

## **LEADERSHIP IN THE SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: EVIDENCE FROM SERBIA**

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**Abstract.** *The purpose of this paper is to show the importance of leadership, as a phase of the management process in safety management systems. Particularly, the most important roles, characteristics and dominant leadership styles were examined in the selected organizations. We use a sample of twenty organizations, incorporating 96 respondents. Data were collected through survey using pre-built questionnaires. Our empirical findings suggest that directive leadership behavior is dominant in the safety management system in domestic organizations. In addition, respondents indicated that they mostly complain about leader's slight tendency to change, a low appreciation of creativity and individual initiative, the fact that leaders are not ready to engage their followers in the decision-making process and poor knowledge of their motivational mechanisms. Therefore, the existing leadership styles are away from transformational leadership, which is essential for organizational changes. The contribution of this study is reflected in highlighting a new perspective of leader-follower relations in the context of safety management systems, whereby it enriches the literature in this area and provides guidance to managers for improvement of their leadership styles.*

**Key words:** *leadership, management, safety, system, organization*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Safety management is one of the most responsible jobs in an organization that requires a lot of activity, attention and thinking of organizations' management [14,20]. Leading people is the most complex function of safety management, and its purpose is to influence people so that they can better contribute to the common goal [18]. When we are talking about leadership, we are really talking about the abilities and skills of safety managers to successfully and responsibly use the power they have, then the ability to understand that people in different times and in different situations have different

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motives, the ability to inspire subordinates and the skill to act in a way that will develop a favorable climate to encourage motivation [8,16].

Leadership is probably one of the multilayer phenomena of social sciences [21]. It occurs in various groups of people: primitive tribes, peasant communities, trade associations, and finally in a modern organization. Leadership manifests itself in many fields of human activity. One can speak of political, social, religious, organizational, sports, economic and military leadership [22]. Leadership is one of the most popular research topics, but still one of the most unexplored [7]. Nevertheless, we can say that the leadership is ability to influence, inspire and guide individuals or groups toward achieving the desired goals [19].

As the process of influence on people to engage in achieving a certain goal, leadership is a multi-disciplinary and highly complex phenomenon [17]. Whether viewed as a part of the management process (with planning, organizing and controlling), or as one of the most important variables of organizational behavior, leadership ceased to draw attention decades ago [11]. Interest in leadership culminated in the last decades of the twentieth century, a period characterized by expressed dynamics of all dimensions of the modern environment, and the escalating demands for increasing the company's ability to meet the specific needs of sustainability and development. This interest is now so pronounced that many are ready to argue that leadership is the number one topic in management and organizational theory, and the number one factor for the success of any business venture in practice, as well as process of safety management.

The aim of this paper is to highlight the importance of leadership, as a phase of the management process in safety management systems, with special emphasis on the important role of the leader and dominant leadership styles within the context of organizations in Serbia.

## 2. LEADERSHIP PROCESS

Regardless of the significant number of the world's published papers and research projects addressing the issues of leadership, this area still represents a major challenge for the scientific research and theoretical generalization. This is particularly true if one takes into account the fact that, regardless of the enormous attention that the leadership arouses in scientific circles and many attempts to exactly explain this phenomenon, there are still very diverse perceptions and opinions about what the key factors are and what is crucial for the design of successful leadership in the organization. Therefore, this phenomenon cannot be considered fully analyzed, especially not in the light of the necessity for adequate respond to intensive changes that companies are facing daily, even in the context of safety management [12]. This context imposes the need to innovate an approach to leader's role in the organization, as well as to review and correct certain previous conclusions.

Leadership is a process that involves at least three dimensions -leaders, followers and goals [10]. Therefore, it implies a set of activities that involves leaders and followers who are working together to achieve certain goals. The emphasis of impact in most definitions of leadership clearly indicates that it is a social process, which, in any case, cannot be one-sided.

The ability to influence implies ambiguous relationships between people, which can be achieved only with the active participation of all relevant stakeholders. Leadership is a process of reciprocal and involves mutual influence of leaders to followers, and vice versa. Changes of varying extent and intensity, which require specific articulation of various desires and intentions, appear as a result of this reciprocity, whereby the leadership role in

this process is essential. Regardless the fact that each member of the leadership process takes personal responsibility in the process of changing the existing and designing the future state, it can be argued that the leadership process is inseparable whole of its most important segments, i.e. it is a function of three essential variables: leader, followers and situation [2].

