



CULTURAL PROFILE OF RUSSIAN LEADERSHIP

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The study presented in this paper aims to formulate a composite profile of Russian organizational leadership based on a review and analysis of research conducted in the last 15 years by Western and Russian scholars. Russian leadership will be approached from the perspectives of cross-cultural organizational research and implicit leadership theory. First, perceptions of effective Russian leadership will be explored in a number of studies, including the GLOBE project. Other studies will also be used for evidence of current organizational leadership practice in Russia. A comparative analysis within and between both sets of studies is then expected to reveal areas of commonality, general trends, and principles with regard to how leadership is perceived and practiced in Russia. The projected results of this study include better cross-cultural understanding, comparison, and assessment of Russian leadership by foreign and local organizational members.

Since Hofstede's (2001) groundbreaking research on values and cultures around the world, the impact of national cultures on organizations has been made increasingly evident in numerous studies investigating various aspects of organizational functioning. Adler (2008) posed an intriguing question of whether organizations are becoming similar or maintaining their cultural dissimilarities as a result of globalization. Adler cited John Child, a leading British management scholar who discovered that while organizations are becoming more similar, the behavior of people remains culturally different. After reviewing a vast body of research on cross-cultural leadership, Dickson, Den Hartog, and Mitchelson (2003) concluded that as business becomes more international, it does not appear that meaningful differences between cultures cease and give place to "a more broadly displayed, generic conglomeration" (p. 759). Cross-cultural differences and research, therefore, will continue to hold their importance for organizations in the years to come. Even so, Hofstede compared students of culture to the blind men from an Indian fable who tried to define an elephant by each getting a hold of its trunk, tail, or leg. The only solution to the subjectivity dilemma, Hofstede proposed, is to be "intersubjective" by bringing together many perspectives and studies of culture (p. 2).

In recent years, a number of research studies have been undertaken in order to investigate management and leadership in the former Soviet Union, an area that until recently was a terra incognita of cross-cultural organizational research (Ardichvili, 2001). The purpose of this paper

is to review several studies conducted over the last 15 years in the field of Russian organizational leadership and identify any commonalities, differences, trends, and principles that may help to better understand leadership as it is practiced in Russia.

Hofstede (2001) maintained that both organizational functioning and theories that have been developed to explain it are bound by national cultures. Russian leadership theories, as conceived in this paper, are not models of leadership proposed by theorists. They are rather mental models, or theories in use, informing behavior of organizational members (Argyris & Schon, as cited in Cummings & Worley, 2001). The approach used in this paper to describe Russian leadership theories is based on implicit leadership theory and its application in Project GLOBE (House et al., 1999), as well as Hofstede's framework of studying national cultures. Accordingly, theories of Russian leadership established by various research studies will be presented either as profiles of endorsed leadership attributes and behaviors or as models inferred from measures of Russian culture. Results of these studies will be compared with those obtained in Project GLOBE. Further, findings from other studies will be explored with a two-fold purpose: to evaluate Russian leadership profiles identified by GLOBE and other research studies, and to illustrate the impact of implicit leadership theories and national culture on the practice of organizational leadership in Russia.

Implicit Leadership Theories and Culture

Hackman and Johnson (2000) compared leadership to impression management: "Leaders... engage in impression management; both to secure leadership positions and to achieve their goals. Images of ideal leaders, called prototypes, often determine who earns the leader designation" (p. 24). Similarly, Lord and Maher (as cited in Den Hartog, House, Ruiz-Quintanilla, & Dorfman, 1999) proposed that to be perceived as a leader is a prerequisite for influencing others. Sources of leadership are to be found in perceivers' implicit ideas of what leaders are. According to implicit leadership theory, attributions and perceptions of leadership are a function of matching leader attributes and behaviors with individuals' implicit theories (Den Hartog et al., 1999; House et al., 1999). These theories constitute prototypes of leadership comprising a collection of attributes, traits, or behaviors that help to distinguish leaders from non-leaders, outstanding from average leaders, moral from amoral leaders, etc. (Brodbeck et al., 2000). House et al. cited extensive experimental evidence of the impact of implicit leadership theories on the exercise of leadership and perception of leaders, including the degree of their influence and effectiveness.

On the other hand, Hofstede (2001) stated that asking people to describe the qualities of a good leader is a way of asking them to describe their culture (p. 388). House, Wright, and Aditya (as cited in Dickson et al., 2003), in line with Hofstede's insistence on the enduring influence of cultural values on organizational functioning, have advanced a cultural congruence proposition which states that "leader behaviors that are accepted, enacted and effective within a collective are the behaviors that most clearly fit within the parameters of the cultural forces surrounding the leader" (p. 755). Project GLOBE researchers have established that cultures can be differentiated on the basis of leader behaviors and attributes that their members endorse; the authors found high within-culture agreement with respect to leader attributes and behaviors that are viewed as contributors or impediments to effective leadership and constitute culturally endorsed implicit leadership theories (House et al., 1999). Project GLOBE and its results are briefly described next.

Project GLOBE

To date, Project GLOBE is the most extensive cross-cultural research study on organizational leadership, conducted on the basis of a long-term, multiphase, multi-method strategy to discover how societal and organizational cultures affect leadership and organizational practices (Dickson et al., 2003). The overall goal of the study is to develop “an empirically-based theory to describe, understand, and predict the impact of specific cultural variables on leadership and organizational processes and the effectiveness of these processes” (House, Javidan, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2002, p. 4). For the purposes of conducting the study, GLOBE researchers from 48 countries developed the following working definition, specifically focusing on organizational leadership: “The ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members” (House et al., p. 5).

One of the objectives accomplished by the study was the empirical development of quantitative country leadership profiles, or culturally endorsed leadership theories, comprising 21 first-order scales of leadership dimensions perceived by the respondents as contributing to or inhibiting outstanding leadership. These dimensions were further factor-analyzed and found to belong to the following six classes of second-order, or “global,” leadership dimensions:

1. Team-oriented leadership (universally endorsed as contributor to outstanding leadership);
2. Charismatic/Value-based leadership (nearly universally endorsed as contributor);
3. Humane leadership (generally viewed as contributor, with variability by culture);
4. Participative leadership (generally viewed as contributor, with variability by culture);
5. Self-protective leadership (generally viewed neutrally or as inhibitor, with variability by culture); and
6. Autonomous leadership (generally viewed neutrally or as inhibitor, with variability by culture) (Dickson et al., 2003).

In addition to quantitative data, qualitative culture-specific interpretations of local behaviors, norms, and practices were developed through content analysis of data derived from interviews, focus groups, and published media (House et al., 1999).

Advantages of GLOBE research include its basis in sound theory and use of large-scale samples of multiple cultures. GLOBE studied 62 nations grouped into 10 clusters (Javidan & House, 2002, p. 1). The main dataset consists of approximately 18,000 questionnaires from middle managers of about 825 organizations in three industries: food processing, finance, and telecommunications. A follow-up study that was part of Project GLOBE explored whether implicit theories of leadership for top level managers are different from those for lower level managers (Den Hartog et al., 1999). Local Country Co-Investigators (CCIs), in teams of between two and five researchers, were responsible for the leadership of the study in each of the participating countries. They were mostly local culture natives residing in the country, with their activities including quantitative and qualitative data collection, ensuring accuracy of questionnaire translations, writing descriptions of their cultures—which included interpretation of results of the quantitative results in the context of their local cultures—and contributing their insights to the overall GLOBE research (House et al., 2002).

Russian Segment

Gratchev, Rogovsky, and Rakitski (2002), the Russian CCIs for Project GLOBE, reported the following method of data collection for the Russian segment of the study. The main quantitative data were collected in 1995-1996, with additional data for media analysis collected in 2001. Responses were received from 450 managers, 150 managers in each of the three industries chosen for the study. Survey respondents came from various regions in Russia and had the average age of 38.8 years. The average number of years that respondents had lived in Russia was 37.9 years. Average employment profile of managers was as follows: the number of years employed, 16.8 years; management experience, 7.4 years; employment in the current organization, 8.6 years.

The results of questionnaire analysis are illustrated in terms of the six global leadership dimensions described above (see Figure 1).

