

PREFERRED LEADER BEHAVIOUR IN THE BUSINESS SECTOR OF LITHUANIA: FOLLOWER DIVERSITY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract. Leadership roles in sustaining effective management have recently become paramount due to the need to keep up with the fast technical and societal developments. Moreover, business sectors in the post-communist transformation settings are facing distinct leadership challenges suggesting a different pattern of leadership behaviour. The main contribution of this study was to build on follower-centric approach in leadership and investigate followers' diversity in regard to leader behaviour preferences as a means to benchmark followers' attitudes in the post-communist country still undergoing societal cultural shift. The purpose of the study was to investigate the leadership behaviours in Lithuanian cultural context. This study used 129 responses to the Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire XII in order to identify the followers' preferences of the leadership behaviour. ANOVA and correlation analyses were used to identify how followers' age, level of education, and gender are related to leadership behaviour. The results indicated significant differences in regard to gender and education level of the follower towards the desired leader behaviour. However, the age of the follower did not affect leader behaviour preferences. This indicates that followers in Lithuania have diverse attitudes towards perception of effective leadership. Studying leader behaviour within the context of the followers' socio-demographic characteristics contributes to the increase of knowledge about leadership behaviour in post-communist emerging economies.

Key words: follower diversity, preferred leadership behaviour, Lithuania

1. Introduction

Even though “more articles and books have been written about leadership than any other topic in the field of management” (Steers et al., 2012, p. 479), we still know very

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little about this area of organizational studies (Barker, 1997). Regardless of the above mentioned, leadership continues to maintain importance in research due to its established recognition as crucial to human well-being and achievement (Gill, 2011). Leadership is important as it influences effectiveness of organizational outcomes (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, Carsten, 2014), is related to dealing with increasing competition and performance (Boin, 2005), and due to the overall effect leaders have on societies. What behaviour constitutes a good leader is a central question in leadership research. This question fuels interest in leadership research, heated academic debate, and the development of new leadership theories.

For a very long time leadership research focused specifically on leaders and endured criticism for this narrow approach (Snaebjornsson, 2016a). Probably the most dramatic shift in the field came as a result of the criticism related to the call to “reverse the lenses” (Shamir, 2007) and give attention to the role of the follower in leadership inquiry. The above mentioned triggered interest towards closer attention on followers’ attitudes, particularly when defining effective leadership (Andreesc & Vito, 2010) as well as universally effective leadership (House et al., 2004). This description is useful in management practice as it serves as guidelines for management in understanding the perceptions of the employees regarding what constitutes a desired, preferred or ideal leader. Members of a particular group (e.g. culture) are more likely to interpret and evaluate situations and events in a similar manner and differently than those of different groups (Erez & Earley, 1993), hence, investigation of group effects on perceived ideal leadership is of particular value in leadership research as it can make leadership practice more effective.

Literature suggests that different cultures differently describe preferred leader behaviour (Littrell, 2010). However, some countries have more unified views (Snaebjornsson, 2016b), but other countries show meaningful differences in terms of certain characteristics of followers when describing preferred leader behaviour (Littrell & Snaebjornsson, 2016). Investigation of diversity in follower attitudes is important, first and foremost because of its relation to potential in increasing leadership effectiveness. Even though leadership is a universally experienced phenomenon, it is culture contingent – what constitutes a good leader depends on the particular culture/sub-culture (House et al., 2004, Mockaitis, 2005), or a group of people related by certain characteristics (e.g., gender, education, etc.) and values. Therefore, this article presents empiric research conducted in Lithuania about followers’ attitudes towards preferred leadership behaviour.

The research had a threefold purpose. First, it aimed to describe preferred leader profile in Lithuania, a country in societal cultural transition, hence in continuous need for the data contributing to a better understanding of work related attitudes of members of the society. Second, by analyzing the followers’ responses on preferred leader profile, it sought to determine how diverse the attitudes are when evaluated by socio-demographic characteristics of the followers, namely – gender, the level of educa-

tion and age, contributing to a follower-centric approach in leadership research. Third, it aimed to collect data on work related attitudes of Lithuanian people working in the business sector which can serve as a benchmark in the future research when investigating a possible shift in work related values in this culturally transforming country.

Non-experimental and non-student sample empirical research on leadership conducted within Lithuanian cultural context is rare (Snaebjornsson, 2016). Furthermore, the majority of research on leadership focuses on actual leadership evaluation (Kuni-gauskaitė, 2011; Bučiūnienė, Škudienė, 2008) even though such research has limited capacity in improvement of leadership effectiveness. Literature review indicated just two studies related with preferred leadership, namely Mockaitis (2005) and Stelmokienė (2012). However, both studies present no or limited evidence regarding followers' diversity in regard to their attitudes, hence leaving a gap in literature.

