

## ANALYSIS OF MACHIAVELLIAN BEHAVIOR IN BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT – QUESTIONNAIRE CASADI

<sup>a</sup>ZUZANA BIRKNEROVÁ, <sup>b</sup>ANNA TOMKOVÁ

*University of Presov, Faculty of Management, Department of Managerial Psychology, Konštantínova 16, 08001 Prešov  
email: <sup>a</sup>zuzana.birknerová@unipo.sk, <sup>b</sup>anna.tomkova@unipo.sk*

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**Abstract:** The paper deals with issues of Machiavellian traits as a significant factor occurring in business behavior. The aim was to enrich the knowledge of the Machiavellian issue with a specific focus on the Machiavellian traits of business behavior. The aim of the creation of the questionnaire was to bring construction and application of using methodology or CASADI questionnaire in Machiavellian traits of business behavior closer.

**Keywords:** Machiavellianism, Machiavellian behavior, Business environment, CASADI, Traders.

### 1 Introduction

Traders try to attract their customers in many ways. They use advertisement, targeted marketing, and widespread campaigns. There are several psychological techniques that merchants can use to attract customers and influence their decision making. They use emotion, so sometimes to attract interest is just about the right color or eye contact. Most of us think that trading decisions are based on rational analysis and on the fact-finding. However, customers often make their choices based on personal feelings and experiences more than facts and descriptions.

It is important to know, what behavior is typical for manipulative merchants and how to recognize manipulative techniques in relationship, family, on the workplace, in advertisements, media and in policy. People are prone to be manipulated. There exist many techniques to manipulate someone without him or her knowing it. These methods are based on basic human brain behavior principles and they work almost perfect in the natural environment. In the case of cooperation word power and our human diversion of the natural environment which is getting bigger and bigger, we become vulnerable.

Manipulation is, according to one of the numerous definition, the use of unawareness, insecurity, kindness, naivety, anxiety, and politeness to achieve own, usually hidden, goals and plans. These could be even very petty and, in our view, trivial or dishonorable. It can be also objectives related to full subjugation of the individual, specific groups, or nations. Therefore, to the manipulator, psychical manipulation means misuse of own predominance regarding quantity and type of information or access to information, intelligence, verbal capability and eloquence, current circumstances or situation, various psychotechnics, methods, and strategies to influence decisions of individuals for own benefit (Christie, Geist 1970).

#### 1.1 Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism in psychological view is a summary of cynical beliefs about the nature of man, his manipulative techniques, and the forms of behavior. Machiavellianism is focused on controlling and influencing others to achieve own benefit in order to achieve own requirements (Výrost, Slaměnik 1998).

Machiavellianism refers to behavioral strategies that involve manipulating others to achieve personal goals and increase and maintain control over others. Acting of people, who reach high scores in the test of Machiavellianism is cold, full of intentional lies and compliments and it is also characterized by lack of moral. (Grams, Rogers 1989).

The objective of Machiavellianism is to keep the public busy and do not provide them any free time to think about the most important principles and the core of the issues. This method

creates and manipulates the crises related to the world and life in a matter of economic, violence, etc. Moreover, it encourages the public to admit persistent harm represented by the restriction of civil rights or gradual removal of public services. (Machiavelli 2007)

A problematical side of the Machiavellian type of person, who may present a certain extent of danger for today's world, is a lack of loyalty and reliability, self-interest and related profit-seeking behavior. It allows the manipulator to act unpredictably and it allows to his potential "victims" justifies the need for achieving the desired goal. If the merchant would follow this principle in achieving personal goals, this behavior could have in particular negative impact on his safety.

A bogeyman of all business activities is the idea that an employee decides to leave his job and begins to work as an employee of another organization or as a civil servant to fulfill his personal ambitions. In this situation, this character trait is inappropriate. Another situation would be if such "opportunistic" actions were committed during the execution of the task entrusted to it, so if it acted on behalf of the public interest, respectively in the interest of its organization or state. In that situation, such a procedure would be desirable. The same opinion can be also given in relation to another negative character trait, namely unreliability. In our view, a lack of loyalty, if it is not just pretended to obtain relevant information of a given task, wouldn't be a specific personality deficiency discriminating the candidate for a job. It may be considered a "personal disadvantage" of profession performance. Forasmuch as loyalty is a "moral value" and not a psychological feature, it cannot be built or "instilled" or enforced; a person has it or not. (Wrobel 2008; Vernon, Villani, Vickers, Harris 2008).

Nowadays a number of questions that psychological sciences, theory and practice of business and business behavior deal with together are growing. The modern trade of companies is becoming more and more challenging and it demands the trader to combine synergistically theoretical and practical knowledge and experience of different disciplines. In many management approaches and solutions, an interdisciplinary approach is essential. Psychological sciences offer traders a whole range of methods and procedures to improve their mental conditions. They are important for the trading process and related employee management and for influencing buyers to reach the company goals. They give the trader an opportunity to uncover and analyze the causes of the often irrational behavior of others in the work and non-work processes. They teach him to identify and respond to various behaviors of employees, to look for motivational factors, thus increasing the performance of the individual as well as the entire working group and ultimately the whole business (Viestová 2001; Birknerová, Frankovský 2013).

