THE POWER DISTANCE (DP) AND LEADERSHIP IN THEATRE OF OPERATIONS FROM AFGHANISTAN

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Abstract: Social aspects are affected by norms related to the distribution of power, being a reflection of inequality manifested in different areas: gender differences and the age, the rules inside the organization, the access to the health systems and education, etc. There are no absolute standards for measuring this dimension. In societies in which this dimension has a high value, social inequality is considered normality, being tolerated until it reaches an unacceptable level. In antithesis the societies in which this dimension has reduced values, social inequality is perceived as something wrong and tends to be revised gradually. Not understanding the relationship in between leadership and different cultural dimensions is a barrier, but not as dangerous as not having enough military skills and competencies. Military should adapt only to cultural phenomenon that are affecting military operations leaving the others the exploitation of cultural elements.

Keywords: power distance; leadership; theatre of operations

1. INTRODUCTION

The directions which I develop on this topic are the following: A brief reminding of the signification of terms "Power Distance" (DP) and "Leadership" (L); Multicultural specificity of the multinational military missions into the theatre of operations; Multicultural military collaboration in peacetime; The effects of the differences in perception and the application of the two notions (DP & L) in theatre of operations; DP and L in „Resolute Support Mission HQs"; Pre-mission cultural training of all the military and of specific leaders.

2. POWER DISTANCE

A brief reminding of the signification of these terms "Power Distance" (DP) and "Leadership" (L) will facilitate a better understanding of the topic of this article. The term "Power Distance" (DP) it was used first time in 1960 by Mark Builder, being taken later and adapted in 1970, by Gerth Hofstede in order to describe one of the socio-cultural dimensions. The term was used with an identical signification also in GLOBE Study. The definition offered by Hofstede for this term is: "The degree in which the majority of the members of the Society, organizations, and institutions are waiting and accepting that the power can be distributed unequally".

This dimension is present in all manifestation forms of the social life, starting with the family, kindergarten, and the school, where the parents are inducing the children the social model and continues in all the forms of social organization. These social aspects are affected by social norms of the distribution of power, representing the reflection of inequality and are finding the place of manifestation in different areas: gender differences and the age, the rules inside the organization, the access to the health systems and education, etc.

There are no absolute standards for measuring this dimension. In the societies in which this dimension has a high value, social inequality is considered that representing normality, being tolerated until it reaches an unacceptable level. In antithesis the societies in which this dimension has reduced values, here social inequality is perceived as something wrong and tends to be revised gradually.

The socio-cultural dimension expressed with the help of the "Power Distance" indicator (IDP), has values in between 1 and 100. Hofstede's research over this dimension comprised 76 countries. A high IDP was registered in Slovakia, Russia, Romania, Serbia, China, India, France, Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Poland and Belgium.

A medium level is having Japan, Italy, Turkey, Spain, Portugal, Germany and a reduced level in USA, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, Nederland, Norway, Denmarkand Austria (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2012). IDP is validating social phenomenon and is correlated with:

Table 1 Power Distance indicator (IDP)

A high IDP	A reduced IDP
Individuals situated in high positions are perceived as being superior; The power is a fact and its legitimacy is irrelevant.	Individuals situated in high positions are supervising the social rules in order to function properly but the social roles in between the members of the society can be easily changed.
The one that is in power decides the behavioral line and decides what is good and what is wrong.	The use of power must be legitimate, with the limits in between right or wrong clearly defined.
The respect is cultivated through education.	The independence is cultivated through education.
Centralization of power	**De-centralization**
The relationship in between the leader and his subordinates: the subordinates are assuming the execution role, they are fulfilling the assigned tasks by those who are in power and have not been able to influence because all the power is in the hands of those who are on the top of the social pyramid.	The relationship in between the leader and his subordinates: when the problem is related to their work the subordinates are expected to be consulted.
A high degree of inequality in the distribution of income.	The income in a society is equals, depending of the role fulfilled inside the society.
Medium population is thick.	Majority of the population is situated at a medium level.
Oligarchic Society, dictatorship.	The power inside a State are separated and the use of power must be legitimate.
There is an Autocrat Government and can be replaced only through a revolution.	There are pluralistic governments elected through a majority vote and changed in a peaceful way.
The parents are teaching their children the unconditional listening.	The parents are treating their children as their equals.
Old persons are respected and listened.	Old persons are not respected or feared especially.
The education is centered on the teacher.	The education is centered on students.
Hierarchy means only existential inequality.	Hierarchy means an inequality of roles, convenient one.
Corruption is frequent and the scandals are covered.	Corruption is rare; the scandals determine the end of the political carrier.
The priests created their own hierarchy.	Religions are promoting the equality of choice of the Christians.

