

Relationships among transformational leadership, organizational climate, organizational citizenship behavior and performance in Romanian employees

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In this paper we identified on the one hand the relationship among transformational leadership, organizational climate, organizational citizenship behavior, and performance, and on the other hand the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in the relation between transformational leadership and the performance of Romanian employees. The participants were 316 employees from small, medium and large Romanian companies. The male and female participants were selected from private sector economic organizations, either manufacturing companies or service providers. The results showed that transformational leadership was positively associated with the organizational climate, organizational citizenship behavior, and employees' performance. The organizational citizenship behavior was positively associated with employees' performance. It was also noticed that organizational citizenship behavior mediates the relationship between leadership and performance, with relatively equal effects on task performance and on contextual performance. By understanding the importance of leadership style in the organizational environment, leadership skills improvement programs may be developed to enhance the performance of the organization.

Keywords: transformational leadership, organizational climate, organizational citizenship behavior, performance.

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Introduction

Transformational leadership, healthy organizational climate, and employee performance are common concepts in the sphere of organizational psychology. Learning the relationships among these variables may have a significant contribution to the proper functioning of organizations in Romania. Although the literature abounds in studies on these issues, there is not enough empirical research in Romania to portray these relationships as they really are. We believe that such a study brings additional value by using data collected from companies currently operating in Romania, as well as data on Romanian leaders and employees, in the current economic and political context.

This study aims to achieve two objectives of great interest for organizational psychology in Romania. The first objective is to identify the associations of transformational leadership with the development of a healthy organizational climate. The second objective is to establish the mediating role of the organizational

citizenship behavior in the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' performance.

The purpose of the study is to provide an insight into the organizational environment of some of the companies currently operating in Romania and to analyze employees' perceptions about the transformational leadership style, but also the relationships that are established between this leadership style and other components of organizational environment such as organizational climate, organizational citizenship behavior and employee performance.

Transformational leadership and organizational climate

The theory of transformational leadership still occupies a central position in the field of organizational psychology. This theory was developed by Burns (1978) and was later improved by Bass (1985, 1998) and by other specialists (Avolio and Bass, 1988; Bennis and Nanus 1985; Tichy and Devanna 1986). The basic idea of the transformational leadership theory lies in the leader's ability to motivate

employees to achieve results beyond their personal expectations (Krishnan, 2005).

Vera and Crossan (2004) emphasize that transformational leadership helps subordinates to unravel their old routines, develop creative solutions to confront ambiguous issues, and adapt appropriately to new environments. Burns (1978) was the first author to highlight the differences between transactional leadership and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership involves the existence of exchange based relationships between the leader and the members of his team. Such exchanges may use salary or prestige as leverage to meet the requirements of the leader, thus focusing on the reward for the effort and compliance or conformism. Transformational leadership, on the other hand, aims to transform individuals, motivates them to achieve performance by changing their attitudes, beliefs and values. Bass (1985) identified a number of sub-dimensions of the transformational leadership style, such as charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration.

Transformational leaders provide employees with a solid view of their opportunities, encourage their critical thinking about initiating changes, contribute to increasing confidence in their own adaptability, and emphasize the importance of their performance by linking their own interests with organizational interests (Bass, 1999). Starting with this type of influence, employees tend to react positively to change, both attitudinal and behavioral. In this respect, Herold, Fedor, Caldwell, & Liu (2008) noticed some positive associations between transformational leadership and employee involvement in new situations. At the same time, Detert and Burris (2007) demonstrated that transformational leadership is a consistent predictor of work performance.

At a strategic level, there are numerous attempts to change and the communication involved in these attempts is formal, encrypted and directed to a large number of people. On the other hand, at lower hierarchical levels, changes are gradually implemented in lower volumes, involve an informal manner of communication and active participation of employees (Rafferty and Restubog, 2010). Managers who implement change have more chances to shape this change and engage in genuine conversations with employees, face to face and unscheduled meetings. On the other hand, the questions and problems posed by employees can stimulate a considerable part of the communication on change. Direct engagement involves more employees at the same time, and misunderstandings about change can be solved by bottom-up inputs about the work process. Through such interpersonal interactions, employees develop positive reactions and become motivated to start changing the situation (Levay, 2010). The transformational leader dedicates more time to coaching and guidance, so as to increase the quality of employee relationships (Liu and Batt, 2010), which will lead to reciprocity of responsibility, trust, respect and interpersonal support (Sun, Aryee, & Law, 2007). Employees who engage in quality relationships with their managers will have higher performances and will demonstrate more organizational civic behavior (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005).