Leadership research in Lithuanian cultural context

After the restoration of Lithuanian independence 28 years ago, deeply embedded values, such as a sense of security, conformism, obedience, self-effacement, and deference to the decisions of higher-level authorities – which overall can be described as bureaucratic model – had to be replaced by innovativeness, entrepreneurship, and strategic thinking about the future of the organization (Diskienė et al., 2010).

This presumes that Lithuanian business managers did not take risks or were unlikely to do so. To avoid uncertainty, rules to control social behaviour were created within the business culture of Lithuania and extreme red tape was followed to have protocols in place and keep uncertainty away (Baltrimienė, 2005). Managers are considered autocratic, and employees usually avoid showing dissatisfaction around them along with little guidance provided by the superior, who instead uses authoritarian methods of supervision. The most important values to Lithuanian managers are professionalism and responsibility. Corporate social responsibility and helpfulness are less important (Huettinger, 2008). Diskienė et al. (2010) describe Lithuanian business culture as highly restrained, monochronic, oriented to the past and the present as well as marked by narrow context communication, where change in the name of progress is unpopular in an organizational environment. Moreover, in Lithuanian business culture the focus is on the present, consequently emphasizing short-term planning, where resource management is based on present needs. A direct, formal, and rather reserved communication style is dominant in Lithuanian business culture, where a strong hierarchical presence is felt, emphasizing authority, social status, and duties. Recent years show a shift towards democratic leadership styles, however, autocratic and paternalistic leadership styles are still common (Diskienė et al., 2010).

A review of the literature identified a few studies (Bučiūnienė & Škudienė, 2008; Stelmokienė, 2012; Mockaitis & Šalčiuvienė, 2004; Matonienė, 2011) focused on leadership within the cultural context of Lithuania. The main findings are as follows:

- Successful leadership is related to “soft leadership” attributes such as communication, attentiveness, flexibility, etc.;
- Various organizational outcomes are related to leadership;
- Industry sector affects leadership;
- Transformational leadership has been identified in research, and such leadership has been associated with positive organizational outcomes.

The scarcity of research available on leadership within Lithuanian societal cultural context has a twofold effect. On a practical note, it hinders increasing leadership effectiveness of business leaders. In regard to the leadership theory, it prohibits opportunity to observe changes in leadership attitudes in the cultural context, which is undergoing a shift in societal and work-related values (Diskienė et al., 2010).

The two factor theory in the plethora of leadership theories

Stogdill (1974) suggested that there are “almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (p. 259). In line with above mentioned, Dinh et al. (2014) suggest that 60 leadership theories are found in the literature today. Fleishman et al. (1992) suggested 65 different classification systems for the definition of leadership, reflecting one or more of the following aspects (see Fig. 1 below).

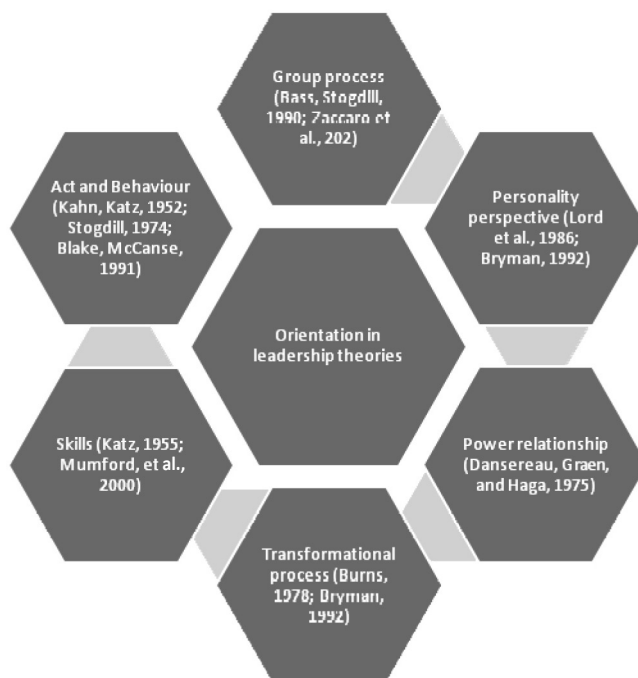


FIGURE 1. Visual Representation of Leadership Theory Classification

The description and presentation of all of these theories is well beyond the purpose of this research. Therefore, the leadership theory chosen for this particular research is presented below, with an indication of the rationale for this choice.

