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Leadership in transformation - between local embeddedness and global challenges*

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Based on empirical studies in Romania, Estonia, Germany, and Austria within the GLOBE project, the authors try to answer the question of cultural embeddedness of leadership patterns in an environment of more and more globalised management. Special emphasis is put on the match/mismatch of the observed styles of leadership behaviour of CEO's with regional and global expectations, on the differences and similarities between the examined countries, the influence of transformational settings in the CEE countries, and the prospective changes due to a new generation of managers.

Auf der Basis empirischer Studien in Rumänien, Estland, Deutschland und Österreich im Rahmen des GLOBE - Projektes, gehen die Autoren der Frage nach der kulturellen Einbindung von Führungsmustern unter Bedingungen eines zunehmend globalisierten Managements nach. Im Zentrum stehen dabei der Vergleich der beobachteten Führungsstilmuster von Geschäftsführern mit den regionalen und globalen Erwartungen der Nachgeordneten, die Unterschiede und Ähnlichkeiten zwischen den untersuchten Ländern, der Einfluss der Transformationsbedingungen in den MOE-Staaten sowie die erwarteten Veränderungen durch einen Generationswechsel im Management.

Keywords: leadership, transformation, GLOBE, cultural embeddedness, CEE countries

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1. Introduction

Leadership in the East-European Transformation Process has been the subject of several country-based studies (e.g., von Rosenstiel 1994; Alt/Lang 1998; Catană/Catană/Finlay 1999; Breu 2000; Catană/Catană 1999, 2000; Alas 2002; Alas/Sharifi 2002) as well as cross-cultural comparisons, both between Eastern and Western countries (e.g. Lang et al. 1998; Edwards/Lawrence 2000; Brodbeck et al. 2000) and within East-European countries (e.g. Lindert 1996; Lungwitz/Preusche 2001; Bakacsi et al. 2002). In general, these studies suggest a more or less pronounced difference between leadership behaviour patterns in Eastern Europe compared to Western or Northern Europe. Leadership in the East was deemed more autocratic and less participative, less human and more status oriented and, at least partly, more formal.

Early explanations frequently saw this as a result of the so-called communist heritage. This, however, ignores on the one hand the influence of the transformation process as a fundamental process of change which may have supported these “stricter” types of leadership. On the other hand, the different cultural backgrounds of East-European countries compared to the West have been also neglected (for a critical assessment see Lang 1998:6-17, or Clark/Lang/Balaton 2001). A few studies have also shown that, concerning leadership, Eastern Europe is on the one hand much more different (e.g. Lindert 1996), and on the other hand quite similar to countries in Western or even Southern Europe (e.g. Brodbeck et al. 2000) than one could expect.

The development in the last 15 years of transformation has brought a more international orientation and global challenges for the East-European countries, e.g., increasing integration into international division of labour, massive foreign direct investments, joint ventures, and last but not least, massive transfers of management knowledge into the East-European countries. This should arguably lead to changes in leadership behaviour, too, namely a process of internationalisation or convergence of leadership behaviours and styles. Nonetheless, experiences of managers as well as empirical studies still suggest a difference between East and West (Catană et al. 1999; Catană/Catană 2000). Reasons for this “inertia” might be the ongoing transformation process or peculiarities of the national culture, but it is unlikely that after ten years of transformation these effects are still the result of the “old” system in many countries.

This paper discusses the issue as a problem of local and cultural embeddedness on the one hand, and global challenges on the other hand. According to institutional theory, changes in the more culturally embedded elements of management, such as behaviour, seem to be more difficult to achieve (Lang/Steger 2002). We will first summarise the literature which gives evidence of changes in leadership behaviour in Eastern Europe, especially for Estonia, East Germany, and Romania. We will then present empirical evidence regarding

similarities and differences between leadership styles in Estonia, East Germany and Romania, compared to global, universal and regional/cultural expectations as presented by the GLOBE leadership study (den Hartog et al. 1999; House et al. 1999; Brodbeck et al. 2000; House 2002), as well as the results from a central European country without transformational influence, Austria. In addition, we will look for changes in leadership patterns introduced by a new generation of managers. The study is based on material from the CEO Study (part of the GLOBE project) with interview and questionnaire data from 177 companies in Austria, Estonia, East Germany, and Romania.

2. Leadership behaviour in East Germany, Romania, Estonia and Austria – A meta-analysis of existing empirical findings

East Germany

Leadership in East Germany has been the subject of several empirical studies in the last 15 years (for summaries see, e.g., Lang 1998; Weik 2001; Schreiber et al. 2002). The empirical data have mainly concentrated on values, cognitions, attitudes and styles of managers but also on management abilities. The early phase of leadership research in East Germany up to 1994 focused on the abilities of East German managers and their leadership styles, often contrasted to West German managers. These early studies have been often criticised for their superficial and methodologically weak approaches, which apparently aimed primarily at legitimating governmental decisions, Treuhand activities or Western prejudice vis-à-vis the pre-modernity of Eastern leadership and management. These quantitative studies often made far-reaching global conclusions despite a small numbers of questionnaires and a frequently biased sample structure and had a significant impact on further research and the public opinion. The results point towards an autocratic or at least patriarchal leadership style which has been interpreted as a result of the “communist heritage” (see, e.g., contributions in von Rosenstiel 1994).

After 1994, more profound research attempts can be found, including qualitative studies. Both theoretical basis and methodological approaches became more sound and appropriate for the situation and the transformational setting. The concept of “habitus”, social and cultural capital, elite theories, implicit leadership theories, concepts of value and cultural change, transformation theories, the concept of myth and “bricolage”, or political behaviour are used to explain stability and changes in leadership behaviour. Case studies and narrative interviews are included to come to more in-depth insights into the transformational changes. These approaches mainly see and explain leadership in transformation as a result of various factors and not just a prolongation of the past. Special emphasis is put on the influence of the transformation process and the situation of the organisation.

With respect to leadership behaviour, a tendency towards patriarchal and directive styles is still supported, but many studies show different types and styles of leadership. Although the baseline still consists of traditional value orientations with an emphasis on performance, tasks, and loyalty to the firm, individualism gains importance within the course of transformation (Lang 2002). Here, striking similarities to a leadership style “made in (West) Germany” can be found (Brodbeck et al. 2002). The informal contracts between managers and workers became less important in the last years while a re-centralisation of decision making processes took place (Lang 2002:146). The leadership styles are not based on individual consideration, but on being a role model as a technical expert (Lang 1997). By and large, leadership behaviour in East Germany within the last 15 years shows a lot of different types and culture- as well as transformation-based developments, but nonetheless remained quite stable.

