

## Considering the gap between Implicit Leadership Theories and expectations of actual leader behaviour: A three-study investigation of leadership beliefs in Romania\*

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*The conceptual base of behavioural preferences for leadership can be found in Implicit Leadership Theories (ILTs). In a series of three studies, we examined both ILTs and expectations for leader behaviour for the purpose of examining the degree of fit between ILTs and associated expectations. In our first study we found that ILTs for transformational and transactional leadership are highly related, although participant's ILTs were either not related or weakly related to expectations of actual leader behaviour. We conducted two follow-up studies to examine the understanding of transformational and transactional leadership in Romania. We discuss the findings in terms of how culturally-derived factors may serve to influence ILTs and profiles of expected leader behaviours.*

*Implizite Führungstheorien (ILTs) bilden die konzeptionelle Basis für Führungsverhaltenspräferenzen. In drei Studien haben wir jeweils ILTs und die Führungsverhaltenserwartungen im Hinblick auf ihre Übereinstimmung hin untersucht. In der ersten Studie haben wir festgestellt, dass ILTs sich stark auf transformative und transaktionale Führung beziehen, obwohl die ILTs der Teilnehmer entweder keine oder nur eine schwache Relation auf die Erwartungen des eigentlichen Führungsverhaltens hatten. Wir haben zwei Folgestudien durchgeführt, um das Verständnis für transformative und transaktionale Führung in Rumänien zu untersuchen. Wir diskutieren die Erkenntnisse in Bezug darauf, wie kulturell abgeleitete Faktoren zur Beeinflussung von ILTs und zur Profilierung von erwarteten Führungsverhalten dienen können.*

**Key words:** *Implicit Leadership Theories, leadership, transformational, transactional, organisational behaviour; Romania (JEL: L22, M12)*

\* Manuscript received: 26.04.2013, accepted: 02.05.2014 (2 revisions)

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# 1. Introduction

When organisations embrace a strategy of adapting to business in other cultures, understanding how to increase the relational abilities of leaders can become a key objective (Hawrylyshyn 1985). Such strategies must include considerations of cultural factors that influence which types of interpersonal interactions are both desired and expected. In regard to desired behaviours from leaders, understanding cultural determinants of these behaviours can be critical paths to producing higher leadership skills in cross-cultural contexts. But it is also important to note that routines and norms for communication and other interpersonal behaviours, which are affected by both organisational and national cultures, may alter which types of behaviours are most likely to be expressed by leaders. We note that these two ideas – of simultaneous preferences and expectations of leadership behaviours – are related, but in fact may be different due to moderating factors within organisational and national cultural environments. The conceptual underpinning for behavioural preferences of leaders can be found in Implicit Leadership Theories (ILTs). ILTs have been found to be stable constructs (Epitropaki/Martin 2004) that are related to proximal leadership-based constructs and processes such as LMX, and other more distal organisational outcomes (Epitropaki/Martin 2005).

## 1.1 *ILTs and ideal versus real leadership preferences*

A key aspect of intercultural competence is to develop listening, observational, and communication skills so that personal values, norms, and behavioural leadership preferences can be compared to those of managers from other cultures. As noted by de Bettignies (1985), if managers can be sensitive to such differences, they can then adjust their own communication and other interpersonal behaviour to best match the leadership preferences of people from other cultures. Managers who are effective in this process tend to decrease perceived uncertainty during cross-cultural operations, and this type of development can be critical for long-term organisational effectiveness (De Cieri et al. 2008).

The conceptual base of this research is found in the area of implicit leadership theories. Implicit leadership theories (ILTs) are schema-based theories, which have their roots in cognitive psychology. Essentially schemas are types of knowledge structures or mental models that individuals use as cognitive frameworks for sense making. These knowledge structures in effect represent categories of experience, which can include descriptions of people, objects, and events (Lord/Foti 1986; Lord et al. 1989). In particular, ILTs are presented as schemas which are specific to leadership perceptions, and individuals are presumed to hold implicit leader profiles composed of ideal leader behaviours as ILTs. In addition, individuals are presumed to match these implicit models of leadership behaviour to actual observed patterns of leadership behaviour in organisations (Epitropaki/Martin 2005). Thus, ILTs represent a leadership categorization ap-

proach to understanding organisational behaviour (Lord/Alliger 1985; Foti/Lord 1987; Lord/Maher 1993). This approach has received support in both laboratory studies (Cronshaw/Lord 1987) and field settings (Engle/Lord 1997; Epitropaki/Martin 2004).

