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RIGHTEOUS NON-CHARISMATIC LEADER MOST EFFECTIVE IN POLISH ORGANIZATIONS? IN SEARCH OF A CULTURE-SENSITIVE COMPETENCY MODEL FOR POLAND

In times, when most scholars are looking for universal competency model, which could work in international environment, this study focuses on local specifics differentiating effective managers operating in various social and market conditions. The main aim of conducted research was to build a picture of the successful Polish manager seen from his own perspective, and place it in Central-Eastern European cultural context. The findings revealed that, against current trends, Polish leaders appreciate constant self-related competencies much more than people-related skills. Leadership was recognized as crucial for manager's role, but there seem to be no charismatic implications in this competency. Importance of this attribution varied depending on the place in organizational hierarchy. Evaluated as having the most impact on senior managers' effectiveness, leadership can be potentially seen as the power tool more than ability to inspire others. The most surprising was very high evaluation of integrity as having an impact on leaders' effectiveness, what can be potentially a strong determinant of local management specifics. Furthermore, there was a relationship between the sales or non-sales work character and the perceived integrity significance observed. Appreciated more by people engaged in commercial activities, integrity seems to be recognized more like business ethics than fairness and honesty in interpersonal work relations.
Keywords: leadership, competences, intercultural management.

INTRODUCTION

In the current research on modern organizations and their management, there is a strong tendency to focus on universal competency model. It is believed to be valid basically under all internationalcontexts. Taking into consideration diverse socio-economicand cultural conditions is rather marginalized, while there is an expectancy that popular Western leadership theories can be successfully applied in almost every environment. In spite of those contemporary trends, there are some voices seeing that potentially there may be a significant gap neglecting regional specifics of organizational order. Recognizing the fact, that there have been barely any research conducted among Polish managers in recent years, I've decided to investigate local trends in competency model in order to extract this specifics (tell the difference) from contemporary Western studies. That could build a ground for further examination of Polish current and desirable leadership styles and more profound understanding of its peculiarity. And most important, such a research could bring the answer to the question about potentially strong determinants of local management specifics.

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1. WHAT IS A COMPETENCY?

Before going deeper into analysis, it is crucial to understand the difference between competence and competency, which definition was first introduced by White[2]. By this word he understood personal traits which are associated with job performance and motivation. This definition was later enriched, among others by Boyatsiz[3], who put an emphasis on influence of person's characteristics on effective and superior performance. Further, the meaning of person's characteristics was explored naming it as "array of different characteristics, behaviors, and traits"[4] and even more in detail "individual's knowledge, skills, thought patterns, mindsets, social roles, and aspects of self-esteem or self-efficacy"[5] that have an impact on successful performance of some type. Thus competencies can be linked to both abilities to perform a certain activity, and power and scope of this activity, whereas competence is simply worthy performance, which is a function of the ratio of valuable accomplishments to effective behavior, measuring specific and objective milestones[6]. Current competencies' definitions have two important connotations. First, it is a strong relation between the person's competency and his or her work effectiveness. This effect is even more visible among managers since they are responsible not only for their own performance, but also for leading both teams and business. Hogan and Kaiser[7] state that intrapersonal, interpersonal, leader and business competencies are predictors of leader effectiveness. Moreover, it was recognized that there is a demonstrable link between the competency of top team members and the overall performance of the organization[8]. There are many research that provides evidence that organizational success is dependent upon its managers and their leadership capabilities[9]. Following MacClelland classical theory of needs, it is very important for managers to be aware of which type of need, power, affiliation or achievement, most strongly motivates their individual workers[10]. Second important conclusion from studies on competencies is its non-abstract nature. When talking about competencies we mean a set of observable and reproducible behaviors and not simply job potential or particular talent. Competencies are indeed something that people actually do

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[2] R. White, *Motivation Reconsidered: The Concept of Competence*, "Psychological Review" 1959 Vol.66, no.5, pp.279-333.

[3] R.E. Boyatzis, *The Competent Manager: A Model for Effective Performance,* John Wiley and Sons, New York 1982.

[4] S.E. Abraham, L.A. Karns, K. Shaw, and M. A. Mena, *Managerial competencies and the managerial performance appraisal process, J.Manage. Develop.,* 2001, 20(10), pp.842-852.

[5] D.D. Dubois, *What are competencies and why are they important?,* Career Planning and Adult Development Journal 2002, 18(4), pp.1-7.

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[7] R. Hogan, R.B. Kaiser, *What Me Know About Leadership*, Review of General Psychology 2005 Vol 9, No. 2, pp.169-180.

[8] A.P. Kakabadase, *The wealth creators: Top people, top team, executive best practice",* Kogan Page, London 1991.

