

Leadership Competencies and Styles in NGO: An Empirical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This article presents the results of a comprehensive empirical study of leadership competencies and styles among 50 employees and volunteers of the NGO “Rokada”, which carries out humanitarian activities under martial law in Ukraine. The study combined an assessment of baseline leadership potential with an evaluation of the effectiveness of the author's leadership development training programme. We used some validated psychodiagnostic tools: the Zharikov and Krushelnitsky method for diagnosing leadership abilities, Bass’s Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X), and the Beales–Schneider method for studying leadership style. The statistical analysis included descriptive statistics with an assessment of the distribution shape, Student’s t-test for independent samples with calculation of Cohen’s effect size, Pearson’s correlation analysis, and factor analysis (principal component method with Varimax rotation).

The results revealed a clearly defined hierarchy of leadership profiles that reflects the functional specificity of humanitarian work, namely, strategic transformational leadership dominates at the top level, operational transactional effectiveness at the middle level, and high relationship orientation combined with vulnerability to stress at specialists/volunteers. Factor analysis allowed us to identify three key dimensions of leadership that explain 70% of the variance and have direct practical significance for team building in crisis conditions. The assessment of the training according to the Kirkpatrick model (levels of “learning” and “behavior”) demonstrated a statistically and practically significant improvement in indicators (an increase from 26.2% to 41.4%), especially in the components of transformational leadership and communicative-empathic skills. The obtained data are of high practical importance for the development of differentiated leadership development systems in Ukrainian humanitarian organizations working with vulnerable groups of the population, volunteers and under conditions of chronic stress and uncertainty.

Keywords: leadership competencies, transformational leadership, stress tolerance.

INTRODUCTION

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, which has been ongoing since February 2022, has radically transformed the landscape of humanitarian activity in the country. Civil society organizations have become one of the key links in the crisis response system, providing emergency assistance, psychosocial support, working with internally displaced persons (IDPs), veterans, civilians affected by hostilities, and are also engaged in logistics, collection and distribution of humanitarian aid. Under these circumstances, leadership takes on particular significance, as traditional hierarchical models often do not work in volunteer and semi-professional teams, where high motivation is combined with the risk of emotional burnout, secondary traumatization and chronic stress.

The NGO “Rokada” is a typical example of a medium-sized Ukrainian humanitarian organizations operating in the eastern region. This NGO coordinates the work of volunteers, implements projects to provide assistance to vulnerable groups, and establishes interaction with local authorities, international donors and other NGOs. The

specifics of its activities include working in conditions of possible shelling, the need to make quick decisions with a shortage of resources, the emotional burden of contact with traumatized people and the constant need for motivation of volunteers, many of whom are themselves IDPs or have relatives at the front.

Statement of the Problem

Despite significant attention to leadership issues in the business sector and public administration, psychological research on leadership competencies specifically within humanitarian NGOs in Ukraine has remained fragmented.

Existing works mainly focus on the corporate context or on general issues of volunteer motivation, while the specifics of combining strategic management, operational coordination and direct work with beneficiaries under crisis circumstances have not been studied sufficiently. An especially significant point is how leadership qualities are distributed across the various levels of the organisational structure, and which psychological mechanisms can ensure effective leadership during times of high uncertainty and emotional strain

The relevance of this study is also enhanced by the fact that many humanitarian organisations in Ukraine are facing a “leadership gap”: senior managers often have strong strategic and resource management skills, but their emotional leadership skills are underdeveloped; middle managers coordinate processes effectively, but need to develop transformational qualities to motivate teams; specialists and volunteers who work directly with people demonstrate high levels of empathy, but suffer from low stress resilience and a tendency to avoid responsibility in difficult situations. These gaps directly affect the quality of assistance, the resilience of organisations and the psychological well-being of staff.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to conduct a comprehensive analyze of leadership competencies and styles among staff and volunteers at various levels of NGO “Rokada” organizational structure, to identify statistically and practically significant differences between groups, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of the author's leadership development training program based on the Donald Kirkpatrick model.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research object is leadership competencies and behavioural styles in the context of a humanitarian NGO’s activities.

Research subject is the psychological features of manifestation of leadership qualities among the employees of the NGO “Rokada” at various organizational levels and the dynamics of these qualities under the influence of a targeted training program.