There is a direct relationship in between "Power Distance" dimension and communication. Individuals that are coming from a culture with a high IDP tend to use a formal hierarchic way in communication, in which the inferior ones on the hierarchic chain are considering as an inappropriate way to ask questions or to argue with the decision taken by the superior. Individuals that are coming from a culture with a reduced IDP tend to use an informal communication, they are thinking individually and are feeling comfortably to contest superior's decision concerning the fight or their rights. The values of IDP are changing in time, being influenced by social evolution of their own nation or by the neighboring ones. Comparing the evolution of this indicator over two generations, the conclusion that there are small changes of the value of this indicator but, in total the position of a country in respect to another is still the same, differences in between the values of this indicator is evolving in a parallel way over the time.

3. LEADERSHIP

Leadership is representing the behavior and the attitude of the leader. "People are asking what is the difference in between a leader and a boss. The

leader is giving the tone and the boss is assuming the success. The leader is leading and the boss is giving the orders" used to say Theodore Roosevelt.

The level of personal leadership is rising with the increase in self knowledgement, with the management of your own believes, emotions, attitudes, behavior, traditions, abilities and capacities that are helping in achieving personal results. When the behavior and the attitude of the leader are acting over some people belonging to an organization, this is called organizational leadership.

The organizational leadership is the way in which individuals are guided, led and influenced in an organization. The organizational leadership level in multinational organizations is increasing with the social intelligence, cultural knowledgement and the way exercising power is accepted. A valuable content, related to the influence of the cultural differences over the leadership is offered by two comparative studies in between Northern and Eastern European countries (Smith; Zander). In the first study there are investigated the cultural differences related to "the style of management", analyzing 17 Nordic and Eastern European countries (Smith, 1997). Leaders from the Nord-European countries proved to be willing to favor a greater implication of the subordinates (higher scores in equality and participation) while the South-European countries preferred the dependence on the surveillance authorities (higher in hierarchy). In the study done by Smith (1997) it was analyzed also "the hierarchy and the loyal implication in the organization activity". The countries from the North-European group Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway tend to register higher scores of the dimension "Equality and the utilitarian participation". The central and Eastern European countries such as France, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Portugal, those from the vicinity of the Eastern European countries, Greece, Turkey and Austria tend to have a higher score related to "Hierarchy and loyal implication in the organization activity".

In the second study done by Zanderin the year 1997 was evaluated the preference of the personnel towards the leadership style. In North-European countries United Kingdom, Nederland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland, the participatory leader is proffered in comparison with the directive one specific to the South-European countries like Spain, France Belgium or the Germanic ones like Germany, Switzerland or Austria. The results of these studies are providing precious information

related to the leadership style in the European countries.

Knowing the leadership style and of the differences in between the countries is a useful way for analysis in multinational operations and a possible way for anticipation of the potential cultural problems.

GLOBE is the most comprehensive study of empiric data, which is showing the relationship in between culture and leaders' behavior in different societies and organizations, using qualitative and quantitative methods (Hoppe, 2007).

The results of the study showed that the effectiveness of the leader is contextual**, *depending on the societal and organizational norms, on the personal values and believes of the individuals that are led*. In order to have a starting point in researching the relationship in between leadership and different variables, GLOBE extended the number of cultural variables to nine and had achieved the grouping of the countries in terms of similarities, difference in norms, believes, values and practices. There were then 10 cultural groups of those 60 countries that have been studied.
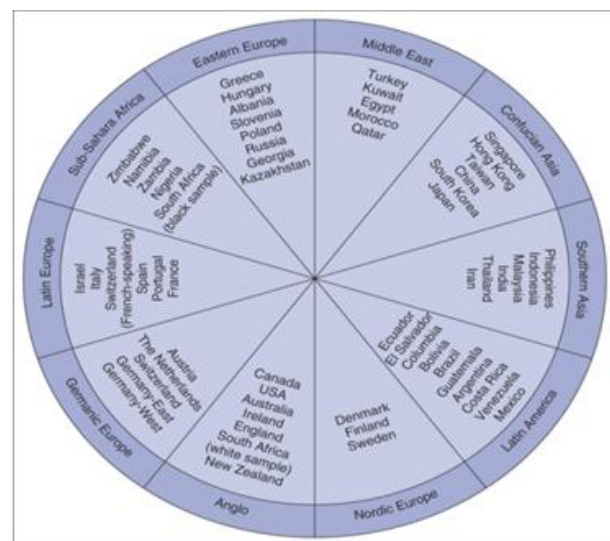