Leadership behaviour theory is a core leadership theory of this research. It emphasizes the behaviour of a leader by focusing on what leaders do and how they act (Northouse, 2013). Leadership behaviour (or style) theory suggests that leaders engage in two types of behaviours – task behaviour and relationship behaviour. The combination of these two behaviours when influencing others is the main focus of this leadership theory (Northouse, 2013). Leadership behaviour theory, popularized by Ohio State University Studies (Stogdill, 1948) and University of Michigan Studies (Cartwright & Zander, 1960), continues to be among major leadership theories and has been a basis of – or made influence on – other leadership theories (e.g., path-goal, House, 1971).

One of the most influential developments in leadership studies was the behavioural two factor theory: task behaviour (initiating structure) and relationship behaviour (consideration, nurturance of followers) (Kahn & Katz, 1960; Stogdill, 1974). The two-factor behavioral theory of leadership laid the ground for major research in the field of leadership. One of these directions was investigation of a preferred or ideal leader profile, which is described below.

Research in leadership indicates that followers hold a certain “prototype” of an ideal leader. When evaluating the leader, the follower creates categories of leaders – prototypes that reflect the individual’s ideal leader, on the basis of personal experience (Goethals & Sorenson, 2007). In other words, a follower has an a priori attitude, vision of how a leader should behave in general as well as in certain situations (Hogg, 2001; Goethals & Sorenson, 2007). These prototypes of ideal leaders are important, as they are related to leader effectiveness (see categorization theory, Lord & Maher, 1991). The explicit leader behavior theory that is employed in this research (for detailed description see Littrell, 2013) suggests that a “person is more likely to be accepted as a leader if the person who is evaluating sees a good fit between a leader’s expected and actual behaviour” (Littrell, 2013, p. 569). In other words, a leader is more likely to be accepted if he or she is behaving in accordance with a follower’s expectations. Many of important outcomes, such as employee’s attitude and evaluation of a leader, a leader’s effectiveness, a leader’s influence, productivity level can depend on the follower’s preconception of a preferred leader (Van Quaquebeke et al., 2009; Stelmokienė & Endriulaitienė, 2015).

2. Diversity of followers and leadership behaviour

Followers’ views on leadership are evident and important (Shamir, 2007). However, followers’ views towards leaders might differ depending on a follower’s socio-demographic characteristics. Literature suggests three most common socio-demographic characteristics affecting attitudes: gender, the level of education and age. Thus, sparse

or contradicting evidence of effects of the follower's age, education level and gender on leader behaviour preferences suggest there is a need to investigate this diversity aspect.

Age in leadership literature is often discussed in a context of generational differences. Prior research suggests that generational differences exist in leadership styles (Sala-huddin, 2010). Moreover, it also impacts leader behaviour priorities of the followers (Boatwright & Forrest, 2000). Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) claimed that societal values could change over time, hence form somewhat different values among different generations of the same country. Congruent with the above mentioned, Inglehart (1997) found some differences among generations worldwide when investigating their value priorities. Therefore it is hypothesized: **H1. The age of the follower affects leadership behavior preferences.**

Education level of a follower has not yet received enough attention in leadership research. The majority of research in the field is sparse, however, it indicates some differences regarding education level effects. Vecchio and Boatwright (2002) reported that employees with higher levels of education expressed less preference for leader structuring. Furthermore, the level of education has been found as negatively correlated with the workers' preferences for worker-centered leadership behaviours, while positively correlated with ideal preferences for job-centered leadership behaviours (Boatwright & Forrest, 2000). The modest amount of research regarding the effect of education level on followers' preferences towards leader behaviour indicates a gap and a need for research. Therefore, it is hypothesized: **H2. Education of the follower affects leadership behavior preferences.**

Gender in leadership research has and continues to trigger intense debate. Consequently, gender roles and attributes are changing with time and within societies (Twenge, 1997), shifting the understanding of what is feminine or masculine. However, the question remains whether men and women view things differently. Leadership literature provides contradicting evidence regarding this question. There is evidence to support gender differences in leadership style. Eagly and Johnson (1990) came to the conclusion that there were differences (insignificant) in leadership styles. They stress that female leaders in organizational settings tend to be more democratic and participative than men, who tend to lean more towards autocratic behaviour. Rosener (1990) also found that males adopted a more "transactional" leadership style, whereas women leaned more towards a "transformational" style of leading. This was also confirmed in a meta-analysis done by Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003). Furthermore, Helgesen (1990) concluded that women prefer "web"-organization instead of the hierarchical structure of the company. Some studies have also shown a difference in the self-perception of male and female managers (Vinnicombe & Cames, 1998). Other studies indicate little or no difference in leadership style among men and women. For instance, the study by Bartol (1978), the meta-analysis by Dobbins and Platz (1986) as well as Powell's (1999) findings indicated few, if any, arguments for differences in gender styles of leadership.