The scientific novelty of this study consists in the empirical substantiation of a three-dimensional leadership model adapted to the conditions of humanitarian activities in Ukraine during the war period, as well as in the practical approbation of an integrative approach to evaluating the effectiveness of leadership training programmes based on the Kirkpatrick model, using validated psychodiagnostic tools.

Research hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. There are statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in the level of leadership competencies (initiative, communication skills, organizational skills, stress resistance, decision-making) and leadership styles among the three participant groups, with senior managers exhibiting the highest levels of transformational leadership and task orientation, and specialists/volunteers the highest relationship orientation with lower stress resistance.

Hypothesis 2. The author's training program, developed taking into account the results of basic diagnostics and the specifics of the humanitarian sector, will ensure a practically significant ($d > 0.5$) increase in the key

indicators of transformational leadership, communication skills, stress resistance and relationship orientation according to the results of pre- and post-testing.

Theoretical and methodological principles of research

Modern leadership psychology presents a wide range of theoretical approaches, which can be conditionally divided into three groups: leader traits, behavioral models, and situational-contingent theories. In the context of humanitarian organizations operating in conditions of high dynamics, emotional stress and resource limitations, the most relevant are integrative models that combine personal competencies, stylistic features and the ability to adapt to the context [1, 9].

The competence approach, implemented in the methodology of Zharikov and Krushelnytskyi, allows you to evaluate specific behavioral manifestations of leadership: initiative (the ability to independently put forward ideas and take responsibility), communication skills (the ability to establish contact, convince, listen), organizational skills (planning, coordination, delegation), stress resistance (maintaining efficiency in stressful situations) and decision-making (analyzing information, choosing the best option in conditions uncertainty). This technique is widely used in Ukrainian and post-Soviet psychology, in particular in studies of the leadership qualities of military personnel and specialists in extreme professions [4, 6].

Bass's theory of transformational and transactional leadership is one of the most validated and widely used in modern organizational psychology. A transformational leader inspires followers through the creation of a compelling vision of the future, intellectual stimulation, individualized attention, and the display of charisma (idealized influence). A transactional leader focuses on clearly stating expectations, monitoring performance, and a reward/punishment system. The passive-avoidant style is characterized by avoidance of responsibility and minimal intervention. In the humanitarian context, transformational leadership is particularly valuable as it motivates volunteers, who often work on enthusiasm, and builds the resilience of teams in crisis situations [3, 5].

The Bales-Schneier method, based on the classic Bales group interaction analysis scheme, allows differentiation of leadership behavior according to two basic orientations: on tasks and on relationships. In humanitarian organizations, where much of the work involves direct contact with traumatized people, a high relationship orientation is a necessary condition for effectiveness, but without sufficient task orientation can lead to chaos and inefficient use of resources [2, 10].

Kirkpatrick's training effectiveness evaluation model includes four levels: participant response (satisfaction), learning (change in knowledge, skills, attitudes), behavior (transfer of acquired skills to real activity) and results (impact on organizational performance). In this study, emphasis was placed on the levels of "learning" and "behavior" measured through repeated psychodiagnostic testing using the same instruments [7, 8].

The choice of these methods is justified by their complementarity: the competence approach provides a detailed picture of individual qualities, Bass's stylistic approach is an integral characteristic of leadership behavior, and Bales-Schneier's method is a balance between instrumental and expressive components of leadership. The combination of these tools allows for a multidimensional profile of a leader, which is critical for humanitarian organizations with their complex social and operational structures.

Sampling and procedure

The study was conducted at the NGO "Rokada" from early August 2025 to late November 2025. Participants were free to choose whether to take part, and all gave their informed consent. Data collection was carried out via individual questionnaires and testing in face-to-face and remote formats (using secure online forms).

The sample (N = 50) was representative of the Rokada organizational structure and contained three strata:

- senior managers (n = 5; 10%) – persons responsible for strategic planning, securing donor funding, inter-regional coordination and representing the organization;

- middle managers (n = 25; 50%) – project coordinators, area managers who ensure operational execution, management of volunteer teams and reporting;
- specialists/volunteers with potential for leadership (n = 20; 40%) – individuals who work directly with beneficiaries, provide psychosocial support, deal with on-site logistics and have proven leadership potential.

The average age of the participants was approximately 32–38 years (depending on the group), with work experience in the humanitarian domain ranging from 6 months to 7 years. The gender composition reflected the disproportion typical for humanitarian organizations (predominance of women).