Therefore, there is no doubt that the leadership must be viewed as a process that has its actors, regardless of the fact that leader, of course, is the central figure of this process. Its essence and fundamental mechanism for its operation, without which, in fact, we could not be talking about the phenomenon of leadership, is a process of *influence*, which represents the core of leadership process. The influence is every action or example of behavior that leads to changes in attitudes or behavior of another person or group [13].

The mechanisms that ensure the support of followers are the source of controversial stands of theorists and they lead to different approaches to the definition, as well as to various theoretical concepts that interpret the phenomenon of leadership [15].

An important feature of any leadership process is that it always takes place in the context of certain groups and in the context of the specific situation, so the various aspects of identifying the influence should be viewed in this light. There is no doubt that this is a very subtle phenomenon, which, despite decades of research has never been completely clarified. One theory, which to some extent explains this process, is a *theory of exchange* that suggests that leadership is a process in which specific exchange between leaders and followers is performed, where the benefit itself is understood as a fluid category and is defined depending on the situation.

There are frequent attempts to treat the relations between actors of leadership process from a psychological point of view, which are quite acceptable if one takes into account the fact that people with different cognitive schemes and psychological characteristics are on both sides of the process. In this regard, so called “emotional aspects” of leadership influence which assume that the leader-follower relationship is often difficult to explain rationally, and much easier to explain considering emotional reasons, are to be found elsewhere nowadays. Among the psychological theories that attempt to define and explain this relationship, the *theory of identification* occupies the special place. It indicates the human need to identify with other people, especially members of the group, in certain situations, being listed as one of the determining factors for the design leadership process [3]. The question is who will stand out in this process as a person able to exercise influence over others, i.e. as a leader, depends on a multitude of situational variables.

The central position of each of the leadership process takes a leader. In this position they exercise their leadership roles, out of which, the following can be distinguished as the most important: objective setting, motivation of others to achieve these goals, support to processes within which goals are achieved, ensuring unity of effort and affirmation of group values, creating an atmosphere of trust and communion representation of group interests, etc. [6].

### 3. ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP ROLES

Basically, there are three essential leadership roles [1]:

1. Diagnosing – the ability to perceive the current situation, the design of the future situation and proposal of possible solutions to overcome the perceived performance gap. This leadership role requires leaders to possess cognitive skills.

2. Adaptation – changes in the behavior of members of the organization in the direction of closing the gap defined and the desired goals, which requires possession of various skills.

3. Communication – informing those whose participation in the realization of the objectives is necessary, on the relevant aspects and activities to be undertaken. Notification must be understandable, timely and due form, and it requires having a communicational or procedural skills.

The roles, realized within certain phases or sub-processes, are most often identified as:

1. Determining a course of action (to establish a vision),
2. Connecting people (mobilization),
3. Motivating and inspiring [5].

The first, and arguably the most important phase of the leadership process is related to the determination of the direction in which the company will go in the future, i.e., developing the vision of the future, which may be close, or quite far away. After that, it is necessary to establish an adequate system of communication through which the members of the organization whose involvement is necessary in the process of realization of the vision should become familiar with its content. During these sub-processes, there is a sort of mobilizing human resources in the company and their encouragement to engage their efforts to achieve the defined vision and goals derived from it. In order for this stage to result in success, it is necessary to provide adequate mechanisms to motivate and inspire, to overcome all possible barriers and keep the taken course of action, directed towards the shaped vision. This is what constitutes the essence of the third phase of the leadership process.

The safety management system is a permanent process of a number of structured and related activities in the safety department that allows a normal course of business processes and functioning of the business system, as well as achieving better economic results [21]. The safety management system cannot be successful without the leadership with a strong and clear vision of safety [22]. Specifically, managers can have a positive influence on safety management with clear presentation and systematization of safety vision and at the same time motivating employees to its realization; acting in a meantime as a role model of behavior and expressing concern for the welfare of workers, communicating and setting clear goals and standards of safety and observing and identifying positive behavior in terms of safety.