However, even if managers are aware of the types of leadership behaviours that are preferred within a cultural setting, people may still not *expect* those behaviours due to contextual factors that limit the expression of leadership behaviours. For example, Brain and Lewis (2004) have demonstrated that Australians prefer transformational leadership because national cultural values of small power distance and high individualism, characteristic of Australian society, fit this leadership style. Nonetheless, situational factors such as work unit size and organisational level can alter such preferences.

As most empirical investigations of leadership preferences have been mainly conducted in North America, we explored ideal (i.e. preferred) and real (i.e. expected) leadership style preferences in Romania, a country transiting cultural and contextual changes following the downfall of the Communist regime and relatively recent entry into the European Union. Thus we note the purpose of this research is to examine the degree of fit between ILTs of Romanian employees and the associated behavioural expectations they hold for their leaders.

## 1.2 *Cross-cultural leadership studies and Romanian culture*

The concept of culture has become an essential factor in understanding economic and business environments, and the associated links between cultural value orientations and leadership behaviour is appreciated by many organisations. Although few organisational leadership studies have been conducted in Romania, such studies may increase with Romania's entry into the European Union because they could provide important information for companies that wish to extend operations into Romania. In general, Romanian cultural history stresses an autocratic leadership style due to strong historic elements of economic centralization and the structural remains of communism. Thus, in Romania there is a strong value of traditionalism, and managers lean towards a more task-oriented leadership style (Aioanei 2006). During the communist era, monopolized industries were under state control and forms of leadership in which managers displayed significant engagement with employees were not rewarded. However, as Romania is now in the process of aligning with western economies, Romanian managers – particularly the generation of managers that can recall the difficulties of working within a communist labour system – are beginning to understand the need for a different leadership style. Accordingly, Aioanei (2006) documents a trend in which the balance of preference for autocratic versus democratic leadership behaviours has been shifting in recent years, and younger Romanians are more likely to lean towards democratic preferences in leadership behaviours.

### 1.2.1 The GLOBE project

The GLOBE project (Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness) has been an ongoing, international series of studies, which started in the early 1990s (Chhokar et al. 2007). The GLOBE project has encompassed 62 participating countries across multiple research phases, including an initial phase for the development of measures and validation of study constructs. Second and subsequent phases have measured aspects of cultural orientation and preferred leadership behaviours, with most data collection ending in 2004 (Chhokar et al. 2007). Across the GLOBE studies, certain leadership behaviours and leadership attributes have been seen as good or effective across virtually all cultures (e.g., honesty), while other types of leadership behaviours and attributes have been seen as universally negative or ineffective (e.g., a neglect-based and a hands-off approach). For example, in the GLOBE study results, the leadership dimension of *charismatic or value-based leadership* has been seen as a universally effective collection of leadership behaviours and traits, which includes justice-based behaviours, impressions of honesty, and impressions of trustworthiness (den Hartog 1999). Specifically, the factor of charismatic and value-based leadership was revealed as second order factor and subsumed the primary leader behaviours related to first level factors of justice, honesty, and trust (den Hartog 1999). Furthermore, in addition to positive and negative behaviours and traits which were found to be common across cultures, other behaviours and traits were found to be contingent on particular cultural contexts. For example, in some cultures compassionate behaviours may be seen as effective leadership but in other cultures would be seen as signs of weakness.

Using the GLOBE network of scholars, there have been follow-up studies involving specific regions in Eastern Europe (Catana/Catana 2010; House 2002). In particular, there has been a CEO study which focused on CEO behaviour as perceived by subordinates. This CEO study has included many Central and Eastern European countries such as Romania, areas of former East Germany, Estonia, and Austria (Steyrer et al. 2006). In regard to Eastern Europe, CEO interviews were conducted and questionnaires were distributed across Romania (44 interviews, 277 questionnaires), Eastern Germany (48 interviews, 205 questionnaires), Estonia (45 interviews, 305 questionnaires), and Austria (40 interviews, 259 questionnaires). The CEO interviews focused on CEO perceptions of leadership, while the questionnaires were distributed to supervisors and examined preferred leadership behaviours (Steyrer et al. 2006).

