	<b>REGULAR MANAGER</b>
A. Key features	
- Chooses, creates and produces events, enthusiasm, confidence;	- Allows the achievement of goals with the help of other people;
- Creates organizational groups and cultures;	- Relies on organizing and control;
- Has a long-term vision, lives in the present, but is concerned with the future;	- Carries out responsibilities, focusing mainly on the present;
B. Creating an agenda	
- Looks at situations in the context of the whole system.	- Looks at situations summarized at cell level.
C. Human relations system	
- Gathers people, offering them a purpose, using their passions, triggering their emotions, helps and supports.	- Encourages competition, organizes people according to rules, making use of its authority.
D. Implementation	
- Motivates and inspires people's effort to overcome political barriers, bureaucratic barriers and resource boundaries;	- Monitors the results, identifies the misconducts, replans the activity;
- Seeks new responsibilities.	- Is prepared to accept responsibilities.
E. Result	
- Leads to change, many times in a dramatic manner, engages in big international competitions, under the condition of sharp fluctuations in the market.	- Makes orders, has a certain predictability, has the ability to give consistency to some key-results.

Undoubtedly, the leader and the manager represent ruling positions, but the difference could be made by the managerial capacity, meaning the multidisciplinary ability.

## **2. Do we need leaders or managers in the public administration?**

Yes, we do have managers in the public administration, and yes, we may need some leaders in the public sector, but we must identify and form the latter ones. Since 2003, with the help of European projects, we tried creating a board of public managers in the public administration but, unfortunately, 13 years apart, the results are not those hoped for, meaning that very few of them have truly become leaders in the public administration, others got lost through various ministries and aren't used at their true professional training, or very few of them even remember of the project entitled „public manager”.

It is obvious that we must watch the particularities of the public and private sector closely, particularities linked to leaders versus managers. This is because, in the private sector, the zero goal is profit, whereas in the public sector the zero goal is satisfying the beneficiaries' interests, so we witness a different type of leadership, because the managerial instruments used for implementing are also different.

If we talk about decisional, financial and motivational autonomy in the private sector, in the public sector everything changes, and we come across some economic variables (no money in the budget), human variables (staff shortage, etc.), motivational variables (lack of motivation and appreciation); it is hard to talk about a real type of leadership in

Romania and about the need of promoting a leadership which is specific to the public administration domain.

People wish for a reform of the public administration system in Romania and, even if we want a real reform, we must give leadership an important role in implementing the reform, because leadership contains two extremely important factors: people and change.

Why? Because leadership expresses itself only during human interactions and the changes that happen among employees, manifested through behaviour and mentality, represent the change in that specific entity. And, in order to have a successful reform of the public sector, we need to train leaders in the public administration, leaders which, at their turn, could help spread, promote and maintain the new values.

Leadership isn't a new or foreign concept in Romania's public sector, the problem is that its implementation was never a priority.

Studies show that other countries, such as Great Britain, Sweden, Holland, Austria, Germany, Norway, Iceland, New Zealand, USA, Finland, Poland, Japan have given high importance to this subject over the years, and the results have not ceased to appear.

Why not in Romania?

### **3. Strategies used for adopting a type of leadership in Romania's public administration**

Even if the administrative reform started in stages and the public sector dealt with a lot of problems in Romania, our country owns such a human and intellectual capital that it could develop a certain type of leadership which could come up with solutions and could adapt to our country's public administrative structures.

According to an UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) report, in the present, in all the countries in the world, including Romania, arise more and more reasons to develop and apply the science of leadership; this is also because the leader of the public organization has to deal with creating visions regarding these organizations' manner of taking action in the future.

The leader, who is daring, full of judgement, open to new ideas and intuitions, is essential for a constant progress and superior achievements.

Today's Romania doesn't have a strategic system plan in order to develop leadership in the public administration, plan which should be included in the reform process. It doesn't even have, at least, governmental departments, institutions or work groups which could think and draw inspiration from successful Western models, so as to develop a leadership strategy in the public administration, to evaluate the public management's actual state and to develop the current public management programs in order to include programs of leadership development.

#### **3.1. Proposals for developing a new type of leadership in Romania's public administration**

1. Leadership should also exist as a priority issue of reform in the government's strategy of reform and administrative strengthening.

Due to the fact that the purpose of this work was doing a comparative analysis of the two concepts, leadership vs. management, focusing on leadership, the following suggestions, inspired from the foolhardies who studied the two concepts, could result in leadership activities within a project which could be entitled „Leadership versus Management Report. Promoting leadership in the public administration. Case study: Romania”.

2. During this project, the real state of the two fields could be evaluated and action plans to develop leadership could be created.

3. Action plans for generating a national strategy of leadership in the public administration, with public departments or institutions specialized in developing leadership in order to support the creation of methods of training and counseling the current and future leaders.

## Conclusions

Leadership and management are two fundamental concepts for the administration's science. As I explained in this paper, the two domains complement rather than exclude each other.

They are highly important in the reform process for Romania's public administration, passing from a pre and pro-bureaucratic system to a post-bureaucratic system; both of them hold the vital role, meaning that the leader's role is that of setting vision and direction, and the management's role is that of streamlining the available resources.

Any need for a reform must implement, on one hand, a modern management system, one that is efficient, action responsible and responsive to citizens' needs, and, on the other hand, it must concentrate on promoting authentic leaders who can offer the necessary vision and guide the whole process.

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