Creating a vision is considered one of the essential dimensions of leadership process, to that extent significant that can often be used as a kind of synonym for leadership. Vision is often defined as a desired future state in which to find a person or organization, in the arena of competition defined by mission [13]. Regardless of the form and wording, vision is a projection of the past and present situation in the future which, in most cases, may not be quite directly and explicitly linked with the current reality, and, very often, seems difficult to achieve from the current perspective.

The importance of vision for the organization is reflected in just one very inspiring force, based on creating a strong emotional charge stemming from a sense of purpose and a sense of meaning and action, which are necessary preconditions of engagement and commitment, i.e. motivation of its members. Vision provides the answer to the question "why". It is believed that the causes of the crisis of identity, as well as the crisis of modern business and the inability to adequately respond to changes, lie precisely in the lack of answers on issues related to the purpose of existence and activity. The need for a sense of meaning is one of the fundamental needs of human beings, as well as the need for belonging and sense of purpose of self- existence. Unfortunately, modern civilization is dominated

by the mechanisms of alienation and superficiality in most segments of life, which is why for many people, an organization remained the only place where they can experience a sense of common purpose and form an image of inspirational future worth fighting for. In this context, the vision often speaks to unconscious desires and needs people to be successful, to do something extraordinary, become significant for its environment, to achieve their dreams and realize themselves through a higher purpose and goals. "The vision connects the rational ego with a deep, subtle, subconscious human potentials" [3].

Vision helps individuals to focus their attention on the really important things in the safety system, to distinguish the good from the bad for the organization, as well as to recognize what is valuable and what should be particularly fought for. Focusing attention through vision, leaders of change are able to manage the emotional and spiritual resources of the organization, based on values, aspirations and hidden human needs [1]. Vision is a subtle force that has the ability to awaken the imagination and dreams and encourage involvement in their implementation [9]. A clear mental image of the future that the leader possesses can be colored by the individual imagination of his followers and it can serve as a mechanism of integrating their efforts. Mobilizing and inspiring followers as significant leadership roles in the organization are achieved in the process of impact and are closely related to the process of applying leadership power.

Understanding the power is one of the most important aspects of research on the phenomenon of leadership. It is an instrument that a leader uses in the process of establishing the impact on followers, which implies that the study of their interdependence must be an integral part of the analysis of each of the leadership process. There is no doubt that the level of leadership influence is closely correlated with the amount of power that a leader possesses. However, given the fact that the impact includes other components, it can be concluded that power is only the potential for influencing the behavior of certain social actors. The degree of effectiveness of the leadership process depends on the extent to which this potential is realized.

Generally speaking, all the sources of power can be classified into two main groups: the positional power and personal power. According to this dichotomous conceptualization, power stems partly from a position that person holds in the organization, and partly from the attributes related to its holder and relations that are established between a superior - inferior members [23].

It is known that the classic organizational theory recognized formal authority as the sole source of power. This type of authority is based on the perception of the authorization, duties and functions that are inherent to a specific position in the organization and includes the right of those who occupy a given position to influence certain aspects of the behavior of members in the other organizational positions. Early studies of organizations suggested that formal authority stems from the tradition that has been legalized by customs, practices and beliefs that certain positions in the organization carry natural right of their holders to affect people in other positions, in terms of establishing rules, command, setting requirements and expectations that these requirements are met.

To what extent members of the organization will be ready to obey legitimate authority, depends on what was their contribution in the selection of leaders who would take up a certain formal position. The degree of leader's influence, although defined by organizational chart, job descriptions or other official document, will be much stronger if his choice is supported by the majority of organizational members. The severity of the impact will be much greater if the values of a leader are compatible with the followers' values or with general social norms.

Otherwise, formal authority will be sufficient enough only to ensure short-term impacts, which cannot be considered as a good basis for the realization of the leader's powers.

Another significant group consists of different forms of power that do not arise from the formal position that the leader has in the organization, but from his personal characteristics. It is believed that the most important source of personal power represents the expertise and ability to solve specific problems and carry out tasks in the organization. However, expertise, by itself, will not constitute a source of power if there are no people who depend on its application in a particular situation. The degree of this dependence is much greater if it is less likely to get expert advice from some other source, which also affects the increase of the power of leaders and their ability to influence the behavior of other members of the organization. What is important for this kind of power is that it is not absolute but relative character, which means that it often does not depend on the real but on the perceived knowledge, compared to other professionals in the organization, so that a small volume of extra expertise can bring a large volume of power [23]. Depending on dominantly applied sources of power, leadership styles also differ.