### 2 Overview of CASADI structure

The first step in compiling the CASADI was to gather a set of statements expressing ideas about the respondent's personal opinion on manipulation between people. The questionnaire items were inspired by the book *The Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli (2007). These thoughts influence how person interprets events and behavior. Table 1 gives an overview of the factors CASADI and the terms that the scales measure.

#### Application of CASADI

CASADI may be useful in business practice to obtain information about opinions on the Machiavellian traits of traders. Such information may be useful during and before the business meeting itself. Furthermore, CASADI may be also useful in various training courses for people in the business. In education, CASADI may be used in the educational process at the university and for counselling their future employment. It

can be also used for selection and counselling of trading and manufacturing companies.

Tab. 1: CASADI scale and its description

Scale	Number of items	Description
Calculativeness	5	The items detect how intensive are people beliefs that it is necessary to keep people manipulated at all costs and that they take control by manipulating others.
Self-Assertion	4	The items detect, how intensive are people beliefs that person is reliable just in case that he relies on himself and his own capacities and that he must avoid allies who are more powerful than he is.
Diplomacy	8	The items detect people's tendency to define themselves by a constant collecting of information that can use for their own benefit later and constant surrounding themselves by capable people whom they express their generosity and appreciation at the right moment.

### 2.1 CASADI tools

The respondent writes his /her answers directly into the questionnaire (form). When the responses are completed, they are rewritten manually into the IBM Statistics SPSS statistical software, which evaluates the record and generates a CASADI results report.

#### Conditions of questionnaire use

The normative group was consisted of twenty years old people and older. The CASADI questionnaire can be administrated and interpreted also by paraprofessionals without special testing training. CASADI is suitable for individual and mass use.

#### Administration

Respondents record all their demographic data, such as age, gender, residence, work area, etc. to the provided space in the questionnaire. After that, it is appropriate to follow the instructions with them so that they can be sure that they understand the method of evaluation. They use a 5-point scale to indicate how suitable the statement is for them. The answer options are 0 (completely disagree), 1 (disagree), 2 (mostly disagree), 3 (mostly agree), 4 (agree), 5 (completely agree).

Administrators should remind the respondents to evaluate the validity of each statement and choose only one answer for each item. If a respondent wants to change an answer, he can do so.

Presence of the administrator during testing is appropriate but not required. People with well-developed language skills should be able to fill in the questionnaire just based on instructions reading. CASADI should carry out in a tranquil environment without any distractions. If the CASADI is implemented in a group, the environment should be arranged so that the respondents have sufficient privacy. Usually, 10 to 15 minutes are sufficient to complete the CASADI depending on respondent reading skills and understanding the questions.

#### Scoring and drawing up a profile

CASADI is scored using the IBM Statistics SPSS statistical software. Administrators should review the questionnaires as soon as they are completed, to ensure that no item is left unanswered. If unanswered items are found, they ask the respondent to answer them and to check a few previous and following items to correct possible errors. If unanswered items

are still found, the evaluation program informs you that the results are not valid.

### 2.2 Interpretation of CASADI

Calculativeness – Opportunism factor refers to people who believe that controlling people should be kept at all costs. They maintain an opinion that it is necessary to tell others what they want to hear and to gain knowledge to control others. Opportunistic people think that when two compete, it is necessary to recognize whose victory is more profitable to them and that it is always profitable to rely on their own ability to control other people.

Self-Assertion – Assertiveness factor refers to people who consider a person reliable just in case he relies on himself and his own capacities. Successful person has to keep in mind that he must avoid allies who are more powerful than he is. This factor supports the idea that if someone helps others to take control, he undermines his own ability to take control. Subsequently, one, who wants to maintain control, has to consider all the necessary difficult preventive actions in advance and carry them out at the same time so that he has to no longer come back to them.

Diplomacy – People with the high rate of diplomacy are characterized by constant collecting of information that can use later for their own benefit. They use diplomacy to control others and prefer false and indirect communication. These people surround themselves by capable people and society in general and they express generosity and appreciation to them at the right moment.

### 2.3 Development and validation of CASADI

The pre-research of the own methodology (questionnaire) making is consisted of 21 items on a sample of 685 respondents. During pre-research, there were extracted three factors (opportunism, power, diplomacy) by the factor analysis and based on it, the new methodology name CAPODI was created. By further developing the methodology, the questionnaire items were reduced due to the low value of their communalities. Based on the results of item reliability analysis for individual extracted factors, items 5, 10, 12, and 20 were not included in the factor score calculations or other analyzes. Based on the calculations, it can be concluded, that a further change in the number of items that each factor contained would not result in an increase in reliability.

#### CAPODI<sup>1</sup>

To what extent does each of the following statements reflect you? Please, rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements so you choose a number on the scale that reflects your opinion.