In respect to Romania itself, the CEO study found consistent results relative to the GLOBE universal attribute of charismatic and value-based leadership. Behaviours related to this dimension were highly preferred in Romania, and specific examples include humane and protective behaviours that were seen as fostering justice in Romanian organisations, although these justice-based behaviours were accompanied by authoritarian elements in existing leader behavioural pat-

terns (Steyrer et al. 2006). Such results are consistent with many other studies of leadership and culture in Romania (Aioanei 2006; Catana/Cantana 1999; Catana/Cantana 2000). Since joining the European Union, it has been observed that attempts at facilitative management are present and Romanian leaders are attempting to incorporate elements of transformational leadership into traditional behaviours of consideration (Dalton/Kennedy 2007; Fein et al. 2011). However, there are still strong patterns of behaviour, based on systems present in the communist era, which promote operational problem solving and short range thinking in contrast to strategic and open systems based problem solving (Dalton/Kennedy 2007). This suggests that practices of leadership in Romania are undergoing a period of transition, where traditional notions of collectivism and gender egalitarianism remain highly valued (Catana/Catana 2010), while some managers simultaneously attempt to enact transformational leadership behaviours (Dalton/Kennedy 2007). Simultaneously these values are accompanied by patterns of functional dependence and high power distance and organisations (Cercel 2011).

### ***1.3 Leadership expectations in Romania***

Thus, it seemed reasonable that there could be a Romanian leader prototype consistent with cross-cultural prototypes of effective leadership (den Hartog 1999) as well as specific cultural factors found in Romania. However, we also note that there may be various barriers to prototype enactment in Romania (Dalton/Kennedy 2007). Thus we believe it is possible that Romanians could hold a particular leader prototype as an ideal representation of leadership behaviour but simultaneously have expectations that such a prototype may not be completely realized due to barriers in organisational and cultural conditions.

In this paper, we review a series of studies that examined such relationships. In particular, we were interested in what types of leadership behaviour would underlie Romanian leader prototypes, and we were also interested in how expected patterns of actual leadership behaviour would relate to such prototypes. In line with Epitropaki and Martin (2005), we have used the terms “ideal” and “real” leadership preferences to respectively refer to prototypes of effective leader behaviour and expectations of actual leader behaviour as manifest in organisations. We have made two assumptions in our research. First, that individuals will hold leader schemas or stable ILTs that will allow them to categorize others as leaders or non-leaders. This assumption is consistent with the large volume of work on implicit leadership theory (Epitropaki/Martin 2004). The second assumption is that while individuals have stable ILTs, these schemas may not be identical with expected leader behaviours in organisations. Both assumptions are based in the conceptual foundation of implicit leadership theory, where individuals are assumed to hold distinct schemas and to match these leader schemas against actual perceived profiles of managerial behaviour. This process of ideal versus real

profile matching process has received empirical support, which shows when the ideal leader profile or ILT is significantly distant from the observed profile valued outcomes such as LMX are less likely (Epitropaki/Martin 2005). This prototype matching process is also discussed in most conceptual work on ILTs (den Hartog 1999; Foti/Lord 1987).

Thus in our paper we use the term "ideal" to examine the ILTs held by individuals and these link to the leader prototype. In contrast, we use the term "real" to refer to expectations of behaviour profiles that managers would manifest during normal operations. Thus the term "real" refers to schemas that represent expectations of actual leadership behaviour, where such schemas may or may not represent individuals' ILTs. In other words, the notion of real expectations simply signals that individuals have formed expectations from managers within their organisations. Accordingly we developed the following hypotheses related to ideal (i.e. preferred) leadership preferences within respondent ILTs and real (i.e. expected) profiles of actual leader behaviour.

*Hypothesis 1: Because there are common elements of leader activity and engagement within both transactional and transformational leadership, but also considering that these types of leader behaviours are distinct because they focus on different motives in followers, we suggest there will be a moderate, positive relationship between preferences for transactional leadership ("ideal transactional") and preferences for transformational leadership ("ideal transformational") within the ILTs of study respondents.*

*Hypothesis 2: Based on the presence of both transactional leadership and transformational leader behaviours in Romania, but considering there are cultural factors that inhibit the full expression of transformational behaviours, we suggest there will be a moderate, positive relationship between expectations for transactional leadership ("real transactional") and expectations for transformational leadership ("real transformational") in actual leader behaviours.*

We have also noted that there is a history of active leadership in Romania, which shows historic elements of transactional leadership with more recent additions of transformational leader behaviours. In respect to comparing transactional ILTs to expected transactional behaviours, we note that recent research suggests both preferences and expectations for transactional behaviours based in the cultural history of Romania (Dalton/Kennedy 2007). However, research also supports that younger Romanian workers also desire and expect some amount of transformational behaviours (Dalton/Kennedy 2007; Fein et al. 2011). Furthermore, we note that research suggests that Romanian workers simultaneously expect that manifestations of transformational behaviours will be blocked by cultural barriers based in the historic patterns of behaviour in Romanian organisations

(Cercel 2011; Dalton/Kennedy 2007). Accordingly, we developed the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 3: Thus, we suggest there will be a moderate, positive relationship between expectations for transactional leadership (“real transactional”) and preferences for transactional leadership (“ideal transactional”).*

