

THE LEADER'S CONSCIOUS AUTHENTICITY INDEX AS A BENCHMARK FOR LEADERSHIP STYLE PREFERENCE AND THE NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract: The text presents one possible concept for identifying the intensity, degree, and level of leader authenticity in the context of leadership styles and prevailing characteristics of the organizational environment, with the potential overlap in terms of the possibilities of cultivating and developing qualities that foster authenticity. The paper introduces partial outcomes of pilot re-search in this area. The first part discusses the framework of the organizational environment nature and presents an index of conscious authenticity for leadership. The next part discusses the center of gravity of variations in people's leadership styles in relation to the characteristics of the organizational environment. The final part presents the partial results of the pilot survey in the context of the Conscious Authenticity Index, leadership styles centers of gravity in relation to the characteristics of the organizational environment and Generations X, Y, and Z.

Keywords: authenticity, adaptation, system complexity, conscious authenticity index, leadership styles, a center of gravity of leadership styles

1 Introduction

We consider the Conscious Authenticity Index, the center of gravity of leadership styles, and the nature of the organizational environment to be significant indicators. The Authenticity Index reflects the degree of readiness, and openness, but also constancy in change. It relates to the theme of individuation through aspects such as the integrativeness of the individual, the coincidence of variability, and fluxion resulting in self-actualization. It concerns the ability to respond to change as well as to embrace and initiate it proactively. Leadership styles and their centers of gravity are related to individuation and self-actualization in consensual reality. The nature of the organizational environment creates the context for cognition, behavior, and action of people and human systems, and sets their basic frameworks and parameters. The leadership style, the organizational structure of the human system, and its internal and external environment form a functional system (Petrová, Konečná, Hornungová, 2023). It is the nature of "logics" of patterns (structures) of organization of interactions, relations of communication, influences, relationships, and "expectations" of a given unit (its internal environment) and its external environment. If the essence of the logic is, for example, competition or "struggle" in the sense of "who is stronger" or "war" in the sense of destruction and occupation, then the whole is organized in the "spirit" or according to the nature of this logic. Similarly, the nature and place of control, power, and influence, regulation. The medium or transducer of the relations of the whole plus environment system may be function, activity, service, etc. If profit is the essence of the logic and the effect of the "ex-change" between the inside and outside, then the indicator of effectiveness is its increase. Then the economics and ecology of the whole, including the nature of the preferred leadership style, are derived. However, profit does not equal wealth. The nature and degree of profit can be substituted and quantified (coinage), represented by "security" or self-security, with the ultimate motive being "survival" and its subjectively experienced "level" by the recipient of the profit.

The pedant of his logic is "unidirectionality" in the sense of drawing on environmental resources. The nature of wealth has a broader, ecological aspect of a more complex, holistic and substrate character, a kind of meta-context of "profit" (which can

be of a different nature and is a two-way process) and a transaction of energy exchange, between the inside and outside:

- Profit as an effect of the exchange ratio (cost - exchange - income) also complements the topic of loss.
- Wealth as an effect of the possibility/opportunity ratio - bidirectional relationship = ecological prosperity (holistic - organizational whole plus environment).

Profit and wealth, in relation to utility and the implications of the different natures of their logics, are addressed in Kahneman's prospect theory, which develops the idea that changes in wealth rather than property stocks are the carriers of utility (Kahneman et al., 2010; Kahneman, Tversky, 1979).

The nature of logic also refers to the locus of "power," in the sense of control, regulation, and decision-making, and subsequently translates into the form of organizational structures, such as hierarchical or networked (Hornungová, 2022; Petrová, Špatenka, 2022). The type of organizational relation-ships nature translates into the logical preference for ways of cognition on the cognitive continuum (Hammond, 2000; Kostroň, 1997), the formation and development of communication patterns and modes, including modes of encoding in the language (Bateson, 2018). Coding can be digital, analogical, iconic, metaphorical, arbitrary, figurative, symbolic, and others (Blumenberg, 2015; Bateson, 2018; Petříček, 2009; Foucault, 2007; Alleau, 2014; Cassirer, 1996; Goodman, 2007; Durand, 2012). Changes in an individual's thinking, cognition, and behavior are organized according to the characteristics of the organizational environment. The organizational environment contributes significantly to the formation of the individual and the human system, particularly in terms of individuation and self-actualization, as well as in terms of preferences for ways of knowing, cognitive models in reasoning, and decision-making (Sládek, Ullrich, 2018). The influence of the organizational environment on individuation and self-actualization is low. The ability to reason, to understand the connections between phenomena and processes, to be aware of manifest and non-manifest aspects and contributing influences, to respect the past and experience as well as to estimate the future, to construct theories and projects from ideas, visions or expectations and assumptions, and to create meaningful projects for their implementation, is the theme of the various expectations associated with the organization and management of human systems, management and leadership, whether in institutional and corporate or entrepreneurial entities, with their selection, preparation and training (Nathan et al., 2019; Sendjaya, Sarros, 2002; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