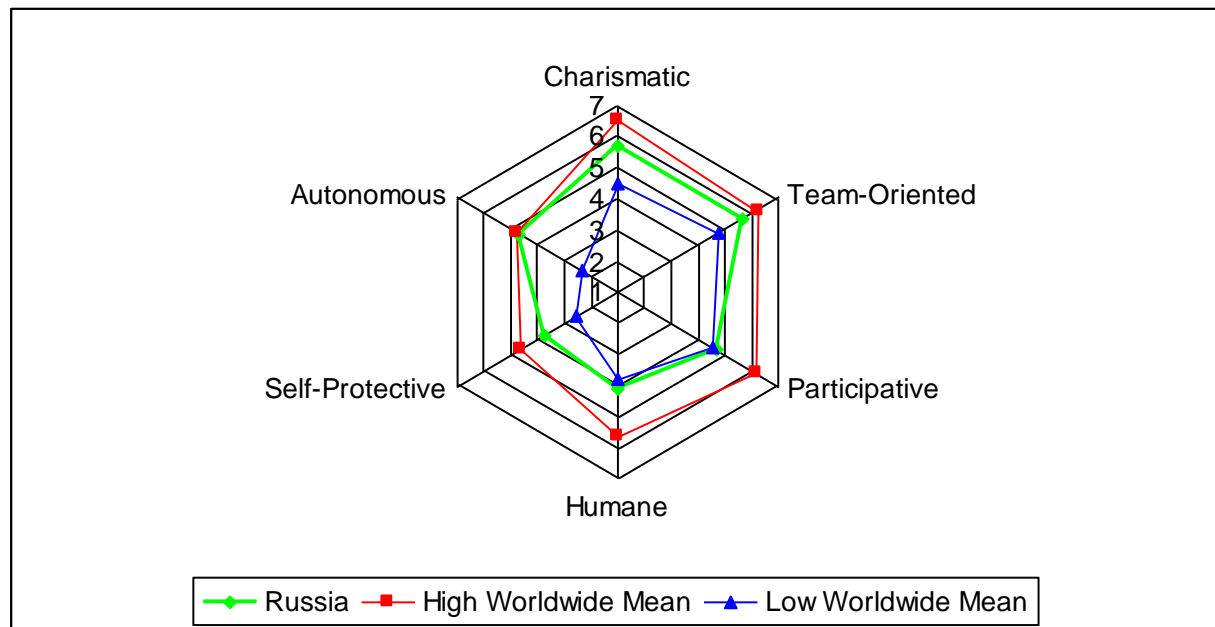


Figure 1. Six Global Dimensions of Russian Leadership According to Project GLOBE. Adapted from Gratchev et al. (2002).

Of the six globally recognized leadership dimensions, charismatic, team-oriented, participative, and autonomous leadership were rated as contributing to outstanding leadership; humane leadership was rated as neither contributing to nor inhibiting outstanding leadership and self-protective leadership was rated as slightly inhibiting outstanding leadership. Among contributors to outstanding leadership, charismatic leadership received the highest score on a 7-point Likert scale (5.66), falling between “moderately contributes” and “slightly contributes.” Autonomous and participative leadership received identical scores of 4.67, which is just lower than slightly contributing to outstanding leadership.

Five out of the six first-order leadership dimensions that received the highest scores as contributors to outstanding leadership were part of Charismatic/Value-based global dimension leadership; the other, Administrative Competence, belonged to Team-Oriented leadership. These

six dimensions, in descending order of importance, were: Visionary (6.07); Administrative competence (6.03); Performance orientation (5.92); Inspirational (5.89); Decisive (5.86); Integrity (5.72). The first-order factors that, according to GLOBE's Russian participants, inhibit outstanding leadership the most were (with scores and corresponding global leadership dimensions in the brackets): Malevolent (1.85—Team Orientation); Self-Centered (2.48—Self-Protection); Face-Saver (2.67—Self-Protection).

Gratchev et al. (2002) summarized their findings on perceptions of an effective leader in Russia as follows:

An administratively competent manager with abilities to think strategically, capable to make serious decisions and inspire his followers to meet performance targets. To a certain extent he/she relies on teams and through diplomatic and collaborative moves succeeds in integrating efforts of their members. However, in his/her actions there is not much interest in humane orientation to the others and modesty in personal behavior. He/she may sacrifice a lot and does not take much care of saving face. Status is not important to the modern Russian leader. (p. 19)

Equally important are the ranking positions occupied by Russian leadership relative to other GLOBE countries. The participating countries were placed on each measured dimension in four bands—from high-scoring Group A to low-scoring Group D—of statistically similar rankings (Grachev & Bobina, 2006). This helps to view Russian leadership profile in a cross-cultural perspective, showing its relative position among the other cultures' perceptions of outstanding leadership. Considered in this way, Charismatic leadership, which is the highest global contributor of Russian leadership in absolute terms, was placed in Group D (rank 47) among the other GLOBE countries. Given the low absolute score (5.66), this might be expected. Similarly, the Team Orientation dimension, with an almost identical rating, ranked 46 and was placed in Group C. On the other hand, a much lower rating given to Autonomous leadership (not quite slightly contributing to outstanding leadership) secured for this dimension a ranking in Group A, while Participative leadership (with an identical absolute score) occupied Group D along with Humane leadership even though its position (rank 60) appears more consistent with its rating as “neither contributing nor inhibiting outstanding leadership.” Finally, Protective leadership was rated by Russian respondents as slightly inhibiting outstanding leadership and placed in Group D (rank 17).

Perceptions of Effective Russian Leadership

Similar to the GLOBE project, Fey, Adaeva, and Vitkovskaia (2001) explored perceptions of effective leadership held by Russian managers. They sought to empirically identify characteristics describing an effective leader in Russia and to determine, on that basis, leadership styles perceived as most effective by Russian managers. An exclusive focus on transactional leadership, however, must be noted as a limitation of this study.

Ninety questionnaires were returned from the sampled 110 Russian middle managers undergoing training at two business schools in St. Petersburg. No more than two managers were from the same firm. Of the sample, 61 percent were men and 39 percent were women. They averaged 31.2 years old, with the youngest manager being 22 and the eldest being 50 years old. Seventy-two percent of the respondents worked for local Russian companies. Twenty-eight percent were managers in wholly owned foreign companies or Russian-foreign joint ventures (Fey et al., 2001).

Data were collected in the form of questionnaires asking respondents to list five characteristics of an effective leader without any predetermined items provided. The researchers then analyzed the obtained data set and were able to group the respondents' items into 19 groups. The Democratic, Task Oriented, Relations Oriented, and Authoritarian groups had the highest numbers of respondents choose these characteristics to describe effective leadership.

Guided by two classical sets of behavioral dimensions—Authoritarian vs. Democratic and Task-Oriented vs. Relations-Oriented—the researchers then concluded that the top four groups of items should be seen as poles of two continua of leadership characteristics: Authoritarian vs. Democratic, and Task Orientation vs. People (or Relations) Orientation. They thus formed a 2x2 matrix with four key Russian leadership styles: Military man (task-oriented authoritarian), Statesman (task-oriented democrat), Politician (people-oriented authoritarian), and Clergyman (people-oriented democrat). In this model, the Authoritarian-Democratic dimension was conceived as including a degree of control and the delegation of tasks and decisions, while the Task-People orientation dimension was conceived as leadership focusing on tasks or people.

The study results showed the respondents' preference for the statesman and clergyman styles of leadership, which were described in the following ways:

- A statesman is a task-oriented democrat focused primarily on organizational goals but striving for consensual means of achieving them. Strategic issues are not up for discussion; however, discretion is granted to subordinates in how they use their time and the best ways to accomplish tasks. Statesmen are aware of the need for employee commitment and use a democratic style. Employees are promoted on the basis of competence and shape formal and business-line organizational cultures.
- A clergyman is a relations-oriented democrat focused on an effective climate, good relations, and teamwork. Once agreement about tasks is achieved, tasks are delegated to subordinates who normally do not need to be tightly controlled. People are promoted on the basis of teamwork ability and the climate is informal.