[9] K. Tsai, C. Tsai. Y. Wang Y., *A study on the relationship between leadership style, emotional intelligence, self-efficacy and organizational commitment: a case study of the Banking Industry in Taiwan,* African Journal of Business Management 2001 5(13), 5319-5329.

[10] R. W. WeinbacH, *The social worker as manager: A practical guide to success.* Boston 1998, Allyn and Bacon.

and what can be observed and measured[11]. They are instrumental in the delivery of desired results or outcomes[12].

2. GROUPING COMPETENCIES

If we consider competencies as a wide set of traits, knowledge, attitudes, roles and other personal characteristics, it is clear, that there is uncountable number of them, depending on a certain view. In order to analyze competencies in more efficient way, there were many competencies models proposed, which divided them into certain groups. Anderson[13] grouped competencies into 9 categories: relational, impartial, technical, creative, directive, tenacious, empowering, influential and strategic which, according to his study, are predictors of leader effectiveness. Other, more recent studies especially on project management, divide competencies into 3 dimensions. Knowledge competency is associated with technical, organizational and management principles knowledge that allows a manager to execute and control various activities. In turn, performance competency also refers to knowledge, but rather to proving managers' abilities of employing related skills and knowledge for performing tasks. Finally behavioral competency is associated with main characteristics of personality[14]. For my studies I decided to use simple competenciesmodel dividing them into: people-related, task-related and self-related ones[15]. In my opinion, this is unique division ensuring that all traits would be assigned, depending both on their motivational context and presented behaviour. When discussing types of competencies, it is crucial to distinguish them from managerial roles. Classical division of the latter, introduced by Henry Minztberg[16], proposed 3 main categories of roles which are informational, interpersonal and decisional which cannot be easily translated into desirable competencies which help to fulfill the roles effectively. Each competency can support manager in all of the roles. For example, decision making is naturally associated with decisional roles, however it is also important in informational ones (decision about communication channel and group of recipients) as well as in interpersonal role (decision about the best way to motivate the group). People-related competencies are gathered around ability to build relationships with other people. They refer directly to people management, e.g. managing teams, influencing others or effective communication.Task-related skills abilitiescan be also named operational ones since they are achievement oriented. Those competencies are strongly based on intellectual capabilities that can help in efficient problem solving and decision making. Self-related competencies appeal to personal attitudes and skills which

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[11]J.P. Campbell, R.A. McCloy, S.H. Oppler, C.E. Sager, *A theory of performance*, N.Schmitt& W.C. Borman (Eds.) Personnel Selection in Organizations 1993, pp.35-70, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[12]D. Bartram, I.T. Robertson, M. Callinan, *Introduction: A framework for examining organizational effectiveness,* I.T. Robertson, M.Callinan&D.Bartram (Eds.) Organizational effectiveness: The role of psychology 2002, pp. 1-10, Chichester, UK: Willey.

[13]D.W. Anderson, H.T. Krajewski, R.D. Goffin, D.N. Jackson, *A Leadership Self-Efficacy Taxonomy and its Relation to Effective Leadership*, Leadership Quarterly 2008, Vol. 19, No.5, pp.595-608.

[14] Project Management Institute, Project Manager Competency Development Framework 2007, 2nd edn. PMI. Newton Square. PA.

[15]Such a division was proposed among others by W. Jr. Arthur, E.A. Day, T.L. McNelly, P.S. Edens, *A Meta Analysis of the Criterion Related Validity of Assessment Center Dimensions*, Personnel Psychology 2003, Vol 56, No. 1.

[16]H. Mintzberg, *The Manager's Job:Folclore and Fact,* Harward Business Review 1975, Jul-Aug.

can also influence people, but indirectly. They are also the most resistant to change and learning process. The examples could be leadership, integrity or stress tolerance.

3. COMPETENCIES AND LEADERSHIP

Possessing and manifesting certain competenciesbuilds a certain leadership style. Leadership issue has been widely studied over the decades and probably now there are as many leadership theories as leaders themselves. Some of the researchers payed special attention to the aspect of organizational success, others focused on helping to develop and share certain vision among employees. But the vast majority of studies focus on individuals who just or as much are leading others in organization. What is common in all theories, are theelements of leaders' characteristics. Firstly, leaders create meaningful results. Secondly, they don't do that themselves, but through others. And thirdly, they have a future perspective in which short-term objectives have to be in accordance with long-term goals[17]. Most recent theories concentrate predominantly on individual's influence on others. According to these conceptionsleadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the organization of which they are a member[18]. Such a view is also present in the most prevailing nowadays conceptions of transactional, charismatic and, above all, transformational leadership, which is the most prevalent in current literature. This approach, introduced by Burns[19], draws on leaders' moral values and exploits their ability to set examples and articulate goals to instigate positive change within social structures and individuals' behaviours. The Burns's concept was frequently used in following years by other scholars. Kouzes and Posner applied it in their model which proposes 5 practices of exemplary leadership: inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process by taking an initiative, enabling others to act, encouraging others and modelling the way by developing self-awareness[20]. Coming back to competencies issue, the transformational leaders need to possess very people-oriented traits, which enables them to influence and show directions to others,rather than giving them tasks, monitoring and evaluating their performance, what constitutes traditional meaning of management. The question that arises here, is whether we can apply popular concepts, like transformational theory, universally all around the world regardless of the national context, or maybe culture and history can verify commonly used assumptions.