#### 4. LEADERSHIP STYLES

The most famous leadership styles are based on early studies that were conducted at the end of the thirties of the twentieth century, from which emerged to date the most popular and most widely used classification of autocratic and democratic leadership. Although many modern research has led to the identification of a large number of different leadership styles, the fact is that leadership behavior still exists on a continuum between these two extremes: autocratic, with a leader in center (leader-centered) and democratic, with subordinates in the center (subordinate-centered). At one end of this continuum are variants of autocratic leadership manifested in the directive behavior, while at the other end are variants of democratic leadership, which is manifested through various modes of participatory and supportive behavior, or so-called divided leadership.

The domination of the mentioned leadership styles has evolved over time. It is mainly conditioned by the changes in the business environment manifested through its different dimensions. The traditional notion of leaders as people who base their influence on domination and subordination (directive behavior) is replaced by the new one, which recognizes the fact that employees in the modern business environment accept more sophisticated leadership styles, particularly those based on cooperation and participation in decision-making [4].

Changes in technology, mode of operation and the nature of the competitive struggle, imposed a need in organizations that leadership style becomes softer, more flexible, more open to new ideas and much more participatory. Leadership styles are the result of different types of leader behavior. The effectiveness of each type of leader behavior is directly caused by situational factors such as the nature of the characteristics of the task, the organization and its employees, that is, characteristics of business environment [11].

The most significant positive effects of direct leadership are connected to precisely defined roles of each individual in the group, or organization. The directive leadership behavior is related to those leadership styles that are primarily focused on defining the roles, structure and communication activities, or ordering followers what to do in a specific situation. Regardless of the fact that a large number of people prefer autonomy,

self-initiative and freedom in performing their tasks, there is still a large number of followers who occasionally need some kind of direction from leaders, which leaves room for the expression of its positive effects.

Providing information on what is expected of followers and pointing them to the working methods and techniques for the realization of tasks, leaders build a clear idea of what needs to be done to make the task realized. Followers clearly understand their role in the execution of the task, as well as what their interpersonal relations with the leader and associates. Such a clear picture releases followers of tension and uncertainty, so they know exactly what kind of behavior is expected of them. Many people prefer a certain degree of structure and predictability, even in conditions of high uncertainty prevailing in the process of implementation of radical organizational changes, i.e. in times of crisis. However, one should bear in mind that over-directive leadership behavior can produce counterproductive effects and negatively affect organizational and individual performance. As in other cases, there are situations that increase as well as those that reduce the effectiveness of the directive leader behavior. It is considered that the directive leadership is most effective when tasks are high structured [4]. Work assignment with clearly defined stages or steps in implementing gives leader the possibility to provide detailed instructions on how to rectify, and to control whether it takes place in accordance with the given instructions. In this way, the followers are relieved of a part of the activities, leaving them more able to focus on the execution of the task. Due to extreme dynamic environment, today's tasks are not structured in many cases, so the directive leadership in these situations is inadequate.

Participatory leadership behavior is related to those styles and models of leadership in which followers are able to be involved in the decision-making process in different ways. These are situations in which a portion of power from leader transferred to the followers, so that one can speak of a greater or lesser degree of shared leadership. Since all the variants of participation of employees in decision making can be considered under the participatory leadership, there are different types of leader's behavior that can be classified as "participatory", starting from a simple collection of information about the problem, through serious consultations and recommendation of alternative solutions to a complete transfer of the right to vote on followers, or delegation.

Positive effects of participative leadership behavior on satisfaction of employees are manifold. Participation in decision making enables employees to involve their own interests in a specific decision, so it is a reflection of their views, wishes and possibilities, which ultimately increases the motivation for its prompt implementation. In addition, participation in decision-making represents a significant opportunity for the realization of the need for achievement, advancement and self-assertion, which leads to the development of employee's potential and allows them to feel competent, valuable and appreciated. Joint participation in decision-making enhances the sense of belonging to the group, which often results in increased motivation and better work performance.

One of the major advantages of the participation of followers in decision-making certainly refers to a greater commitment, or interest to made decisions, which, among other things, is reflected in a reduced resistance to change implementation, as well as to efforts to remove barriers in the way of its implementation. This is of great importance for the successful response to crises, which requires the implementation of complex organizational change, when a lot of resistance is expected.