Research tools

1. Zharikov and Krushelnitsky’s Leadership Ability Diagnostic Method –50 statements, 5-point Likert scale. It assesses five competencies.
2. Bass’s Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X Short Form) –36 statements, 5-point scale. This method assesses transformational (4 subscales), transactional (2 subscales) and passive-avoidant leadership.
3. The Bales– Schneier method – 2 scales, each with 50 points maximum. It measures task orientation and relationship orientation.

Training program

The author's 10-day program "Leadership in a humanitarian crisis" was developed taking into account the results of basic diagnostics. The training program combined theoretical blocks, practical exercises, group discussions, individual reflection and homework. It included modules: development of transformational leadership (storytelling, motivational speeches, vision creation); communicative and empathetic skills (active listening, role-playing, intercultural communication); stress resistance and self-regulation (mindful breathing, body scan techniques, art therapy exercises); organizational skills and decision-making (crisis in the company simulations, SWOT analysis, scenario planning, TRIZ elements); working with the inner critic and prevention of burnout. Post-testing was conducted 2–3 weeks after the end of the training.

Statistical analysis

Data were processed using SPSS 26.0 and Python (pandas, scipy and statsmodels libraries). Normality verification was performed using the Shapiro–Wilk test. Equality of variances was assessed using Levene’s test. The Bonferroni correction was applied for multiple comparisons. Effect sizes were interpreted according to Cohen (1988): $d = 0.2$ – small, 0.5 – medium, 0.8 – large. The Kaiser criterion (eigenvalue > 1) and the analysis of stony scree were used for factor analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Analysis of descriptive statistics revealed clear patterns reflecting organizational hierarchy and functional requirements for each group.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the Zharikov and Krushelnytsky method (5-point Likert scale)

Competences	Group of participants	M	SD	Median	Q1	Q3	Min	Max	Skewness	Excess
Proactivity	Senior managers	4.2	0.45	4.3	3.9	4.6	3.7	4.8	-0.12	-0.15
	Mid-level managers	3.8	0.62	3.9	3.4	4.3	2.8	4.7	-0.18	0.10
	Professionals/volunteers	3.5	0.71	3.4	3.0	4.0	2.5	4.5	-0.25	0.20
Communication skills	Senior managers	4.1	0.50	4.2	3.7	4.5	3.5	4.9	-0.10	-0.12
	Mid-level managers	3.9	0.58	4.0	3.5	4.4	3.0	4.8	-0.15	0.08
	Professionals/volunteers	3.7	0.65	3.8	3.2	4.2	2.7	4.6	-0.22	0.15
Organisational skills	Senior managers	4.3	0.42	4.4	4.0	4.7	3.8	4.9	-0.08	-0.10
	Mid-level managers	4.0	0.55	4.1	3.6	4.5	3.2	4.8	-0.12	0.05

	Professionals/volunteers	3.6	0.68	3.5	3.1	4.1	2.6	4.5	-0.20	0.18
Stress resilience	Senior managers	4.0	0.48	4.1	3.6	4.4	3.4	4.7	-0.15	-0.08
	Mid-level managers	3.7	0.60	3.8	3.3	4.2	2.9	4.6	-0.20	0.12
	Professionals/volunteers	3.3	0.75	3.2	2.7	3.9	2.3	4.4	-0.28	0.25
Decision-making	Senior managers	4.4	0.40	4.5	4.1	4.8	3.9	4.9	-0.05	-0.10
	Mid-level managers	4.1	0.53	4.2	3.7	4.6	3.3	4.8	-0.10	0.05
	Professionals/volunteers	3.8	0.66	3.9	3.3	4.3	2.8	4.7	-0.18	0.15

Senior managers demonstrated the highest means on all five competencies (M 4.0 to 4.4), with the highest scores on decision-making (M = 4.4, SD = 0.40) and organizational skills (M = 4.3, SD = 0.42). Low values of the standard deviation (0.40–0.50) indicate a high homogeneity of the group – senior managers are “selected” professionals with many years of experience in strategic management, working with donors, and coordinating large projects. Negative skewness coefficients (Skewness of – 0.05 to – 0.15) and near-zero kurtosis values indicate a near-normal or slightly left-skewed distribution, which is typical of highly skilled groups with a “ceiling” of scores (many participants scoring 4–5).

Middle managers occupied an intermediate position (M from 3.7 to 4.1). The strongest competency in this group was organizational skills (M = 4.0, SD = 0.55), which directly corresponds to their role in day-to-day coordination of projects, management of volunteer teams, scheduling and reporting to donors. The standard deviation is slightly higher (0.52–0.62), reflecting greater variability in experience, from relatively young coordinators to experienced project managers.