Romania

The development of leadership in Romania has been also researched and discussed in a lot of empirical studies (e.g., Gehmann 1996; Catană/Catană 1996; Kelemen/Hristov 1998, Olaru 1998; Catană/Catană 1999; Catană et al. 1999; Kelemen 1999a; Edwards/Lawrence 2000; Catană/Catană 2000; Catană, Catană/Gheorghita 2003). Compared to East Germany, a smaller number of studies with a limited range of methods and approaches have been conducted so far. Some quantitative studies, and a few case studies, are in the centre of research approaches.

Initially, the concept of organisational culture was at the core of empirical studies aiming at analysing the process of transition from the egalitarian type of culture to one based on market economy values (Gehmann 1996; Catană/Catană 1996). Gradually, theoretical basis and research methodology were improved. For example, some studies rely on theoretical concepts such as the value based leadership theory, motivational theory (Catană et al. 2003), leader traits and behaviours theory, or contingency theory (Mereuta 1995; Kelemen 1995; Mereuta et al. 1998). Some case studies especially investigated the impact of Western type managerial culture on Romanian organisational culture (Kelemen 1995; Kelemen/Hristov 1998; Heintz 2002). The majority of studies from the first years of transition show a preference of CEOs and subordinates for a managerial style which “tends to be autocratic” (Edwards/Lawrence 2000:83). The “strong hand” is seen as a prolongation of the “old system”. It is also regarded as a guarantee of strategic coherence in a very unstable environment, with general distrust in an effective and efficient functioning of the democratic-participative mechanism, high corruption, and a lack of transparency (both at micro and macro levels) (Catană/Catană 1996; Mereuta et al 1998). Besides the autocratic style, there are patriarchal leadership patterns, motivated especially by the social dimension of managers’ roles in socialist Romanian enterprises

(Gehmann 1996; Olaru 1998; Kelemen/Gardiner 1999). The professional composition of the management board (mainly engineers) may also be taken into account, just as the influence of the trade unions in early appointments of managerial staff (Olaru 1998:314-315). Kelemen (1999a) points out the persistence of the top-down-style of decision making, which is in turn supported by a tendency of delegating the responsibility upwards, to the general managers (Gehmann 1996:219). Catană and Catană (1999) have extended this research, including the influence of Romanian national culture, e.g. short term orientation, high uncertainty avoidance, stability orientation instead of risk taking, informal dealing, importance of family relations, and the influence of religious values.

In her comment, Kelemen (1999b) takes a critical stance towards the influence of religious values, but also underlines the masculine orientation of Romanian management and business. Underlining the changes rather than the stability of values, she reports a tendency towards material values as a result of the introduction of a market economy. They are now seen as a part of the communicative behaviour of managers (1999:260). In addition, the influence of the transition process, including the restructuring of the firm and its culture, is seen as an important factor for both stability and change in leadership behaviour in Romania (Gehmann 1996; Catană/Catană 1996; Kelemen/Hristov 1998; Catană/Catană 2000).

A recent interview-based study on the status of leadership in the present Romanian business environment, conducted by KRW International and Romanian-American Center for Business Excellence¹ with a representative sample of large, medium and small companies, reveals that the “Western” leadership concept is only known and understood in few foreign companies. Communication between CEO`s and followers is not efficient. Managers show no trust in subordinates` abilities, thus they are more involved in doing subordinates` tasks than in coordinating the groups. In another study, Finlay et al. (2003) statistically reveal the Romanians` preferences for a rational-legal type of leadership.

To summarize the results, these studies suggest a persistence of directive, autocratic or even patriarchal leadership styles as well as changes towards legal, materialistic and performance orientations. Both culture and transformational settings of the companies play an important role for explaining stability vs. changes.

Estonia

For Estonia, leadership has been also analysed in several studies, or described in different articles (e.g. Hentze/Lindert 1992; Nurmi/Üksvärav 1994/1996;

¹ <http://www.leadership.ro>

Lindert 1996; Alas 2002; Alas/Sharifi 2002; Stout 2003; Tuulik/Alas 2003; Vaadi 2003). In a comparative study with Finnish management practices, Nurmi and Üksvärav (1994, 1996) underline the technical background and a production orientation of Estonian managers. They also confirm a tendency towards group decision making at the top and individual decisions at the lower levels, with a general tendency towards top-down and authoritarian decisions, combined with a traditional orientation towards social responsibility. The authors also mention a dislike of bureaucracy, and at least a partial tendency to avoid responsibilities (1996:248).

In addition, Nurmi and Üksvärav point out that especially the older group of managers “feel more responsible for their personnel, for the community, and the Estonian society at large, than Western managers...” (1996:253). According to Vadi (2003), collectivism still plays an important role in the Estonian society, and is related to organisational culture and behaviour of both employees and managers. The close connection between the values of managers and employees with respect to collectivist attitudes has been documented by Tuulik and Alas (2003). They show a joint orientation towards the well-being of the employee, professional growth and development, as well as the well-being of the community and the state.

In his comparative analysis, Lindert (1996: 97-99) shows that Estonian managers, especially top managers, can be characterised by a relatively high power distance. About 50% of managers advocate the theory X assumption of leadership (“people have to be frequently controlled and led in order to get good results”), which can be seen as an indicator of a directive type of leadership. Stout points out a more risk-avoiding and face-saving behaviour among Baltic managers, due to the socially stigmatising effect of failures (2003: 52). To sum up, Estonian managers seem to exhibit more patriarchal leadership behaviours, which may be rooted in the collectivist value orientations shared by managers and subordinates. The shared cultural roots guarantee a certain amount of stability. At the same time the generational shift that comes with a younger group of managers, as well as training efforts should result in a certain amount of change.

All in all there is clear empirical evidence of a stable pattern of leadership behaviour in the three transforming countries rather than massive changes towards Western styles of leadership. This can obviously not be explained by the aftermath of the “old system” alone. Cultural factors and the transformation process itself must be taken into consideration, too. In addition, examining whether there is an observable tendency towards “Western” styles of leadership calls for a benchmark. For our comparative study Austria seems appropriate. Belonging to the Germanic culture and thus being a suitable comparison country for East Germany, it is also part of Central Europe and geographically and culturally not as far away from Eastern Europe as other Western countries. At

the same time the East-European countries in the sample, Romania and Estonia, have never been part of the Austrian Empire, so that one can exclude far-reaching historical influences.

Austria

The general Austrian phenotype as seen from outside (Schweiger 1992:102) is depicted in the following general description: Austrians are considered charming and friendly, open and welcoming, show respect, and are always punctual. Austrians display behavioural patterns which are deeply rooted in history and culture. A very typical characteristic of Austrians is their avoidance of conflict and the resulting desire to seek consensus (Pichler 2003:83-84). This almost notorious pursuit of consensus is present at all levels in society. The Austrian saying "*Durchs Reden kommen d'Leut z'samm*" ("Talking brings people together") applies to day-to-day life on an individual level as well as corporate or even political levels. Social peace and consensus politics have characterised Austrian life since the end of World War II. Arguably, one of the most prominent manifestations is the "social partnership" model: cooperation rather than confrontation. As a result of the effective functioning of the social partnership model, not a single case of large-scale industrial action has taken place for many years, which has earned Austria a high recognition for industrial stability and social peace.