The foundations of this ability to understand, construct and create lie in the degree of fluidity, consistency, and "adaptability" of the thinking of every person who is in some way involved in organizing, managing, and leading in human systems, from the "lowest" levels with direct practical implications (task situation) to the "highest" levels representing systemic, strategic decision-making and action. The dominant trend to find out the extent of this "capability" is organized around the assumption of the relevance of intelligence and its specific forms to correct cognition (perception), and reasoning. It relies on revealing its extent and quality through testing. If the measure of this ability, the measure and quality of critical, systemic, and strategic thinking of a particular person is "survival" (in the sense of preservation of function) and prosperity (of the individual, of the whole system in the environment and context), then the ability to make correct judgments in "non-parametric" or non-standardized conditions must also be taken into account, and, as mentioned above, the ability to make or take an adequate, realistic decision based on judgment and to implement it effectively, i.e., to act, be it at the situation (tactical), context (operational) or systemic and conceptual (strategic) level.

The characteristic features, thinking requirements, and decision-making algorithms of the organizational environment (corporate or business) within which the individual exists professionally and gains or develops experience come into "play" or serve as co-factors and correlates, and specific personality factors. These factors contribute to the way in which an individual reflects and valorizes experience, and uses, cultivates, trans-forms, and develops the natural potentials or, in the modern language of informatics, reformats, reprogrammes or, on the contrary, stabilizes and standardizes the skills, abilities or so-called competences (Ullrich, Ambrozová, Sekanina, 2018).

The nature of the relationship between the internal environment and the external environment influences the nature of adaptation and learning patterns. The evolution of modern environments points to one significant factor that does not correspond to mechanistic thinking about organizational environments (Lecic et al., 2023). The organizational unit plus the environment should be thought of as a dynamically evolving complex whole whose sub-systems interact, evolve and change qualitatively. This places different demands on the nature of adaptation. If the environment is "static" then demands approximate to identification, external formation prevails with varying degrees and forms of intervention into the internal environment of the whole system (individual, team). It works with information as a command, an instruction leading to the application, the realization of those "external" required internal resources resulting in self-actualization in preformed forms and patterns of cognition and behavior, in relation to the requirements placed on the "outputs" in the form of functions and activities.

If the environment is dynamic, then it requires transformation and change of a trans-formational character in the units contained in it. It treats information, communication, and knowledge in an initiating way, and accentuates auto-transformation and resources from the internal environment of the whole, i.e. it initiates a "transformation" of the ratios of qualities of active or activated internal resources. The effect is auto-actualization (self-actualization), self-redundancy in the sense of creating new patterns of internal potential arrangement of the whole system.

Leadership and management naturally share a number of common features as well as significant qualitative differences, and have different origins and histories (Adair, Reed, 2009; Adair, 2006; Adair, 1993; Covey, 2005; Armstrong, Stephens, 2008). In assessing management, the activities and functions of the manager are evaluated, with an emphasis on order, organization, process regulation, stability, and control. In contrast, management or leadership tends to emphasize values, mission, developing motivation, and contributing to change. With the development of management, human, social and cognitive sciences, there is a growing share of efforts to grasp the topic of formerly "leadership" and more recently the leadership of people and human systems. The notion of leadership and management is burdened by historicism, the vagueness of definitions, differences in the attitudes of researchers, and the reasons and goals of the research. The effect of the involvement of the natural sciences as well as modern sciences such as cognitive science, cybernetics, systems science and information theory also plays a significant role. They have broadened the base of the spectrum of approaches to conceptualizing leadership styles (e.g. systemic). Similarly, the changes in environmental trends have translated into an increase in the importance of situational leadership (Dirani, et al., 2020; Khan, et al., 2015; Koleňáková, Ullrich, 2021). The dominant research trend in this area is towards individuals as "members" of human systems and their cognition (epistemology and cognitive sciences), behavior (behavioral sciences), decision-making, and action (cybernetics, communication, systems, and information sciences). In particular, from the perspectives of autopoiesis and self-regulation (e.g., learning systems, organizations), i.e., on the conscious self-management and self-development of people and human systems. It is related to the change or transfer of the locus of control and regulation from the external environment, or hierarchically superior level, to the