Professionals/volunteers showed the lowest mean values (M between 3.3 and 3.8), with the most critical indicator being stress tolerance (M = 3.3, SD = 0.75). A high standard deviation (0.65–0.75) and a moderate negative asymmetry (Skewness from –0.18 to –0.28) indicate a significant heterogeneity of the group: it includes both experienced volunteers with previous experience of working in crisis zones and newcomers who have encountered humanitarian work for the first time. The lowest stress resistance in this group is particularly worrying, since it is specialists and volunteers who have the most contact with traumatized beneficiaries, work in the fields or at aid points, where the emotional load is maximum.

Comparison of medians and quartiles showed that even in the group of specialists/volunteers, the upper quartile (Q3) reaches 4.0–4.3 for most competencies, that is, some volunteers already demonstrate leadership potential close to the level of the middle rank. This creates a good basis for internal "cultivation" of leaders.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the Bass method (MLQ)

Leadership style	Group of participants	M	SD	Median	Q1	Q3	Min	Max	Skewness	Excess
Transformational leadership	Senior managers	4.3	0.43	4.4	4.0	4.7	3.8	4.9	-0.10	-0.12
	Mid-level managers	3.9	0.57	4.0	3.5	4.4	3.0	4.7	-0.15	0.08
	Professionals/volunteers	3.6	0.69	3.7	3.1	4.2	2.6	4.6	-0.22	0.15
Transactional leadership	Senior managers	4.0	0.49	4.1	3.6	4.4	3.4	4.8	-0.12	-0.10
	Mid-level managers	4.2	0.52	4.3	3.8	4.7	3.3	4.9	-0.08	0.05
	Professionals/volunteers	3.8	0.64	3.9	3.3	4.3	2.8	4.7	-0.18	0.12
Passive-avoidant leadership	Senior managers	2.3	0.60	2.2	1.8	2.8	1.5	3.2	0.20	0.10
	Mid-level managers	2.6	0.65	2.5	2.0	3.1	1.7	3.5	0.25	0.15
	Professionals/volunteers	3.0	0.72	3.0	2.4	3.6	1.9	4.0	0.30	0.20

Senior managers demonstrated the highest level of transformational leadership (M = 4.3, SD = 0.43) with the lowest level of passive-avoidant leadership (M = 2.3, SD = 0.60). This is fully in line with their role as the "architects" of the organization: they shape the vision, inspire the team towards long-term goals, attract resources and represent the organization externally. A low level of passive-avoidant style indicates high personal involvement in decision-making even in difficult situations.

Middle managers, on the other hand, showed the highest level of transactional leadership (M = 4.2, SD = 0.52). This is logical: their work requires clear planning, control of tasks, distribution of resources among volunteers,

compliance with deadlines and reporting to donors. Their transformational index is lower ($M = 3.9$), which indicates a deficit in the skills of inspiration and creation of a common vision at the level of project teams.

Professionals/volunteers had the lowest scores on both transformational ($M = 3.6$) and transactional ($M = 3.8$) leadership, but the highest levels of passive-avoidant style ($M = 3.0$, $SD = 0.72$). The positive skewness for passive-avoidant style in all groups (Skewness 0.20–0.30) suggests that the distribution is skewed towards lower scores, a positive sign, but in the specialist/volunteer group the mean of 3.0 is already high enough to cause concern. In the context of a humanitarian crisis, when it is necessary to respond quickly to shelling, changes in logistics or emotional crises of the beneficiaries, the passivity of the leader can have serious consequences.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for the Bales–Schneier method

Type of behavior	Group of participants	M	SD	Median	Q1	Q3	Min	Max	Skewness	Excess
Task-oriented	Senior managers	42.5	4.2	43.0	39	46	37	48	-0.10	-0.08
	Mid-level managers	40.8	5.1	41.0	37	45	32	47	-0.15	0.05
	Professionals/volunteers	37.2	6.0	37.5	33	42	28	45	-0.22	0.12
Relationship-oriented	Senior managers	39.8	4.5	40.0	36	44	34	46	-0.12	-0.10
	Mid-level managers	41.5	5.3	42.0	38	46	33	48	-0.08	0.05
	Professionals/volunteers	43.0	5.8	43.5	39	48	34	49	-0.15	0.08

Senior managers had the highest task orientation ($M = 42.5$ out of 50) with a relatively lower relationship orientation ($M = 39.8$). This reflects their strategic role: focus on results, planning, resources, donor reports. At the same time, a slightly lower relationship orientation can create an "emotional gap" with volunteers and beneficiaries.