The Austrian phenotype of leadership is deeply influenced by this social background. Although empirical findings about the typical leadership style practiced by the average Austrian supervisor are very scarce, the few studies available show that leadership style is frequently influenced by this consensus-oriented culture. Based on the Vroom-Yetton-Model (Vroom/Yetton 1973), Reber, Jago, Auer-Rizzi and Szabo (2000) and Jago, Reber, Auer-Rizzi and Szabo (1998) explored differences in intended leadership styles between managers from various countries. With respect to the level of participation, the results show a general tendency toward participative behaviour of managers in seven European countries. Austria and (West) Germany score similarly high, and only Sweden has a somewhat higher score. A lower participation value could be found in Switzerland, Finland, the United States, and France. Poland and the Czech Republic were at the end of the list (Szabo et al. 2001: 231).

Owing to the Austrian business landscape, which predominantly features small and medium sized businesses, social relations are friendly and fraternal. Austrian managers show a tendency towards consultation and group decisions while, for example, American and French managers resort more to an autocratic leadership behaviour (Jago et al. 1998). These findings were consistently confirmed in studies that included students rather than business managers, too (Auer-Rizzii/Berry 2000: 279-280).

All in all, participative communication patterns and consensus orientation are deeply embedded in the Austrian culture. This behaviour also reflects the more general attitude that the greatest good can be achieved through dialogue, widespread involvement, and the deliberate search for common goals and objectives.

3. Leadership behaviour in East Germany, Romania, Estonia, and Austria: results from the GLOBE/CEO-Study

Theoretical background of the study

The CEO study is part of the GLOBE project (den Hartog et al. 1999; House et al. 1999). While the second phase of the GLOBE project concentrated on culturally endorsed leadership perceptions, the CEO project looked at leadership behaviours as perceived by subordinates. Additionally, self-perception of the managers was included as well.

The CEO study shares the main theoretical assumptions of the GLOBE project. Leadership is seen as socially construed by managers and followers as well as by culturally based assumptions on good and effective leadership. Socialisation theory supports the idea of a learned behaviour which is supported by role models from past and present in politics and economy. Successful leadership therefore requires acceptance of the style by the followers, and is in turn the result of the leader's success. According to contingency theory, the organisational context plays an important role, too, but mainly as a mediator of societal influences. In addition to the underlying assumptions of the abovementioned approaches, the GLOBE concept focuses on universal factors, especially the globalisation process, as well as on the influence of national and organisational cultures.

The results of the GLOBE research on leadership expectations have shown that certain leadership styles and attributes are seen as good and effective (or bad and hampering) in all countries and regions, while others are more culturally contingent, varying from good to bad across different countries (e.g. den Hartog et al. 1999; House et al 1999).

Hypotheses

The meta-analysis of the literature on leadership in the four countries as well as the theoretical background and the data provided by the GLOBE project are the basis for the hypotheses of this article. First of all, it can be assumed that leadership is culturally embedded, despite some universal expectations of good leadership. Globalisation and internationalisation arguably lead to the development of a universal picture of good and effective leadership which may have some influence on the local leadership prototypes and may also influence

the perceived behaviour of managers. Nevertheless, a certain stability in leadership differences between the different countries over time can be expected. This leads to the first hypothesis:

(H1) We expect to find similar patterns of leadership in each country, as reported in literature reviews on earlier findings about leadership behaviour in the past 10 years.

According to the GLOBE findings (House et al. 1999; Brodbeck et al. 2000; Weibler et al. 2000; Szabo et al. 2002; Bakasci et al. 2002), we expect the four countries to show similar patterns with respect to value-based leadership and team-oriented leadership, but different patterns with respect to participative leadership, self-protective leadership, humane leadership and leader autonomy.

(H2) The leadership patterns across the examined countries will be more similar regarding universal leadership attributes like value-based und team-oriented leadership, and less similar with respect to culturally contingent attributes of participative leadership, self-protective leadership, humane orientation, and autonomous behaviours.

Regarding the countries in our sample, we expect more similar patterns between (East) Germany and Austria, especially concerning culturally endorsed attributes, such as participative, self-protective, humane, and autonomous leadership (Szabo et al. 2002; Brodbeck et al. 2002). With respect to Romania and Estonia, we expect more differences, but nevertheless a similar pattern close to East-European leadership expectations (see House 2002; Bakasci et al. 2002), which are based on a higher degree of family-based collectivism than in Central or Western Europe (e.g., Brodbeck et al. 2000; Bakasci et al. 2002; Vadi 2003).

(H3) Cultural influence leads to a more similar leadership pattern between Austria and (East) Germany. It will be close to the Germanic leadership expectations found in the GLOBE project. Romania and Estonia will be closer to the leadership expectation of East-European countries and will display more differences within than the Germanic countries. Owing to the higher degree of collectivism in CEE countries, a more team- as well as human oriented behaviour than in the Germanic countries can be expected.

The influences of the old system and of the transformation process may have influenced the leadership behaviour in certain attributes. The Western literature suggests a more humane, modest, and probably team-oriented, but less performance-oriented style as a heritage from the old system (von Rosenstiel 1994; Lindert 1996). In addition, less participative and more autocratic styles are expected to occur in the transforming countries. This could be seen as a result of the past as well as the ongoing transformation, where strong leadership is supported by a situation of radical changes (see e.g. Tichy/Devanna 1986; Kilman/Covin 1989). The situation may have supported the attribution of transformational leadership to managers (Lang 1997). The system of central

planning and the structure of the old economy in big state-owned enterprises suggests the predominance of a more bureaucratic, less risk-taking behaviour.

(H4) The influence of the former socialist system and the ongoing transformation leads to a leadership style in the three transforming countries which is more humane, less performance-oriented, more team-oriented and bureaucratic, and less risk-taking and participative than in Austria.

The discussion about changes in leadership behaviour is often connected with the issue of a new, younger generation of managers. While Anglo-American styles may be more influential in the process of globalisation in general (e.g. Edwards/Lawrence 2000:141), the younger generation of managers in the transformation countries is expected to act more transformational, team-oriented, and participative, and less self-protective, humane and autonomous (e.g., Edwards/Lawrence 2000; Bakacsi et al. 2002). Especially in transforming societies, changes in behavioural styles towards less bureaucratic and self-protective styles, and more risk-taking and performance-oriented behaviour can be expected.

(H5) The younger generation of managers will display higher scores of transformational, team-oriented and participative leadership styles whereas the older generation scores higher on self-protective, humane, and autonomous styles.