The participation of employees in decision-making increases the quality of decisions, simply because of the fact that there are more information circulating and there is a larger

a number of alternatives. Modern business environment is characterized by a pronounced dynamism and complexity of information so it is impossible to expect that one person (the leader) concentrates all the knowledge needed for decision making. Besides, the involvement of employees in the process of generation, evaluation and selection of alternatives leads to the development of their decision-making abilities, which is one of the preconditions of the development of other skills relevant to the overall leader-follower relationship.

The greatest effectiveness of participative leadership is manifested when acceptance of the decisions by followers is essential for its implementation, as well as in situations when a task is particularly important for the whole group or organization. Another significant contingent feature, which increases the effectiveness of participative leader behavior, is related to the high level of uncertainty faced by organizations in their business environment (which is the case with most modern organizations). In this case, participative leadership is an efficient way of collecting as many relevant information and ideas that would assist the reduction of risk and uncertainty as possible.

## 5. RESEARCH IN SERBIA

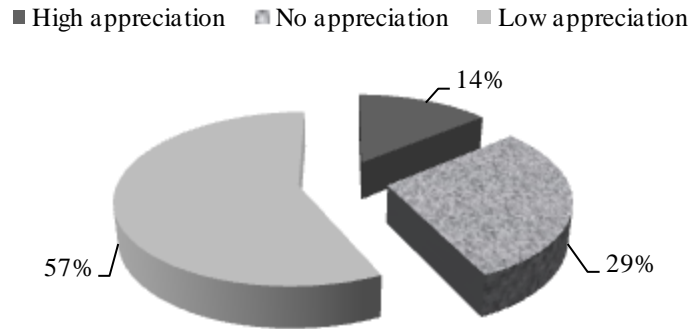
In an effort to examine the phenomenon of leadership in local companies in the safety management system, the research was conducted during the period November 2015 - December 2015. The study included twenty six companies and was conducted on a sample basis, by random selection of companies of different activities, size and ownership structure. Data were collected through survey using pre-built questionnaires, completed by 96 respondents.

The aim of the research was to determine what the characteristics of leadership in organizations are, which the most important mechanisms of motivation and power are, what the attitude of leaders towards teamwork, creativity and individual initiative is, how it encourages the participation of members of the organization, which dominant features of these leadership styles in the examined organizations are and which leader's characteristics are preferred by employees.

Despite the fact that the existence of a clear vision of the future is one of the most important functions of leadership, only 33% of respondents stated that they know the vision of their company, while 67% were not able to cite it. Ignorance of the vision of the employees points to problems in communication between leaders and followers, and the inability of leaders to communicate a vision to the members of the organization, although of course, it may be due to the complete absence of vision, which is unacceptable in all business segments, as well as in safety management systems.

Similar responses were obtained to the question "How appreciated is creativity and individual initiative in your company?" Namely, 57% of respondents indicated low appreciation, and 29% that it is not appreciated at all, making a total of 86%, which is a very worrying result. These data suggest that our leaders do not use enough potential of their followers, who may represent a significant source of new ideas for business improvement (Figure 1).