*Hypothesis 4: We suggest there will be no significant relationship between expectations for transformational leadership (“real transformational”) and preferences for transformational leadership (“ideal transformational”).*

We also wanted to investigate how the Romanian participants would relate the dimensions and items of the Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire to the concepts of transformational and transactional leadership. In Studies 2 and 3 this lead to the following predictions:

*Hypothesis 5: Participants will assign the leadership dimensions of Consideration, Integration, Demand Reconciliation, and Tolerance for Uncertainty to transformational rather than transactional leadership, reflecting their connection to transformational leadership in Romanian ILTs.*

*Hypothesis 6: Participants will assign the leadership dimensions of Role Assumption, Production Emphasis, and Predictive Accuracy to transactional rather than transformational leadership, reflecting their connection to Initiation of Structure in Romanian ILTs.*

## 2. Methodology

Data were collected from MBA students in Romania across three separate studies. While the studies involved different groups of students, all groups were similar in composition in respect to organisational profiles (mainly service industries) and age cohorts. For Study 1, data were collected from 362 managers in Bucharest organisations who were enrolled in an MBA program. The sample reflected a one to three (97 men, 265 women) distribution of gender. 52 percent of respondents had 16 and more years of education. 46 percent of respondents were age of 34 and bellow while 54 percent were age of 35 and above. 79 percent of respondents supervised 20 or less subordinates. We used the Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire (LBDQ XII) to collect data regarding preferences of leadership behaviour. Our adaption of the LBDQ to Romanian was based in past adaptations of this instrument to the Romanian language and culture. Specifically Littrell and colleagues (Littrell/Valentin 2005), have conducted extensive work with a reliable and valid translation of the LBDQ into Romanian, which supports the notion that assumptions within the structure of the instrument are invariant across cultures. As further support, other researchers (Fein et al. 2011), have also used the LBDQ in Romanian translations and have found similar results. All LBDQ scales were compiled into a Romanian version

of the questionnaire using the translation/back-translation method, in accord with previous studies (Fein et al. 2011; Littrell/Valentin 2005).

The LBDQ provides measures of preferences of “ideal” and “real” transformational leadership behaviours and “ideal” and “real” transactional leadership behaviours. The concept of ideal behaviours are distinguished from real behaviours by the understanding that ideal behaviours reflect preferences of the best possible behaviour from leaders – in effect, the ideal preferences serve as behaviours manifest from effective leaders and are types of ILTs. In contrast, the concept of real behaviours indicates what transformational or transactional behaviours would look like under the common conditions in which leaders and members operate. Thus, real preferences for both transformational and transactional leadership reflect the expectations of how leadership behaviours will appear within conditions and that are commonly encountered.

Studies 2 and 3 were small-scale projects (with respective samples of 52 and 33 participants) that were conducted with groups of MBA students from the same institution as those that participated in Study 1. In Studies 2 and 3, we investigated how respondents understood preferences for leadership styles in relation to the various factors of the LBDQ. The full version of LBDQ XII is composed of 12 subscales or leadership dimensions (Stogdill 1963). In our research, we used a modified form of LBDQ XII that was limited to 7 key dimensions, which can be related to the classic meta-dimensions of *personal consideration* and the *initiation of structure* (or task focus). These meta-dimensions have appeared as the classic behavioural dimensions to emerge from the Ohio State studies (Bartol/Wortman 1975; Stogdill 1969). In subsequent research the dimension of personal consideration has been connected to transformational leadership behaviours (especially the transformational sub-factors of individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation (Schriesheim/Stogdill 1975; Singer/Singer 2001)). The factors associated with personal consideration are: Factor 1, Demand Reconciliation; Factor 2, Tolerance of Uncertainty; Factor 4, Consideration; and Factor 7, Integration. Of the LBDQ subscales or leadership dimensions related to personal consideration, the factor of *Consideration*, which refers to the tendency to regard the wellbeing and contributions of followers, and the factor of *Integration*, which refers to the resolution of intra-group conflict and the development of close personal relationships within the group, are closest to the classic notions of personal consideration. In addition, the subscale of *Demand Reconciliation*, which refers to reconciling conflicting demands and resolving disorder in the group, and the subscale of *Tolerance for Uncertainty*, which refers to the ability of a leader to tolerate uncertainty or postponement of tasks without emotional instability, are also related to the meta-dimension of personal consideration. Example items for these dimensions (Schriesheim/Stogdill 1975) include “He looks out for the personal welfare of group members,” “He puts suggestions

made by the group into operation,” “He is willing to make changes,” and “He gives advance notice of changes.”