4. THE NATIONAL CONTEXT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

This is probably not particularly astonishing, that vast majority of currently prevailing competencies' models have been built upon American and British experiences. Recent interest in building a cross-cultural universal set of competencies needed by managers also have its roots in Anglo-Saxon history and market. In 1994 Lambert reviewed the interna-

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[17]J. Schultz, *The elements of Leadership, Global Business and Organizational Excellence,* DOI:10.1002/joe.21514, September 2013.

[18]R.J. House, M. Javidan, *Overview of GLOBE, in: House et al. Culture*, Leadership and Organizations, the GLOBE study of 62 Societies 2004, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 9-28

[19]J. Burns, *Leadership.* Harper and Row, New York NY 1978.

[20]J. Kouzes, B.Posner, *Leadership: The Challenge.* Fourth edition. Jossy-Bass, San Francisco CA 2007.

tional literature and constructed the concept of global competency, which describes the characteristics necessary for professional practice[21]. From that time many scholars are engaged in similar projects aiming to find a "recipe" for an ideal global manager. Even, when we look at dominant competencies' theories, there is not much place for a cultural context. Such a perspective fails to consider that competencies as work accomplishments are functions of the social and task-specific context in which performance occurs[22]. It is important to take into consideration the fact that differences in cultural contexts, organizational cultures, and workplace environments play an important role in defining and understanding competence in work performance[23]. Why it so crucial? Firstly, each nation has its own, unparalleled history which shapes its current economy and marketand foremost mindset of the countrymen. Secondly, competencies aren't gainedacquired in vacuum – they are developing under certain circumstances and after specific experiences because of active participation in different situations.

It is recognized that the development of management and leadership styles in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the development of performance management systems were deformed to the greatest extent under the communist "market economy"[24]. Taking into consideration specific conditions under which Central and Eastern Europe organizations shaped their organizational cultures, it raises doubts, whether doing "copy-paste" from Western competencies and leadership models in CEE countries really works. Until now numerous examples have proved that while companies from CEE countries enthusiastically introduced contemporary performance measurement frameworks developed for organizational contexts of Western companies, here they did not lead to the anticipated successes[25]. A cultural-based approach recognizing certain specific of our region have already been introduced in a few studies concerning Central and Eastern Europe which aimed to demonstrate some unique aspects of their organizational culture and leadership styles, which have its roots in communism.

For example, in Romania it was recognized foundthat cultural history stresses an autocratic leadership style due to strong previouselements of strong economic centralization. Organizational cultures in Romania have been characterized by standard bureaucraticvalues and structures such as hierarchy, rigid organizational boundaries, and a general mechanistic view of people embedded in the organization[26]. Thus, there is a strong value of tradi-

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[21]R.D. Lambert, *Educational exchange and global competence.* New York 1994, Council on International Educational Exchange.

[22]J. Burgoyne, *The competence movement: Issues, Stakeholders and Prospects,* Personnel Review 1993, No 22, pp. 6-13 and J. Sandberg, *Human Competence at Work: An Interpretive Perspective,* Goteborg:Bas 1994.

[23]G. Scaratti, S. Ivaldi, BPA - Applied Psychology Bulletin (Bollettino di Psicologia Applicata). Jan-Apr 2015, Vol. 63 Issue 272, pp. 42-57.

[24]B. Vargic, National culture and Human Resources management practices, PhD thesis, Bratislava 2002.

[25]A.R. Buhovac, M.Z. Groff, *Contemporary performance management systems in Central and Eastern Europe: synthesis of the empirical literature*, Journal of Eastern Management Studies, 17, 1, pp.68-103.