Leadership effectiveness studies revealed that women and men are equally effective leaders. Differences only appeared in gender evaluation; men and women were more effective in roles that were appropriate to their gender (see role congruence theory) (Eagly, Karau, Makhijani, 1995). When investigating leader behaviour preferences, research indicates that gender differences exist (Vecchio & Boatwright, 2002). Furthermore, the literature indicates that gender effects could in some cases even have stronger influence on leader behaviour preferences than race (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). Gender will most probably continue to be an important part in leadership research in the future, due to changing environments and increasing egalitarianism globally. However, very few studies so far have investigated “gendered” followers’ attitudes towards preferred leader behaviour. Hence, this gap is addressed in the research presented in the hypothesis: *H3. The gender of the follower affects leadership behavior preferences.*

Methodology

The survey instrument: The Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire XII

The field survey method was used in order to investigate a preferred leader profile in Lithuania. The survey instrument that was used is the LBDQ-XII (Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire XII). The theoretical approach adopted in this research study is the Ohio State Theory of Leadership, operationalised by the Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire version XII (LBDQ-XII, see <http://fisher.osu.edu/research/lbdq/>) the most established and widely used instrument in leadership research (Northouse, 2013, p.76). As to other motives of choice of the LBDQ-XII in this particular research, the conclusion of literature review should be mentioned. Literature review indicated that the LBDQ-XII was found to be the only non-experimental questionnaire designed to research preferred leader behaviour that has well established sample bases across the cultures and studies published by competent teams. The questionnaire was developed at The Ohio State Studies by compiling a questionnaire from 1800 items condensed into 150 questions (Hemphill & Coons, 1957), which were later reduced to 100 questions (Stogdill, 1963). The LBDQ-XII describes the behaviour of a preferred leader or somebody in a leadership position. The questionnaire consists of 100 items with a Likert-type response categories. These 100 items were factor analyzed to construct 12 dimensions of leadership behaviour (Table 1).

The LBDQ XII is a reliable (Stogdill, 1965) and valid instrument (Halpin & Winer, 1957; Black & Porter, 1991; Selmer, 1997). The main discussion regarding preferred leader behaviour today is about contextual influence (Festekjian et al., 2014). Therefore, this research focuses on followers’ socio-demographic characteristics as a context in investigation of the diversity of the followers attitudes. The survey was administered in Lithuanian, after the standard double-blind translation process recommended by Brislin (1980). Preparation and adaptation of the original questionnaire followed general guidelines formulated by Littrell (2015):

TABLE 1. Preferred Leadership Behaviour Dimensions Defined by the LBDQ-XII

Factor 1: Representation measures to what degree the manager speaks as the representative of the group.	Factor 7: Role Assumption measures to what degree the manager actively exercises the leadership role rather than surrendering leadership to others.
Factor 2: Demand Reconciliation reflects how well the manager reconciles conflicting demands and reduces disorder to system.	Factor 8: Consideration depicts to what extent the manager regards the comfort, well-being, status and contributions of followers.
Factor 3: Tolerance of Uncertainty depicts to what extent the manager is able to tolerate uncertainty and postponement without anxiety or getting upset.	Factor 9: Production Emphasis measures to what degree the manager applies pressure for productive output.
Factor 4: Persuasiveness measures to what extent the manager uses persuasion and argument effectively; exhibits strong convictions.	Factor 10: Predictive Accuracy measures to what extent the manager exhibits foresight and ability to predict outcomes accurately.
Factor 5: Initiation of Structure measures to what degree the manager clearly defines own role and lets followers know what is expected.	Factor 11: Integration reflects to what degree the manager maintains a closely-knit organization; resolves inter-member conflicts.
Factor 6: Tolerance of Freedom reflects to what extent the manager allows followers scope for initiative, decision and action.	Factor 12: Superior Orientation measures to what extent the manager maintains cordial relations with superiors; has influence with them; is striving for higher status.