Methods and data basis

The CEO study is based on case descriptions of leadership behaviour. In around 40 firms in each country, both owner-- and manager-led, two hour interviews with the CEO were conducted, including questions concerning leadership career, experiences and philosophies, as well as views on change management. The interview included a short CEO questionnaire on management preferences and strategies. In addition, between six and nine subordinates per CEO have been asked to describe the leadership style and behaviour of their supervisor with a questionnaire from the GLOBE project which had been translated (and re-translated) into Romanian, German and Estonian before. The questionnaire asks for leadership behaviour, trust and confidence of the followers, and their perception of the objectives and strategies of the firm.

The Romanian sample consists of 44 CEO interviews and questionnaires and 277 follower questionnaires. In the East German sample 48 CEO interviews and questionnaires and 205 follower questionnaires have been included, while the Estonian sample includes 45 CEOs and 305 follower questionnaires. For the Austrian sample, 40 Austrian CEOs have been interviewed, and 259 questionnaires of subordinates could be used.

Leadership description is based on single items with a 7-point-scale, ranging from "strongly agree" (7) to "strongly disagree" (1). Typical items are:

Visionary: "Has a clear understanding of where we are going"; Diplomatic: "Is able to maintain good relationships with others"; Administratively effective: "Is organised and methodological in work"; Malevolent: "Is punitive, has no pity or compassion"; Autocratic: "Acts like a tyrant or despot"; Humane: "Has empathy for others, is inclined to be helpful or show mercy"; Autonomous: "Acts independently, does not rely on others".

In accordance with the GLOBE methodology, data on the leadership items were summarized to leadership sub-scales (leadership attributes), and six main factors (leadership style patterns). They are compared with global leadership expectations as reported by the GLOBE project (House et al. 1999) as well as with the leadership expectations in CEE countries (Bakacsi et al. 2002), and Germanic European countries (Szabo et al. 2002). In addition, the country data are examined for special patterns of leadership style and for differences in age, to see the consequences of a generational change on leadership behaviour.

This comparison allows interesting conclusions because of the countries involved. East Germany, Romania and Estonia represent different cultures, but they share the same heritage. Strong similarities could therefore be interpreted as a result of the influence of the past system, but also as an impact of the transformational setting. Differences may be seen as culture-based and due to special developments of transformational changes. Being a part of Germanic culture, Austria may share some characteristics with East Germany, but may also be different due to the absence of radical societal changes.

Main results with respect to leadership

The following table shows the mean values of perceived leadership behaviour on the six main GLOBE dimensions compared to "ideal", desired values in the Germanic area, Eastern Europe, and all examined countries. The table cells are shaded to show the ranking of the values: the darker the background, the higher the country's average value.

There were a few significant differences between the examined countries. The Romanian leadership style of the surveyed CEOs is seen as more self-protective and humane compared to their German counterparts, while the leadership style of German and Austrian CEOs is described by their followers as being more participative than the style of Romanian and Estonian CEOs. The Estonian style shows significantly lower scores on value based leadership compared to all other examined countries, and on humane leadership compared to Romania and East Germany. Last but not least, the Austrian CEO style seems to be more individualistic and less self-protective, compared to the three other countries. The overall picture is characterised by larger differences in participative styles (0.93), significant differences in humane (0.69), self-protective (0.66) as well as autonomous (0.55) and also value based styles (0.53), and similar scores in team oriented behaviour (0.25).

Each country shows a special pattern of behavioural styles. The Romanian pattern of leadership appears more value-based and authoritarian, suggested by the lowest score on participative styles, with a strong tendency towards self-protective but also humane behaviour. The Estonian pattern is characterised by a dominant team orientation, and relatively weak value-based behaviour. The (East) German pattern, in turn, is more participative than in the other countries. And finally, the Austrian style shows a pronounced preference for autonomous leadership which is at the same time value-based and participative, but less humane and self-protective.

Table 1. Leadership styles in Romania, Estonia, East Germany and Austria in comparison with German, East-European and Global Expectations

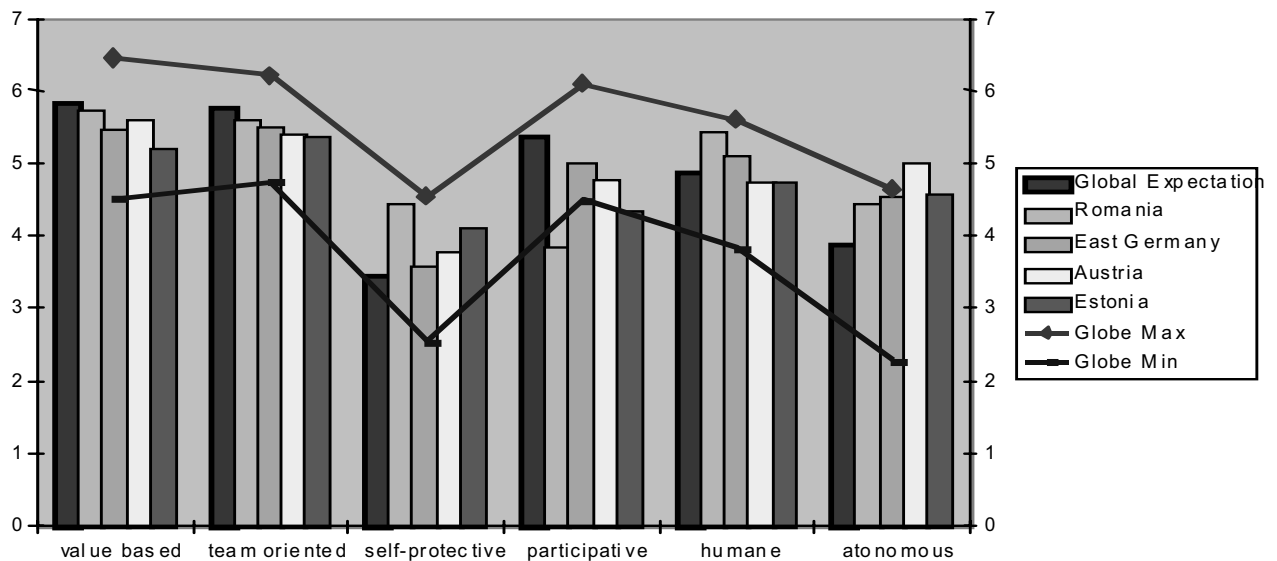
| | Roma- nia (Ro) | Esto- nia (Est) | East Ger- many (Ger) | Austria (A) | Signifi- cant differen- ces | Germa- nic* expecta- tions | Eastern Euro- pean** expecta- tions | GLOBE mean expecta- tions |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Value based | 5.72 | 5.19 | 5.48 | 5.58 | Est < Ro, Ger, A | 5.93 | 5.73 (5.68) | 5.83 |
| Team oriented | 5.61 | 5.36 | 5.44 | 5.40 | | 5.62 | 5.50 (5.84) | 5.76 |
| Self- protective | 4.44 | 4.09 | 3.89 | 3.78 | Ger < Ro A < Ro, Est, Ger | 3.03 | 3.67 (3.69) | 3.45 |
| Participa- tive | 3.83 | 4.34 | 4.98 | 4.76 | Ro, Est < Ger, A | 5.85 | 5.09 (4.98) | 5.35 |
| Humane | 5.43 | 4.74 | 5.07 | 4.74 | Est < Ger < Ro | 4.71 | 4.75 (4.69) | 4.87 |
| Autono- mous | 4.45 | 4.56 | 4.53 | 5.00 | Ro, Est, Ger < A | 4.16 | 4.18 (4.21) | 3.86 |