[26]E.C. Fein, A. Tziner, C. Vasiliu, M. Felea, *Considering the gap between Implicit Leadership Theories and expectations of actual leader behaviour: A three-study investigation of leadership beliefs in Romania*, Journal for East European Management Studies 2015, Vol. 20 Issue 1, pp.68-87.

tionalism, and managers lean towards a more task-oriented leadership style[27]. One of the most current research of that type in Slovakia showed that the typical organizational structure is the "family" type with a great power distance and weak uncertainty avoidance; and typical features are that there is direct control of things and the fatherly behavior of the leaders of the organizations[28]. Studies conducted in Russia clearly showedan authoritative character of leadership styles which was the heritage of Soviet times. It was proved that more managers demonstrated a transactional style than the transformational style[29]. They were also very comparative studies in Russia which aimed to confront British competency model and the list of competencies determined to be important in Russian market. They proved that although there were significant similarities between those models, there are also important differences in the standards for Western and Russian successful manager. The main differences were found in areas of interpersonal skills and individual traits which depended to a large extent on cultural specifics and the country's socioeconomic development[30]

Studies in Poland conducted in 90s also indicated that managers are still relatively autocratic in nature[31] which, no doubt, had its main reason in communism and centralized economy, where there was not much place for balanced and reciprocal cooperation between employees and their supervisors. Although the official collapse of former regime happened in the end of 80s, learning how to function in the new market realities had to take a long time. GLOBE research conducted globally, including Poland in the end of 90s still showed relatively high results in power distance and low in future orientation.Later research were still showing thatPoland might be regarded as a collectivist nation under the imposition of communism and the emphasis on community and egalitarianism[32]. However, other studies conducted in Poland proved that market reforms has changed the mode of allocating rewards in favour of ( ) meritocracy[33], which indicates that individualistic approach is developing. More recently, the Development Dimensions International organization has published research results concerning leadership in Poland. The data shows that the skills which Polish leaders lack most are coaching and developing others. They declared that the critical skill which made Polish leaders effective in the past and will make them effective in the future is improving employee engagement. Generally Polish leaders evaluated themselves more strictly than their counterparts abroad. What is interesting,

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[27]I. Aioanei, *Leadership in Romania*, Journal of Organisational Change Management 2006, 19/6, pp.705-710.

[28]D. Bauer, Successful *leadership behaviours in Slovak organizations' environment – an introduction to Slovak implicit leadership theories based on GLOBE study findings,* Journal for East European Management Studies 2015, Vol. 20 Issue 1, pp.9-35.

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[30]S. Simonenko D. Khrenov D., *Fairy tails and true stories about assessment methods of personnel.* Moscow 2010, RF:DeTech.

[31]A.G. Jago, J. Maczynski, G. Reber, *Evolving leadership styles?: A comparison of Polish managers before and after market economy reforms*, Polish Psychological Bulletin 1996, Vol 27(2), pp. 107-115.

[32]L. Lett, M. Smith, *East meets West: the case of Polish expatriates in the UK*, International Journal of Human Resource Management, Sep2009, Vol. 20 Issue 9, pp.1864-1878.

[33]H. Domański, *Rise of Meritocracy in Poland: 1982:2008,* European Sociological Review Jun2011, Vol. 27 Issue 3, p400-411, p.409.

after more than 20 years from communism collapse, they still felt that the transition period for Polish economy is not ended[34]. This research, although providing very interesting information, doesn't show the clear picture of competency model influencing effectiveness of Polish managers. There is still little data describing the competencies that have direct effect on leaders' success that could be compared to Western leadership models. I found this gap critical for further studies regarding leadership in Poland, and that is why I've decided to conduct a research devoted merely to Polish leaders' competencies.

Hypotheses

The research I've conducted had its aim in answering five main hypothesis related to managers' subjective view on the most desirable competencies. First was an assumption that due to the fact that power distance is still proved to be relatively high in Poland, people-related competencies will be evaluated as having less importance than task and self-related ones. The second hypothesis based on the cultural difference between East and West, was that charismatic leadership worshiped in Western literature, will not be indicated as one of the most important competency for Polish managers' effectiveness.Furtherly I wanted to determine the relationship between place in hierarchy and perceived leadership importance. Since the proposed definition appealed to ability to create a certain vision and convince others to follow it, I expected that it will be treated as more significant for younger generation of managers brought on Anglo-Saxon leadership theories, who are still relatively low in organizational hierarchy. Fourthpresumptionthat I had, referred to the relation between age and perceived importance of integrity, fairness and reliability. I assumed that due to the fact, that communism provided a work environment devoid of those features, senior people would indicate those competencies more often than the young.Finally, the last hypothesis that I had, was that integrity will be more important for those managers, who are tied to sales, since trust and fairness are perceived as essential for doing business as closely related to trust and fairness.

Method

There was a survey conducted among 74 Polish managers. They were representing different hierarchical levels in organizations, starting from first line sales supervisors and ending on General Managers. Respondents were recruited both from public organizations and from private sector. Detailed information about participants' characteristics is given in Chart 1.