inside of the whole. That is, the direction "inward" and "downward" at the level of cognition, reasoning, decision-making, action and behaviour of people and human systems in dynamically changing and highly relationally complex task situations and contexts. At the same time, the temporal "length" of the stability of contexts and paradigms has changed in the sense of increasing the speed - the dynamics of their qualitative changes. There is a growing requirement for the ability to create knowledge, make decisions and act in highly complex and dynamically evolving situations and contexts. This is the reason for the growing interest in authenticity, which derives both from the growing trend of demands for the qualities of organizational structures in the sense of autopoiesis and from the demands for relative "autonomy" (self-regulatory autonomy) and "self-sufficiency" (the transfer of information and the regulatory effect of the superior level always lag behind the real situation). Conscious self-poiesis is the background and source of authenticity, which basically means the being and acting of the individual in accordance with the real Self, its manifestations (behavior and actions) are manifested in ways that correspond, correlate, or are in accordance with inner thoughts, experiences, feelings, emotions, preferences, values, and beliefs. Avolio et al. (2004) and Avolio and Gardner (2005) rely mainly on the foundations of humanistic psychologists Rogers et al. (1959), Rogers (1963), and Maslow (1981), Maslow et al. (1971) in their conception of authenticity. These authors focused attention on the development of fully functioning or self-actualized persons, i.e., individuals who are "tuned" to their essence and see themselves and their lives clearly and accurately. Because fully functioning people are not burdened by the expectations of others, they can make more reasonable personal decisions. Interestingly, Maslow et al. (1971) conceptualizes self-actualized people as individuals with strong ethical beliefs or structured value frameworks. Arguably, these ideas from humanistic psychology provide valuable references for thinking about authentic leadership development. Authentic individuals are true to their inner values, thoughts, and feelings (Harter, 2002). Therefore, the key to authenticity is knowing and understanding oneself, one's life and identity, and self-awareness. In this sense, they build on or complement and develop the theme of individuation and self-actualization elaborated by Jung (2019), rather than concepts emphasizing socialization, individuation, and self-actualization. Individuals with stronger expressions of authenticity are more aware of their values and more likely to act in ways that are consistent with those values. There is also evidence that more authentic individuals are characterized by higher levels of psychological well-being, higher engagement, and increased performance (Harter, 2002).

One of the important insights in the case of authenticity is that it is a self-referential state of being. It is faithfulness or truthfulness to oneself that is actualized at the individual level without requiring external influences. A related construct, authentic leadership in organizations, is defined by Luthans and Avolio (2003) as a process that draws on both positive psychological capabilities and a highly developed organizational context, resulting in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and co-workers, which promotes positive self-development. Gardner et al. (2005) suggest that through increased self-awareness and self-regulation of authentic leaders, the development of authenticity in followers is supported. Followers' authenticity in turn contributes to their well-being and the achievement of sustainable and genuine performance. In this context, Shamir and Eilam (2005) provide the following four manifestations of authentic leaders:

1. they are true to themselves (without conforming to the expectations of others) rather than faking their leadership,
2. they are motivated by personal beliefs rather than by achieving status, honors, or other personal benefits,
3. they act by themselves, without imitating (i.e., they lead from their own personal perspective),
4. their actions are based on their personal values and beliefs.

Kernis (2003) identifies self-awareness, unbiased processing, relational authenticity, and authentic behavior/action as essential

elements of authenticity. Ilies et al. (2005) use similar terms in their model, however, the meanings are shifted to better reflect their conception of authentic leadership. Specifically, they use the term "balanced processing" as opposed to unbiased processing in recognition of the extensive research from cognitive psychology that suggests humans are inherently flawed and biased processors of information (Fiske, Taylor, 1991; Tice, Wallace, 2003; Gaddy, et al., 2017; Harms, et al., 2013). Rather than claiming that authentic leaders and followers are free of cognitive biases, they argue that they are inclined and capable of multidimensional insight into issues and multiple perspectives because they evaluate information in a relatively balanced way. Our experience is related to this context and is reflected in the category of mental mobility on the cognitive continuum (Ambrozová et al., 2016; Hammond, 2000; Kostroň, 1997), involving the component of cognitive variability. Similarly, we consider the term relational transparency to be more objective than the term relational authenticity because it better reflects the open communication between authentic leaders and followers in communicating and sharing information, and the transparency of the organization's interpersonal relationships with each other, and relationships with the external environment of the organizational unit.

The findings of the preliminary research on the issue of authenticity and individuation in terms of relational aspects, which was conducted between 2015 and 2021, point to the possibility of considering the Index of Authenticity (IA) as a more general and comprehensive model, corresponding to the tendency of followers to prefer in leaders, firstly, personality integration, secondly, cognitive variability, and the sub-factors that make up the content of the Index of Conscious Authenticity (ICA). We consider the Index of Authenticity (IA) as a comprehensive summary of selected aspects in relation to group members' preference choices. These are factors related to authenticity for individuals who received the highest frequency of choices from group members. The index includes individual-conscious and unconscious indicators, including cognitive variability; original thinking; personality integration; self-awareness; internal locus of control and location of the center of gravity of interpersonal relationship characteristics in specific octants, and parameters with higher levels of conscious control and regulation. These parameters include transparency, ethics, the steadiness of action, and self-awareness, and in their totality, they constitute the content of conscious authenticity. Thus, we consider the Index of Conscious Authenticity (ICA) as the cumulative value detected by the parameters of the ALQ method (Avolio, Wernsing, Gardner, 2018; Banks et al., 2016; Baron, 2015; Hsiung, 2012).