Transformational leaders transmit a strong vision of growth opportunities within their organization and work team, they motivate employees to think critically and constructively about the changes that occur at the organization level and cause them to align their personal

goals with those of the company in which they work (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Gardner and Avolio, 1998). These leaders call for employees' ideals and values, which facilitates their involvement in the organization's activities (Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006), while providing meaning to their work by promoting high values, and thus helping employees to reconcile their personal values and those of the organization (Bono and Judge, 2003). As employees are more connected to the goals of the organization, the possibility of experiencing negative emotions that could generate stressful, unreliable and excessively flexible work contexts diminishes (Moss et al., 2009).

At group level, transformational leadership imparts a pattern of behaviors that propagate over the entire context of work (Cho and Dansereau, 2010). Through social learning, employees interact with the leader and develop a common perception of their behavior, generating a transformative work environment (Zohar and Tenne-Gazit, 2008). This organizational climate reflects the rules (spoken) within the company.

The organizational climate is defined as a set of common perceptions about policies, practices and procedures that carry the intra-organizational messages about what is rewarded, what is allowed and what is valued in the organization, being generated by social interactions that occur at group level (Kuenzi and Schminke, 2009). As a collective phenomenon, the organizational climate coordinates employee behaviors by helping them in giving meaning to work situations and orienting them towards the objectives (Schneider and Reichers, 1983).

The organizational climate is a basic component of the organizational environment in general and it represents the right context for studying organizational behaviors at a global, group or individual level. Although the organizational climate is a long-standing construct, there is no unanimous opinion amongst the specialists about the dimensions it encompasses (Patterson et al., 2004). The organizational climate refers to the specific aspects of the work environment that employees perceive consciously, to the formal and informal work atmosphere, to what employees see and feel about their work environment. Despite having a purely subjective nature at individual level, the perception of the organizational climate at group level becomes a summary of the image that employees shape about their work context. Thus, it is the global expression of what the organization really is (Evans, Hodkinson, Rainbird, & Unwin, 2006). According to Calahane and Sites (2008), the organizational climate represents the collective perception of the working environment, as it is received by the members of a system. The authors add that the organizational climate is a stable structure which stands the test of time and gets a lot of inertia over the generations of employees coming and going.

According to Ekvall and Tangeberg-Andresson (1986), among the factors that determine the organizational climate, leadership occupies the main place, being the most influential element. Changing leadership leads directly to climate change. The close link between leadership and the organizational climate has been studied and mentioned by many specialists, and literature shows numerous studies attesting to this association (Gil et al., 2005).

Koene et al. (2002), in a study with over 2000 employees from 50 supermarkets, noted that leadership style is a consistent predictor for both the organizational climate and the financial performance of the supermarkets which were included in the study. As stated by Mumford et

al. (2002), organizational climate and culture are collective social constructs over which leaders exercise substantial control and influence.

A meta-analysis conducted by Wang et al. (2011) pointed out among other things that transformational leadership has significant effects on the organizational climate. Positive leadership types are more strongly associated with less demoralizing organizational climate (Schneider et al., 2013). Stringer (2002) addresses the leadership-climate relationship by using an analogy with the cause-effect relationship. What the head of a working group does is the most important determinant of the climate. The behavior of the leader determines the climate, which stimulates motivation. And increased motivation is an impetus for global performance. Thus, daily management practices - in Stringer's opinion - are the most important determinant of the climate for the following three reasons: 1) leadership impregnates an organization; other climate determinants, such as organizational arrangements and strategy, are communicated to the members of the organization through the words and the actions of the manager; 2) organizational research conducted so far has shown that the leadership factor has the greatest impact on the climate; 3) leadership is the determinant of the climate that is the easiest to change, or at least to be influenced, so climate change and performance are obtained faster by changing leadership practices.

H1. Transformational leadership is positively associated with organizational climate.

Transformational leadership, organizational citizenship behavior, and performance

An essential component of the organizational environment, which contributes to growth and performance, is organizational citizenship behavior. This construct refers to the actions that employees choose to carry out spontaneously, on their own initiative and not as part of their specific work tasks. Organizational citizenship behavior cannot be recognized and rewarded directly at the organizational level, but can facilitate indirect rewards and make a significant contribution to the organization's well-functioning (Organ, 1988).