Professionals/volunteers showed the opposite profile: highest relationship orientation ($M = 43.0$) with lower task orientation ($M = 37.2$). This is explained by the nature of their work, direct contact with people, the need for empathy, active listening, and support in times of crisis. However, the combination of high relationship orientation with low stress tolerance creates the risk of emotional burnout and secondary traumatization.

Middle managers showed the most balanced profile (task orientation $M = 40.8$; relationship orientation $M = 41.5$), which makes them "universal soldiers" in organization, they are able to simultaneously coordinate processes and maintain a human climate in teams.

Table 4. t-criterion for competencies (Zharikov, Krushelnytskyi)

Competence	Comparison of groups	t-value	p-value	Cohen's d Effect
Proactivity	Senior managers vs Professionals/volunteers	2.78	0.008	0.85
	Mid-level managers vs Professionals/volunteers	2.15	0.037	0.45
Communication skills	Senior managers vs Professionals/volunteers	2.22	0.032	0.65
	Mid-level managers vs Professionals/volunteers	2.12	0.039	0.40
Organizational skills	Senior managers vs Mid-level managers	2.45	0.018	0.60
	Senior managers vs Professionals/volunteers	3.10	0.004	0.90
Stress resilience	Senior managers vs Professionals/volunteers	3.45	0.002	0.95
	Mid-level managers vs Professionals/volunteers	2.80	0.008	0.55
Decision-making	Senior managers vs Mid-level managers	2.65	0.012	0.65
	Senior managers vs Professionals/volunteers	2.89	0.006	0.50

All comparisons between senior managers and professionals/volunteers were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) with large or medium effects. The greatest effect was recorded for stress resistance ($t = 3.45$; $p = 0.002$; $d = 0.95$) and organizational skills ($d = 0.90$). This means that the difference between the groups is not only statistically significant, but also practically significant: senior managers exceed specialists/volunteers by almost 1 standard deviation in their ability to maintain effectiveness under stressful conditions. In the conditions of humanitarian

work, where stress is constant (shelling, uncertainty of funding, emotional stories of beneficiaries), such a difference directly affects the quality of decisions and the sustainability of the organization.

Comparisons of middle managers with specialists/volunteers also showed significant differences on all competencies, but with smaller effects ($d = 0.40-0.55$). This confirms the intermediate status of the middle ranks, they are better than volunteers, but have not yet reached the level of senior management.

Table 5. t-test for leadership styles (Bass)

Leadership style	Comparison of groups	t-value	p-value	Cohen's d Effect
Transformational leadership	Senior managers vs Mid-level managers	2.35	0.024	0.60
	Senior managers vs Professionals/volunteers	3.12	0.003	0.90
	Mid-level managers vs Professionals/volunteers	2.20	0.033	0.45
Transactional leadership	Mid-level managers vs Professionals/volunteers	2.50	0.016	0.50
Passive-avoidant leadership	Senior managers vs Professionals/volunteers	-3.67	0.001	1.00
	Mid-level managers vs Professionals/volunteers	-2.45	0.018	0.55

The comparison of the passive-avoidant style is particularly revealing: senior managers resort to it much less often than specialists/volunteers ($t = -3.67$; $p = 0.001$; $d = 1.00$ – a very large effect). This means that in crisis situations, senior managers take responsibility, while some specialists/volunteers tend to “step aside”. Such dynamics can lead to overloading of senior management and ineffective use of the potential of volunteers.

Table 6. t-test for leader behavior (Bales–Schneider)

Type of behavior	Comparison of groups	t-value	p-value	Cohen's d Effect
Task-oriented	Senior managers vs Professionals/volunteers	3.28	0.002	0.95
	Mid-level managers vs Professionals/volunteers	2.40	0.021	0.50
Relationship-oriented	Senior managers vs Professionals/volunteers	-2.15	0.037	0.60
	Mid-level managers vs Professionals/volunteers	-2.10	0.041	0.45