Fig.1. Graphical representation of cultural grouping-GLOBE

Then, they analyzed the replies of over 17,300 managers from the countries belonging to the 10 cultural groups. The conclusion of the study is that an exceptional leader is a person from the organization having "motivational influencing and favoring skills of those members of the group and to contribute to the success of the organization" (House *et al.*, 2004). There have been identified 21 major attributes that can characterize a leader. They have been statistically and conceptual

reduced to six categories of leaders. Then the determined for the predominant leadership.

categories in different societal cultures are

Table no.1 The societal groups and the leadership style

Leadership Orientated towards the performance High	Leadership Orientated towards the team High	Participative Leadership High	Human Leadership High	Autonomous Leadership High	Auto Leadership /Protective Group High
Anglo Germanic Nordic Asia SE L. European L. American	Asia SE Confucian. American E. European African L. European	Germanic Anglo Nordic	Asia SE Anglo African Confucian	Germanic E. European Confucian Nordic Asia SE Anglo	Middle East Confucian Asia SE LatinAmerican E. European
Confucian African E. European	Nordic Anglo Germanic Middle East	L. European L. American African	Germanic Middle East L.American E. European	African Middle East L. European L.American	African L. European
Middle East		E. European Asia SE Confucian Middle East	L. European Nordic		Anglo Germanic Nordic
LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW

GLOBE Study has an important influence because it offers a scientific framework to understand the way leadership is performed in those 61 studied states, analysis is generating finally six styles of leadership. And these are: Leadership style oriented towards performance, named "charismatic, based on values", that is having the following characteristics: high standards, determination, innovation, supports and inspires the team that is leading; Leadership style oriented towards the team: is cultivating proud, loyalty and the collaboration in between the members of the team, based on cohesion and on the aim of achieving the objectives; The participative style: encourages the others opinion for the decision implementation, being comfortable with the delegation of responsibilities and with the concept of equality; The human style: the leadership is achieved with generosity and compassion, patience, support, preoccupation for the wellbeing of the team; Autonomous, independent, individualistic and centered on interest; Auto-protective style (or for the protection of the group): procedures, rules and position are important, no authentic behavior for saving the appearances, concentrated on the safety and the individual protection of a person or a group.

Moving forward with the research, the study determined 22 universal characteristics of an exceptional leader, 8 incompatible with the role of a leader and 35 important skills whose variation is signifying a variation in amplitude and perception from one culture to another.

4. DP AND LEADERSHIP IN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

The societies with a high IDP pay a greater attention to the formal respect towards the status and the title of a leader, with the socialization in between the leaders and the subordinates being limited and where the subordinates are respecting the leader's decision.

At important meetings in between individuals belonging to groups with different IDP there is produced a phenomenon of hard inter-relationship. The equal creative participation is not a notion specific to all societies. Those belonging to cultures with an IDP reduced have the tendency to be vocals and are perceived by the rest of the group as being very interested and involved, while those belonging to groups with a high IDP are considering that participation has to be according to the responsibilities they have inside the structure to which they belong. In multicultural structures they are in disadvantage because inside the same system the acceptance is generated by individual initiatives and creative solutions.