Subsequent research has also linked the dimension of initiation of structure to transactional leadership behaviours (Schriesheim/Stogdill 1975; Singer/Singer 2001), and the remaining LBDQ subscales used in studies 2 and 3 are related to the meta-dimension of initiation of structure. In particular, the factor of *Role Assumption*, which refers to the tendency to exercise responsibilities within a leadership role, the factor of *Production Emphasis*, which refers to the application of pressure for task production, and the subscale of *Predictive Accuracy*, which refers to foresight and the ability to predict group outcomes with accuracy, are also related to the meta-dimension of initiation of structure. Example items for these dimensions (Schriesheim/Stogdill, 1975) include “He makes sure that his part in the group is understood by the group members,” “He decides what shall be done and how it shall be done,” and “He schedules the work to be done.”

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Study 1

Table 1 presents basic descriptive information and correlations between the LBDQ XII leadership preference scales. Both the ideal and real scales for transformational leadership were composed of 15 items each. The scale for the ideal transactional style was composed of 19 items, while the scale for the real transactional style was composed of 17 items. As detailed in Table 1, our analyses indicate that the reliability coefficients for each of the four leadership preference scales were within the acceptable range.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and correlations for study 1

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
Ideal Transformational (1)	3.52	0.65	.741			
Real Transformational (2)	2.79	0.70	.08	.880		
Ideal Transactional (3)	3.59	0.59	.63**	.14**	.779	
Real Transactional (4)	3.21	0.60	.22**	.71**	.38**	.824

Note: N = 362.

The results of Study 1 indicate that when comparing ILTs for transactional to ILTs for transformational leadership (or *within ideal* preferences) the ILTs for leadership types are strongly related. However, in Hypothesis 1 we predicted a *moderate*, positive relationship between preferences for transactional leadership (“*ideal transactional*”) and preferences for transformational leadership (“*ideal*”).

*transformational*”). What we observed was  $r = .63$  ( $p < .01$ ) between ideal transformational and ideal transactional styles, which is a higher relationship than expected. Thus, this finding does not support Hypothesis 1.

In regard to Hypothesis 2, we predicted a *moderate*, positive relationship between expectations for transactional leadership (“*real transactional*”) and expectations for transformational leadership (“*real transformational*”), in reference to expected profiles of actual leader behaviours. We found that the *within real* preferences were strongly related across leadership types, where  $r = .71$  ( $p < .01$ ) between real transformational and real transactional styles, which is a much higher relationship than expected. Thus, this finding does not support Hypothesis 2.

In contrast, the relationships that compared the real versus ideal preferences *within style* (Hypotheses 3 and 4) were either non-significant or were significant but at a much lower magnitude when compared to the relationships within the ideal and real frames of reference for respondent ILTs. Thus, the relationship between the real and ideal transactional style (*within transactional*) was a moderate, positive relationship at  $r = .38$  ( $p < .01$ ), which supported hypothesis 3. And the relationship between the real and ideal transformational style (*within transformational*) was non-significant at  $r = .08$  ( $p > .05$ ), which supported hypothesis 4.

We were especially interested in the reasons that might drive these different results. The results from this study suggest that the frames of reference surrounding the contextual markers of “real” and “ideal” are actually much stronger than expected. This interpretation is in accord with the Full-Range Leadership Theory (Bass/Stogdill 1990) which supposes that the transactional and transformational styles overlap to some degree, because they both indicate that attention is directed from leaders to members, and thus transactional and transformational styles are more distinct from a neglectful, laissez-faire leadership style. According to this logic, we should be able to predict one type of “real” leadership style from another “real” leadership style, and predict one kind of “ideal” leadership style from another kind of “ideal” leadership style. This is indeed the case in our sample. We observed an R Square of .51 ( $p < .01$ ) when observing real transformational leadership preferences as a function of real transactional leadership preferences. We also observed an R Square of .40 ( $p < .01$ ) when observing ideal transformational leadership preferences as a function of ideal transactional leadership preferences.

Thus, we noted in Study 1 that the *within style* relationships were either non-significant or were significant but at a much lower magnitude when compared to the relationships within the ideal and real frames of reference. One possible explanation for this finding is that respondents may have had a difficult time determining which LBDQ factors were related to which particular styles. Specifi-

cally, we observed very high relationships between the *within real* preferences across leadership types, where  $r = .71$  ( $p < .01$ ) between real transformational and real transactional styles. We also observed a strong relationship of  $r = .63$  ( $p < .01$ ) between the ideal transformational and ideal transactional styles. In contrast, we observed no relationship between the real and ideal transformational style (*within transformational*) at  $r = .08$  ( $p > .05$ ) while the relationship between the real and ideal transactional style (*within transactional*) was moderate at  $r = .38$  ( $p < .01$ ). These patterns of results prompted us to investigate the nature of respondents' understanding of transactional and transformational styles. Namely, our work in Studies 2 and 3 was done to investigate how our Romanian participants understood the notions of transactional leadership and transformational leadership in reference to the factors within the LBDQ. This was in response to the higher than expected relationship between the ILTs for transactional leadership and transformational leadership (observed in Hypothesis 1), and the higher than expected relationship between the expected behavioural profiles for transactional leadership and transformational leadership (observed in Hypothesis 2).