	Mean	Std. deviation
Transparency	9	0.05237
Ethics / morale	7	0.18241
Balanced procedure	8	0.03125
Self-actualization	8	0.13254
Conscious Authenticity Index	8	0.12109

Tab. 1: Summary of the results of the Conscious Authenticity Index sub-factors

In terms of other outcomes and data from the comprehensive psychological and social diagnosis of individuals with higher frequency and preference of voting, no significant association was found with scales such as ambition, aspiration, extraversion, introversion, dominance, submissiveness, sociability, etc. Also, no significant association was found between the frequency, duration, and focus of education and courses in competencies, skills, and abilities for management and leadership and higher frequency and preference of choice. There are indications of significance for courses and training focused on personal development. The sub-indicators with a potentially significant link to authenticity, forming the overall authenticity index, can be communicated as follows: the highest frequencies and preference choices were obtained by individuals (both men and women) with the following characteristics in the indicators

studied. No significant difference was found in the values achieved by individuals for these indicators (σ - standard deviation was low).

The centers of gravity and variations of leadership styles in relation to the characteristics of the organizational environment

In terms of the characteristics of the organizational environment and, in their context, preferred leadership styles, we attempted to identify potential correlations. The morphology of leadership styles and preferred communication patterns of logics of cognition and behavior, as well as the localization of the "locus" of power (control, regulation, and decision-making), allows us to estimate with more than haphazard success the nature of the organizational environment and vice versa. The organizational environment is an environment made up of people and human systems. Different organizational environments differ in their explicit or implicit values and "traits" in the nature of their dominant benchmarks, functions, and activities. These can then be organized on a multidimensional model that can be thought of as a "reference" medium for both specific leadership styles and the nature of specific organizational environments or task situations. The diagram below contains two basic axes and one additional axis. The axes can be thought of as bi-polar dimensions / continua.

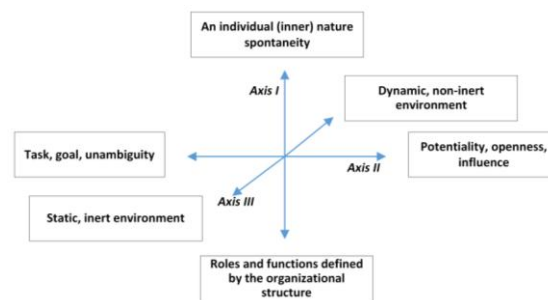


Figure 1. Multidimensional model and the organizational environment

Individual axis describe areas of the organizational environment as follow:

- Axis I has at one pole a preference for orientation to the individual (naturalness, spontaneity), the other pole represents orientation to roles and functions, given by the organizational structure.
- Axis II has at one pole an orientation towards task, goal, causality, and clarity, the other pole is represented by potentiality, openness, plurality, and influence.
- Axis III completes the model and allows the nature of the organizational environment to be captured. It has at one pole (SQ) the maximum of the static and inert environment (ecology and economics of the abiotic mechanistic), the other pole (AP) represents change, alteration, and non-inertia in the sense of the permanence of the course of juxtaposition, interrelation, and influence (ecology and economics of the living). An example is the immutability of information at one pole (it is only "trans-mitted") and the transformation of information in the process of mutual communication at the other. The third dimension enables to distinguish the nature of the organizational environment and the adequate nature of the leadership style in terms of the importance of the external-internal influence ratio; the importance of the nature of communication and adaptation; the preference for the locus of control and regulation; and the nature of information in communication (information as instruction and as initiation).

The environment preferring the status quo (SQ environment) applies a proven formula, method, and methodology (in the sense of an established, stable set of algorithms), and changes are innovative in nature. The application of cognitive models and

methods accentuates activities of an auto-centric nature (in its own interest), self/affirming. It cooperates for the survival of the "parent" algorithm", heads for the homogeneity of totalitarian type, aggressively reactive action adaptation to change, external locus of control and hierarchical structure of regulation, and cooperation by subordination - static, systemically, and functionally rigid, closed, static - stable, hard. It acts as a static, non-inertial whole.