In organizations with a high IDP there is an expected phenomenon that the elites, commanders to function keeping a significant distance in between the normal members of the society. If this fact will not happen, the members of this kind of society will lose respect for the leader. In multinational teams, the team members coming from societies of this

type have the tendency to have their own opinion and to have difficulties to express themselves in the presence of the leader, the effectiveness of the information or the creative feed-back being restricted, the social position, limiting the area of communicating with those persons, and the information being offered in a formal way. The superior cannot be criticized even the individuals know that he is wrong; the decision will remain the attribute of the leader. In multicultural relations, in the interaction of a leader belonging to a culture with a high IDP with individuals belonging to a culture with a reduced IDP, criticism or direct talk of those or sharing their own opinions and ideas will be perceived as being very bad, without respect and with arrogance. In cultures with a reduced IDP individuals are opened to criticism, they do not perceive as a personal issue and they are seeking a way to progress, innovative solutions in resolving the problems a communicating the information is achieved mainly through informal ways. Knowing that is diminishing the frictions generated by the cultural interaction in between societies with extreme values of the IDP.

Zelman *et al.* (1993:369) had characterized the essential elements of the military culture as being "conservative, routed in history and traditions, based on group loyalty and orientated towards conformity and listening the superiors". Is understanding of the cultural dimension more important than understanding military carrier, operational art or military strategy? Misunderstanding of the cultural context is a barrier, but not as dangerous than of not having enough military competencies. When it is analyzed cultural factors we need to have in our attention the fact that the military are experts in using legitimate violence. In the opinion of the specialists, military should adapt only to the cultural phenomenon that are affecting military operations and to leave for the others the exploitation of the cultural elements. I am not having the same opinion. The modern type of war has changed; the individual actions are having serious repercussions over the international public opinion attitude towards the fighting actions. Not knowing the culture can generate regrettable consequences.

Is the multinational common training important for the increase of the efficiency of the multicultural military missions? The analysis of the 10 years of German-Nederland collaboration led to surprisingly conclusions. Common training is important, but its duration is not a guarantee that inter-relationship will be efficient during common missions in high and extended stress conditions.

Moelker *et al.* wanted to determine if cultural interoperability is feasible, what conditions will favor cultural interoperability and in what direction will be developing. They elaborated a study of the collaboration in peacetime, the only research document produced in the modern Era with the participation of two NATO countries over a 10 years period, in between 1995-2005. 90% of the questioned personnel agreed that "German and Dutch National Cultures are pretty similar". In general, reciprocal images of the Dutch and the Germans were positive (Soeters; Winslow).

The most astonishing difference is related to the *formal dimension versus informal one over the behavior codes* (the Dutch being informal and liberals with respect to rigidity, sociability and independence). This difference can bring different styles of interaction and frictions in between Dutch and German soldiers. The styles of leadership in Nederland and Germany are different (Dechesne *et al.*, 2005). The authoritarian style is more frequent in German Army, while the participative on is specific for the Dutch. The majority of the German soldiers showed the preference for the Dutch leadership style, but in military environment the style of leadership is generating the attitude of the majority of the participants. The peacetime cooperation was positive, with all the signs of an excellent functioning in the theatre of operation because of some common elements: a common culture, common leadership elements, knowing the military procedures, all achieved during the 10 years military cooperation.

The multinational experience into the theatre of operations had generated, in my opinion conclusions that were not a surprise. Into my PHD thesis "The effects of the cultural differences over the military mission in the theatre of operations from Afghanistan" I presented both conclusions on three case studies performed by other authors in the theatre of operations ("Camp Warehouse", "Camp Julien" and Military Airport-KAIA) and the results of two case studies conducted by me during the mission.

In the first three cases, conducted by the authors, different operational tasks were shared in between the national participating units. Each national unit in case study no. 1 (German-Dutch cooperation, in "Camp Warehouse") and no. 3 (Belgian-German cooperation in „Camp Julien") had their own area of responsibility, having the task to control the situation, to protect the area from hostilities and to develop projects in cooperation with civilians. Despite these national contingents had not the same living conditions and

also some of the nations had a surveillance role in their national operations being supervised by another nation (Case study No.1: Germany; Case study No.3: Canada). At KAIA Airport (Case study No.2), for each national unit there was a specific functional task. Such a kind of structure is based on cumulative interdependence (Thomson, 1967:54-55) that means that each unit is bringing its own direct contribution, complementary to the whole mission. The ways in which those processes are administrated are different in every case study. The administration is supposing reciprocal interdependency and adjusting. Only in the case of KAIA Airport this thing has been reciprocally adjusted at the personnel level, in a true international environment, creating a collective spirit (Weik, 2001:266-268). In each of the two operational camps "Camp Warehouse" and "Camp Julien"), only a single country had the command that meant an administration of the problems according to its national spirit. Differences in the terms of perception and the administration of power, to which were added different styles of leadership, had generated frictions of different intensity in all the three case studies analyzed.