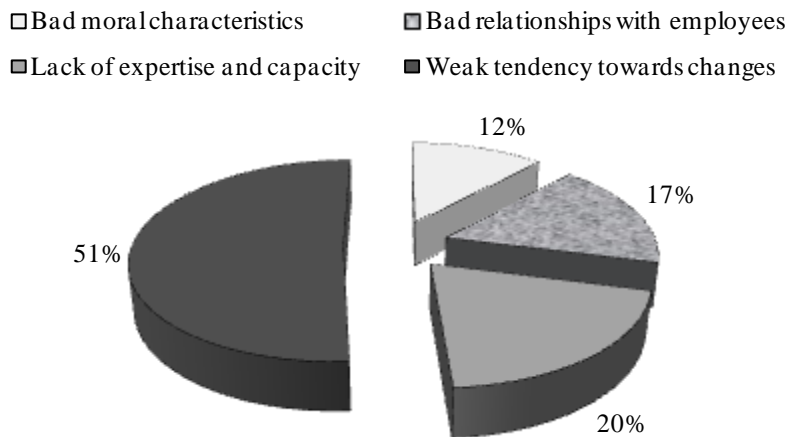




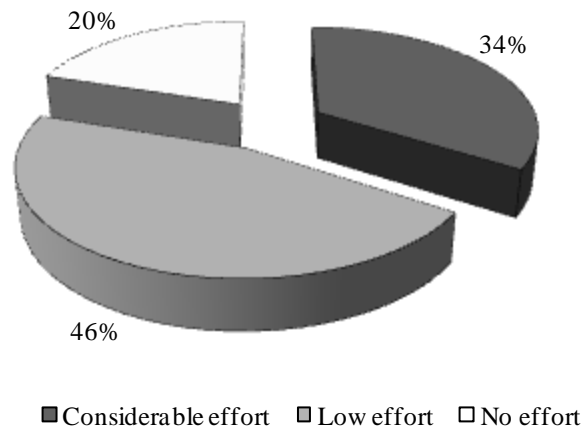
**Fig. 1** How appreciated is creativity and individual initiative in your company?

Unlike employees who have demonstrated high propensity to change, it seems that the leaders of the domestic companies do not possess such a tendency, at least according to the respondents. In fact, more than half of the respondents stated that what bothers them the most about their leader was weak tendency towards changes (51.5%), 20% said that it was lack of expertise and capacity, 17% said that it was bad relationships with employees and 11.5% indicated bad moral characteristics. The fact that employees are more bothered by a weak propensity to change than e.g. bad moral characteristics shows that people have become aware of the necessity for change, and that the leaders are expected to vigorously take action in this direction (Figure 2).

The research has shown that leaders are not too willing to listen to ideas and suggestions of their followers, nor they try to understand their problems and needs. Almost 70% of respondents indicated that managers were not willing to listen to the ideas and suggestions at all or were ready to start, while 66.4% said that the leaders showed low or no effort to understand their problems and needs (Figure 3).

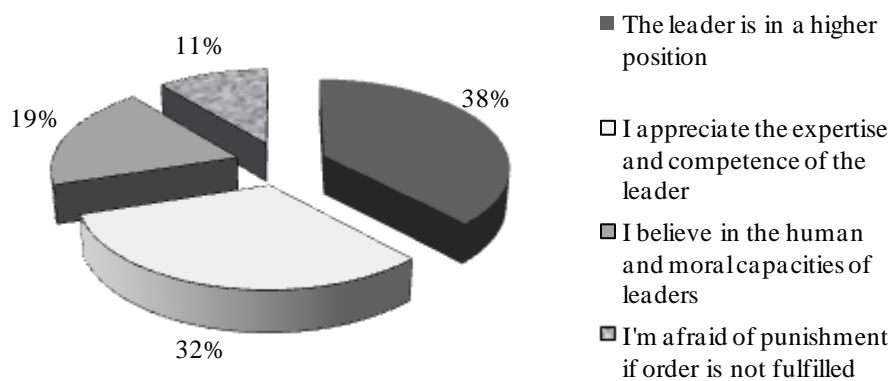


**Fig. 2** What bothers you the most about your leaders?

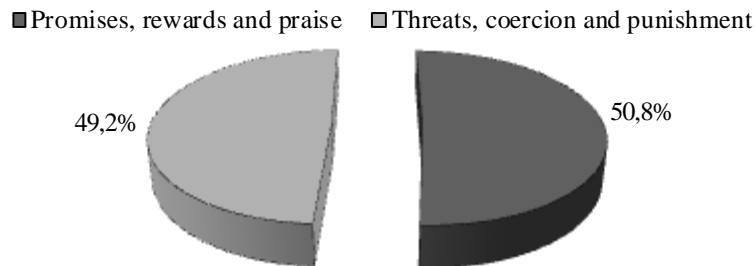


**Fig. 3** To which extent are leaders trying to understand your problems and needs?

Leaders who do not bother to understand the needs of their coworkers will not be able to understand even their motivational mechanisms and, therefore, will not be able to make a real choice in determining the methods of influence, which is very important in the leadership process. On the other hand, leaders are not willing to listen to proposals of their workers, which implies an unwillingness to be allowed to participate in the decision making process. In the context of the research of leader's dominant source of power in organizations, it was concluded that there was a slight advantage of the personal over the positional sources. Therefore, to the question, "Why are you willing to obey the requirements of the leader?" 38% responded stated that it was because the leader is in a higher position, 32% because they appreciated the expertise and capability of leaders, 19% because they believed in the human and moral qualities of leaders and 11% due to fear that they would be punished if they did not carry out orders (Figure 4).