Sources: Szabo et al. (2002), Bakacsi et al. (2002), den Hartog et al. (1999), House et al. (1999)

*West Germany, East Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Netherlands

** Russia, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Albania, Greece, Kazakhstan, Georgia, (without Greece)

Figure 1. Leadership patterns: global expectations and local realities in CEE countries



Compared to the expectations of middle managers in the relevant region as well as global expectations, it can be clearly seen that the observed leadership styles in all examined countries are more autonomous and self-protective, but less participative than expected by their relevant group of followers, as known from the GLOBE project (see figure 1).

In addition, leadership in East Germany and Romania is described as more humane, and Estonian, while German leadership is seen as less value-based than followers expect it to be. With respect to team-oriented leadership, all countries seem to be more or less in line with the local/regional expectations, but farther from the leadership style which is expected worldwide.

The following table 2 shows leadership attributes (subscales or first order factors), which have more or less formed the styles above. The results give a differentiated picture of the more complex factors presented in table 1. It can be seen that for value-based leadership, the Estonian leadership style is described as less visionary, less inspirational, less decisive, and less performance-oriented than for the other countries, but with respect to integrity, the difference is smaller. All in all, Estonia shows a significantly lower charisma value. The visionary style is also more developed in Austria and Romania, but, in comparison to these two countries, less developed in East Germany. With respect to risk-taking behaviour, and follower confidence, Germany and Austria score significantly higher than Romania and, for the latter dimension, than Estonia.

Despite the general similarity of results for team-oriented management styles (see above), the results for the second order factors show similarities as well as a couple of differences. In general, Romanian styles are also described as more team oriented, but owing to a significant higher degree of malevolent behaviour, the team oriented style of the Romanian managers is not fundamentally different from those in the other countries. Administratively effective behaviour seems to be more important in the transforming countries than in Austria. No significant differences could be found for diplomatic and communicative behaviour, neither for informative behaviour and directness of the behavioural style, which have not been listed here.

Romanian managers also show significantly higher scores on all dimensions of self-protective behaviour. In turn, Austrian managers have got the lowest assessments in self-protective behaviour except for self-centredness with the second highest value after Romania. This again fits with the more individualistic Austrian leadership style. With respect to the differences on the other dimensions, especially the differences between the transforming countries and Austria in face saving and procedural (bureaucratic) behaviour are significant, whereas the role clarification is significantly higher in Austria and Germany in comparison with the selected CEE countries.

Participative styles are more common in the Germanic countries, East Germany and Austria, than in Estonia or Romania. Major differences could be found especially for non-directive behaviour. Authoritarian styles seem to more common in Romania than in Estonia; and participative, and non-autocratic behaviour is more common in East Germany than in Austria, but the latter differences are not significant, and may vary within Germany between East Germans and West Germans/Foreigners². On the last two dimensions, humane leadership and modesty/calmness, Romanians and Germans score similarly high, while Estonians and Austrians have a significantly lower score.

2 On very few items of participative, and non-autocratic or power-sharing behaviour, East Germans have significantly lower scores.

Table 2. Selected leadership attributes in Romania, Estonia, East Germany and Austria³

| Leadership attributes (sample means) | Romania (Ro) | Estonia (Est) | East Germany (Ger) | Austria (A) | Mean differences (Max-Min) | Significant difference? | Between which countries? |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Visionary | 5.84 | 5.38 | 5.64 | 5.89 | 0.51 | ** | Est < Ro, A |
| Inspirational | 5.68 | 5.21 | 5.59 | 5.46 | 0.47 | ** | Est < Ro, Ger |
| Integrity | 5.86 | 5.46 | 5.57 | 5.80 | 0.40 | * | Est < Ro, A |
| Decisive | 6.10 | 5.54 | 5.51 | 5.71 | 0.59 | ** | Est, Ger, A < Ro |
| Performance orientation | 6.09 | 5.20 | 6.01 | 5.97 | 0.89 | ** | Est < Ro, Ger, A |
| Risk taking | 3.47 | 3.88 | 3.93 | 3.95 | 0.48 | ** | Ro < Est, Ger, A |
| Charismatic effect | 5.54 | 4.97 | 5.46 | 5.40 | 0.57 | ** | Est < Ro, Ger, A |
| Follower confidence | 5.45 | 5.23 | 5.62 | 5.78 | 0.55 | ** | Ro < Ger, A |
| Team integrator | 5.74 | 5.23 | 5.39 | 5.28 | 0.51 | ** | Est, Ger, A < Ro |
| Diplomatic | 5.81 | 5.48 | 5.60 | 5.63 | 0.33 | n. s. | n. s. |
| Communicative | 5.66 | 5.43 | 5.65 | 5.61 | 0.23 | n. s. | n. s. |
| Administratively effective | 6.05 | 5.36 | 5.32 | 5.14 | 0.91 | ** | Est, Ger, A < Ro |
| (Non)Malevolent [†] | 5.18 | 5.56 | 5.94 | 5.89 | 0.76 | ** | Ro, (E) < Ger, A |
| Role clarification | 5.18 | 5.56 | 5.95 | 5.98 | 0.72 | ** | Ro, (E) < Ger, A |
| Self-centred | 3.32 | 2.53 | 2.51 | 2.89 | 0.81 | ** | Est, Ger, A < Ro |
| Status consciousness | 5.20 | 4.76 | 4.77 | 4.62 | 0.58 | * | Est, Ger, A, < Ro |
| Face saver | 4.72 | 4.15 | 4.10 | 3.87 | 0.85 | ** | Est, Ger, A < Ro (A < Est, Ger) |
| Procedural | 5.07 | 4.58 | 4.48 | 3.81 | 1.26 | ** | A < Ro, Est, Ger |
| (Non-) Autocratic [†] | 4.28 | 4.92 | 5.35 | 5.09 | 1.07 | ** | Ro < Est, Ger, A |
| (Non-) Directive [†] | 3.38 | 3.75 | 4.61 | 4.42 | 1.23 | ** | Ro, Est < Ger, A |
| Humane | 5.68 | 4.81 | 5.14 | 4.85 | 0.87 | ** | Est, Ger, A < Ro |
| Modesty/Calm | 5.18 | 4.67 | 5.00 | 4.86 | 0.52 | * | E < Ro, Ger |