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[34] Global Leadership Forecast 2011

Chart 1: Characteristics of Respondents

Characterisctics of Respondents		
Total	N	**74**
Sex	Women	46
	Man	28
Age	20-30	3
	31-40	34
	41-50	30
	51-60	7
Type of activity	Distrubution	44
	Production	16
	Services	5
	Public Institution	8
Job position	Sales manager	31
	Non-sales manager	24
	Sales director	3
	Non-sales director	12
	General manager	4
Size of company	1-20 workers	19
	21-50 workers	6
	51-100 workers	6
	101-200 workers	14
	201-300 workers	1
	More than 300 workers	27
Size of the town	Less than 20 000 citi-zens/inhabitants	4
	20 001-50 000 citizens	7
	50 001-100 000 citizens	3
	100 001-500 000 citizens	6
	500001-1mln citizens	10
	More than 1 mln citizens	43

Source: own study

Measures

Managers were asked to classify set ofcompetencies according to their opinion about importance of those competencies for their organizational roles' effectiveness.Final set of 26 competencies was built on the base of features used by Assessment Systems International in the contemporary research among Central-Eastern European managers. It is important to recognize that this set is not homogenous, as those competencies come from very different levels of analysis. Next to very operational capabilities like decision making, there are also competencies having ethical character like integrity and also the ones which can signify the broad meaning category like leadership. What they have in common is the fact that they were all proven to have an impact on managers' behavior.

There were 5 levels ofpotential importanceof the competencies: crucial, very important, important, fairly important and not important).The task for participants was to compose a pyramid, where the subjective importance rate was a determinant of chosen tier. On the top there was only one competency indicated as crucial, then there were 3 considered as very important, 5 seen as important, then 7 found as still fairly important and the bottom of pyramid was composed of 10 competencies evaluated as not important at the bottom.Such a scheme constrained managers to really think over the choice rather than give quick and ad hoc response.

 I provided very short description for all the competencies in order to have a fairly common understanding of themto enable responsescomparisons. At the same time the depiction wasn't too detailed so that some field of interpretation was left to respondents.
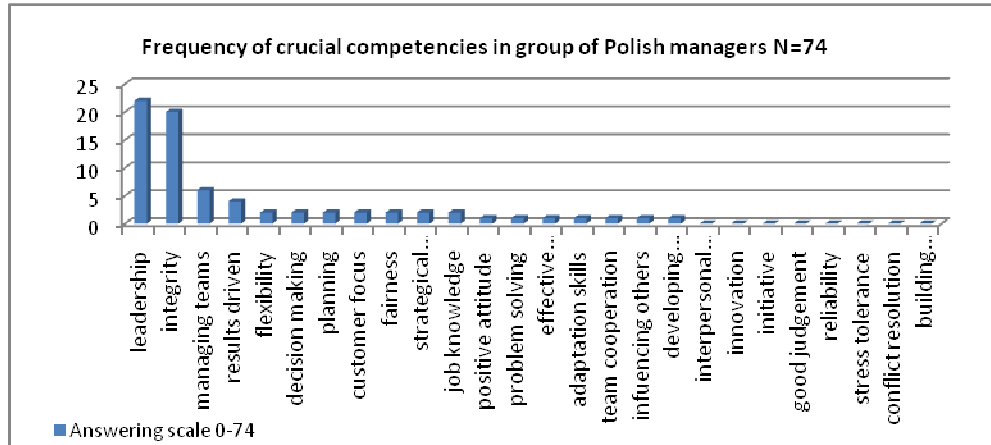
Results

Graph 1:Averages competencies' importance

Source: own study

Graph 2: Frequency of crucial competencies

Source: own study

The competencies evaluated as having the most impact on managers' effectiveness are leadership and integrity and also decision making and managing teams. The importance of the first two is much more visible when analyzing characteristics appraised as crucial for the role. More than half of respondents indicated either leadership or integrity as the most significant trait for successful manager, which seems to be quite a meaningful result. The difference between distribution of competencies pointed out as generally important and those indicated as crucial is quite striking and undoubtedly should be examined more in detail. The competency evaluated as having the smallest influence on leaders' work success are adaptation skills. Also good judgement, conflict resolution, initiative, innovation and reliability were appraised quite low on a scale. When asked for the characteristics that are crucial for the role, there were few of them that weren't recognized as such. These are again innovation, initiative, good judgement, reliability and conflict resolution and moreover interpersonal skills, stress tolerance and building effective teams.

Nest step of my analysis was to determine, whether the hypothesis connecting age, managerial position and type of work with perceived leadership and integrity importance.

