

Leadership Metaphors as expressions of Implicit Leadership

Theories in Germany and the Czech Republic

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Abstract (250-300 words)

Purpose of the article Implicit Theories about leader and follower or about leadership attributes and contexts are important to understand managerial leadership processes. In our attempt to understand leadership behaviours in Central and East European Countries (CEE), we address a widely neglected aspect of management behaviour in countries of transition. Metaphors of Leadership as specific culturally endorsed verbal expressions of Implicit Leadership Theories (ILT). Our comparative case study is theoretically based on the concept of Implicit Leadership Theories (e.g. Junker & van Dick, 2014) and influenced by Alvesson and Spicer's "Metaphors We Lead By" from 2011. Overall, we analysed 60 different newspaper articles. In this paper, we present our first results of this work-in-progress-project in form of two short country analyses, and a culture-comparative part. The country comparison of our results shows overlaps and differences in the use of Leadership Metaphors in both countries. On top of that, our study identified Leadership Metaphors that were not yet used in Alvesson & Spicer (2011) typology so far. So finally, we further develop this typology and proposed directions for further research.

Methodology/methods Data were gathered through the online access of Leipzig University Library and Brn University of Technology Library. The online database provided a comprehensive search function that helped to conduct a sound research process. First, we looked for representative newspapers of everypolitical spectrum in each country. Then, we identified five overlapping areas in each of the newspapers. For Germany: politics, economy, society, sports and culture, for the Czech Republic: Our underlying assumption was that the article writers have used different metaphors for a respective area. Accordingly, we have selected two newspaper articles from each of these areas, published in 2018. Coding was done through MAXQDA.

Scientific aim Implicit Theories about leader and follower or about leadership attributes and contexts are important to understand managerial leadership processes. In our attempt to understand leadership behaviours in Central and East European Countries (CEE), we address a widely neglected aspect of management behaviour in countries of transition.

Findings Implicit Theories about leader and follower or about leadership attributes and contexts are important to understand managerial leadership processes. In our attempt to understand leadership behaviours in Central and East European Countries (CEE), we address a widely neglected aspect of management behaviour in countries of transition.

Conclusions. With a closer look we can see that the factor in the German sample was dominated by the collaborative team orientation, which partly expressed participative behaviour either. On the contrary, to the GLOBE results, the administratively competent behaviour was found to be part of the German understanding of a transformational leader. The GLOBE methodology with its pre-defined factors and dimensions may have been an obstacle for the further in-depth analysis. The results for participative leadership have to consider this fact. If we take a closer look at notion of collaborative team orientation, which may indicate for some higher expectations towards participative leadership within the German sample. A Human orientation had the highest rating in the Czech sample and seemed to build a counterpoint to the strong focus on performance orientations and decisiveness. Finally yet importantly, the results for autonomous behaviour came close to the GLOBE results with the highest share for the Czech sample and close to the German sample.

Keywords: digitalization, leadership, Implicit Leadership Theory, Czech Republic, Germany

JEL Classification: O15, O33