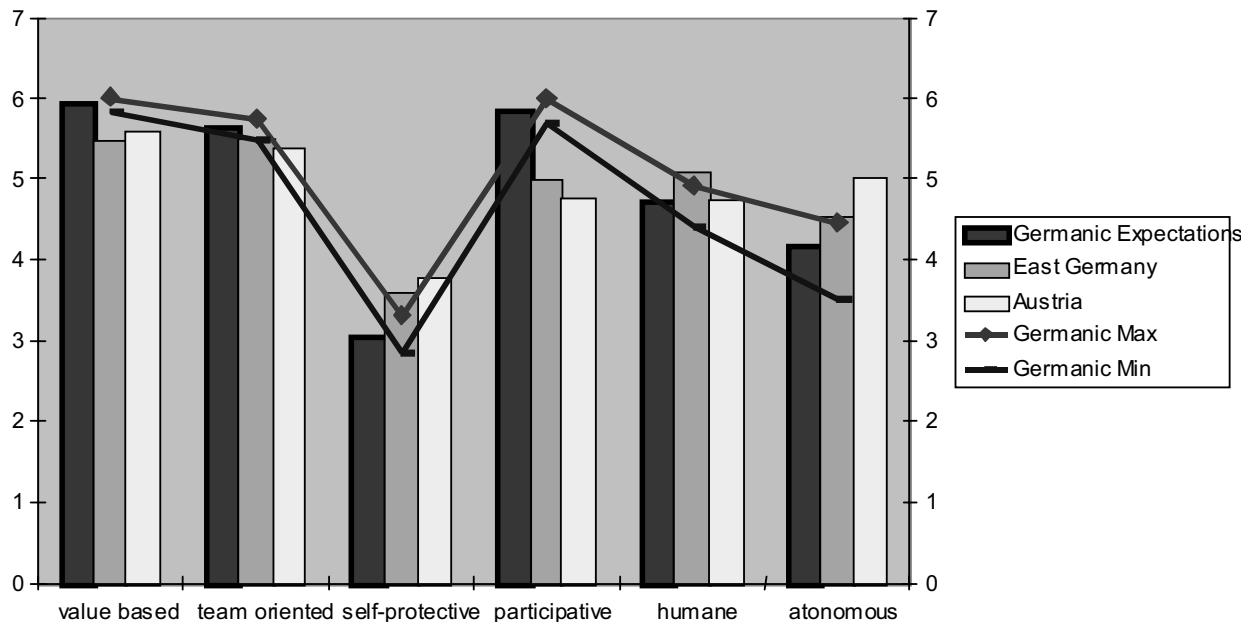
[†] Items for autocratic, directive and malevolent behaviour – reversely scored

* : $p \leq 0,05$

** : $p \leq 0,01$

³ Again, the table cells are shaded for an easier pattern recognition. The country with the darkest background is the one with the highest value.

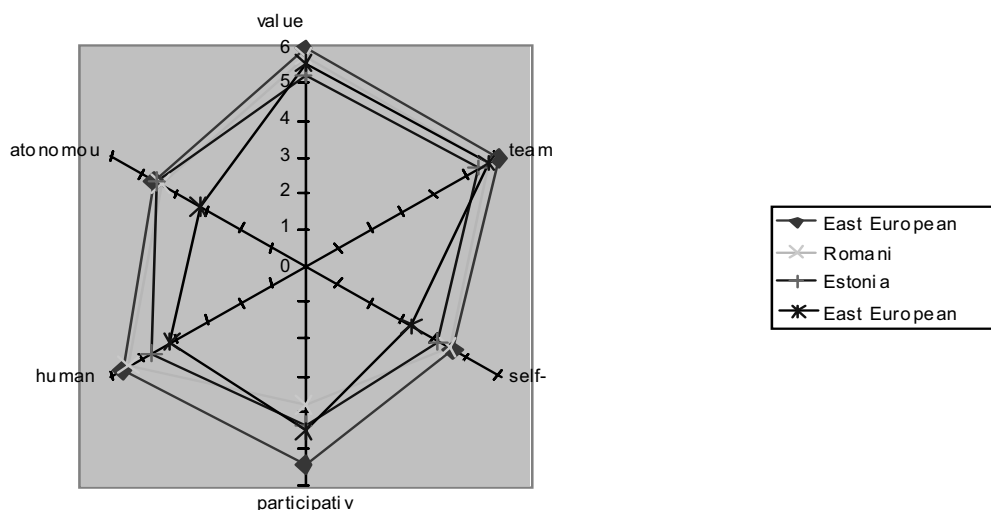
Figure 2. Leadership patterns: germanic expectations and local realities in (East-)Germany and Austria



Looking at the cultural sub-groups in our study, the Germanic countries and the East-Europeans, the summarised data suggest a comparatively homogeneous Germanic pattern, and a different and more inconsistent pattern of East-European styles. The Germanic style can be described as rather non-autocratic and participative, but with clear task descriptions for the followers. It is not punitive or malevolent, includes trust in followers and more risk-taking than in the Eastern European countries studied (see figures 2 and 3).

In addition to the cultural idiosyncrasies, the results also point to some factors which can be attributed to a special organisational culture from the past. Especially for procedural and face-saving behaviour, the differences in leadership attributes between the transforming countries – regardless of their special culture – and the Austrian leadership behaviour are striking. But the differences between the transforming countries and Austria are also noteworthy for the more group-centred, collectivist (not autonomous and individualistic), and partly more administratively effective, status conscious, and humane behaviours.

Figure 3. Leadership patterns: East European expectations and local realities in Romania and Estonia



Based on the leadership attributes and their correlations, a factor analysis⁴ was carried out in order to find empirically based patterns of leadership behaviour for the transforming countries. These analyses included several additional attributes, such as power sharing, intellectual stimulation, follower confidence, or communicative behaviour.⁵ The results for Romania, Estonia, East Germany, and Austria as examples are presented in table 3.

Percentage of CEOs younger than 50 years ranged from 50% (Austria) to 75% (Estonia). It can be seen that similar types of leadership behaviour⁶ have been described in the four samples: transformational leadership behaviour on the one hand, different kinds of participative and human leadership on the other hand. A few countries share types of bureaucratic administrators, or individualistic and

⁴ Principal component analysis, Varimax-rotation, and Kaiser-normalisation for each country.

⁵ For the factor analysis, the whole range of subscales of the GLOBE project has been used, except for Austria, where the abovementioned additional attributes were not available.