Comparison to GLOBE Results

This study demonstrated a similar sampling approach and similar research questions, but only positive dimensions were sought (GLOBE explored both contributors and inhibitors). An interesting aspect of the sample was that most participants had good English skills (in order to be involved in a training program taught in English) as 80 percent of the respondents completed their questionnaires in English. The data collection was conducted 3-4 years after the Russian segment of GLOBE. Unlike GLOBE, which supplied a large number of items to be rated by participants, leadership characteristics were generated by respondents in this study. As in GLOBE, a form of factor analysis was used in order to reduce the number of obtained items to fewer leadership dimensions; however, only four out of 19 factors were used to formulate results.

In terms of its theoretical base, the study focused on transactional leadership conceived as that which operates within the framework of an existing organizational culture and structure rather than seeking to effect substantial changes based on a clear vision (Fey et al., 2001). Consequently, it is not possible to compare the results of this study with a number of characteristics of the Russian leadership profile identified by GLOBE, including its main global contributor to outstanding leadership in Russia, Charismatic/value-based leadership. Comparisons appear appropriate involving the following dimensions from each study:

- Participative leadership (GLOBE) vs. Authoritarian-Democratic continuum (Fey et al.); and
- Humane leadership (GLOBE) vs. Task-People orientation continuum (Fey et al.).

The most preferred style identified by Fey et al. (2001), task-oriented democrat, is consistent with the high score given in the GLOBE study to Performance Orientation (one of the Charismatic leadership components) and low scores given to Humane Leadership. However, this is not consistent with the overall score for Participative Leadership, which, according to GLOBE, only slightly contributes to outstanding leadership, as does Autocratic Leadership. On the contrary, an emphasis on people-orientation behavior of the second-preferred style, People-Oriented Democrat, does not match low value of Humane leadership in GLOBE.

When compared with GLOBE's results, the most salient aspect of the perceptions of effective transactional leadership in Russia formulated by Fey et al. (2001) is the apparent higher degree of participative leadership. Whereas an effective Russian leader is neither very autocratic nor very participative at the same time according to GLOBE's profile, both most-preferred styles in this study may be seen as reflecting greater willingness to involve subordinates in decision making. This may have to do with the fact that a relatively high proportion of respondents came from wholly-owned foreign companies or Russian-foreign joint ventures (28%); also relevant is that all participants were undergoing training conducted in English (with 80 percent choosing to fill out their questionnaires in English even though Russian translations were available). It is likely that these managers may have been exposed to greater participation typical of Western leadership styles.

A Cross-Cultural Examination of Leader Ethic

In a study conducted by Rhodes et al. (2004), respondents—leaders in the U.S., Central Russia, Eastern China, and Germany—were asked to select from a provided list of items the top three characteristics that they thought were most important for career advancement. The respondents were also asked to add any other leadership characteristics they thought were more important than the ones chosen from the list. However, no findings of additional leadership characteristics were reported. The list of leadership factors was prepared on the basis of Covey's (1989) seven habits of effective leadership, as well as on emotional intelligence and two characteristics of transformational leadership. The list contained the following nine items: a) Time Management—putting first things first; b) Empathic Communication—seeking first to understand, then to be understood; c) Creative Cooperation—synergy; d) Self-Renewal—“sharpening the saw”; e) Personal Leadership—beginning with the end in mind; f) Personal Vision—being proactive; g) Intellectual Growth of Employees—stimulating in order to motivate; h) Conflict Resolution—creating win/win solutions; and i) Employee Commitment—charisma. The rationale behind the question proposed to respondents was that knowing what it takes for career success provides a way of understanding what is valued in different countries (Rhodes et al., 2004).

Around 60 questionnaires were returned by Russian respondents whose aggregated top three characteristics were, in the descending order of importance: Personal Leadership (71%); Time Management (60%), and Creative Cooperation (42%), with Personal Vision a close fourth characteristic (40%). The rest were chosen significantly less frequently. The least important

were: Charisma (13%), Intellectual Stimulation (16%), Conflict Resolution (18%), and Self-Renewal (20%).

As expected by the researchers, some universal characteristics emerged. In three out of four countries managers stressed Personal Leadership (setting goals) and Time Management (setting priorities) among the top three leadership factors.

Comparison to GLOBE Results

Because Personal Leadership was operationalized as “clear understanding of your desired destinations and the development of strategies to accomplish personal objectives” (Rhodes et al., 2004, p. 68), this characteristic can be roughly compared with GLOBE’s Visionary first-order dimension, which also received the highest score. However, an emphasis on personal vision, in contrast to the collective nature of the Visionary dimension in GLOBE, must be noted. None of the other top rated dimensions in this study—Time Management, Creative Cooperation, or Personal Vision—closely fits any of the first-order dimensions of Russian leadership reported by Gratchev et al. (2002). Charisma was presented to respondents as creating employee motivation through their emotional commitment to one’s values, beliefs and vision (p. 68), which is very much compatible with “the ability to inspire and motivate others and facilitate high performance outcomes on the basis of firmly held core values” of charismatic/value-based leadership in GLOBE study (Gratchev & Bobina, 2006, p. 71). Its bottom rating in Rhodes et al. (2004), however, is markedly at variance with the highest global score received in GLOBE study.

Besides the obvious sample size limitation, a focus on career advancement in this study may have been instrumental in the low score received by charisma and the high score received by personal Leadership.

Inferring Leadership Profiles from Cultural Dimensions

Since examination of culturally endorsed leadership theories is a way of describing national cultures (Hofstede, 2001; House et al., 1999) and culture dimensions have been shown to predict preferred leadership dimensions (Koopman et al., 1999), a Russian leadership prototype may be inferred from national culture measures. Some studies utilizing this approach or providing measures of Russian culture are described next.

Elenkov’s (1998) Study

The greatest number of studies of Russian culture dimensions has been conducted on the basis of Hofstede’s (2001) framework of national culture and values. One of these studies was conducted by Elenkov (1998), who inferred attributes of a Russian leadership profile from cultural dimensions in a cross-cultural study of American and Russian managers. Data were obtained from 178 managers located in the Moscow and St. Petersburg areas of the Russian Federation in order to measure six attributes of Russian culture. Elenkov used the four original cultural measures developed by Hofstede: power distance, individualism as opposed to collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity formulated as competitiveness. To these were added the following two dimensions:

- Political-influence orientation seen by the author as a conspicuous feature of Russian decision making;
- Dogmatism described as lack of tolerance for new ideas introduced by others (p. 152-153).

Where applicable, the findings were roughly consistent with Hofstede's (2001) ratings for both countries, showing Russia's high power distance (88.1 vs. 93 reported by Hofstede), medium individualism (45 vs. 39), and high uncertainty avoidance (79.6 vs. 95). The only exception was represented by medium competitiveness, which was rated somewhat higher (58.9 vs. 36 in Hofstede's data). The Russian respondents were also found to have high political influence orientation (93, compared to 45 for American managers) and medium low dogmatism (30.9 vs. 38.8 for the American respondents).

As compared with GLOBE's findings on Russian cultural practices, or "As Is" scores, Elenkov's (1998) ratings were generally consistent on the dimensions of power distance, assertiveness, and collectiveness, but were significantly higher on uncertainty avoidance, which was rated 2.88 (on a 7-point scale) in GLOBE.

Elenkov (1998) then built his profile of Russian leadership mainly on the basis of Russian culture's high power distance, medium individualism, and high political influence orientation. In contrast to American concepts of participation in a leader's decisions and confidence and independence in negotiating with one's boss, he proposed that Russian employees expect an autocratic style offset by support given to subordinates' families, intuitive leadership (rather than stressing facts), and the use of political power (rather than following clear organizational procedures) (p. 140).

Bollinger's (1994) Study

Elenkov's (1998) conclusions about Russian leadership style follow very closely those proposed earlier by Bollinger (1994) on the basis of one of the early studies of Russian culture published in the West. Bollinger also sought to identify Russian management styles by looking at the basic values making up Russian culture. The study was carried out in 1989 and involved a small sample of 55 directors and executives undergoing training at a management school in Moscow. Data were gathered on the four original dimensions included in Hofstede's framework of national cultures. Bollinger reported similar results of high power distance and uncertainty avoidance, and slightly higher collectivism and lower masculinity than Elenkov's (1998) study. The author's implications for choosing a management style that would be appropriate in Russia included autocratic leadership care for subordinates' families and incompatibility of the Western system of management by objectives.