Graph 3: Leadership importance depending on the managerial position
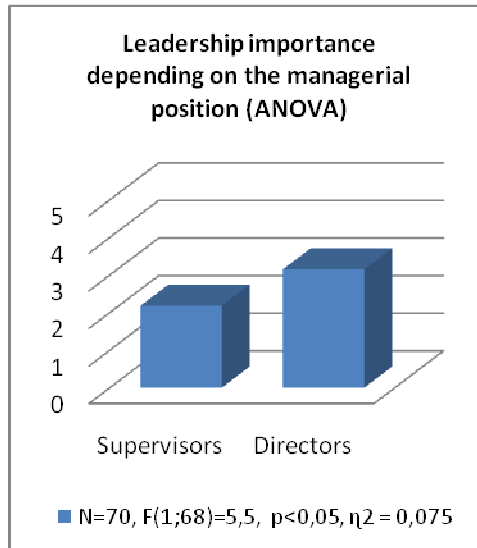
Graph 4: Integrity importance depending on the type of work
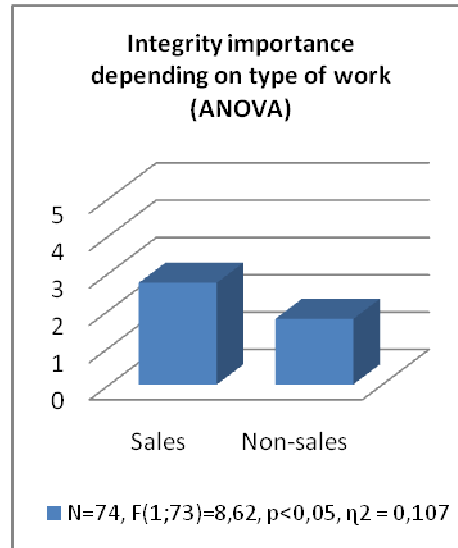
Source: own study

ANNOVA variance analysis proved that there are statistically valid differences between different managerial positions when indicating leadership importance. The research showed that this competency is considered as more significant among more senior positions. It was also evidenced that perceived integrity importance varied between the group of managers involved in commercial activities and those leading supportive functions, showing that it is much more important for those occupying sales functions in organizations. Both hypotheses about the relationship between age and leadership importance and between age and integrity, were not confirmed (respectively F = 0,626 andF=0,895). As mentioned above, in order to analyze data from wider perspective, I've decided to use 3 families of competencies: self-related, people-related and task-related ones. I divided them as presented in chart 2.

Since proposed criteria are not perfectly sharp and objective, one can argue here that proposed division could have had a different shape. Leadership, for example, can be seen as natural talent to influence others which would fit to self-related competency definition (as I state) and at the same time as actual ability to manage other people motivation what would fit more to people-related category. What we have to be aware here, however, is that the 3 categories are introduced mainly for methodological reasons rather than being foundation of critical theory.

Chart 2: Division of Competencies

Self-Related competencies	Task related competencies	People-related competencies
Leadership	Decision making	Managing teams
Integrity	Planning	Effective communication
Fairness	Results driven	Infuencing others
Flexibilty	Customer Focus	Team cooperation
Stress tolerance	Job knowledge	Solving problems
Possitive attitude	Strategical thinking	Interpersonal skills
Reliability	Initiative	Building effective teams
Innovation	Good judgement	Developing employees
	Adaptation skills	Confict resolution

Source: own study

Competencies were divided in 3 groups on base of 3criteria described below:

Chart 3: Competencies' division criteria:

| Criterion	Self-related competencies	Task-related competencies	People-related competencies
Learning possibility	Very difficult to learn	Possible to learn	Fairly possible to learn
Type of ability	Natural talent or trait	Intellectual ability	Emotional and intellectual ability
Connection with managing people and resources	Indirectly connected with managing people	Connected with managing resources	Directly connected with managing people

Source: own study

When analyzing types of competencies which were indicated as having the biggest impact on managers' effectiveness, self-related ones were the most appreciated. The prevailing role of self-related competencies is even more visible if we look at the traits crucial for the role. No less than 66% of respondents indicated that the most important for being a successful manager is possessing self-related values. In both analysis, people-related skills were recognized as having the weakest relationship with managers' work effectiveness, which confirmed my hypothesis.