Environment focused on self-creation, self-poiesis (AP environment), transformation, and change of the inner - inquisitive, active, proactively "mutates," adaptation is flexible, proactive work with change, partnership collaboration with prevailing respectful context. It behaves and acts non-inertly, relatively "free," openly, and "ready" to change (in the sense of responding positively to change by changing itself in terms of external and internal stimuli and initiations), intelligent living organismic whole, actively "interacting" with the environment. The coefficients SQ and AP represent potential values of preferences for "logic" of the behavior of organizational structures preferring these leadership styles. These "logic" or patterns of communication are reflected both in the characteristics of the corporate culture and relationships between people and in the preference of people's leadership styles. Secondly in the way people think and their mental condition, personality characteristics, and, in turn, in the quality of their lives as well as the people involved in their relationship, either family or co-workers.

Other themes that enable the distinction between the nature of the environment tending to the character of SQ or AP are, e.g., the theme of the economics and ecology of change and behavior of the whole, the theme of the hierarchically organized, and self-organizing, and within these the issue of the locus of control and regulation (from the outside - from the inside). A specific issue is a closedness or relative openness of the systems of the whole, openness and "readiness" to adapt to change, to respond to change by passive or active resistance, or acceptance of change or even its proactive initiation. The paradox of the duplicity of structurally closed systems, which are always open to the external environment, becomes apparent (Hoque, Raya, 2023).

Systems with a higher degree of freedom in terms of the relationships between members are better "transported" to the influence of changes and the occurrence of random states. They also differ in the nature of feedback adaptation to change. Systems with a higher degree of rigidity prefer control, and negative and reactive feedback, the nature of their behavior is mechanistic, and causal logic prevails. Systems with a higher degree of freedom and "readiness" to openness prefer self-control, and positive and proactive feed-back, which has a "self-regulatory" change effect on both the source of the stimulus and the subsequently responding "link" of the communication "circuit," the nature of their behavior is organismic or biotic (living systems), and the cybernetic "logic" prevails. This effect is sometimes understood as a learning organization. Thus, the organizational unit is qualitatively transformed in "communicating" (creation - transfer - application of information and knowledge).

Individual organizational settings also differ, for example, in the way they implicitly think about their members, whether they are primarily people (Heidegger, 2000) or workers (Novák, 2006) or things or mechanisms for performance, "sources" of energy performing work, functions and activities, etc. These assumptions have a significant formative influence on the structures of relationships and their organization. Practical experience shows that by developing authentic leadership, it is possible to create foundations on which other, specific leadership styles can be conceived or built, as shown by Blanchard (2001; 2020). Authentic leadership shares externally significant correlations with the concept of transformational leadership, and when a comparison is made between a real transformational leader and an authentic leader in terms of personality, it appears that both strive to be authentic in their behavior and actions (Alok, Israel, 2012; Avolio, Gardner, 2005). However,

transformational leadership focuses more on the development of followers and their leadership roles, whereas authentic leadership is concerned with the development of followers in terms of a self-sense more generally. Both leadership theories emphasize, for example, the importance of self-awareness, positive role modeling, followers' self-determination, positive exchanges between followers and leaders, supportive and ethical organizational climates, etc. Authentic leadership focuses more on the effective handling of task situations and places more emphasis on personal, and mindful development. At the core of the differences between these theories, we can see the different concepts of attitudes, which, however similar they may appear from the out-side, make them two distinct constructs. The transformational one emphasizes the external and adaptation to the external, highlighting an *ab alio* attitude (Lat. *ab alio* - from the other, external); the authentic one emphasizes internally conscious change and proactive transformation emanating from the self, highlighting an *aseite* attitude (Lat. *a se* - from the self, from the internal environment) in relation to environmental change. On the other hand, their similarities and correlations also make them complementary constructs. Authenticity is also closely related to the issue of a person's ability to withstand/manage challenging (sudden, unexpected, emergent situations or events perceived as random, *cri-sis*, or increased risk). Thus, it has overlapping potential in the field of project management or crisis management.

In general, each human system in relation to the organizational environment develops and prefers specific leadership styles, which differ from each other. In this sense, there are different leadership styles, and similarly, the literature offers different approaches and concepts of leadership styles. However, there are not very sharp boundaries between them, and some of their aspects overlap, intertwine, and assimilate, while others are diametrically opposed, complementary, mutually coinciding, or condition each other. For the purposes of the model, twelve leadership styles have been selected that carry the potential for separability and mutual definability based on the personal qualities of individuals, aspects of the organizational environment, or the conditions and circumstances of task situations in which people and human systems perform activities and functions, cognize, reason, decide, and act or behave (Blanchard, 2020; Sarros, Santora, 2001; Van Dierendonck, 2011; Chaudhry, Javed, 2012; Van Vugt, M., et al., 2004; Krause, O'Connell, 2011; Samad, 2012; Ely, et al., 2010; Ambrozová et al., 2021; Taylor, Cornelius, Colvin, 2014; Blanchard, Zigarmi Zigarmi, 2017; Hendriks, Karsten, 2014):