Naumov's (1996) Study

Naumov (1996) conducted in 1995-1996 a study involving 300 respondents in various areas of Russia. Respondents included students and faculty members of business schools, professionals, administrators, and businessmen. The sample composition was chosen to approximate that of Hofstede's IBM sample in order to facilitate comparison of results. Analysis of 250 usable questionnaires yielded the following results for the five dimensions of culture on a

100-point scale: Individualism (41); Masculinity (55); Uncertainty avoidance (68); Power distance (40); Paternalism or Long/Short-term orientation (59).

Naumov (1996) modified Hofstede's fifth dimension of long-term orientation to emphasize paternalism, or prevalence of familial relations in society. Paternalism was defined as the condition of a high need felt by the weaker members of society to receive protection and care from the more powerful members. Naumov stated that a high degree of paternalism, for instance, can be seen throughout the centuries of Russian history in the unwillingness to grant to the people the ability to take care of themselves (e.g., to restore private ownership of factories) (p. 25). As a result, the rating of the fifth dimension obtained by Naumov is not readily compatible with Hofstede's long-term orientation and should be considered with this specific emphasis in mind.

Naumov (1996) proposed some general implications of cultural values with respect to leadership. He argued that Russian collectivism has been undermined beginning from the second half of the 19th century, throughout the communist rule, and under present economic and political reforms, with the result being outward collectivism and growing individualism inside. His respondents indicated a higher importance of individual goals over against group goals but also a high priority of affiliation and protection offered by group membership.

Naumov (1996) pointed out that a fairly high rating of uncertainty avoidance implies that dependence on the leader is regarded as normal, a large difference in competence between leader and subordinates exists, a strict leader is preferred, and subordinates are not optimistic about participation in management.

With respect to masculinity, Naumov (1996) traced a decrease up to recent reforms in traditionally clear definition of the roles of men and women, proposing that removal by the state of people's ability to control their external environment is the crucial factor in this process. The implications of decreasing masculinity include a trend toward emphasis on relationships as opposed to results, personal power as opposed to positional power, "intrastructural" interactions as opposed to "macrostructural." With a recent increase in entrepreneurial freedom, however, a slight increase in masculinity should be expected.

In view of the high ratings of Russian power distance in most studies conducted by Western researchers, Naumov's (1996) medium power distance finding is interesting. As a result, Russia's position is interpreted as intermediate between legal and power bases of rule, position power and personal power, participative delegation and delegation through decentralization, pluralist (majority rule) and oligarchic leadership, appearance of less than actual leader power and demonstration of maximum actual power. Naumov explained that such a rapid shift could indeed happen within several years as a consequence of economic and political reforms in Russia that may eventually separate economic rule from political power.

Finally, according to Naumov (1996) the medium high paternalism is interpreted as a leaning toward a paternalistic, caregiver, master-servant paradigm, as opposed to perceiving the boss as partner and leader.

A somewhat transitional profile can be gathered from the implications and results of Naumov's (1996) study to conceive of a Russian leader who can no longer motivate followers by relying solely on domination of group interests over individual goals nor exclusively on positional power, who understands that relationships are at least as important as results, who is a strong and competent leader who is not likely to involve subordinates in decision making, and who understands his or her responsibility to care for the families of organization members.

Comparison to GLOBE's Results

Contrary to Bollinger's (1994) and Elenkov's (1998) emphases on autocratic leadership, neither autocratic leadership nor participative leadership in general is seen as an important factor of effective leadership in the GLOBE research. One reason that may explain this discrepancy is the unique design of the GLOBE research culturally endorsed leadership theories were surveyed directly and reflect cultural values (What Should Be), whereas Elenkov's results may have more relevance to cultural practices (What Is). This is supported by the high rating of Russia's actual power distance and the much lower score of the ideal level of power distance obtained by GLOBE researchers.

Paternalism—one of the expressions of collectivism pointed out by Elenkov (1998)—and the use of political power are not readily comparable with any factors of leadership formulated in GLOBE. High paternalism was also brought out in Naumov's (1996) study. Intuitiveness as opposed to stressing facts (mentioned by Elenkov) may have some relevance for the low rating obtained in GLOBE for the "Procedural" dimension.

Where comparison is possible, an overall profile of Russian leadership constructed on the basis of the implications proposed by Naumov (1996) does not contradict the prototype described in Gratchev et al. (2002). In particular, Naumov's implication of lack of participation of followers in decision making appears to match the low rating and ranking of participative leadership observed in the GLOBE project.

Summary of Research Studies on Russian Culture

Since the beginning of this century, a number of research projects have been conducted to study Russian culture on the basis of Hofstede's methodology. Latova and Latov (2008) reported on five studies, in addition to the GLOBE project, which have been undertaken by Russian researchers. These studies targeted various Russian cities or regions and used significantly greater samples than Bollinger (1994), Naumov (1996), or Elenkov (1998). A brief description of these studies as well as those described above with their corresponding findings of individualism (IDV), power distance (PDI), masculinity (MAS), uncertainty avoidance (UAI), and long-term orientation (LTO) are provided in Table 1.

Latova and Latov (2008) compared current findings on Russian mentality with those of other cultures and hypothesized that Russian culture may be significantly different from both the West and the East. Latova (2003a) used Hofstede's (2001) data for other countries to show that Russia occupies an intermediate position between the West and the East on key dimensions such as power distance and individualism. Latova then proposed that such an intermediate position reflects a symbiosis of seemingly opposite value mindsets that may be utilized depending on the situation. Nevertheless, Latova and Latov noted that greater accumulation of research data remains a crucial task of ethnic measurement analysis of Russia.

Latova and Latov (2008) also stated that none of the samples used in the above studies are representative of Russia as a whole. Some studies, even though they are based on Hofstede's methodology, cannot be readily compared because they used modified questionnaires. As a result, the obtained ratings can be used with respect to overall Russian culture only with a degree of approximation.

Table 1

Studies of Russian Culture on the Basis of Hofstede's Model

Date and Description of Study	Sample	IDV	PDI	MAS	UAI	LTO
Hofstede's (2001) data sources unclear	N/A	39	93	36	95	N/A
1989 Bollinger's (1994) study of directors and executives at a management school in Moscow	55	26	76	28	92	N/A
1995-1996 Naumov's (1996) study of students and faculty members of business schools, professionals, administrators, and businessmen from several regions in Russia and in Belarus	250	41	40	55	68	59*
1996 Elenkov's (1998) study of managers in the Moscow and St. Petersburg areas	178	45	88	59	80	N/A
2001 study by the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Latova, 2003a) of residents in Nizhny Novgorod region	557	44	48	45	N/A	N/A
2002 study by the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Latova, 2003a) of residents in Yaroslavl region	545	51	46	41	51	49
Yadov's study of workers and administration staff of machinery plants in Samara, Murom, Volzhsk, Moscow (Latova, 2003b; Latova & Latov, 2008)	518	55	28	2	121	42
Latova and Latov's study in the cities of Stavropol, Tula, and Tyumen (Latova & Latov, 2008)	1869	60	52	35	109	45
2003-2004 study of teachers conducted by Fishbein (Latova & Latov, 2008)	2200	47	32	12	93	N/A

Notes. Where applicable, all ratings were rounded up to a whole number.

*LTO modified in Naumov's study to emphasize Paternalism.

**Average value of two separate ratings for 2001 and 2002 cited in Latova (2003a).

With this caveat in mind, perhaps some "intersubjectivity" (Hofstede, 2001) may be allowed to bring together the outlined studies of culture conducted on the basis of Hofstede's model. By summarizing the findings presented in Table 1 and neglecting the ratings with the highest deviation, Russian culture may be roughly characterized by low to medium individualism, medium to high power distance, medium masculinity, high uncertainty avoidance, medium long-term orientation, and fairly high paternalism.