The statistical analysis revealed that senior managers demonstrate a significantly greater focus on task completion compared to specialists and volunteers. This difference is statistically significant ($p = 0.002$) and is characterised by a large effect size according to Cohen ($d = 0.95$), indicating that it is of considerable practical significance. This pattern is entirely consistent with the functional responsibilities of top management, which focuses on strategic planning, determining organisational priorities, managing resources and shaping a long-term vision. Middle managers also exceed professionals /volunteers in terms of task orientation ($p = 0.021$, $d = 0.50$), although the effect size here is moderate. In contrast, specialists and volunteers demonstrate a statistically significant higher orientation towards interpersonal relationships compared to both senior managers ($p = 0.037$, $d = 0.60$) and middle managers ($p = 0.041$, $d = 0.45$). This feature is explained by the nature of their work with beneficiaries, where key competencies include empathy, active listening, the ability to build trusting relationships, and effective communication in emotionally charged situations.

The results of the t-test clearly indicate the hierarchical structure of leadership competencies and management styles within the NGO “Rokada”. Senior managers have strong strategic competencies – they are proactive, have organisational skills and are capable of making complex decisions under conditions of uncertainty. These qualities are essential for defining the organisation’s mission, securing external resources, coordinating with partners and ensuring the long-term sustainability of its activities. Middle managers, for their part, demonstrate strong operational skills, which is in line with their role in the day-to-day coordination of projects, the allocation of tasks among team members and ensuring that operational plans are carried out. Despite their strong focus on relationships, professionals and volunteers tend to have comparatively lower levels of stress resilience and proactivity. Within the context of humanitarian work, particularly in crisis situations and under high emotional strain, these traits can pose certain risks to the effectiveness of frontline work.

It is noteworthy that high Cohen's d values ($d > 0.8$) for most comparisons involving senior managers indicate not only statistical significance but also real-world practical significance of the discovered differences. It means that the difference between the groups is significant enough to affect the organisation's overall performance. Considering this, the findings must be taken into account when developing and implementing training programmes. In particular, it is advisable to tailor approaches to the development of leadership competencies according to management level: In particular, it is advisable to tailor approaches to the development of leadership competencies according to management level: for top management – to strengthen emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills; for middle management – to develop a balance between operational efficiency and team support; for specialists and volunteers – to pay particular attention to developing stress resilience, proactivity and self-regulation skills, whilst preserving their strengths – a strong focus on relationships and empathy towards beneficiaries. This differential approach would enhance the overall performance of the management hierarchy and facilitate the harmonious functioning of the organisation despite the challenging conditions of humanitarian work.

Factor analysis (KMO = 0.82; Bartlett $p < 0.001$) revealed three factors explaining 70% of the total variance – a very high figure for psychological data.

Factor 1 “Strategic leadership” (with 42% of the variance) combines initiative (0.82), organizational skills (0.78), decision-making (0.75) and transformational leadership (0.80). This is the core of leadership for senior management. The negative loading of the passive-avoidant style (–0.30) confirms that strategic leadership is incompatible with avoiding responsibility.

Factor 2 “Socially oriented leadership” (with 18% of the variance) includes communication skills (0.85), relationship orientation (0.79) and stress resistance (0.65). This factor is key for professionals/volunteers working directly with beneficiaries. A moderate stress resilience loading indicates that empathy and communication require emotional resilience, otherwise they lead to burnout.

Factor 3 “Transactional Effectiveness” (with 10% of the variance) combines transactional leadership (0.77) and task orientation (0.74). It is most pronounced in middle managers and ensures the operational stability of the organization.

The obtained three-factor model is context-specific for humanitarian organizations, it reflects the need for the simultaneous presence of strategic vision, social sensitivity and operational discipline.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings of this study fully confirm both research hypotheses and have significant theoretical and practical implications.

First, the revealed clear hierarchy of leadership profiles is not accidental, it reflects the objective functional requirements of a humanitarian organization in crisis conditions. Senior executives who are responsible for strategic vision, raising multi-million donor funds and coordinating cross-regional initiatives really need a high level of transformational leadership, initiative and the ability to make decisions under conditions of uncertainty. Their relatively lower score on relationship orientation can be both a strength (focus on results) and a risk of “emotional detachment” from volunteers and beneficiaries. In wartime conditions, when volunteers' motivation is often based on personal contact with leaders, this gap needs conscious compensation.

Middle managers play the role of the “operational backbone” of the organization. Their high transactional efficiency and balanced orientation to tasks and relationships allow them to effectively translate strategic decisions of senior management into concrete actions of volunteer teams. However, the lack of transformational leadership in this group is a risk area: without the ability to inspire and create a shared vision at the project level, volunteers may lose motivation, especially when faced with routine, exhausting tasks or emotionally difficult situations.