1. Transactional leadership emphasizes mentoring, development, and follow-up of team members. The leader works with rewards for successful task performance and sanctions for task failure. Transactional leadership is manifested by short-term goals and clearly defined structures.
2. Helpful leadership focuses on helping team members and is sensitive to their needs. It helps develop individuals' strengths and commitment. This translates into greater efficiency and productivity.
3. Liberal leadership is characterized by leaders delegating decision-making and responsibility to their team members. Subordinates have the authority to make decisions about their work. Teams are given recommendations and sources of information when needed, otherwise, their work is not interfered with. Ensuring sufficient resources and tools is necessary for effective team delegation.
4. Pacesetter leadership is considered one of the most effective for achieving quick results. Leaders are set toward performance and motivating team members to achieve goals. They have higher expectations and delegate responsibility for achieving goals in a dynamic environment to their subordinates.
5. Autocratic leadership focuses mainly on productivity and efficiency, with communication providing clear instructions to accomplish goals and defining what and how subordinates are to perform. Leaders make decisions

- independently and quickly, creating a stable and predictable work atmosphere for team members.
6. Bureaucratic leadership requires employees to follow rigid rules, responsibilities, and procedures exactly as laid down. There is no collaboration or creativity required. Each team member has a clearly defined job description that leads to performance.
 7. Transformational leadership encourages others to achieve their goals and motivates, and inspires through an inspiring environment for personal and professional development. At the same time, it requires clear communication, goal setting, and staff motivation. It emphasizes goal achievement as the work of the whole team.
 8. Coaching leadership helps to develop new skills, freedom, and creativity in thinking, contributes to the competence of team members, and helps a confident company culture. Leaders who coach are often considered valuable mentors.
 9. Systemic leadership creates the basic value frameworks of the organizational system, discovers the possibilities of their transformation, and helps to formulate them. It clarifies the meaning, significance, and interrelationship between the functions and processes of the organizational system and its environment. It cultivates the environment and facilitates shared understanding. Naturally and continuously reflects the evolution of the conditions, circumstances, and context of the organizational environment.
 10. Visionary leadership is characterized by a strong ability to drive development and introduce change by inspiring employees and easily gaining confidence in new ideas. It is also characterized by a strategic mindset.
 11. Situational leadership is based on an analysis of the current state of the team, situation, and environment. Realistically adapts leadership style to the conditions and circumstances of the situation, task, and environment. Consciously uses a variety of leadership styles in light of the current state of the team and the individual characteristics of its members. It focuses on creating functional and pragmatic relationships within the scope of the organizational responsibility.
 12. Democratic leadership seeks the maximum possible involvement of team members in decision-making processes and achieving consistency in performance. This leadership style is often credited with fostering higher levels of employee engagement, promoting creativity and workplace satisfaction. The team is encouraged to share ideas and concepts and stimulate group discussions focused on the results of the effort. It also calls for less managerial oversight.

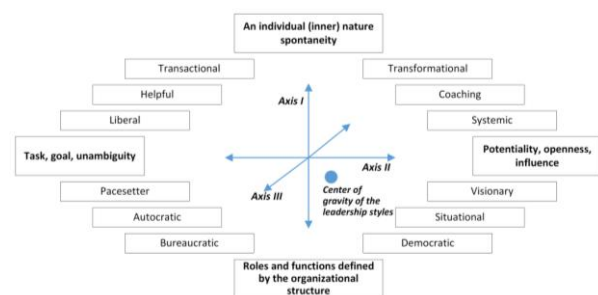


Figure 2. Multidimensional model and the organizational environment and center of gravity

Specific criteria for distinguishing the characteristics of the "nature" of the organizational environment may be the tendency to prefer people orientation or function orientation (vertical) and similarly to prefer stability or change (horizontal). Leadership style preference can be identified both in terms of individuals and leadership style preference regarding the nature of the organizational environment or task situation. The results enable to locate the "center of gravity" of the leadership style in the space of the "model" and examine their correlations, which are reflected in their "distance"; in the case of long-term monitoring, it is also possible to follow the trend of their "direction," for example, when introducing organizational changes of a

qualitative nature or changes in the behavior and actions of leaders in terms of optimizing the leadership style in relation to the nature, functions, and activities of the organizational unit, environment.

2 Materials and Methods

135 respondents/managers in leadership positions from both institutional (corporate) and entrepreneurial backgrounds participated in the pilot project. The following assumptions formed the basis of the research. The assumption of a relationship between the authenticity index measure and the location of the center of gravity from a corporate/business perspective. The assumption is that authenticity, as a cumulative value and/or its sub-parameters or pairs or triples of parameters, may exhibit a relationship with organizational environment characteristics and preferred leadership or personality styles.