### 3.2 Study 2 and 3

In Studies 2 and 3, we hypothesized that respondents would assign all of the LBDQ leadership dimensions related to personal consideration to the meta-dimension of transformational leadership. To test this assumption, we assumed in Studies 2 and 3 that the dimensions of *Consideration*, *Integration*, *Demand Reconciliation*, and *Tolerance for Uncertainty* would be assigned at no less than 80% frequency to the transformational style. In addition, we associated the three dimensions of *Role Assumption*, *Production Emphasis*, and *Predictive Accuracy* with the meta-dimension of transactional leadership. We expected that respondents would assign the three dimensions of *Role Assumption*, *Production Emphasis*, and *Predictive Accuracy* to the meta-dimension of transactional leadership with no less than an 80% success rate.

In Studies 2 and 3 the participants read descriptions of transformational and transactional behaviours (Bass/Stogdill 1990) and the seven selected LBDQ dimensions of *Consideration*, *Integration*, *Demand Reconciliation*, and *Tolerance for Uncertainty* and *Role Assumption*, *Production Emphasis*, and *Predictive Accuracy*. They were then instructed to assign each of these LBDQ factors to either the transformational or transactional category. Although participants were encouraged to assign each of the LBDQ dimensions to one of the two categories, they were also instructed to assign a dimension to "both categories" if they felt that a dimension fit equally well in either the transactional or transformational category. Table 2 reviews the results of the matching of the seven LBDQ factors to either the transformational category, the transactional category, or to both categories. In Table 2, rows which display a significant chi-square result show

that the expected pattern of match was violated, which means that the participants were unable to assign all of the LBDQ dimensions successfully to the transactional and transformational categories. Thus, in the rows where the chi-square results are non-significant, we see that the participants in fact matched our predicted expectations of results.

*Table 2: Study 2 – LBDQ factors matched to leadership styles*

<div>Leadership styles</div> <div>LBDQ factors</div>	Assignment of the 7 LBDQ factors to the 2 styles of leadership						
	Transactional		Transformational		Both Styles		Chi Square significance
	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	
*Factor 1 Reconciliation (Actual)	9	17,3	30	57,7	13	25	$p = .00$
*Factor 1 Reconciliation (Expected)	5.2	10%	41.6	80%	5.2	10%	
*Factor 2 Tolerance of Ambiguity	15	28,8	30	57,7	7	13,5	$p = .00$
*Factor 2 Tolerance of Ambiguity (Expected)	5.2	10%	41.6	80%	5.2	10%	
Factor 3 Role Assumption	34	65,4	13	25	5	9,6	$p = .00$
Factor 3 Role Assumption (Expected)	41.6	80%	5.2	10%	5.2	10%	
*Factor 4 Consideration	7	13,5	36	69,2	9	17,3	$p = .13$
*Factor 4 Consideration (Expected)	5.2	10%	41.6	80%	5.2	10%	
Factor 5 Production Emphasis	43	82,7	5	9,6	4	7,7	$p = .85$
Factor 5 Production Emphasis (Expected)	41.6	80%	5.2	10%	5.2	10%	

Factor 6 Accuracy	26	50	17	32,7	9	17,3	$p = .00$
Factor 6 Accuracy (Expected)	41.6	80%	5.2	10%	5.2	10%	
*Factor 7 Integration	6	11,5	40	77	6	11,5	$p = .86$
*Factor 7 Integration (Expected)	5.2	10%	41.6	80%	5.2	10%	

Note: N = 52, \*Indicates Assumed Transformational Dimensions.

In Table 2 this is revealed for the two transformational dimensions of Consideration and Integration and the single transactional dimension of Production Emphasis. Thus, based on the results of Study 2, our predictions for the matching of LBDQ dimensions to the transformational category (Hypothesis 5) were not confirmed. Namely, we expected that the participants would be able to generally match the LBDQ categories of Consideration, Integration, Demand Reconciliation, and Tolerance for Uncertainty to the transformational category. However, we found that respondents were able to match only half of the assumed LBDQ dimensions to the transformational category. Also, our predictions for the matching of LBDQ dimensions to the transactional category were not confirmed. Namely, we expected that the participants would be able to match the LBDQ categories of Role Assumption, Production Emphasis, and Predictive Accuracy to the transactional category. In fact, we found that respondents were able to match only one of the three assumed LBDQ transactional dimensions to the larger transactional category.