Completely Disagree 0	Disagree 1	Mostly Disagree 2	Mostly Agree 3	Agree 4	Completely Agree 5				
1.	It is necessary to constantly collect information that can be later used for own benefit.			0	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Anyone who wants to maintain control has to consider all the necessary difficult preventive actions in advance and carry them out at the same time so that he has to no longer come back to them.			0	1	2	3	4	5
3.	To control others, neither merit nor happiness is necessary, but rather skilful diplomacy.			0	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Although it is easy to			0	1	2	3	4	5

<sup>1</sup> The name of the methodology CAPODI is the acronym created from syllables of the terms in Slovak language - Calculativeness, Power, Diplomacy

	convince others of something, it is important to maintain this belief at all costs.						
5.	It does not matter the means that lead to success.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6.	It is necessary to tell people what they want to hear.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7.	It is necessary to gain knowledge so that they can be used to control others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8.	If someone helps others to take control, he undermines his own ability to take control.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9.	In the enforcement of own opinion, it must be assumed that people believe in what they want to hear.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Helping others is pointless unless others know about it.	0	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Control over people must be kept at all costs.	0	1	2	3	4	5
12.	It is important to bear in mind the danger of not recognizing incipient evil.	0	1	2	3	4	5
13.	If two people compete, it is important to recognize, whose victory is more profitable for you.	0	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Taking control by manipulating others is beneficial.	0	1	2	3	4	5
15.	To be considered a person in the right place must be surrounded by capable people.	0	1	2	3	4	5
16.	It is important to express generosity and appreciation to people at the right moment.	0	1	2	3	4	5
17.	People are considered reliable just in case they rely on themselves and their own capacities.	0	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Only one thing must have a successful person always in mind: avoiding allies stronger than himself.	0	1	2	3	4	5
19.	It is important to let others know that you are not offended by the truth.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20.	It is always more effective to act vigorously than carefully.	0	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Person may be permanently successful just in case, that he can adapt to changing conditions.	0	1	2	3	4	5

The modified methodology was designed and validated as part of a first research project for the purpose of detecting Machiavellian traits in business behavior. There were extracted three factors (opportunism, assertiveness, diplomacy) by the factor analysis and based on it, the new methodology name CASADI was modified.

CASADI<sup>2</sup>

To what extent does each of the following statements reflect you? Please, rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements so you choose a number on the scale that reflects your opinion.

<sup>2</sup> The name of the methodology CASADI is the acronym created from syllables of the terms in Slovak language - Calculativeness, Self-Assertion, Diplomacy

Completely Disagree 0	Disagree 1	Mostly Disagree 2	Mostly Agree 3	Agree 4	Completely Agree 5				
1.	It is necessary to constantly collect information that can be later used for own benefit.			0	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Anyone who wants to maintain control has to consider all the necessary difficult preventive actions in advance and carry them out at the same time so that he has to no longer come back to them.			0	1	2	3	4	5
3.	To control others, neither merit nor happiness is necessary, but rather skilful diplomacy.			0	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Although it is easy to convince others of something, it is important to maintain this belief at all costs.			0	1	2	3	4	5
5.	It is necessary to tell people what they want to hear.			0	1	2	3	4	5
6.	It is necessary to gain knowledge so that they can be used to control others.			0	1	2	3	4	5
7.	If someone helps others to take control, he undermines his own ability to take control.			0	1	2	3	4	5
8.	In the enforcement of own opinion, it must be assumed that people believe in what they want to hear.			0	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Control over people must be kept at all costs.			0	1	2	3	4	5
10.	If two people compete, it is important to recognize, whose victory is more profitable for you.			0	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Taking control by manipulating others is beneficial.			0	1	2	3	4	5
12.	To be considered a person in the right place must be surrounded by capable people.			0	1	2	3	4	5
13.	It is important to express generosity and appreciation to people at the right moment.			0	1	2	3	4	5
14.	People are considered reliable just in case they rely on themselves and their own capacities.			0	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Only one thing must have a successful person always in mind: avoiding allies stronger than himself.			0	1	2	3	4	5
16.	It is important to let others know that you are not offended by the truth.			0	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Person may be permanently successful just in case, that he can adapt to changing conditions.			0	1	2	3	4	5

Evaluation of analyses was proceeding based on Kaiser normalization criteria where we determined fixed number of factors (3 factors) and value of communalities correlate at the level of 0,6. Proposed three-factor structure of analysing Machiavellian traits in Business behavior and its basic validation parameters affirm a meaningfulness of proposed specification for creating methodology to indentify these traits in business behavior.

### 3 Conclusion

Professional manipulators use thousand of different tactics to get others to agree. Business policy follows the basic psychological principles that control human thinking and in this way this tactics become effective. Basic principles as reciprocity, stability, social influence, sympathy, authority and shortage, become a part of our lives and ways of integration into society.

A professional or trader can achieve an incredible power by using the right way of manipulation and its implementation in the fulfilment of the requirements for the sales of goods, services, acquisitions or donations, votes or even a "simple" consent of the other party.

It is up to each of us how do we see a leader or trader that is trying to manipulate us. It is up to each of us who do we trust in and give in.

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