View of Russian Culture in GLOBE and Other Studies

According to the GLOBE research results, Russian culture has the lowest rating among all participating countries on uncertainty avoidance and future orientation, high power distance and collectivism, and medium levels of the dimensions comprising masculinity (Gratchev et al., 2002). Thus, the most significant and indeed striking discrepancy between GLOBE's findings and the aggregate results of the studies outlined above is observed on the dimension of uncertainty avoidance which has generally high ratings in the studies reported by Latova and Latov (2008). Gratchev et al. (2002), who were responsible for the Russian segment of the GLOBE study, interpret this finding as “‘creative survival,’ when people quickly and creatively adjust to rapidly changing situations and conditions in the environment” (p. 9). They also conjectured acceptance by Russian managers of the uncertainties created in abundance by Russia's transitional environment after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The finding in GLOBE of such low uncertainty avoidance also comes as a surprise in light of Gratchev et al.'s report on the pilot study conducted prior to the main data collection in GLOBE:

Most of respondents were willing to accept the idea of establishing the order and following the rules (69 percent) rather than exploiting the benefits of uncertainty (31 percent), adding that it is entrepreneurs who need stability in the rules of the game to do business effectively. (p. 13)

In his study of Russian culture, Naumov (1996) posited a distinction between formal, outward, behavior of people and their culture; it is possible that people may adopt new formal behaviors without any impact on the content of culture. Naumov advanced a hypothesis that under the present conditions in Russia the rate of change in formal behavior exceeds the rate of change in the culture. Naumov stated that shifts in culture will begin when new behaviors will be assimilated not only in business organizations but also at the levels of secondary school and, especially, families. Similarly, Hofstede (2001) proposed that cultural diversification may take between 500 and 5,000 years. It appears, therefore, that GLOBE's finding of Russians' extremely low uncertainty avoidance may indeed have more relevance to formal behaviors adopted under stress of adaptation to rapidly changing economic and political conditions, and not necessarily to a culture change effected in a matter of some 15 years. After all, one is still very unlikely to find on Russia's highways the 4-way stop signs that are so common elsewhere. On the contrary, traffic lights continue to be the number one way of coping with road uncertainty, and local drivers know only too well how difficult driving can become after a traffic light has gone out of order and a traffic policeman, or “regulator” as they are called in Russian, has not yet appeared. This is just one of many regulations Russia has been accustomed to throughout its history.

Implications for a Russian Implicit Leadership Theory

One of the hypotheses advanced by the GLOBE study states that there are significant positive relationships between societal culture dimensions and dimensions of culturally endorsed leadership theories (House et al., 1999). In this respect, Project GLOBE's results revealed the following:

- Collectivistic values are predictive of preference for team-oriented leadership;

- Values relating to power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and assertiveness are negatively related to participative leadership whereas gender egalitarianism and performance orientation are its strong positive predictors;
- Humane orientation predicts the same preferred dimension in leadership; and
- Performance orientation and in-group collectivism are predictive of preferred charismatic behavior (Koopman et al., 1999; Dickson et al., 2003).

As shown by the GLOBE study, implicit leadership theories are consistently affected and shaped by their corresponding cultures. Combining the above conclusions about the relationships between national cultures and culturally endorsed leadership theories with the composite profile of Russian culture produced by the analysis of the most important recent research studies enables formulation of the following general Russian implicit leadership theory. A leadership profile that will be culturally accepted, enacted, and effective in Russia will reflect:

- A moderate focus on team development and collective implementation of a common goal, with an emphasis on administrative competence;
- Lack of participative leadership; low involvement of subordinates in decision making, an autocratic orientation; and
- A preference for charismatic behavior; inspirational and motivational ability, achieving high performance through shared core values.

This profile represents a generic image based on conclusions about Russian culture for which considerable agreement exists among the recent studies analyzed in this article. Greater definition of this image should be sought by further investigating, in particular regarding areas of disagreement along with further systematic research into Russian culture in general. These implications are supported by the findings of culturally endorsed global leadership dimensions directly studied by the GLOBE project where charismatic and team-oriented leadership dimensions received the highest scores, with a low rating assigned to participative leadership (Gratchev & Bobina, 2006).

Impact on the Practice of Leadership in Russia

While GLOBE research included testing of hypotheses of observed leader behavior and effectiveness by culturally endorsed leadership theories, publication of these results appears to be still forthcoming. The following sections contain a review of several studies that explored actual leadership behavior and provide some evidence of the impact of implicit theories on the practice of leadership in Russia. The review also outlines additional historical, sociological, and political factors that have shaped Russian culture and leadership.

Transformational and Transactional Leadership Behaviors

Ardichvili and Gasparishvili (2001) studied leadership profiles of managers in four post-communist countries. The sample included three manufacturing companies in the Russian Federation. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Avolio and his colleagues was used to measure different behaviors involving transactional and transformational leadership styles. A total of 1,216 usable responses were received from Russian participants, including 361

managers and 855 non-managers. The study found the transactional style's contingent rewarding behavior the most relied upon by Russian managers, followed by the transformational style behaviors of inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, charisma, and individual consideration. The other two dimensions of transactional style—management by exception and laissez-faire leadership—received the lowest scores.

Similarly, McCarthy, Puffer, May, Ledgerwood, and Stewart, Jr. (2008) described Russian leaders as transactional, “characterized by a controlling, topdown orientation that promotes dependency in their followers rather than openness to change” (p. 221). The authors argued that the intrusive role of the state is the most powerful institutional factor affecting leadership in Russian organizations. This role is not necessarily disapproved by general public; McCarthy et al. cited results of a late 2007 national poll, which found that 52% of Russians surveyed preferred an economy based on state planning and distribution, up by 11% from 1997. (p. 232). Along with the pervasive role of government, the authors mentioned the booming economy, seemingly adequate investment, and the masking of a fundamentally uncompetitive economy as additional forces that perpetuate a transactional leadership style.

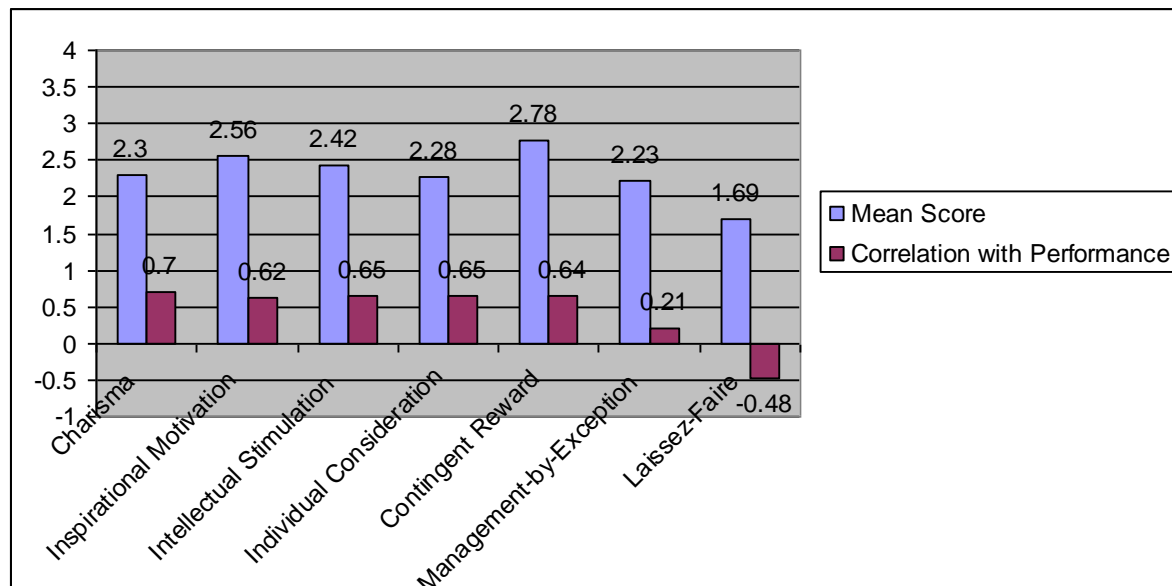


Figure 2. Transformational and Transactional Leadership Behaviors of Russian Managers. Adapted from Ardichvili and Gasparishvili (2001).