The experts are describing the organizational culture of a NATO HQs as "a mixture of different national military cultures and services that NATO member states are represented inside *Resolute Support Mission HQs*". In the graphical representation of the cultural grouping, done by GLOBE, we found 24 from the participating nations in Afghanistan. A simple glance over this representation will help us understanding the initial image of the cultural difference and of the possible frictions generated during the interaction. Countries being into an opposite cultural posture are risking a decrease of the mission efficiency.

The structure of the General headquarters of „Resolute Support Mission" is specific for multinational military operations. The leadership of the mission is mainly ABCA (USA, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia) on which Italy, and Germany are contributing. This top dominance of some similar multinational sub-cultures is determining an interaction and behavior line that is promoting participation and stimulating personal opinion in the operational planning process. The leadership dominant forms within Resolute Support Mission HQs are „participative leadership" and „leadership oriented towards performance". These are generated by the characteristics of military sub-cultures of the mission's leadership and have a direct link to the

IDP value of the societies from where the leaders are coming from.

For a better understanding of the idea I will make a brief analysis of the interaction in which the leaders belong to a culture with a value of the IDP below average (USA) and subordinates belonging to a high value of IDP such as Romania. In USA the general relation in between the leader and his subordinates is one in which the subordinates are waiting to be consulted if the problem is one related to their job. In Romania subordinates are assuming that they are executing the task given by those who are in command and they do not the power to influence the means use by those who are in lead. The effects of those approach differences of inter-relationship, from the position perspective towards the power, can have effects on the efficiency of the mission.

Leaders are expecting participation and the subordinates are waiting for orders and directions, communication is limited, the participation in making creative decisions is minimum and the subordinates are intimidated by the person in lead. Current practice proved that in a participative leadership participation personnel's capacity and the wish for adaptation is accelerated if this is belonging to cultures with an increased IDP.

The majority of the modern armies have cultural knowledge software used in the military and civilian training programs for the international missions. For example, in 2004 it was created „GS Commander", a computer program for general multinational headquarters for cultural knowledge, that has been validated during the exercises „Allied Warrior 2004 (AW04)" and „Deployable Joint Task Force (DJTF)". This program comprises 10 modules each using 5 steps.

• Step 1, comprises a short series of questions that are helping to produce the personal profile for certain cultural dimensions;

• Step 2, comprises a scenario that illustrates an unproductive interaction based on the cultural differences. It contains a narrative part, a discussion part and an exercise;

• Step 3, makes an animated presentation of the country's profile and helps in comparing the two or more country profiles;

• Step 4, is providing recommendations in the interaction with different behavior styles, developing integration suggestions according to the team effort;

• Step 5, offers the opportunity for the users of this program to develop action plans with the soldiers from other nations with who they are in contact.

5. CONCLUSIONS

I consider that this type of training program is useful for all personnel categories, in all the stages of the professional formation, mainly during pre-mission training. The exercises, common international training, cultural harmonization and the knowledge, leader's training for multinational positions are representing only some elements that can increase the efficiency of multinational missions.

"The linear model for the harmonization of the cultural interaction and knowledge" (Palaghia, 2018) is, in my opinion a complex instrument to know the different cultural aspects, for the specialized personnel in cultural training at all levels for the military personnel of all ranks. In all the armies, both for officers and NCOs there are leadership courses starting from the beginning of the carrier. Those courses are carried out at national level, but also in NATO common training centers (Rome, Oberammergau, Stavanger, Lucerne, Bucharest, etc.).

The leadership style can be taught but can be influenced by the culture of the society from where the individual coming from, by the specific training, his/her personality and international experience. Not understanding the relationship in between leadership and different cultural dimensions is a barrier, but not as dangerous as not having enough military competencies. In the specialist opinion military should adapt only to cultural phenomenon that are affecting military operations and to leave the others the exploitation of cultural elements.

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