Source: Summarised from Stogdill (1963)

- 2 translations from English to Lithuanian, implemented by native speakers;
- 2 back translations to English from Lithuanian, implemented by native speakers;
- 2 focus group studies to discuss and validate the translations.

This procedure of preparation of the survey instrument is aimed at assurance of quality of translation and adaptation of the instrument.

Sampling and recruitment of participants

The population of this study consists of employed business people in Lithuania. As organizational structure can influence employees' preferences towards managerial leader behaviour, a specific segment, private companies, in the focus of this research. In this research subjects were systematic random samples (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) of businesspeople, drawn from Lithuania.

The questionnaire was distributed in cooperation with the Council of Small and Medium-sized Businesses – SVV, which comprises about 47 business associations (some of them representing large companies as well). SVV sent an invitation to all of its partner associations, encouraging them to distribute the online questionnaire among their members. Two weeks later, SVV sent a reminder to their partners. In addition, the research team sent emails to and contacted by the phone all 47 business associations in order to encourage them to distribute the questionnaire among their members.

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were made following the recommendations of Bryman and Bell (2007). Invitation to participate in research contained information about the purpose of the research initiators and institutions that they represent, with contact information should any questions arise. The electronic link of the survey was distributed to the respondents, guaranteeing confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy. Respondents were informed that research results would be presented in a summarized form, therefore there is no risk of personal harm or negative consequences based on one's opinions. A respondent's decision to answer the research questions is considered as his/her consent to allow researchers to use his/her answers for purposes of the research. Emails requesting additional information about the purpose of the research and affiliations of researchers were answered with honesty and transparency.

Sample size

The questionnaire was accessed and answered to different degrees by 184 respondents. After elimination of unreliable responses (procedure specified below) and after data cleaning procedures, the data set was left with 129 responses to be used for further analysis, admittedly contributing to limitations of the study, however, serving as a benchmark for future research in this vein.

Data preparation and analysis

It is critical to clean the data collected before doing analyses. The data cleaning procedure followed the rules established by the CCCC consortium (supervised by Littrell, R.F.) – umbrella project, under which research presented in this paper was carried out. For the total number of missing items, after cleaning the data, the process consisted of placing subjects into two groups: those who had missing data and those who did not, and carrying out sequential multivariate analyses of variance for groups with some and no missing items, then 1, then 2 missing items, etc. Results indicated that groups which had completed 90% of the total items had multivariate population mean estimates that were not significantly different, at $\alpha=0.05$ level, from those with 100% completion rates. Thus the minimum 90% completion criterion was used to include the subjects in analyses. After the subjects with fewer than 90% complete items had been eliminated from dimension scores and after cleaning the data, the process involved placing the subjects into two groups, those who had missing data and those who did not, and carrying out Games-Howell post-hoc tests for each dimension. Subsequent iterations were run, adding the subjects who had one missing item per dimension, then two, then three. The results indicated that groups with 80% of the items complete for each dimension had population means estimates that were not significantly different, $p<0.05$, from the group with no missing items. That criterion was used to include subjects in analyses.

Calculation of the LBDQ-XII factors

Conversion of A – E values of the questionnaire and calculations of the LBDQ-XII factors were done following the Manual for the Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire – Form XII (Stogdill, 1963) and later coded accordingly in the data analyses process. Factors are defined by the average of the scores of different numbers of items specified in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Structure of the Factors

Number of factor	Items	Items in total
F1	1, 11, 21, 31, 41	5
F2	51, 61, 71, 81, 91	5
F3	2, 12, 22, 32, 42, 52, 62, 72, 82, 92	10
F4	3, 13, 23, 33, 43, 53, 63, 73, 83, 93	10
F5	4, 14, 24, 34, 44, 54, 64, 74, 84, 94	10
F6	5, 15, 25, 35, 45, 55, 65, 75, 85, 95	10
F7	6, 16, 26, 36, 46, 56, 66, 76, 86, 96	10
F8	7, 17, 27, 37, 47, 57, 67, 77, 87, 97	10
F9	8, 18, 28, 38, 48, 58, 68, 78, 88, 98	10
F10	9, 29, 49, 59, 89	5
F11	19, 39, 69, 79, 99	5
F12	10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100	10

Data analysis methods

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 14.0 (SPSS) software was used in data analysis. Skewness and kurtosis analysis with z-values outside +/-1.96 interval range (Doane & Seward, 2011), Shapiro-Wilk's test with $p < 0.05$ (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965) and visual inspection of histograms, normal Q-Q plots and box plots led to a conclusion that the samples were not normally distributed. Literature suggests the use of non-parametric analysis methods in the case of not normally distributed samples (Jamieson, 2004). However, Norman (2010) suggests that parametric methods can be utilized without concern for "getting the wrong answer", as he provides evidence that "many studies dating back to the 1930s consistently show that parametric statistics are robust with respect to violations of these assumptions" (p. 625). Moreover, when investigating an ideal leader profile in New Zealand and China, Littrell (2010) calculated both parametric and non-parametric tests and found a lack of significant difference in the results using both methods. Therefore, the decision was made to use parametric methods in the analysis of the data of this research.