Study 3 was a simple replication of Study 2. In Study 3, as in Study 2, participants read descriptions of the seven selected LBDQ dimensions – Consideration, Integration, Demand Reconciliation, and Tolerance for Uncertainty and Role Assumption, Production Emphasis, and Predictive Accuracy. They were then instructed to assign each of these LBDQ factors to either the transformational or transactional category. Although participants were encouraged to assign each of the LBDQ dimensions to one of the two categories, they were also instructed to assign a dimension to “both categories” if they felt that a dimension fit equally well in either the transactional or transformational category. Table 3 reviews the results of the matching of the seven LBDQ factors to either the transformational category, the transactional category, or to both categories.

Table 3: Study 3 – LBDQ factors matched to leadership styles

<div>Leadership styles</div> <div>LBDQ factors</div>	Assignment of the 7 LBDQ factors to the 2 styles of leadership						
	Transactional		Transformational		Both Styles		Chi Square significance
	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	
*Factor 1 Reconciliation (Actual)	14	42,4%	17	51,5%	2	14	$p = .00$
*Factor 1 Reconciliation (Expected)	3.3	10%	26.4	80%	3.3	10%	
*Factor 2 Tolerance of Ambiguity	7	21,2%	24	72,7%	2	6,1%	$p = .09$
*Factor 2 Tolerance of Ambiguity (Expected)	3.3	10%	26.4	80%	3.3	10%	
Factor 3 Role Assumption	13	39,4%	7	21,2%	13	39,4%	$p = .00$
Factor 3 Role Assumption (Expected)	26.4	80%	3.3	10%	3.3	10%	
*Factor 4 Consideration	5	15,2%	23	69,7%	5	15,2%	$p = .33$
*Factor 4 Consideration (Expected)	3.3	10%	26.4	80%	3.3	10%	
Factor 5 Production Emphasis	25	75,8%	6	18,2%	2	6,1%	$p = .25$
Factor 5 Production Emphasis (Expected)	26.4	80%	3.3	10%	3.3	10%	
Factor 6 Accuracy	17	51,5%	8	24,2%	8	24,2%	$p = .00$
Factor 6 Accuracy (Expected)	26.4	80%	3.3	10%	3.3	10%	

*Factor 7 Integration	6	18,2%	25	75,8%	2	6,1%	$p = .25$
*Factor 7 Integration (Expected)	3.3	10%	26.4	80%	3.3	10%	

Note: N = 33, \*Indicates Assumed Transformational Dimensions.

In Table 3 the results of matching is again positive for the two transformational dimensions of Consideration and Integration, but in addition the dimension of Tolerance of Ambiguity was also matched to the transformational category. As with Table 2, in Table 3 we discovered that the single transactional dimension of Production Emphasis had been matched to the transactional category.

The results of Study 3 mirror those of Study 2. Thus, Study 3 did not confirm our predictions for the matching of LBDQ Dimensions to the transformational category. Namely, we expected that the participants would be able to generally match the LBDQ categories of Consideration, Integration, Demand Reconciliation, and Tolerance for Uncertainty to the transformational category. And as with Study 2, we expected that the participants would be able to match the LBDQ categories of Role Assumption, Production Emphasis and Predictive Accuracy to the transactional category. In fact, we found that the respondents were able to match only one of the three assumed transactional LBDQ dimensions to the larger transactional category.

## 4. Discussion

In respect to Study 1, we discovered that participants had distinct but related ILTs for both transformational and transactional leadership. Furthermore, the expectations for actual profiles of transformational and transactional leadership behaviours were also related. The results suggest that knowing ILTs for one style of leadership may allow the prediction of ILTs for another style. However, when we examined a match between the ILTs and profiles of expected leader behaviour we found mixed results. Although the notion that individuals match their ILTs to expected profiles is a key component of ILT research, the actual match has rarely been tested (Epitropaki/Martin 2005). One strength of our research is that we actually examined the match between ILTs and actual expected profiles.