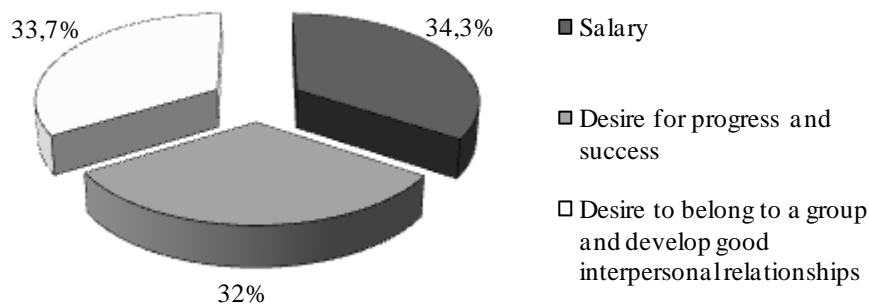
**Fig. 4** Why are you willing to obey the requirements of a leader?



**Fig. 5** What do leaders apply more frequently in an attempt to persuade you to do what is expected of you?

According to the survey, leaders almost uniformly apply the promises, rewards and praise as well as threats, coercion and punishment, in an effort to persuade employees to do what is expected of them. The encouraging fact is that half of respondents believe in the competence, abilities and moral qualities of a leader and they are therefore ready to follow them, which are more acceptable sources of power than the power of punishment or formal position in the organization (Figure 5).

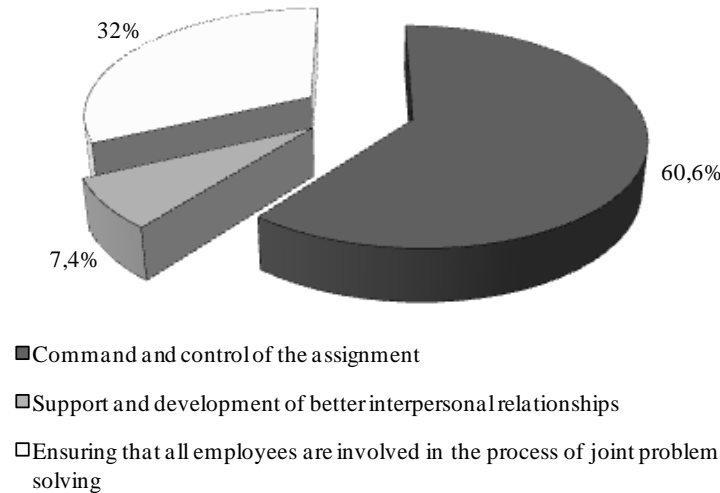
Despite the many existential problems faced by employees in our organizations, only 34.3% of respondents indicated that salary was the most important motivational factor for engaging in work for them. The desire for progress and achieving success is the main motivating factor for 32% of respondents, while 33.7% of the respondents are most motivated by the desire to belong to a group and develop good interpersonal relationships (Figure 6).



**Fig. 6** What motivates you the most to be engaged at work?

Thus, over 65% of employees are not primarily motivated by salary or cash incentives, but by other stimulants. This response is confirmed by the fact that 65% of respondents would agree to do more creative and challenging job for lower wages, as opposed to 35% who would not agree. However, the relatively high percentage of respondents (45.6%) replied that they preferred working in an environment where there are clearly defined roles and tasks for each individual and everybody knows what is their job compared to the environment where the opportunity to create task, make decisions and take responsibility is allowed, which is preferred by 54.4% of respondents.

In the end, the most important result is related to the fact that most of our leaders are more focused on the issue of command and control of the assignment, even 60.6%, while only 7.4% are focused on supporting and developing better interpersonal relationships, whereas 32% is aimed at ensuring that all employees are involved in the process of joint problem solving, indicating the dominance directive in relation to participative leadership styles (Figure 7).