In the first phase, the significance of the sub-styles of leadership in relation to the characteristics of the organizational environment was identified through focus groups. In the next step, the following meanings of relational closeness were investigated:

- Leadership style center of gravity x organizational environment character - corporation/entrepreneur;
- Leadership style center of gravity by organizational environment x Conscious Authenticity Index;
- Leadership style center of gravity x Conscious Authenticity Index ratio;
- Conscious authenticity and sub-items x leadership styles;
- Conscious authenticity x organizational environment.

2.1 Focus groups

The purpose of the focus group assignment was to determine, using ten points, the ratio of trend, inclination, importance, and leadership style preference on the bipolar axis of the SQ/AP dimension. An expert investigation using the focus group method (Fern, 1982; Babbie, 1995; Miovský, 2006; Morgan, 2001; Veisová, 2009) established the following parameters for leadership style preference ratios in relation to organizational environment characteristics. The mean values obtained are presented in the table 2. Distribution of leadership styles by the level of relevance to the environment can be split into two groups:

- SQ group - leadership styles with higher relevance to the SQ environment;
- AP group - leadership styles with higher relevance to the AP environment.

Distribution of leadership styles by the reported levels of conscious authenticity - low, medium, and high conscious authenticity index in relation to preferred leadership styles.

- group α = low level of authenticity;
- group ω = medium level of authenticity;
- group θ = high level of authenticity.

	SQ	AP	ICA	
Transactional	6	4	5	α
Helpful	6	4	6	ω
Liberal	5	5	5	α
Pacesetter	3	7	6	ω
Autocratic	8	2	6	ω
Bureaucratic	7	3	4	α
Transformational	4	6	5	α
Coaching	3	7	8	θ
Systemic	2	8	9	θ
Visionary	4	6	7	ω
Situational	1	9	10	θ
Democratic	4	6	5	α

Tab. 2: Distribution of leadership styles by the level of relevance to SQ and AP environment, and the Conscious Authenticity index (ICA)

3 Results

For the purpose of the study, we have to define the target population. The main distribution is by the individual generations X, Y, and Z. These generations represent different approaches to human beings and behavior. Individual generations are defined by the individual’s year of birth (Crampton et al., 2009; Hertz, 2016):

- generation X: born from 1965 to 1979;
- generation Y: born from 1980 to 1999;
- generation Z: born since 2000.

According to the approved survey, we have found that there are differences between individual generations and their preferred leadership style. The observed results, displayed in table 1, prove that generation X works with fewer obstacles in comparison to other generations. This generation is also the most leadable group. On the contrary, generation Z is the most fragile generation. There is a risk of lower cooperation among leaders in specific areas; especially bureaucratic leadership is unacceptable for them. In terms of age, younger individuals are more responsive to the behavior of a leader (Crampton et al., 2009; Martin, 2005).

According to the obtained results, the center of gravity should not be verified. All evaluated generations have a similar perception of individual leadership styles. There is only a change in their specific chart flat. When the flat is designed as a personal comfort zone, then the individuals want to follow their manager or supervisor. Concurrently, with the lower age of a person, the flat becomes smaller (see Figure 3).

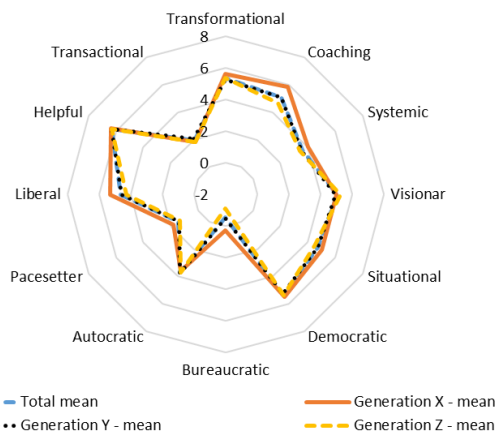


Figure 3. Center of gravity according to individual generations

In the context of the preferred leadership style, each person is located in one of four quadrants. Each quadrant represents different preferences. According to the gained results, the most persons are members of quadrant 1. That means, without care of the generations’ kind, the majority want to be individuals with their own nature, and they want to be open to new ideas and future potentiality.