Another finding reported by Ardichvili and Gasparishvili (2001) concerns a correlation between measured leadership behavior and perceived manager performance comprising three components: employees' satisfaction with the managers' leadership styles, the extent to which managers were able to elevate employees' motivation beyond their initial expectations, and effectiveness in meeting employees' needs. In the opinion of the respondents, charisma had the highest correlation with performance, closely followed by the other transformational leadership behaviors and contingent rewarding. The findings of the study illustrated in Figure 2 support a later proposition by McCarthy et al. (2008) that Russian leaders should change their transactional styles in order for their organizations to be competitive. This change, they argue, is not likely to be revolutionary “unless there is a precipitous, systemic economic event” (p. 226). Such precipitous, systemic economic event has indeed appeared in the form of the recent economic

crisis. However, as the state has in recent years played a greater role even in such deregulated Western economies as the U.S., it is but likely to increase even further in Russia where the reversal of state control liberalization was evident as president Putin spent a good part of his tenure restoring the "vertical" of state power. The impact of the economic crisis on leadership in Russia is a highly interesting area of prospective organizational research.

Ardichvili and Gasparishvili's (2001) study provided support for Den Hartog et al.'s (1999) hypothesis of universal endorsement of attributes of charismatic/transformational leadership in general and the results of the GLOBE research for Russia featuring the global dimension of charismatic/value-based leadership as the top score (Gratchev et al., 2002). The results of this study are at odds with Rhodes et al.'s (2004) described above which showed a very low perceived importance of charisma and intellectual stimulation for leadership career advancement.

Decision Making and Predominant National Leadership Style

In an earlier study Ardichvili, Cardozo, and Gasparishvili (1998) examined, inter alia, decision making and the predominant leadership style of Russian entrepreneurs. The study was conducted in 1994 and included a sample consisting of 256 CEOs and owners of private businesses from eight major economic centers in Russia: Moscow, St. Petersburg, Nizhniy Novgorod, Kursk, Yekaterinburg, Tomsk, Novosibirsk, and Stavropol. The entrepreneurs represented companies of various sizes and industries. In the course of a structured interview each respondent was asked to describe their predominant decision making and leadership style by choosing from a list of choices. The results revealed that almost 25% of respondents made their decisions without consulting others, around 50% consulted with other executives or outside experts, and about 16% consulted with subordinates. In terms of leadership styles only about 11% described themselves as autocratic, around 30% as democratic, and over 56% claimed to be "situational" leaders defining it as using either autocratic or democratic style depending on the situation.

Ardichvili et al. (1998) admitted that certain negative connotations of both terms, "autocratic" and "democratic," existed in Russian media and society in general. These may have affected the respondents in self-assignment of their leadership style. In fact, Ardichvili expressed surprise that as many as 11 per cent of respondents were willing to admit to being autocratic leaders at all.

In view of this possible bias, as well as the nature of the third choice of leadership style as combining the other two choices, the content of the finding about the predominant leadership style is not sufficiently clear and should be considered with caution. On the other hand, such broad variation of the leader's styles as is seen in the top ranking assigned to the "situational" style may bear some evidence to the transitional leadership style that was likely to issue from the Russian culture profile formulated by Naumov (1996). It may be relevant to note that both Naumov and Ardichvili conducted their studies in the midst of Russian economic and political reforms.

The predominant decision making styles reported by Ardichvili et al. (1998) provide support to a low perceived value of participative leadership found in the GLOBE project. These styles also reflect high reliance on collective decision making which, however, tends to exclude subordinates.

Role Preferences of Russian Leaders

Zavialova (2006) conducted a study of role preferences of leaders from six organizations in Russia, with a total sample of 162 respondents. The study was based on Belbin's theory of leadership roles which originally included Chairman/Coordinator, Shaper, Plant, Resource Investigator, Monitor Evaluator, Team Worker, Company Worker/Implementer. An additional role of Specialist was later added to the list (as cited in Zavialova, p. 123-124). Zavialova concludes that the study results enabled identification of team role preferences of Russian managers as follows:

- Company Worker/Implementer (described as an activity function and organizer of practical activities), was chosen as the preferred role by 62 respondents.
- Coordinator (described as communication function and leader-coordinator) and Shaper (described as an activity function and leader-activator) were each preferred by 30 respondents.
- Plant (described as a function of intellectual leadership and generator of ideas), Finisher (described as an activity function, control, and provision of stability) Monitor Evaluator (described as a function of intellectual leadership and analyst), and Team Worker (described as a communication function and emotional leader) received approximately equal numbers of choices (12, 11, 10, and 9, respectively).
- Resource Investigator (described as a communication function and organizer of external relations) was the least preferred role (5 respondents) (p. 123-125, 134).

Zavialova's (2006) focus on leader role preferences contributes to research of leadership practices in Russia and helps to verify perceptions of ideal leadership identified in GLOBE and other studies. GLOBE's conceptual model includes a proposition that cultural attributes affect leadership behaviors that are enacted in a given culture (House et al, 2002). A hypothesis that culturally endorsed theories of leadership measured in its phase 2 predict observed leader behaviors was to be tested in phase 3, with the final product of GLOBE research including a description of most favored leader behavior patterns (House et al., 1999). Meanwhile, Zavialova's (2006) study findings can be viewed as evidence of an actual profile of Russian leadership as compared to implicit leadership theories identified in the second phase of GLOBE. In this regard, Zavialova points out that "having general mental propensity to charismatic leadership Russian managers ... [nevertheless] opt for a 'working bee' role" (p. 136, translation mine). Preference for an implementing role accounts for close to a third of the choices, with the communication and coordinating role taking a distant second ranking. These two ratings are consistent with fairly high scores of administrative competence (6.03) and performance orientation (5.92) in the GLOBE study. The fact that they are at odds with equally high importance of visionary (6.07) and inspirational (5.89) leadership may be explained by the focus in Zavialova's (2006) study on a limited choice of roles provided to the respondents.

INSEAD Research

Even as the intrusive role of the state has been a major factor of organizational functioning, it has also modelled organizational leadership. Kets de Vries, Korotov and Shekshnia (2008) trace characteristics of Russian leadership to historical development of the

state concluding that the latter inevitably affects life in organizations: “[A]n historical tradition of governing lingers on in Russia, where there has always been strong, undivided central government, and authoritarian rule has been a dominant feature” (p. 213). On the other hand, preference for implementation found in Zavialova’s (2006) study is echoed by Kets De Vries’ (2000) who explains it as part of Soviet command control heritage. In the USSR, execution and troubleshooting of plans handed down by the State Planning Committee were key management skills. So were connections and string-pulling, or *blat*, which were often the only way to get things done given Russia’s “bureaupathology” and still remains a part of Russian business culture (p. 73). This aspect is relevant to Russian managers’ high level of political influence orientation identified in Elenkov’s (1998) study.

Kets de Vries (2000; 2001), Chair of Leadership Development at INSEAD Business School in France, presents a portrait of Russian leadership based on his review of literature and his own interviews with and observations of both Russian leaders and a cross-section of Russian population conducted between 1993 and 2000. An analysis of underlying culture is a cornerstone in Kets de Vries’ (2001) approach, “Comprehending the building blocks of culture in Russia will assist us to better understand the why Russians approach leadership style and run their organizations” (p. 590). By using criteria from several most popular models of studying cultures, including Hofstede’s, Kets de Vries makes some highly insightful observations of the Russian psyche and its significance for local leadership style.