Organizational citizenship behavior reflects the flexible nature of work roles and is manifested by helping colleagues, assisting newcomers, working overtime, shifting with others when needed, and numerous voluntary actions that contribute to the organization's good work, in the absence of expectations regarding additional remuneration (Van Scotter, Motowidlo, & Cross, 2000).

By adopting organizational citizenship behaviors, beneficial effects are achieved in three areas. First of all, employees are more appreciated by their managers (Podsakoff et al., 2009) due to the fact that the latter deem that this behavior plays an important role in the success of the organization and the cohesion of the work teams (Organ et al., 2006). Secondly, the appreciation received from managers is associated with receiving rewards (Podsakoff et al., 2009), such as salary increases, bonuses, promotions, or other work-related benefits. Thirdly, employees with a high organizational citizenship behavior have greater chances of being retained in organizations in crisis or restructuring situations.

Organ et al. (2006) argue that the effects of this behavior are beneficial at both individual and organizational levels, contributing to the increased productivity, availability of resources, attracting and

retaining good employees, building and strengthening social capital.

Social exchange theory is often used to check the level of reciprocity manifested by employees in work activities. Social exchanges take the form of "goodwill" gestures and take place between employees and the organization or between subordinates and managers when their reciprocity is guaranteed. Both social exchanges and reciprocity highlight the fact that individuals are interconnected through mutual dependence, and this dependence is characteristic of the employee-organization relationship.

Organizational citizenship behavior involves two complementary aspects. The first aspect includes those behaviors that have a direct impact on the balance of social exchanges between employees and the organization (OCBO). The second aspect includes behavior with indirect impact on individuals (OCBI). Lee and Allen (2002) argue that as long as organizational citizenship behavior is a deliberate attempt to maintain the balance of social exchanges between employees and the organization, it is more geared towards bringing benefits to the organization.

Studies have shown that there is a strong link between organizational citizenship behavior and the transformational leadership style (Asgari et al., 2008; Boerner, Eisenbeiss, & Griesser, 2007; Oguz, 2010). Also, organizational civic behavior is positively associated with individual, group or organization performance (Luthans, 2011; Chiang and Tsung, 2012).

Another component of the organizational environment that is the subject of this study is work performance, perhaps the variable with the highest level of dependence in organizational psychology. Borman and Motowidlo (1993) identified two major classes of employee behavior: task performance and contextual performance. Task performance involves behavioral patterns directly linked to manufacturing goods, service providing, or activities related to organizations' specific technical processes. It uses quantitative and qualitative criteria to evaluate the results. Contextual performance is an individual effort that is not directed to the production of products or services but to the modeling of the organizational, social and psychological context, which plays the role of a powerful catalyst for fulfilling the tasks (Werner, 2000).

The relationships of transformational leadership, organizational citizenship behavior and work performance are vast and complex. Studies in this field have shown the most diverse results. Leadership is considered a factor of major influence on performance in all its aspects, at organization level, at managerial level or at individual level (Wang et al., 2005).

Organizational citizenship behavior in itself is a positive behavioral phenomenon that produces beneficial effects on performance in all its aspects (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000) and benefits both organizations and their members (Ackfeldt and Leonard, 2005). Previous studies have shown that transformational leadership has direct effects on organizational citizenship behavior (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Rich, 2001), determining the leaders to stimulate employees to engage in goodwill towards others and in work activities that go beyond the established goals.

Bass (1990) argued that transformational leaders create employees who are not selfish, are trustworthy, and connected with the organization. Studies have shown that there is a positive association between transformational leadership and citizenship behaviors: helpful, team spirit,

altruism (MacKenzie et al., 2001; Schlechter and Engelbrecht, 2006).

H2. Transformational leadership is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior.

Bass (1985) argued that transformational leadership encourages employees to think critically and seek new approaches to work, it motivates them to become more involved, resulting in increased job satisfaction and attachment to the organization with effects on performance.

The relationship between transformational leadership and performance is one of the most studied topics in the literature (Hiller, DeChurch, Murase, & Doty, 2011). Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert (2011) conducted a meta-analysis on the effects of leadership on performance, including 113 studies. The results showed that transformational leadership is positively associated with performance and it is linked with contextual performance to a greater extent than with task performance.

Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir (2002) conducted an experiment involving 54 military leaders and 814 subordinates. Leaders in the experimental group received a transformational training, and those in the control group received standard training. The results of the subordinates were analyzed and indicated that the individuals led by transformational leaders achieved higher performances than those under the guidance of the leaders having received standard training.

H3. Transformational leadership is positively associated with employee performance.

H3a. Transformational leadership is positively associated with employee task performance.

H3b. Transformational leadership is positively associated with employee contextual performance.

Organizational citizenship behavior was analyzed by specialists also as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance (Khokhar and Zia-ur-Rehman, 2017; Ekowati, Troena, & Noermijati, 2013) and organizational performance (Andrew, Rebecca, & Shawn, 2011), and employee creativity (Eisenbeis and Boerner, 2013). Transformational leadership emphasizes the importance of social exchanges between leadership and employees in the form of a psychological contract, thus stimulating organizational citizenship behavior. Moreover, organizational citizenship behavior includes extra-role behaviors that are extremely important for the efficiency of organizations (Avolio and Yammarino, 1990). Also, Podsakoff et al. (2000) noted that organizational citizenship behavior predicts employee performance.

Peer helping behaviors lead to improved performance and to the fact that new colleagues are more easily integrated into groups, so groups can build up their best practices, facilitating communication and activity coordination.

Boerner, Eisenbeiss, & Griesser (2007) conducted a study on the factors that mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. The authors hypothesized that transformational leadership increases the performance of employees by stimulating organizational citizenship behavior, based on contradictory debates and discussions that stimulate the creativity of employees. The study was attended by 91 leaders from 91 German companies, and the authors' hypothesis was supported by the data.

H4. Organizational citizenship behavior is positively associated with performance.

H4a. Organizational citizenship behavior is positively associated with task performance.

H4b. Organizational citizenship behavior is positively associated with contextual performance.

H5. Organizational citizenship behavior mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance.

Method

Participants

The sample consists of 316 employees in management and executive positions from small, medium and large Romanian companies. The male and female participants were selected from private economic organizations in a wide range of industries (Table 1). The inclusion criterion in the research group was seniority, i.e. at least six months, and it was based on the assumption that an employee having worked with the company for less than 6 months cannot provide a pertinent opinion on the leadership style and the type of organizational climate.

Measures

1. *Transformational leadership* (Rafferty and Griffin, 2004). The scale was developed in 2004 and contains 15 items, three for each of the five subscales: vision, inspirational communication, intellectual stimulation, supportive leadership and personal recognition. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 - to a very small extent and 5 - to a very large extent. Item example: "Makes me think in new ways about old issues."

Taking into account that there is a strong correlation among the five dimensions of transformational leadership, only the overall score of this scale was used. The reliability score Cronbach Alpha was $\alpha = .95$.

2. *CLIOR, Organizational Climate Scale* (Pena-Suarez et al., 2013). The instrument was created according to the principles established by Jones and James (1979), James et al. (2008), Corral & Perena (2010), allowing the measurement of the organizational climate as a general factor underlying a series of facets. These facets are grouped into three dimensions by Carr, Schmidt, Ford, & DeShon (2003) and by Ostroff (1993). The first facet, the affective component, includes the attachment to the post as well as the cooperation and relations with colleagues and managers; the second facet, the cognitive component, includes innovation, autonomy and participation; the third facet, the instrumental component, includes the organization, the reward system, the physical conditions and the program. The novelty of this scale consists in the reward component, which was not measured in the previous questionnaires.

The development of the scale was based on a very large item bank that included the dimensions proposed over time by various authors and involved a large number of participants (3163), which contributed to guaranteeing the validity and robustness of the instrument's psychometric properties. Another advantage of the scale is its unidimensionality and the possibility of computerized adaptation, which, in the opinion of the authors, is an important step forward in the organizational climate assessment (Bartram and Hambleton, 2006; Downing and Haladyna, 2006).