Validity and reliability of the survey

Judge, Piccolo and Iles (2004) found that all the survey instruments had significant predictive validity for leader success in the LBDQ-XII. Moreover, they suggested that

the LBDQ-XII has “the highest validities averaged across the overarching dimensions of Consideration and Initiating Structure of their exhaustive array of studies reviewed” (Littrell, 2010, p. 169). Furthermore, there are extensive reliability studies (see Littrell, 2010, 2013) of the LBDQ-XII which included Cronbach’s α -based reliability analysis and item-to-scale correlational analyses, together with goodness-of-fit tests using structural equations modelling (SEM) (Littrell et al., 2018).

TABLE 3. Internal Consistency of the LBDQ-XII Factors of the Research Sample

Number of factor	Items	Cronbach α
F1	1, 11, 21, 31, 41	0.764
F2	51, 61, 71, 81, 91	0.697
F3	2, 12, 22, 32, 42, 52, 62*, 72, 82, 92	0.517
F4	3, 13, 23, 33, 43, 53, 63, 73, 83, 93	0.813
F5	4, 14, 24, 34, 44, 54, 64, 74, 84, 94	0.705
F6	5, 15, 25, 35, 45, 55, 65, 75, 85, 95	0.686
F7	6, 16, 26, 36, 46, 56, 66, 76, 86, 96	0.713
F8	7, 17, 27, 37, 47, 57, 67, 77, 87, 97	0.705
F9	8, 18, 28, 38, 48, 58, 68, 78, 88, 98	0.634
F10	9, 29, 49, 59, 89	0.717
F11	19, 39, 69, 79, 99	0.804
F12	10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100	0.727

George and Mallery (2016, p. 231) provide the rule of thumb for Cronbach alphas, namely 0.9: Excellent, 0.8: Good, 0.7: Acceptable, 0.6: Questionable, 0.5: Poor, and <0.5: Unacceptable. However, Schmitt (1996) contends that overall “There is no sacred level of acceptable or unacceptable level of alpha. In some cases, measures with (by conventional standards) low levels of alpha may still be quite useful”. In the cases where a measure has other desirable properties, for example, meaningful content coverage of some domain, alphas of 0.5 may not be a major impediment to scale use. Canales, Tejada-Delgado and Slate (2008) found the LBDQ-XII scales from data in the USA to be reliable with Cronbach alphas ranging from 0.67 to 0.95, and noted 85 studies from 62 universities finding the LBDQ-XII to be a reliable and valid instrument. Therefore, Cronbach α presented in Table 3 can be considered acceptable.

After careful consideration, the following data analysis methods were chosen in order to achieve the aims of this research:

1. Descriptive analysis of the sample in order to:
 - a) describe sample characteristics,
 - b) describe preferences for leader behaviour.
2. Hypotheses testing:

H1: The age of the follower affects leadership behavior preferences. Correlation analysis was used to investigate relations between age and the LBDQ-XII preference.

H2: **Education of the follower affects leadership behavior preferences.** Correlation analysis and ANOVA analysis were chosen as appropriate after considering other methods of analysis.

H3: **The gender of the follower affects leadership behavior preferences.** Test: one-way analysis of variance for gender (One-way ANOVA).

Results

Descriptive analysis

Table 4 presents socio-demographic characteristics of the sample, including education level, age, and gender. The largest age group in the sample is 30-39 years. 88% of participants have a university degree. This is congruent with statistical data, showing educational levels in Lithuania to be among the highest in Europe, with Lithuanian women being the most educated among all the EU countries (The Baltic Course, 2015).

TABLE 4. Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Sample

		Sample
Gender	Male, %	44
	Female, %	56
Age	< 29	28
	30–39	69
	40–49	14
	50–59	13
	60 <	3
Education	NF Professional School	1
	Professional School	5
	NF Bachelor's	6
	Bachelor's degree	21
	NF Master's	3
	Master's degree	61
	PhD	3

Table 5 shows information on the size of the firms, industrial sector and ownership type of the firms where participants in the surveys work. 66% of respondents work in SMEs (up to 250 employees) and 78% work for micro companies (Statistics department data, Lithuania).