Graph 5: Weighted average importance of types of competencies

Graph 6: Frequency of types of competencies

Source: own study
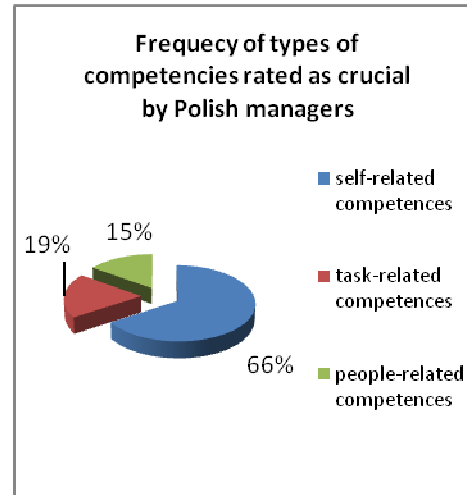
5. DISCUSSION

The research showed that the most valued competencies among Polish managers are leadership and integrity, both of them categorized as self-related ones, but with potential impact on all the managerial roles. As for leadership, the most important question that appears, is what is the managers' understanding of this competency? If we associate it with charismatic conduction, my hypothesis about the non-charismatic character of management in Polish organizations would be false. However,I argue here, that the definition provided in the most recent theories focusing on charismatic management does fit into Polish organizations' context. Transformational model of leadership supposes close cooperation between manager who has an ability to inspire and influence others and subordinates who consciously apply the experience and knowledge gained through this relationship. Western leadership scholars claim that transformational behavior characterized by ability to make an emotional contact with people, expressing concern and building trust and loyalty that nurtures long-term relationships[35] influences followers and make the functioning of whole organization more efficient. Such a coexistence is only possible in the organizational culture with a very small power distance, and according to previous research done in Poland, power distance is here still quite high. The fact that people-related competencies were evaluated as the least important ones in all groups of managers, seems to confirm that Polish organization culture is not mainly focused on cooperation between employees from various hierarchical positions. The relation between model of leadership and power distance have been proved before. For example, Brain and Lewis (2004) have demonstrated that Australians prefer transformational leadership because

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[35]S. Wolmarans, N. Martins, *The 360 degree Emotional Competency Profiler.* Unpublished manual, Johannesburg 2001, Organizational Diagnostics and Learning Link International.

national cultural values of small power distance and high individualism, characteristic of Australian society, fit this leadership style[36]. It is also quite meaningful that quite against my hypothesis, leadership was mostly appreciated among more senior managers standing at the top of organizational hierarchy and thus having more distance to other positions in organization. While I thought that leadership will be recognized as having more importance for leaders directly managing their personnel and naturally having stronger relations with subordinates, it seems like it's associated more with more distant guidance. What is also worth attention here is very low appreciation for competencies which Western literature and research describe as "must" for an effective leader, and these are interpersonal skills, conflict resolution and building effective teams. In place of those skills which we can name as "soft", there was a high evaluation of competencies related with intellectual potential and operational functioning, like planning, decision making, managing and obtaining results. Additional argument which supports the non-charismatic leadership model prevailing in Poland is a very high integrity score and traditionally integrity is not seen as central to charismatic leadership[37]Thus we can think of different than charismatic understanding of leadership, being more governance and direct management rather than inspiring others with vision.This is of course only hypothesis that could be verified only be in-depth interviews concerning the subjective meaning of leadership for Polish managers.

Integrity is a competency almost absent in most current Western research. However, I wouldn't argue here that it's not perceived as an important competency for Western leaders. Quite the opposite – it has been proved that "trustworthy", "just" and "honest" are universally desired attributes in Western leadership theories. Thus, I would rather state here that in mature Western organizations it is considered as inherent characteristics accompanying other skills necessary to be an effective leader and that this is this obviousness which makes integrity not central in contemporary Western research. However, I've encountered single studies where integrity was marked out as having some importanceas an independent trait, although I must admit that the understanding of this trait differed to a large extent. Some researchers linked it with the confidentiality in communication[38]. Others connected integrity with honesty and trustworthiness which leaded to respect for others, expressing concern, listening responsively and recognizing the contributions of others[39]. Integrity was also seen as putting others' goals by managers before their own and admitting their own weaknesses. Although integrity and other ethical-related competencies were among 26 competencies that would be chosen by manager, I didn't expect that such a large number of Polish managers would indicate this competency as crucial for their effectiveness. There is one study conducted in Ukraine that also takes notice to the fact that integrity, understood there as high moral and ethical norms, is something that distinguishes American competency model from Ukrainian one. Do we have to do with a

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[36]K. Brain, D.Lewis, *Exploring leadership preferences in multicultural workgroups: An Australian case study,* Leadership and Organisational Development Journal 2004, 25/3, pp.263-278.

[37]R.B. Kaiser, R. Hogan, *How to (and how not to) assess the integrity of managers*, Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research 2010, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp.216–234.