Professionals and volunteers are the “frontline” of humanitarian work. Their high relationship orientation is a definite strength – it is through empathy, active listening and the ability to establish trusting relationships that they provide quality care and psychosocial support. However, the combination of this strength with the lowest stress tolerance and the highest level of passive-avoidant style creates a serious vulnerability. In humanitarian work, the emotional load is constant: the stories of the suffering of the beneficiaries, the need to maintain a professional distance with high empathy. Without sufficient stress resistance and an active attitude, this leads to rapid burnout, secondary traumatization and, as a result, staff turnover and a decrease in the quality of care.

Secondly, the factor analysis made it possible not only to describe the differences, but to identify three fundamental dimensions of leadership, which are relevant specifically for the humanitarian context of wartime. The “Strategic Leadership” factor reflects the need for vision, initiative and the ability to act in conditions of uncertainty, which is traditionally associated with top management, but should also be developed at lower levels (especially in conditions where communication with the center can be lost due to shelling or logistical problems). The factor “Socially oriented leadership” emphasizes that in working with vulnerable groups, empathy and communication are not “soft skills”, but a critical competence that directly affects the effectiveness of assistance. The “Transactional Efficiency” factor reminds us that even the most humane activities require operational discipline, without clear planning, control and management of resources, the best intentions may not be realized.

Thirdly, the results of the training evaluation demonstrate that leadership qualities are not only stable personal characteristics, but also those that are amenable to purposeful development. A 30-41% increase in the key indicators of transformational leadership and communication skills in a relatively short period (10 days + post-test after 2-3 weeks) is impressive and shows the high sensitivity of these constructs to interventions. It is especially valuable that the greatest growth was observed precisely in those components that were identified as deficient according to the results of the basic diagnosis (transformational leadership among middle managers and specialists, stress resistance and an active position among volunteers). It confirms the effectiveness of a differential approach to program design.

The theoretical significance of the research lies in the empirical substantiation of a context-specific model of leadership for humanitarian organizations in conditions of armed conflict. The resulting three-factor structure complements Bass's classic model, adapting it to the realities of working with volunteers, traumatized beneficiaries, and in conditions of chronic uncertainty. The practical significance consists in the opportunity to use the developed diagnostic toolkit and training program as ready-to-use tools for other Ukrainian humanitarian organizations.

Prospects for further research

It is advisable to conduct a longitudinal study with repeated measurements 6 and 12 months after the training, including a 360° assessment (leaders, colleagues, subordinates, volunteers), a qualitative component (interviews about leadership experiences in crisis situations), as well as expanding the sample to other humanitarian organizations of different types and regions. It is also promising to integrate the diagnosis of leadership with the study of value orientations (according to Schwartz) and the level of burnout (Maslach Burnout Inventory), since leadership styles can be both a protective and a risk factor for the psychological well-being of leaders.

CONCLUSIONS

The NGO “Rokada” has a clearly defined distinction between leadership competencies and styles depending on the organizational level, which reflects the objective functional requirements of humanitarian activities under martial law. Senior managers are characterized by a high level of strategic and transformational leadership with a relatively low relationship orientation; middle managers — with high transaction efficiency and a balanced profile; specialists/volunteers - high relationship orientation with the lowest stress resistance and the highest level of passive-avoidant style. Factor analysis revealed three independent dimensions of leadership (Strategic Leadership, Socially Oriented Leadership, Transactional Effectiveness) explaining 70% of the variance and having direct practical significance for team building and role allocation. The revealed strong correlations between proactivity, transformational leadership and task orientation, as well as negative relationships of

passive-avoidant style with stress resistance and team dynamics, confirm the need for purposeful development of active forms of leadership. The author's 10-day training program, developed taking into account the results of basic diagnostics, demonstrated high efficiency: an increase in indicators from 26.2% to 41.4%, especially in the components of transformational leadership and communicative and empathic skills. The obtained results can be directly used to create a system of regular diagnosis of leadership potential, formation of individual development trajectories and construction of an internal "leadership pipeline" in humanitarian organizations. Within the context of martial law and Ukraine's post-war reconstruction, the development of leadership competencies in the humanitarian sector is not merely an organizational priority, but a national priority, since the effectiveness of helping millions of people suffering from the war depends on the quality of leadership.

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