To conclude: the respondents participating in the survey represent a variety of companies of differing sizes and types of industry.

The first aim of this research was to describe an ideal leader profile in Lithuania (Figure 1 indicates respondents' preferences).

TABLE 5. Type of Organization of Respondents' Employment

		%
Company size	Micro (up to 10)	16
	Small (up to 50)	36
	Medium (up to 250)	14
	Large (more than 250)	34
Industrial sectors	Wholesale and retail	8
	Other service including consultancy	47
	Financial service	7
	Marketing and sales	6
	Manufacturing	31
Ownership type	Mixed ownership	16
	NGO	2
	Private (SC, JSC)	75
	Public	6

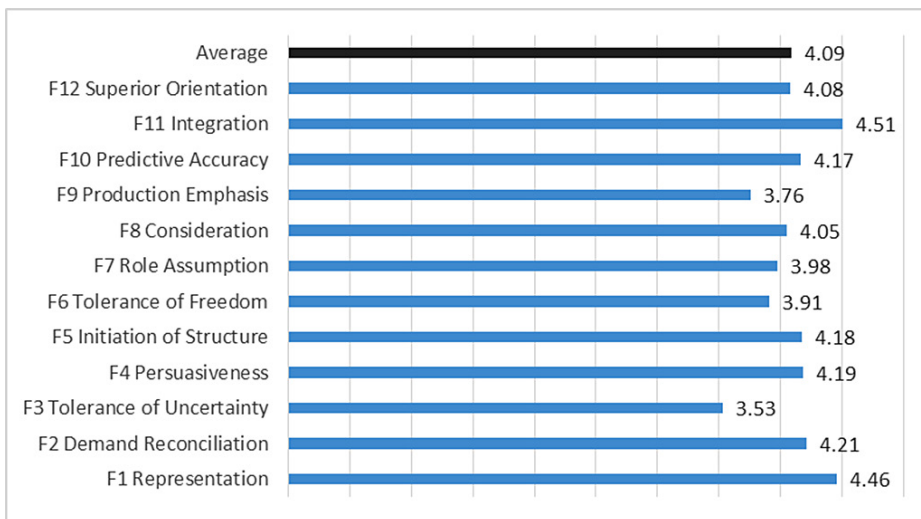


FIGURE 1. Ideal Leader Behaviour Preferences in Lithuanian Business Sector

As indicated in Figure 1, for people employed in the business field in Lithuania, the most important aspects of the leader behaviour are: Integration, Representation and Demand Reconciliation.

Hypotheses testing

The research was also aimed at determining how diverse or unified are the attitudes of the followers towards ideal leader behaviour when evaluated by socio-demographic characteristics of the followers. Three hypotheses were formulated and statistical methods chosen in order to test these hypotheses.

H1. The age of the follower affects leadership behavior preferences.

TABLE 5. Correlation analysis: age and the LBDQ-XII dimensions

		F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12
Age	<i>P</i>	.005	.066	-.125	-.041	.076	-.057	.029	.016	.109	.111	.047	-.067
	<i>Sig.</i>	.956	.460	.164	.652	.396	.528	.746	.856	.226	.216	.601	.458
	<i>N</i>	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126

Correlation analysis was chosen to investigate relations between age and leadership behaviour preference. The analysis indicates no effects on the preferred leader behaviour dimension means in Lithuania due to the age of participants. Therefore, H1 is rejected – age does not affect leader behaviour preferences in Lithuania.

H2: Education of the follower affects leadership behavior preferences.

TABLE 6. Correlation analysis: education and the LBDQ-XII Dimensions

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12
Pearson Correlation	.355**	.161	.031	.270**	.230**	.187*	.171	.209*	.140	.260**	.243**	.212*
<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)	.000	.071	.728	.002	.009	.035	.055	.019	.117	.003	.006	.017
<i>N</i>	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127	127

Correlation analysis and ANOVA analysis were chosen as appropriate after considering other methods of analysis. There were a number of significant positive correlations with education level in the sample (significance level 0.01): F1 (Representation), F4 (Persuasiveness), F5 (Initiation of Structure), F10 (Predictive Accuracy), and F11 (Integration). The first conclusion drawn from those results of the correlation analysis is that in Lithuania people working in the business sector are somewhat a diverse group, as their preferences towards ideal leader behaviour differ depending on their level of education.