[38]D.E. English, E.J. Manton, J. Walker, *Human resource managers' perception of selected communication competencies,* Education 2007, Vol. 127 Issue 3, pp.410-418

[39]L. Reave, *Spiritual Values and Practices Related to Leadership Effectiveness*, The leadership quarterly 2005, Vol. 16,No.5,pp.655-687.

regional trend here? There is no research evidence showing that integrity was appreciated most by the oldest age groups, who started their career in the communist times. However, in order to definitely reject that hypothesis, that would be necessary to increase the sample of respondents from the oldest groups (51-60 and more than 60), which were underrepresented in this study. In the interest of determining whether this phenomenon is characteristic for Central-Eastern Europe, it would be necessary to conduct a research in, at least, one other country from the region to observe some common trends. The other question is the same as for leadership, so what is the managers' understanding of integrity. As we can see from examples above, there is no common definition of integrity among scholars. Are managers more coherent in that matter? So far it seems that it is not associated with reliability,since the lattercompetencywas evaluated very low. That seems to support the view connecting Polish business ethics rather with professionalism understood as compliance with the law and professional standards, and with independence to decide what is wrong and what is right[40] rather than with credibility and honesty. Integrity more often was indicated as having the strong impact on managers' effectiveness by Sales Supervisors and Directors. The fact that the hypothesis saying that integrity was the most important for managers involved in commercial activities was confirmed, seems to support the presumption that this competency is commonly associated with business ethics more than with interpersonal fairness.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

One of the strongest trend which we can lately observe in research on leadership competencies, is an aspiration to build a universal set of traits which will make the manager most effective. Progressive globalization which, among other effects, lead to development of international cross-cultural organizations is undoubtedly supporting such a tendency. Although such studies are important and up-to-date, it needs to be recognized, that still there are many local specifics which influence the final leadership models. The universal theory is not necessarily applicable in every context. This leads to further conclusion that the Western competency models, which are being taught in Central-Eastern European business schools, courses or universities cannot be taken for granted. The example could be transformational theory, which can be successfully implemented in Anglo-Saxon organizations with small power distance, and can fail in companies from post-communist countries, where traditional hierarchy is still prevailing. The high importance of integrity for managers' effectiveness, which was proven in the research, can also constitute regional picture of Central-Eastern leadership, but it should be farther explored in additional country with similar history. It is also significant, that Polish managers appreciated most the self-related competencies, which are relatively constant and not susceptible to change. Strong conviction that traits having the most impact on effectiveness are in fact congenital predispositions and not task-oriented or people-oriented competencies, which can be learned more easily, raises a question, to what extent managers are open for managerial education.
Research conducted in Polish organizations can suggest that leadership, although similarly to many recent Anglo-Saxon studies, recognized as having crucial importance, here is

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[40]A. Simha, A. Stachowicz-Stanusch, *The Link Between Ethical Climate and Managerial Success: A study in Polish context,* Journal of Business Ethics, Apr2013, Vol. 114 Issue 1, pp.55-59, p.58.

understood differently than in current Western literature. In order to determine, what is the real understanding of leadership, integrity and other competencies for managers, there is a need to conduct in-depth interviews, which would build a more profound view.

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UCZCIWY I NIECHARYZMATYCZNY LIDER NAJBARDZIEJ EFEKTYWNY W POLSKICH ORGANIZACJACH? W POSZUKIWANIU SPECYFICZNEGO KU-TUROWO MODELU KOMPETENCJI W POLSCE

W czasach, gdy większość badaczy zajmuje się poszukiwaniem jednego, uniwersalnego modelu kompetencji, który mógłby się sprawdzić w ogromnych, międzynarodowych korporacjach, to studium skupia się na lokalnej specyfice, która ma wpływ na efektywne zarządzanie w organizacjach funkcjonujących w różnych warunkach społeczno-ekonomicznych. Głównym celem tego badania była próba uchwycenia subiektywnego wizerunku odnoszącego sukces polskiego menedżera i osadzenie go w kulturze środkowoeuropejskiej. Wyniki pokazały, że wbrew obecnym trendom, polscy menedżerowie w znacznie większym stopniu doceniają kompetencje osobiste, z natury rzeczy nie podlegające większym zmianom w czasie, niż kompetencje związane z zarządzaniem zespołem. Przywództwo zostało ocenione jako mające kluczowe znaczenie w pracy menedżera, ale raczej próżno dopatrywać się tu jego charyzmatycznych implikacji. Ocena istotności tej kompetencji różniła się w zależności od zajmowanej pozycji w organizacyjnej hierarchii. Będąc oceniane jako ważniejsze przez doświadczonych liderów, przywództwo potencjalnie może być widziane bardziej jako narzędzie sprawowania władzy niż umiejętność inspirowania i motywowania pracowników. Dużym zaskoczeniem była wysoka ocena uczciwości jako mającej bardzo duży wpływ na efektywność polskich menedżerów, co potencjalnie może mieć źródło w lokalnej specyfice. Ponadto zaobserwowany został związek pomiędzy sprzedażowym i niesprzedażowym charakterem pracy a subiektywną oceną istotności uczciwości. Deceniana bardziej przez menedżerów zaangażowanych w działania komercyjne, uczciwość wydaje się być widziana bardziej jako etyka biznesu niż szczerość w relacjach interpersonalnych.

Słowa kluczowe: przywództwo, kompetencje menedżerskie, zarządzanie międzykulturowe.