⁶ It has to be taken into account that the analysis used the factors derived from the GLOBE project, in order to compare the data with the leadership expectations. This certainly produces a tendency towards more similar patterns.

autocratic behaviour. There are also interesting differences in the data. The composition of the factors, mentioned above, as well as alternative factors point to the influence of the specific situation, including cultural factors. For instance, transformational leadership in Romania includes leadership attributes with respect to humane behaviours (humane, diplomatic), but also strict decisions, and face saving behaviour. In the line with the other factors, the picture of a patriarchal type of leadership can be suggested for Romania.

In Estonia and Germany, transformational leadership includes performance orientation, but is also more individualistic than in Romania and East Germany. No special type of autocratic leadership could be identified, but two different types of participative and human leadership. The more negative types of leadership in Estonia are a risk avoiding, bureaucratic behaviour, and a type of indirect, inconsequent “non-leadership”. In the German pattern of transformational leadership, human styles are not represented; instead a strong performance orientation is included, as mentioned above. Another difference can be seen in the different construction of the bureaucratic or "tayloristic" types, and calm or even avoidant management between the countries

In Austria there is a quite clear distinction between desirable "positive" and "negative" leadership styles. The first factor unites many desirable leadership dimensions, whereas the second factor describes an extremely "military" leadership style. The third and fourth factor are rather a panopticum of undesirable leadership attributes, with the fourth factor at least including performance orientation.

Table 3. Factor loadings of CEO behaviour in Romania, Estonia and East Germany

| Romania | Estonia | East Germany | Austria |
|---|--|--|---|
| <i>1. Transformational team leader</i> | <i>1. Transformational leader</i> | <i>1. Transformational leader</i> | <i>1. Transformational team leader</i> |
| Charisma: 0.828 | Inspirational: 0.873 | Charisma: 0.889 | Inspirational: 0.869 |
| Inspirational: 0.814 | Visionary: 0.860 | Inspirational: 0.884 | Charisma: 0.845 |
| Team-oriented: 0.783 | Charisma: 0.857 | Visionary: 0.780 | Team-oriented: 0.822 |
| Decisive: 0.741 | Performance | Team-oriented: | Decisive: 0.765 |
| Visionary: 0.736 | Oriented: 0.845 | 0.768 Intellectually | Team collaborative: |
| Humane: 0.724 | Decisive: 0.791 | stimulating: 0.760 | 0.758 |
| Diplomatic: 0.668 | Team-oriented: | Decisive: 0.741 | Humane: 0.719 |
| Intellectually | 0.787 | Informative: 0.705 | Diplomatic: 0.688 |
| stimulating: 0.647 | Autonomous: 0.679 | Performance | Team integration: |
| Face saving: 0.637 | Integrity: 0.679 | Oriented: 0.673 | 0.680 |
| | | | Integrity: 0.626 |
| | | | Visionary: 0.613 |
| | | | (Non-)Malevolent: - |
| | | | 0.472 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>2. Communicative administrator Follower confident: 0.701 Communicative: 0.642 Procedural: 0.612 Administratively effective: 0.573</p> | <p>2. Participative leader Power sharing: 0.764 Follower confident: 0.739 (non) Directive: -0.683 (not) Self-protective: -0.660 Diplomatic: 0.625 Communicative: 0.623</p> | <p>2. Participative communicator Power sharing: 0.745 Communicative: 0.705 Follower confident: 0.690 Diplomatic: 0.577</p> | <p>2. Individualistic autocrat (Non-)Participative: -0.849 Autocratic: 0.775 Autonomous: 0.646 Malevolent: 0.577</p> |
| <p>3. Individualistic autocrat Malevolent: 0.746 Autocratic: 0.708 Autonomous: 0.707 Status conscious: 0.637</p> | <p>3. Human Leader (non) Autocratic: -0.818 (not) Malevolent: -0.780 Calmness: 0.687 Humane: 0.429</p> | <p>3. Individualistic autocrat Autocratic: 0.791 Autonomous: 0.758 Malevolent: 0.746</p> | <p>3. Self-protective conflict inducer Self-protective: 0.875 Conflict inducer: 0.614 Face saving: 0.464 Self-centered: 0.463 Procedural: 0.501</p> |
| <p>4. Participative leader (not) Self-protective -0.767 Power sharing: 0.702 (non) Directive: -0.674</p> | <p>4. Risk avoiding bureaucrat (not) Risk taking -0.596 Bureaucratic: 0.528 Face saver: 0.493 Status conscious: 0.454</p> | <p>4. Risk avoiding administrator (not) Risk taking: -0.760 Procedural: 0.715 Administratively effective: 0.606</p> | <p>4. Performance-oriented bureaucrat Performance-oriented: 0.634 Administrative: 0.597 Status conscious: 0.590 Procedural: 0.553 Modesty: 0.467</p> |
| <p>5. Cautious informant Informative: 0.587 Calmness: 0.577 (not) Risk Taking: -0.540</p> | <p>5. Avoidant leader Indirect: 0.647 Non-contingent praise?: 0.641 Humane: 0.413 (not) Informative : -0.408</p> | <p>5. Laissez faire (not) Status conscious: -0,716 Calmness: 0,714 (not) Face saving: -0,523</p> | |

In Austria there is a quite clear distinction between desirable "positive" and "negative" leadership styles. The first factor unites many desirable leadership dimensions, whereas the second factor describes an extremely "military" leadership style. The third and fourth factor are rather a panopticum of undesirable leadership attributes, with the fourth factor at least including performance orientation.

By and large this part of our analysis also supports the assumption of different, but culturally embedded types of leadership in the different countries, with some influence of the national cultures and transformational settings. In order to get

an idea about possible changes in leadership behaviour in the future, especially with respect to global tendencies, we analysed the data, splitting the sample into CEOs up to 50 years and older than 50.

The comparison leads to some surprising results. With respect to the leadership styles, no striking differences between the two groups can be found. There is no significant difference; although the differences for humane orientation in Germany (higher value for younger CEOs) and self-protection in Estonia (higher value for older CEOs) are almost significant. Nonetheless, a few interesting observations can be reported. In Romania, the older group tends to be more charismatic and team-oriented, whereas it is more self-protective in Estonia and East Germany. At the same time, the younger group of managers in all the transforming countries shows a tendency towards a more individualistic behaviour, contrary to the Austrian CEOs, where the older group seems to be more autonomous and humane.

Looking at the leadership attributes largely yields the same results. There are only few attributes with significant differences between the age groups. The younger German CEOs score higher in humane behaviour (5.4 vs. 4.8), the older Estonians show more status consciousness (5.2 vs. 4.6). The behavioural style of younger Austrian CEOs is also characterised by a higher degree of status consciousness (4.9 vs. 4.4). Risk-taking behaviour in the transformation countries is somewhat higher in the younger group of CEOs for all countries, but the differences are far from being significant. With respect to participative behavioural styles the data for all countries show an intergenerational stability of the attributes, within their specific cultural boundaries.