The CLIOR Scale was translated and sent for retroversion to two specialists, an authorized translator and a psychologist. After making the necessary corrections, it

was introduced in the final form. Each item was rated on a 5-step Likert scale, where 1 - total disagreement and 5 - total agreement. Example item: "My job is pleasing". A high score indicates the presence of a healthy, pleasant and satisfactory organizational climate in all aspects: affective, relational and cognitive, while a low score signifies the existence of a disagreeable organizational climate. Although there is also a 15-item version, in the present study we used the version with 50 items. The reliability score Cronbach Alpha was $\alpha = .95$.

3. *Lee and Allen's Organizational Citizenship Behaviour Scale*. The scale was developed in 2002 and comprises 16 items, eight for each of the two subscales: interpersonal OCB and organizational OCB respectively. Each item was rated on a 7-step Likert scale where 1 - Never and 7 - Always. Examples of items: "I help my absent colleagues" or "I express my loyalty to the organization". In this study the global scale score was used. The reliability score Cronbach Alpha was $\alpha = .94$.

4. *Goodman & Svyantek's Performance Scale* (Goodman and Svyantek, 1999). The scale comprises 16 items grouped into two subscales, nine for task performance and seven for contextual performance. Each item was rated on a 4-step Likert scale where 1 - strong disagreement and 5 - strong agreement. Example item for task performance: "I meet all the requirements required by my work". Example item for contextual performance: "I help others when they have a lot of work". The reliability score Cronbach Alpha was $\alpha = .91$ for the entire scale, $\alpha = .89$ for task performance, and $\alpha = .91$ for contextual performance.

Demographics

The study collected relevant demographic information: gender, age, position, seniority, and type of company (the number of employees).

Procedure

The study was conducted in Romania and data were collected exclusively online on a volunteer basis, from employees working in 18 Romanian organizations. We firstly contacted the managers of the companies and asked

them to distribute the questionnaire to their employees. The participants were approached via email by their supervisors. Of the initial 350 calls (email addresses), only 320 participants volunteered to participate in the study, with 316 participants remaining, whose answers met the conditions of completeness.

Results

Means, standard deviations, and internal consistencies for all study variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients

	Descriptors		α
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1. Transformational leadership	51.83	13.44	.95
2. Organizational climate	179.14	30.94	.95
3. OCB	81.72	17.05	.94
4. Task performance	30.09	3.95	.89
5. Contextual performance	22.26	3.70	.91

Note: α indicates the reliability scores.

H1: Correlation analysis was used and the results indicated that transformational leadership was positively associated with organizational climate and the association was statistically significant: $r = .73$, $p < .01$, with an effect size $r^2 = .53$.

H2: Correlation analysis was used to test if transformational leadership significantly correlated with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The results of the correlation analysis indicated that transformational leadership was positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior and the results were statistically significant: $r = .42$, $p < .01$, with an effect size $r^2 = .18$.

Table 1. Demographics of the sample (N = 316)

Gender	Men 112	Women 204				
Age (years)	18-24 68	25-30 87	31-40 84	over 41 77		
Position	Management 60	Execution 256				
Seniority	Beginner, < 2 years 116	Intermediate, 3-5 years 70	Experimented, 6-8 years 36	Senior, > 9 years 94		
No of org. employees	1-9 63	10-49 84	50-249 88	250-499 17	500-999 14	>1000 50

Table 3. Pearson correlation for Transformational Leadership and Performance

	Transformational leadership	Task performance	Contextual performance
Transformational leadership	1		
Task performance	.27**	1	
Contextual performance	.38**	.70**	1

** . $p < .01$.

Table 4. Pearson correlation for Organizational citizenship behavior and Performance

	OCB	Task performance	Contextual performance
OCB	1		
Task performance	.53**	1	
Contextual performance	.72**	.70**	1

** .p < .01.

Table 5. Mediation Estimates for Transformational Leadership on Task Performance through OCB

Effect	Label	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p	% Mediation
				Lower	Upper			
Indirect	a × b	0.0622	0.00997	0.0426	0.0817	6.24	< .001	79.5
Direct	C	0.0161	0.01549	-0.0143	0.0464	1.04	0.300	20.5
Total	c + a × b	0.0782	0.01595	0.0470	0.1095	4.91	< .001	100.0

Table 6. Path Estimates for Transformational Leadership on Task Performance through OCB

		Label	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p	
					Lower	Upper			
LITRANS	→	OCB	a	0.5335	0.0647	0.4066	0.6603	8.24	< .001
OCB	→	PSAR	b	0.1166	0.0122	0.0926	0.1405	9.54	< .001
LITRANS	→	PSAR	c	0.0161	0.0155	-0.0143	0.0464	1.04	0.300