TABLE 7. A One-way ANOVA Analysis: Education Level and F1, F4, F5, F10, F11

		Levene Statistic	DF1	DF2	Sig.
F1 Representation		2.158 ^a	5	119	.063
F4 Persuasiveness		.330 ^b	5	119	.894
F5 Initiation of Structure		1.152 ^c	5	119	.337
F10 Predictive Accuracy		.270 ^d	5	119	.929
F11 Integration		.162 ^e	5	119	.976

		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
F1 Representation	Between Groups	5.807	7	.830	5.203	.000
F4 Persuasiveness	Between Groups	5.190	7	.741	3.660	.001
F5 Initiation of Structure	Between Groups	2.718	7	.388	2.124	.046
F10 Predictive Accuracy	Between Groups	4.558	7	.651	3.032	.006
F11 Integration	Between Groups	4.471	7	.639	3.001	.006

The results indicate that the more educated a follower is, the more he/she prefers the leader to represent the group and speak on his/her behalf, to be persuasive, to exhibit the ability to predict and maintain a closely-knit organization. F5 is positively correlated with education level, hence the more educated the employee, the more important he/she finds the need for an ideal leader to clearly define the roles of employees and his or her own role. To conclude, H2 is accepted, as some significant effects were found on followers' preferences when describing a preferred leader.

H3: The gender of the follower affects leadership behavior preferences.

Test: one-way analysis of variance for gender (One-way ANOVA). To answer how different the leader behaviour preferences are, one-way ANOVA was performed. Results indicate significant difference ($p < 0.05$) among men and women for 9 factors (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F7, F8, F10, F12) out of 12. Moreover, women in the sample were on average rating all the 12 factors higher than men; however, the ideal leader behaviour pattern is similar for both genders. H3 is accepted – men and women differ considerably in ranking ideal leader preferences.

Conclusion and discussion

The overall conclusion of the research is that followers in Lithuania have diverse attitudes when describing the preferred leader behaviour. The diversity originates from the different educational background and gender of the follower. However, age was not identified as a predictor of the difference in attitudes. These conclusions call upon con-

textualisation of the results and relating them to the managerial practices locally and in expatriate management. The results of the research indicate that the most desired characteristics of a leader within Lithuanian cultural context are Integration, Representation and Demand reconciliation. In other words, as seen by followers, the leader has to be able to maintain a closely-knit organisation and resolve inter-member conflicts (Stogdill, 1963). This indicates the need of the followers to feel a team spirit in the organisation. Integration is a dimension within the LBDQ-XII dimensions which corresponds to the leader's social skills (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The high priority given to this dimension suggests that social competence of a leader will be regarded as the most important one by the followers in Lithuania.

The second highest on the priority list is Representation dimension. This LBDQ-XII dimension describes the degree the leader speaks as the representative of the group (Stogdill, 1963). Peterson and Seligman (2004) claim Representation to be a personality attribute and similar to „charismatic leadership“. The GLOBE findings indicated that charismatic leadership is universally desired, therefore the results of the research presented here support the findings of the GLOBE study (House et al., 2004).

The third most important characteristics for the followers in Lithuania was Demand Reconciliation. This dimension describes how well the leader reconciles conflicting demands and reduces disorder (Stogdill, 1963). This dimension is among the top three most desired leader behaviours for Lithuanian followers and the second one that includes ability to solve conflicts or conflicting situations. Demand reconciliation describes the individual level or personality attribute of the leader (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). This suggests that a preferred leader for Lithuanian followers is the one who is able to solve various conflicts: at the organisation level and outside the organisation. Therefore, when considering leadership effectiveness development, managerial leaders in Lithuania should pay a lot of attention to the increase of the conflict solving competence.

One of the main aims in the article was to determine whether followers have diverse attitudes when describing the preferred leader, due to followers' gender, education level and age, as suggested by literature. The results of the above research indicate the diversity of attitudes among Lithuanian followers, particularly due to their gender and educational background.

This implies the need for an effective leader who is able to adjust leadership style, even apply situational leadership, and who is competent in diversity management. It is noteworthy that the age of the followers did not influence the preferences towards ideal leader behaviour. This is an interesting finding, particularly within the cultural context of Lithuania, the country that has experienced dramatic changes over the last 28 years which could have affected the values priorities of the follower and influenced perception about a preferred leader behaviour. Therefore, the results indicate that an effective managerial leader will be competent in diversity management and might be considered for expatriate positions involving leading diverse teams.

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