Autocracy. Kets de Vries (2000) points out autocracy as one of the most characteristic features of Russian leadership:

Russian society, and the organizations that comprise it, is ruled by minidictators at all levels, who are extremely subservient toward those above them but act as dictators toward those at lower levels... Russian executives place great importance on hierarchy and formal status. They distance themselves physically from the rank and file; they receive (and feel entitled to) privileges; they enjoy ceremony, pompous titles, and symbols of rank and accomplishment; and they see compromise in decision-making as a weakness. (p. 76)

Kets de Vries, Shekshnia, Korotov, and Florent-Treacy (2005) found Russian leadership style to be similar to that in African cultures. In Africa, a leader is often referred to as a Big Man. Russian leaders are considered to be supra-ordinary beings having extraordinary rights and, by definition, deserving obedience. Russians need a charismatic and powerful leader, they create him or her—this is why Russian business leaders have much greater resources to maneuver and manipulate than their Western colleagues (p. 318). The Russian philosopher of the 19th century Chaadaev (as cited in Kets de Vries et al., 2005) wrote that blind submission to external forces and any power that would proclaim itself has to do with Russia’s geography and vast expanse of land (p. 29). Strong leadership serves as an antidote to helplessness and lack of control—of this the remarkable persistence of the Stalin cult is shown to be a striking illustration—and many people see in autocratic leadership, not law, protection against chaos and a panacea for every problem in the society (Kets de Vries, 2001). The main figures in Russian history such as Alexander Nevsky, Peter the Great, Stalin, all exemplify strong leadership. Gorbachev was indeed a different type of leader who did not abuse power to the extent that was widespread and did in fact give place to counsel and seeking consensus (Kets de Vries et al., 2005) Despite that or, perhaps, partly because of it, his historic role is still widely seen in Russia as controversial.

Paternalism. Kets de Vries (2000) ascribes the desire for strong leadership to a prevailing anxiety among Russians about their circumstances and surroundings and a great

dependency on strong leaders for protection and “containment” against chaos (p. 75). Thus, autocratic leadership in Russia is closely linked to and is, in a way, compensated by paternalism. Russian people are willing to put up with high power distance but they also expect their leaders to take care of them and their families. This finding is identical to that revealed in some other studies (Naumov, 1996; Elenkov, 1998). This autocracy-paternalism connection can be traced in Russia’s history in relationships between the Czars and their people, large landowners and their serfs, with the Communist Party and the Soviet command control system later assuming a similar paternalistic function (Kets de Vries, 2000). Just as the Czar was called a father so was Stalin often referred to as the father of nation. It is also true that hardly any ruler has been designated in that way since then, certainly not since the collapse of the USSR. Authoritarian tradition may still be there but it is definitely not the same today.

Centralized decision making and control. A famous Russian historian of the 19th century Klyuchevski (as cited in Gratchev, Rogovsky, and Rakitski, 2002) named “the ability to cooperate within large geographic space” among distinctive qualities of the national character (p. 3). Coping with Russia’s vast territorial expanse that has perpetuated a preference for autocratic leadership has also contributed to strong central governance that has traditionally played an important role (Kets de Vries, 2000; 2001; Kets de Vries, Shekshnia, Korotov, and Florent-Treacy (2004); Puffer, 1994).

Kets de Vries (2001) stated that most of the traditional organizations visited by him in Russia were centrally controlled, hierarchical and bureaucratic. Kets de Vries et al. (2005) describe it quite vividly:

When we ask Russian managers to draw an image they have in their mind when we say “organization”, two thirds draw a pyramid... They know how to order and control but they, at the same time, need to be ordered and controlled. This is what management means to them... Most workers in today’s Russia still need structure, not freedom of action (p. 55-56, translation mine).

With high centralization and autocracy, Russian leaders may have to personally deal with routine issues (Kets de Vries et al., 2005). Hence, a system of rules and regulations is common in organizations and, in fact, is required by the state legislation.

Comparison to GLOBE’s Results

Most of the studies reviewed in this paper support Kets de Vries and his colleagues’ (2000; 2001; 2005) characterization of Russian leadership as autocratic. Remarkably, in the GLOBE project autocratic leadership was rated by respondents as neither contributing to nor inhibiting outstanding leadership. Moreover, non-participative leadership was rated as slightly inhibiting. The rankings of Russian leadership attributes in the GLOBE results may shed some light on the reasons of such varying assessments. Both of the above dimensions were ranked, respectively, in Group A and Group B relative to other countries’ scores. Likewise, Russian participative leadership, GLOBE’s global antidote of autocratic leadership, occupies a place among low ranking cultures in Group D. This likely indicates the different approaches taken by GLOBE on the one hand, and Kets de Vries and his colleagues, on the other hand. In GLOBE, participants described ideal typical leaders and their ratings correlated more with values than practices (Dickson et al., 2003). A similar discrepancy is seen between “As Is” and “Should Be” ratings given by GLOBE’s Russian participants to power distance: the actual power distance score of 5.52 vs. the desired value of 2.62 (on a 7-point scale). Another possible explanation is

that of direct self-assessment in GLOBE vs. conclusions in Kets de Vries and his colleagues' research made from an evidently Western perspective.

Another insight into Russian culture proposed by Kets de Vries' (2001) is also very interesting in relation to the GLOBE research. Kets de Vries, along with other researchers (Puffer, 1994; Elenkov 1997; Meirovich & Reichel, 2000), described Russian culture in terms of "the integration of individual conscience with political dishonesty" (p. 606). The socialist era in Russia left a legacy of split public and private lives, an external compliance with the group accompanied by passive, internal, indifferent resistance. The outward conformity in public life has been compensated by a high priority of friendship and trust in personal relations. Russians are a particularistic culture and, as an example, will go to extraordinary lengths to help their friends even at the expense of bending public rules; "personal loyalty is more important than fair play" (p. 607). Puffer (1994) refers to this as dual ethical standard and finds its evidence in various historical periods. Therefore it may be an interesting question how this split may have affected the relatively modest value attached by Russian GLOBE respondents to integrity. Finally, the rating of status consciousness as slightly contributing to outstanding leadership according to GLOBE may be subject to a similar dynamic between ideal and actual leadership behavior perceptions as described for autocratic leadership.

Russian Leadership: Transition and Diversity

A subtle but revealing reflection of the transitional character of Russian leadership is found in the language. A native Russian word for "leader" and "leadership" ("rukovoditel" and "rukovodstvo"—literally, "leading by hand") has traditionally been used in the context of organizations. However, the most common usage of the word "rukovoditel" corresponds either to the person in charge (i.e., positional leader) or the manager. A loan translation from English ("lider") was first introduced in the 19th century to denote the leader of a party (later, of a trade union, country, organization), then a sportsman who leads (e.g., in a cycling race), a ship leading a group of vessels, and finally an idea, or concept, champion (Taskinen-Pleshak, 2006). Taskinen-Pleshak explains that assimilation of a borrowed word is usually complete when it begins to be registered in host language dictionaries. Of over a dozen dictionaries surveyed by the author -- published between 1912 and 2006 -- only one contains the meaning of "the one who is capable of leading others, a leader ('vozhak')" (p. 25, translation mine) which most closely approaches the concept of leadership as it is referred to in this article. A set expression "informal leader" that has become common in Russian in recent decades may be an indication of a linguistic need to better express an emerging meaning and make a distinction with the more familiar concepts described earlier. The distinction between the more traditional (and still most common) and the newly emerged meanings of the words "leader" and "leadership" must be considered in understanding often diverging results of various research studies in the field of Russian leadership.

Having described a typical Russian style of leadership as authoritarian and contributing to hierarchical and bureaucratic organizations, use of coercive power, attaching great importance to rank and status, deferring of initiative and decisions to the leader, and paternalistic orientation, Kets de Vries et al., (2005) observed an emerging leadership style in Russia that they call "global Russian". The authors illustrate this new style in seven case studies of highly successful Russian leaders of the 1990s and early 2000s. One of the attributes that Kets de Vries et al. (2004) found in common about these leaders is that "[t]heir leadership competencies have a very distinct

Russian accent, and yet to a large extent their success is a result of behaviors that contradict many features of the traditional Russian national character” (p. 643). They combine unusual flexibility and artfully create and take advantage of networks of relationships so important for traditional Russian collective culture. These new leaders proactively shape their environment and utilize a type of decision making that is based on democratic centralism once exemplified by the Communist Party. They display tenacity and resilience and effectively offer new vision and meaning to motivate their followers.

Gratchev and Bobina (2006) identify three types of leaders in today’s Russia: Old Guard, New Wave, and International Corps. Fragmentation in Russian business culture is a consequence of radical political and economic changes initiated in 1992 and it affects organizational leadership styles (Gratchev et al., 2002). Finally, while recognizing certain mental unity of people inhabiting the Russian Federation researchers insist that its regional differentiation implies significant cultural differences (Latova & Latov, 2008).