In addition, Studies 2 and 3 also suggest that while both the transformational and transactional types of leader behaviour are distinct, there are common elements that cannot be clearly assigned to either type of behaviour. This is evident in that for both Studies 2 and 3, the LBDQ scales were incompletely linked to their respective categories of transformational and transactional leadership. Other research suggests that transformational leadership is apparently desired uniformly by employees (Brain/Lewis 2004). Nonetheless, the transactional style is an es-

sential managerial behaviour, which explains why the two styles highly inter-correlate in many studies, including the current one. Moreover, the similarity within ideal and real preferences may be due to the fact that there is a common core of engagement-oriented behaviours that underlies broad types of leadership behaviours (Antonakis/House 2002; Bass/Steidlmeier 1999; Kark/van Dijk 2007). However, seemingly a gamut of factors may affect preferences for leadership style such as individual characteristics (e.g., personality, cognitive style) and situational characteristics (e.g., stress, organisational structure) in addition to national culture (Bhagat et al. 2012).

#### **4.1 Limitations**

We recognize that this series of studies has certain limitations. A main limitation is that our data was based on self-reports. Evidence suggests that leadership preferences based on self-reports of are valid measures (Yukl/van Fleet 1992). However, as validity is best indicated through multiple indicators, future studies should employ other methods in an attempt to replicate the findings. In the context of Romania, using life history analysis, content analysis, or in-depth interviews might be particularly helpful to examine the origins of ILTs. A second limitation is that findings derived from a sample of Romanian managers may be questioned, in respect to generalizability. In particular, the results might reflect the fact that the stressful transition from the communist to the post-communist era has impacted leadership preference in Eastern Europe in unique ways (Littrell/Valentin 2005). This factor, depending on the strength of its effect, may limit the generalizability of our results. However, our results are still relevant for businesses interested in operating in Romania and other countries in Eastern Europe.

Furthermore, our sample consisted mainly of managers in full-time positions in service organisations (94%). Future studies would do well to examine more diverse populations, not only in terms of geography and culture, but also in respect to organisational context. It might also be worthwhile to examine the possibility of culturally-based moderating effects of variables not included in the current study. In the Romanian context this could involve the identification of age cohorts that learned about organisational leadership in either communist or non-communist systems. The role of such predictors might be elucidated by means of qualitative studies.

#### **4.2 Future research directions**

Organisational cultures in Romania have been characterized by standard bureaucratic values and structures such as hierarchy, rigid organisational boundaries, and a general mechanistic view of people embedded in the organisation. In relation to personality, perhaps extroverts or those high on the personality dimension of openness to experience may prefer transformational style, whereas indi-

viduals high on conscientiousness may prefer the transactional style, which stipulates complying with rules and involves contingent reward orientation (Singer/Singer 2001).

We suggest that what emerges from the present research is that national cultural values may predispose individuals for either transformational or transactional styles. However, their actual preferences could be determined by contextual factors such as individual and situational characteristics. This is consistent with existing empirical research on leadership preferences (Brain/Lewis 2004; Chhokar et al. 2007; Fein et al. 2011; Littrell et al. 2005). Here we refer to the notion raised by Littrell and Valentin (2005) that social and political changes that have occurred in Eastern Europe could impact gender and leadership preferences in these countries in unique ways. For example, we have discussed that our results might reflect stressful transitional processes in national economies, and that respondents may wish to simultaneously sustain two sets of preferences due to uncertainty regarding how the local economic climate may evolve. In addition, although knowing the national cultural values might prompt us to predict that employees would prefer the transformational leadership style, in reality we may find that employees favour the transactional one or perhaps both styles, because they are unable to completely distinguish all types of transformational behaviours from transactional behaviours. This would probably due to little experience in observing a full range of these behaviours.

In the case of our research, this finding, contrary to anticipation, is attributable to the impact of situational elements in Romania and/or individual characteristics as well as underlying common elements within transformational and transactional leadership. This reasoning may suggest an explanation of the current study findings. However, being a tentative explanation it warrants further empirical investigation.

This offers a suggestion for practitioners in Romania, in that when attempting to predict employee preferences for leadership behaviours, human resource managers should be open to the historical trends which have shaped local economies, in respect to their influence on the *role* of leaders in a particular context and the typical *opportunities* of employees to witness patterns of specific types of leader behaviour. Furthermore, our research found evidence that ILTs do not always match expected profiles of leader behaviour. This fact alone should be taken into account by human resource managers, and it could serve as the foundation of model testing, investigating under what historic contextual conditions would employee's ILTs strongly match to expected leader behaviours.

Although much remains to be learned about the relationship between gender, age cohort effects, and leadership preferences in the workplace, we believe that the current study makes an important contribution to the body of existing knowledge. As the first investigation of its kind to be conducted in Romania, it

offers insights into the factors influencing both the ILTs and expectations of actual leadership behaviours in Romanian organisations, as well as suggesting avenues for future research in other cultures and contexts. Finally, the findings within this study should prove useful to organisations attempting to manage leadership and change processes in Romania.

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