Table 7. Mediation Estimates for Transformational Leadership on Contextual Performance through OCB

Effect	Label	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p	% Mediation
				Lower	Upper			
Indirect	a × b	0.0787	0.0108	0.05758	0.0997	7.32	< .001	75.9
Direct	c	0.0249	0.0118	0.00184	0.0480	2.12	0.034	24.1
Total	c + a × b	0.1036	0.0143	0.07550	0.1317	7.23	< .001	100.0

Table 8. Path Estimates for Transformational Leadership on Contextual Performance through OCB

		Label	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	P	
					Lower	Upper			
LITRANS	→	OCB	a	0.5335	0.06471	0.40664	0.6603	8.24	< .001
OCB	→	PCON	b	0.1474	0.00929	0.12923	0.1656	15.87	< .001
LITRANS	→	PCON	c	0.0249	0.01178	0.00184	0.0480	2.12	0.034

H3: Correlation analysis was used to test if transformational leadership significantly correlated with employee performance. The results of the correlation analysis indicated positive and statistically significant associations of transformational leadership with both task performance, $r = .27$, $p < .01$, with an effect size $r^2 = .07$, and contextual performance, $r = .38$, $p < .01$, with an effect size $r^2 = .14$.

H4: Correlation analysis was used to test if OCB was positively associated with performance. The results of the correlation indicated positive and statistically significant associations of OCB with both task performance, $r = .53$, p

$< .01$, with an effect size $r^2 = .28$, and with contextual performance, $r = .72$, $p < .01$, with an effect size $r^2 = .52$.

Mediation analyses

H5: Firstly, mediation analysis was used to test if OCB mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and task performance, using MEDMOD module of JAMOV1 (Jamovi project, 2018). The results of the mediation indicated that the indirect effect $M = .06$ accounted for 79.5% of total effect, 95% CI = .04, .08.

Secondly, mediation analysis was used to test if OCB mediated the relationship between transformational

leadership and contextual performance, using MEDMOD module of JAMOVI. The results of the mediation indicated that the indirect effect $M = .08$ accounted for 75.9% of total effect, 95% CI = .06, .10.

Discussion

In this study we investigated the associations of transformational leadership with a set of organizational environment components such as organizational climate, organizational citizenship behavior and performance.

Transformational leadership proved to be strongly correlated with organizational climate; therefore, we can state that transformational leaders whose leadership is based on vision, personal recognition and support succeed in building and maintaining a satisfactory organizational climate for employees, in accordance with their needs and their desires.

Although there are many studies on the relationship between leadership styles and organizational climate, these issues have not been thoroughly investigated in Romania. However, our results are in line with the results of other studies. Haakonsson et al. (2008) conducted a survey of the inconsistencies between the organizational climate and the leadership style that led to negative performance. The questionnaires were completed by general managers and the researchers formulated their observations based on the answers provided by the former. The results showed that the incompatibility between the organizational climate and the leadership style generated serious problems in terms of business results and performance, which required changes in either the organizational climate or the leadership style. The study draws attention to the importance of constantly assessing the relationship of these variables so as to prevent problems at organizational level.

Sarros, Cooper, & Santora (2008) conducted a study among 1,158 private Australian managers trying to identify the relationships of transformational leadership style, organizational culture, and innovation-oriented climate. The results showed that vision and support were the facets of transformational leadership style with the strongest links to organizational climate. At the same time, intellectual stimulation did not show significant correlations with the innovation-oriented organizational climate.

Similar results were also obtained by Antonakis and House (2002) or Mumford et al. (2002). Damanpour and Schneider (2006) argued that transformational leaders contributed to creating an innovation-based climate and facilitating changes at organizational level.

Transformational leadership was positively associated with OCB, which was consistent with other studies in the literature. Cho and Dansereau (2010) obtained similar results in a study on the relationship between transformational leadership, the perception of justice, and OCB. The authors used a sample of 159 employees, of whom 40 were managers from a multinational company in Korea. The results showed that transformational leadership was positively associated with OCB, the relationship being mediated by the perception of justice.