Managerial Implications

A basic implication of research presented in this article is that managers conducting business with Russia as well as expatriates coming to work in the country should start with an assumption that a style of leadership—accepted and effective in Russian organizations—may be very different from what they are accustomed to in the home country. Further, as proposed by Javidan and House (2001), the increasing need for globally competent leaders may be addressed by helping them understand the differences and similarities between their home and host cultures. Systematic research, such as Project GLOBE, enables cross-cultural understanding, comparison, and assessment of various national leadership styles by developing cross-culturally generalizable dimensions of leadership. An importance factor of such assessment and comparison is the cultural point of reference, or the home-country position. For example, in contrast to the profile of Russian leadership assessed in absolute terms in the GLOBE project, to an average “global” organizational member—if, indeed, he or she existed in reality—the most conspicuous aspect would hardly be its highest-rating Charismatic dimension. Rather, he or she would be struck by a high degree of autonomous leadership and low value of humane orientation and participative leadership. An example of comparison with an existing culture—between Russia and Greece—is presented in Figure 3, which plots leadership profiles of both countries on the basis of data obtained in Project GLOBE.

The aspects of similarity and variance are vividly illustrated by the chart. Based on GLOBE’s results, the two countries’ culturally endorsed leadership theories are very close with respect to Charismatic and Self-Protective components of leadership, manifest greater difference on Participative, Humane, and Autonomous leadership, and diverge significantly on Team Orientation.

Coming from the West, a foreign or expatriate manager is likely to find greater use and tolerance for an authoritarian style of leadership in Russian organizations. This style is a deeply ingrained tradition that is likely to continue and Western managers are advised to learn certain transactional techniques to promote organizational change (McCarthy et al., 2008). Among these, contingent rewarding has been found closely correlated with manager performance (Ardichvili & Gasparishvili, 2001). Other scholars propose that the traditional desire for strong, authoritarian leadership that is typical of Russian culture should serve as the basis for assuming a similar yet qualitatively distinct authoritative style to provide clear vision, empowerment,

ownership of the organization, teamwork, and employee involvement (Kets de Vries, 2000; Kets de Vries et al., 2008; Fey, 2008).

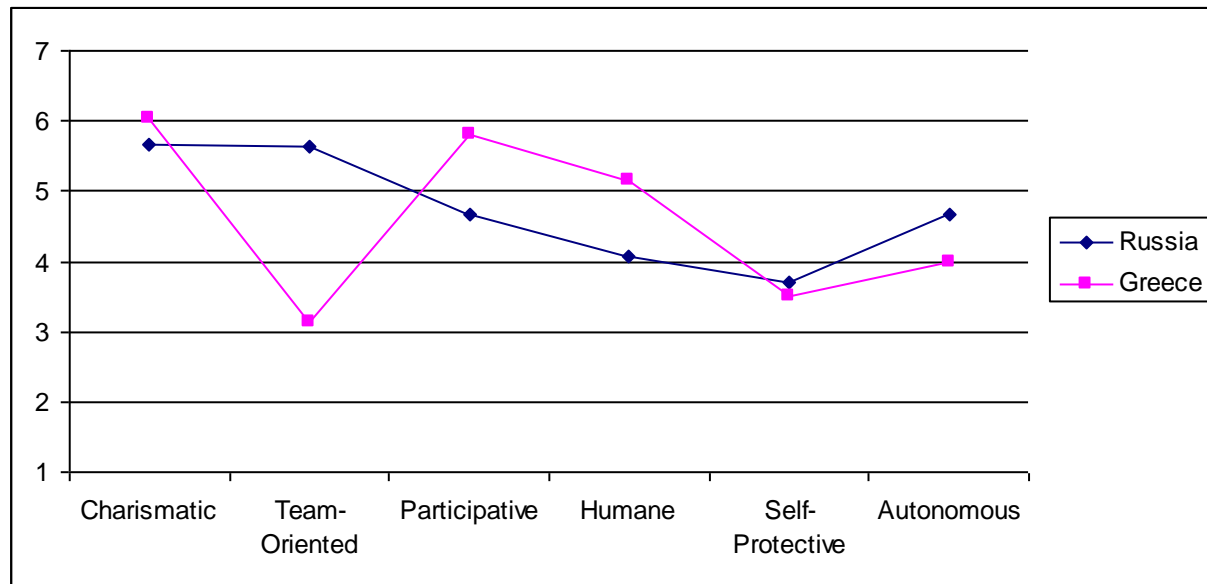


Figure 3. Cultural Profiles of Leadership in Russia and Greece. Adapted from Bakacsi, Takacs, Karacsonyi, and Imrek (2002).

Foreign managers should regard administrative competence as an important element of effective leadership style in Russian organizations. They should also rely on the more universal aspects of effective leadership, such as inspiring a shared vision, focusing on high performance, and manifesting integrity and decisiveness. An effective leader will also not limit his or her involvement with subordinates by purely organizational business but will also strive to provide support in their homes and families. Finally, foreign managers and expatriates doing business with and in Russia should be aware of a high government involvement in both public and private organizations and the consequent need for leaders to maintain important networks of relationships outside of the organization.

Conclusion

Hofstede's (1996) description of a Japanese business tycoon comparing Japanese and American management can be readily applied to Russian leadership; it may share many aspects with other cultures but differ in all important respects. On the ground, assessment of Russian leadership and its style will ultimately depend on the cultural point of reference, or "home base," of a foreign practitioner. In terms of a global view, the review and analysis of recent studies of Russian leadership presented in this paper found significant areas of agreement as well as some variance as to what leadership style is perceived as culturally acceptable and effective in Russia. Research generally agrees on moderate team orientation, low but positive value of participative leadership, and a preference for charismatic behavior. Charismatic behavior includes performance orientation and visioning. Administrative competence is highly valued and subordinates are not seen as important contributors to decision making. Some studies emphasize high authoritarianism of Russian leadership (Bollinger, 1994; Elenkov, 1998) while others rate it

somewhere in the middle range of the scale or even deemphasize it (Gratchev et al., 2002; Fey et al., 2001). Similarly, a composite analysis of various studies of Russian culture does not provide sufficient evidence of very high power distance in contemporary Russia but nevertheless shares the above view of low participation. Paternalism, which may be seen to a certain extent as an expression of Russian collectivism, was reported by several studies and emerged as an aspect that is important for understanding of Russian leadership.

In the descent from ideal perceptions to actual practice of Russian leadership, correlations between culturally endorsed theories of leadership and organizational functioning are evident. Charismatic behaviors as well as centralized decision making and paternalism have been found in broad use. On the other hand, autocratic behavior is still prevalent and seems to indicate a gap between valued and practiced leadership. Finally, rapid political and economic reforms in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union should be seen as a critical factor shaping a transitional character of leadership in modern Russia. Swift integration of Russian organizations in international and multinational business has created high pressures for conformity to Western management and leadership ideas and practices. More research will be needed to better understand how Russian culture has been responding to these pressures in the area of organizational leadership. Already, new and culturally innovative aspects of leadership have appeared that provide evidence for the cultural difference proposition, which suggests that slight deviations from dominant cultural norms may improve performance (House, as cited in Dickson et al., 2003).

To be sure, any attempt to formulate an accurate single leadership profile for any country, especially as vast and culturally diverse as the Russian Federation, will suffer from a fair degree of stereotyping. Contrary to much conventional thinking, however, stereotyping is not necessarily bad and can be a useful tool for leaders and managers who find themselves in new situations (Adler, 2008). Stereotypes should occupy their rightful place among managers' tools as a starting point for understanding the complexities of cultural differences (Cullen & Parboteeah, 2005). These conclusions drawn from studies of Russian leadership will be useful for foreign and Russian organization members whom globalization continues to bring in contact at an increasing rate. Expressing Russia's leadership in cross-culturally generalizable terms facilitates understanding of its unique leadership style and helps to meaningfully relate it to leadership attributes and behaviors in other countries. Likewise, Russian leaders will achieve greater self-awareness on the basis of a global frame of reference. A combined benefit should be higher effectiveness of intercultural encounters in various areas of international organizational activities.

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