4. Discussion of the findings

The results of our analysis strongly support the findings of the literature review, especially with respect to the role of participation in leadership. But the different factors and types of leadership show a surprising similarity to other typologies of leadership behaviour in the respective transforming countries, too. The “administratively skilled taylorist” as well as the “participative communicator” or the “individualistic autocrat” have already had an appearance in an in-depth study from 1997 (Alt/Lang 1998). In a similar vein, the special type of the East German transformational leader with a low rate of individual consideration but an orientation towards high technical or administrative competence shows striking similarities with the results from 1994/95 (see Lang 1997). The technically and administratively competent expert as a role model for the current group of managers may have been developed in the big state-owned enterprises with their specific structures and cultures, as the results of Schreiber et al. (2002) suggest. They found this type of leadership models (and/or implicit concepts of leadership) as dominant among the former economic management elite (see also Steger/Lang 2003).

In the case of the Romanian managers, the data also show patterns similar to those reported in earlier studies (e.g. Kelemen/Hristov 1998; Catană/Catană 1999). For instance, they support the statement that the Romanian managers have some transformational characteristics, such as vision (have a clear strategy: Catană/Catană 1996, Kelemen/Hristov 1998), and diplomatic and communicative behaviour (Catană/Catană 1996; Catană/Catană 1999). Romanian managers also tend to be risk-avoiding and act on the short run (Catană/Catană 1996; Catană/Catană 1999). The present study strongly supports these earlier empirical findings or assumptions concerning the more autocratic style of Romanian managers (Gehmann 1996; Mereuta et al. 1998; Olaru 1998; Heintz 2002). In fact, the lowest score for participative leadership style, and the highest one for self-protective style in the group of researched countries reflect this propensity towards a more autocratic leadership style, with a weak participative component (Finlay et al. 2003). However, the present study does not confirm the earlier claim about a widespread kind of “laissez-faire” style among Romanian managers in the early transformation (Gehmann 1996); the pattern concerning this dimension found in the study seems to have a weak structure and is of limited importance.

Last but not least, the results which have been reported for Estonia in the mid-90s and mentioned in studies later on (see section 2.), can be supported and explained in more detail by our findings (see also Tuulik/Alas 2003). As for Austria, the assumption of a participative style as a fundamental and dominant component of leadership is supported by the data, and partly elaborated by the results of the factor analysis. So, our first hypothesis (H1) is supported.

For all examined countries, the described leadership patterns are close to the characteristics of the national cultures, as known from other studies, especially Lindert (1996), Lang et al. (1998), Edwards/Lawrence (2000), Brodbeck et al. (2000), Weibler et al. (2000), Bakacsi et al. (2002). The cultural factors seem to be more important for the specific leadership style than the influences of the past system, or the transformation process. Especially with respect to participative leadership, but also for self-protective and humane orientation, the results also support the second hypothesis (H2). The differences in autonomous leadership and value-based leadership are smaller, but still statistically significant. For value-based leadership, the hypothesis of a homogeneous pattern has to be rejected, due to the lower score of Estonian managers on several items and subscales. For team-oriented leadership, the data do not contradict the assumption of a homogeneous pattern.

The results also lend support to some statements of the third hypothesis (H3). As shown above, Germany and Austria sort of form a block of similar behavioural patterns, different from the other countries, but at least partly in accordance with our expectations. At the same time, the observed behaviour deviates from the expected one in both countries, especially for culturally contingent attributes,

such as self-protective (higher) and participative styles (lower) as well as for some value-based attributes (especially for East Germany). A closer look at the results for the East-European countries suggests that they are more different than the Germanic countries, but share some attributes, and are often close to expectations with respect to team-oriented leadership. Like for Germany and Austria, the differences between described, “real” behaviour and expectations point to some problems concerning effective leadership.

Significant differences between Austria as “Non-Eastern-Block” country and the transforming countries in the sample could only be found for few leadership attributes. The fourth hypothesis (H4) proposing such differences can be confirmed for procedural (bureaucratic), and face-saving behaviour, as well as for autonomous behaviour. For dimensions such as administratively competent behaviour, humanely oriented or visionary leadership, no significant differences could be found. On risk-taking and participative behaviour, the Austrian managers resemble the German ones. Here, cultural, and transformational effects may have overlapped. In spite of the results for Estonia, the hypothesis also has to be rejected with respect to differences in performance orientation, and with regard to more team-oriented styles in transforming countries.

The results of the meta-analysis as well as our own empirical findings also show the difficulties of a change in behavioural patterns. The similarities in the studies over the last 15 years to the results presented above clearly document the stability of leadership behaviour patterns. In a quasi-longitudinal series of studies on values and implicit leadership concepts in East Germany, traditional values and Tayloristic attitudes as important internal factors for leadership style have been shown to be stable over the last years, too (Lang 2002). Other results suggest that very high rates of organisational change lead to a re-stabilisation of traditional values as the basis of adequate behaviour (Alt/Lang 1998). The stability in leadership styles may also be (partly) explained by the similarities between the expected types of leadership as shown by Brodbeck et al. (2002) and the types of “real” behaviour (see above).

Bakacsi et al. (2002:78) also observe a two-faced picture. Transformation is connected with a strong and positive impetus for a cultural and value change process. But transformational settings and former experiences have led to a gap between espoused values and “theories-in-use” with a strong negative effect on motivation, with a passive acceptance and adaptation to the circumstances (see also Kelemen, 1995; Heintz, 2002 for Romania). Looking for further explanations, it becomes clear that changes in behavioural patterns in transformational settings are much more difficult to realise than the transfer of more universal and general practices, or more technical concepts and instruments (Lang/Steger 2002:285).

According to institutional theory, behavioural training programmes and instructions represent institutional elements (e.g. Scott/Meyer 1991), which may

spread leadership ideology and support the justification of modernity. But institutional theory also suggests a decoupling of legitimising practices at the surface from the real behaviour of managers. The facade of legitimacy allows the managers to perpetuate their behaviour. However, the discrepancy between the more globalised surface and the culturally embedded local behaviour will lead to conflicts and, in the long run, to more evolutionary changes in leadership styles. A lot of authors therefore expect changes with a “next generation” of younger managers. But the results concerning age differences do not support the fifth hypothesis (H5). Both in Austria and the transforming countries, older and younger CEOs show largely similar leadership styles. This also holds largely true for Estonia, where we have found some very weak traces of a changing behaviour within the younger group of managers. Especially for participative behaviour, no “wind of change” could be observed. Quite the reverse, the results rather support earlier findings for East Germany (Lang, 2002), affirming a reinforcement of strict leadership types during transformation. Since the Austrian managers share this lack of generational differences, the only explanation is the general environment of globalisation and permanent changes, also faced by Western firms. All in all we should expect at least the next generation of top managers to act in a similar manner as the present one.

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