Khalili (2017) examined the associations of transformational leadership, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) of employees and the emotional intelligence (EI) of employees. Additionally, the study explored the moderating role of employees' EI on the relationship between transformational leadership and OCB. The study was conducted in 50 organizations in Iran, on a

sample of 2,021 employees. The findings of this research showed that transformational leadership and employees' EI positively and significantly influenced employees' OCB. Additionally, the results revealed that employees' EI moderated the association between transformational leadership and employees' OCB.

Transformational leadership has proven to be positively correlated with performance. These results are similar to those found by Naeem and Khanzada (2018) in a study which explored the association between transformational leadership and employee performances, and also investigated the mediating role of job satisfaction in the health sector of Pakistan. Research data was collected from 152 respondents. The results showed that transformational leadership positively correlated with employee performance in the health sector of Pakistan.

Casimir, Waldman, Bartram, & Yang (2006) also tested the effect of transactional and transformational leadership on the performance of subordinates by incorporating trust in leaders as intervening variable. The tests were conducted on two different companies within different cultures, i.e. Australia and China. The results in Australia showed that transformational leadership influenced the performance of subordinates and was mediated by the trust in leaders. On the other hand, the results in China showed that mediation of trust had no effect on the influence of transformational leadership on employees' performance.

The research conducted by Jung and Avolio (2000) tested the analysis of the effect of trust mediation and value congruence on transactional and transformational leadership. The results of that research revealed that transformational leadership had a very strong and positive influence on performance, mediated by trust and value congruence.

As far as the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior, researchers noted that OCB mediated the relationship between leadership and performance, with higher effects on contextual performance than on task performance.

Similar results were obtained by Jiang, Zhao, & Ni (2017) in a study on the mediating role of OCB in the relationship between transformational leadership and work performance. The authors noticed that OCB was responsible for more than 50% of the influence of leadership on performance, especially on relational performance.

On the other hand, a study conducted by Maharani, Troena, & Noermijati (2013) on a group of employees at an Indonesian bank, found that transformational leadership did not influence OCB, that both transformational leadership and OCB had direct effects on performance and that OCB did not act as a mediating factor in the relationship between leadership and performance.

In our study, OCB has a significant mediation effect on performance. This leads to the conclusion that the leadership style determines the achievement of results to a certain extent, but the results are lesser in the absence of adequate citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior, although a complex construct that involves interacting with others, remains essentially a subjective variable, a personal way of manifesting in the organizational environment. If OCB brings about increased contextual performance and lower task performance, we can conclude that leadership style manages to partially model the behaviors of the members of an organization, but does not necessarily lead to effective performance. The

human component has an important contribution to performance and does not always overlap with the broad objectives of the organization, the achievement of which is probably dependent on a variety of other factors that may be related to the type of work, the type of organization and the type of communication within the company.

Limits and future research directions

One limitation of this study consists in the choice of a new instrument to measure the organizational climate. Although it has been translated in accordance with all the rules and norms established in the field, the instrument is a relatively new one, with no rich history and sufficient references. Another limit of the study is that the cross-sectional format does not allow some causal conclusions. Also, the instruments which were used, including those for performance, were self-reports, which may entail a high level of subjectivity of the provided answers.

The findings of this research can be considered the basis for developing training programs addressed not only to senior management employees, but also to employees in any positions, aiming to develop better communication methods and channels within organizations. At the same time, we aim to identify the ways in which to increase the quality and improve the organizational environment in general in order to stimulate performance, as this is a limitation of the Romanian organizational framework.

Practical implications

The present study offered a more accurate portrayal of the Romanian employees' perceptions regarding the leadership style, organizational climate, organizational citizenship behavior and work performance. These four aspects of the working environment are interdependent; they attract and reject one another according to the quality of their implementation and manifestation within organizations. This study may be the basis of a process of organizational diagnosis and program development so as to ameliorate the critical situations faced by some private Romanian companies.

Following the diagnostic analysis of the components of the organizational environment, specific sessions may be organized to improve the quality of these components in order to increase the employees' well-being, organizational citizenship behavior and the level of performance. In terms of leadership, companies may identify strengths and weaknesses in leadership, and alter them through specialized trainings. Most managers in Romania lead and manage their companies intuitively rather than based on scientifically proven principles. A more scholastic approach to leadership is likely to bring benefits both at individual level - to both managers and employees, as well as globally, driving consistent results in the organization.

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