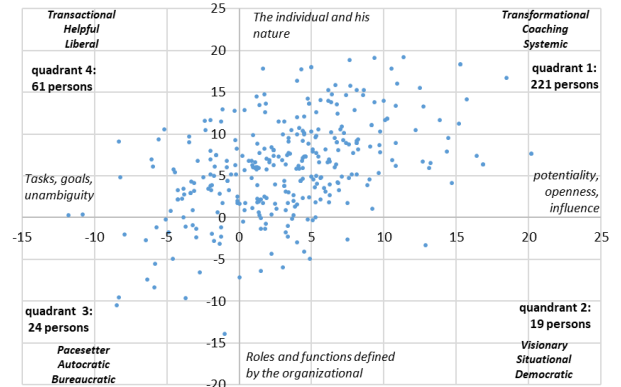


Figure 4. Distribution of leadership styles into individual quadrants

The individual relative distribution of each generations are showed in Table 3. From the generations’ point of view, most people become part of quadrant 1, no matter of individual generation. In case of changes in quadrant 2, there is an obvious decrease in a per-son’s rate from generation X to generation Z. Against this situation, in quadrant 3 is rate increasing.8 Rate of quadrant 4 is almost similar in all generations.

Q	Generation X		Generation Y		Generation Z	
1	43	66.15%	96	66.21%	178	68.46%
2	6	9.23%	6	4.14%	13	5.00%
3	3	4.62%	12	8.28%	21	8.08%
4	13	20.00%	31	21.38%	48	18.46%
Σ	65	100.00%		100.00%	260	100.00%

Tab. 3: Pivot table of generations and quadrants

We compared preferred leadership styles within authentic leadership parameters (ALQ) by correlation matrix (see table 4). People preferring transformational leadership, have a higher rate of self-awareness. Except transformational leadership, higher self-awareness have also systemic, visionary, situational, and democratic. For transformational leadership is important also transparency of their personal activities. If the persons prefer systemic leadership, then is possible to find out correlation with moral and ethical personal qualities - they should drive themselves with own internal compass. Other combinations do not verified by Pearson correlations – their values are not statistical significant. Other potential connections in Pearson correlation matrix do not meet the significance level. However, these connections have to be monitored to understand relevant approaches of managers’ work within specific staff generations.

Leadership	ALQ	Transparency	Morale/ethics	Balanced procedure	Self-awareness
Transformational		0.438887	0.233438	0.195683	0.506921
Coaching		0.200184	0.23361	0.217971	0.276690
Systemic		0.263558	0.511210	0.179464	0.481275
Visionary		0.268449	0.207445	0.142989	0.436589
Situational		0.226877	0.294237	0.201983	0.455526
Democratic		0.135228	0.218958	0.176917	0.446032
Bureaucratic		-0.09061	0.108877	-0.03427	0.126644
Autocratic		0.082187	0.171972	0.006419	0.284760
Pacesetter		0.173186	0.224826	0.141572	0.258977
Liberal		0.191423	0.200101	0.130635	0.297309
Helpful		0.186509	0.232257	0.028026	0.313925
Transactional		-0.03438	0.124140	0.036317	0.204299

Tab. 4: Correlation matrix of ALQ and leadership styles

4 Discussion and Conclusions

The results of the pilot investigation point to the following factors – first of all, they indicate that higher levels of self-awareness are presented by people who prefer transformational leadership. Higher levels of self-awareness are also indicated by people inclined towards systemic, visionary, situational, and democratic leadership. The results of the survey show that people preferring systemic leadership show higher values of moral and ethical qualities and have a stronger preference for autonomy in their decision-making.

Interesting results are also suggested by the effect of structuring respondents by generational "affiliation" (Generation X, Y, and Z). Generation X appears to be the generation with the least constraints in terms of the ability to be led and in relation to preferences for leadership styles, including the bureaucratic style. In this sense, it differs significantly from Generation Z respondents, where the willingness to be led is less intense, and the risk of less ability to cooperate with leaders preferring styles dominated by the command and control aspect can be assumed. In this context, we can suppose that, for example, bureaucratic leadership is unacceptable to them and may even provoke active resistance. The observation that bureaucratic leadership loses its "attractiveness" in the terms of willingness to accept it, as the generation gets younger can also be considered significant. In other words, the younger the generation, the stronger this trend becomes (Jakavonyte-Staškuvienė, Strazdauskienė, 2023; Terenteva et al., 2023; Crampton et al., 2009; Avolio et al., 2004).

The investigation also points to a shrinking surface area, and if we understand surface area as adaptive or adjustment potential in terms of the willingness and ability to adapt and follow leaders, it is evident that as age decreases, this comfort zone becomes smaller, i.e., each younger generation will be more rigid and radical or intolerant, with a stronger preference for autonomy-supportive environments and leadership styles. If we take into account the whole investigation, it turns out that potentially promising leadership trends in relation to the gradual generational change of employees and with regard to the characteristic features of the development of the modern environment are transformational, systemic, visionary, situational and democratic leadership (Avolio, Gardner, 2005; Brown, Treviño, 2006).

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