**Fig. 7** What are your leaders mostly focused on?

## 6. CONCLUSION

Starting from the fact that safety management is extremely complex and responsible job in an organization that requires a lot of attention and activity, as well as existence of a strong and clear vision of safety, we can conclude that leadership represents one of the most important factors that influence the success of safety management processes. By creating and communicating the safety vision through organization, leaders influence people and manage to lead them towards the common goal. Leader is faced with the necessity to motivate employees to realization of the vision, acting as a role model and showing care for followers in the same time. Therefore, in order to be a good leader in safety management system, a manager has to develop various skills and fulfill different roles, such as: determination of the direction in which the company will go in the future, i.e., developing the vision of the future, changing the behavior of followers in the direction of realization of common goal, establishment of an adequate system of communication with the followers.

While achieving their essential roles, leaders can apply different leadership styles. Basically, the most popular and most widely used classification is one of autocratic style, manifested in the directive behavior, and democratic leadership, realized through various modes of participatory and supportive behavior, or so-called divided leadership. Bearing in mind that leadership process depends on three main variables, leader, follower and situation, we can conclude that each leadership style has its positive and negative sides, depending precisely on these factors. However, due to extreme dynamic modern environment

and low structuring of the tasks in organizations, the directive leadership is inadequate and positive effects of participative leadership on satisfaction of employees are manifold.

The most important benefits of participative leadership result from the fact that modern business environment is characterized by a pronounced dynamism and complexity, so it is less likely for one person to possess all the necessary information and skills that leaders position requires. Participative leadership means inclusion of employees in decision making process enabling them to involve their own views, wishes and possibilities, which is extremely significant because it not only influences the reduction of resistance to organizational changes but it additionally increases the motivation for its prompt implementation.

Starting from the defined goals of the research and following an empirical study, we can confirm that leadership represents an important integral element of safety management system, which highly affects satisfaction of employees. Based on the results of conducted empirical study, it can also be concluded that directive leadership behavior, or task-oriented behavior, is dominant in the safety management system in domestic companies, that the participative style is partially represented, and that the supportive behavior, or relationships-oriented, represents a very small percentage. If we summarize the results of the above answers in which respondents indicated they mostly complained about leaders slight tendency to change, a little valuation of creativity and individual initiative, the fact that teamwork was little represented and that the leaders were not ready to engage their followers in the decision-making process, as well as poor knowledge of their motivational mechanisms, it can be concluded that the existing leadership styles and behavioral patterns are away from transformational leadership, which is the key driving force of organizational changes.

Scientific contribution of this paper is reflected in an expansion of the knowledge base in the area of safety leadership, as well as in the emphasis of the new focus on the research problem and provision of the relevant data. Also, it gives managers an insight into followers' attitudes on different aspects of leadership behavior which are significant due to their influence on employees' satisfaction, and thus the motivation or resistance to organizational changes that are inevitable in modern business environment. Therefore, the results of an empirical research provide guidelines for the improvement of leadership behavior in safety management systems in domestic organizations.

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## **LIDERSTVO U SISTEMU UPRAVLJANJA BEZBEDNOŠĆU: ISKUSTVA IZ SRBIJE**

*Cilj ovog rada je da ukaže na značaj liderstva, kao faze menadžment procesa u sistemu upravljanja bezbednošću. U tom kontekstu, istraživane su najvažnije uloge, karakteristike i stilovi liderstva u odabranim organizacijama. Korišćen je uzorak od dvadeset šest organizacija, uključujući 96 ispitanika. Podaci su prikupljeni korišćenjem strukturiranog upitnika. Rezultati istraživanja pokazali su da je direktivno lidersko ponašanje dominantno u sistemu upravljanja bezbednošću u domaćim organizacijama. Takođe, najveće zamerke ispitanici su imali na slabu sklonost lidera promenama, nizak nivo uvažavanja kreativnosti i individualne inicijative zaposlenih, i nespremnost da se sledbenici uključe u proces odlučivanja, što ne doprinosi jačanju njihovih motivacionih mehanizama. Postojeći liderski stil je daleko od transformacionog liderstva, koji čini suštinu procesa organizacionih promena. Doprinos ovog istraživanja ogleda se u naglašavanju nove perspektive odnosa lider-sledbenik, u kontekstu sistema upravljanja bezbednošću, i obezbeđenju smernica za unapređenje liderskih stilova u ovoj oblasti.*

**Ključne reči:** *liderstvo, menadžment, bezbednost, sistem, organizacija*