

# Leadership through Spiritual Wisdom: The Case of Romania

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## Abstract

*As a society, there is great need to change our values and principles towards leadership. We cannot change the society by just creating laws and policies, but there is also the need to re-examine our ethical and social norms. Romania is changing after the bloodshed revolution of 1990's and its people have been trying to adapt to the market-based economy and that has put the focus on the appropriate leadership style and behavior in business operations. In this context, this paper will investigate the significance of leadership with spiritual wisdom in Romania.*

## Introduction

In the contemporary society, human beings are increasingly seeking to adopt values where their thoughts and deeds are harmonious. Such individuals aspire to live integrity that is necessary for all aspects of our social life. Social institutions are also being created with great reference to ethical and moral values. The essence is to ensure that human beings can solve the challenges arising from the complex and ever-changing social dynamics. It requires people to have the necessary wisdom to provide adorable solutions. One cluster of people whose wisdom is virtually required to realize success is the leaders. Whether in business or non-business organizations, the leaders perform critical duties such as supervision, leading and management, among others. Their wisdom is sought by the followers to enhance to enhance the positive realization of the expected objectives.

The paper will investigate the significance of leadership with spiritual wisdom in Romania. Through the literature review, scientific and practical evidence that adds value and direction to the study will be gathered. Also, the literature analysis will assist them in the critical and thematic examination of spiritual in the contemporary context of Romania. Having come from an autocratic leadership and violence, the country's society and institutions need to adopt values and norms that conform to the current needs and

dynamics in the contemporary environment. Leading with wisdom entails understanding the purpose of both the external world as well internal facets of conscience and consciousness. Such leaders perform their duties by expressing it through the souls and hearts. This form of leadership is normally regarded as spiritual leadership. Ideally, this form of leadership does not necessarily follow the principles of mainstream leadership. In most cases, mainstream leadership is influenced by power and prestige among the leader. That is the reason poverty and other social challenges remain a threat to socio-economic progression in the world despite the 25 years of globalization. As a society, there is great need to change our values and principles towards leadership. We cannot change the society by just creating laws and policies, but there is also the need to re-examine our ethical and social norms. We can never realize the true potential of the organizations and individuals if spiritual wisdom is missing in management (Singh, 2011). Business leaders, for instance, ought to understand the importance of creating socially responsible, ethical, and sustainable business.

## Discussion

In the 1990s, Romania experienced bloodshed revolution as the country sought to move a dictatorial to a democratic regime. All the sectors in the country were affected as the nation went

through contemptuous change (Thomas, Pop, & Bratianu, 2014). Around 2007, the nation formally moved from totalitarian rule and joined the European Union. Since then, the country's economy and its people have been trying to adapt to the market-based economy. Various multinational firms have opened a business in the country with the nation being one of the highest recipients of the Foreign Direct Investment. Further, the country's business climate has been restructured with the adoption of Western management styles and structures. Many firms took advantage of the new opportunities that included middle-class and well-educated population. Based on the changes in the management styles, it became apparent that the businesses were responding positively. As noted by Thomas, Pop and Bratianu (2014), the experiences from Romania offer great lessons to the business transitions to the emerging economies.

In his study, Aioanei (2006) seeks to examine the appropriate leadership styles and behaviors suitable for business operators in Romania. Using the information collected from the Romanian leadership styles, practices and preferences, the author researched on two major areas namely autocratic and democratic styles. He also examines the task orientation versus relationship orientation to generate important finding on the matter under study. The findings indicated that the Romanian leadership was largely autocratic. In particular, about 55 percent of the Romanian leaders were authoritarian while 45 percent were democratic. As such, the majority of the leaders did not involve their followers in making decisions. The inclination to the autocratic style was higher in state-owned firms compared to the private firms. Essentially, this was driven by the fact that the country's power was largely centralized. Elements of communism and totalitarian were evident in the leadership styles adopted by the leaders and institutions. It is through these elements that the values and norms in the organizations were driven. Moreover, it was identified from the study that women are less task-oriented compared to men.

Most of the organizational leaders were authoritarian and task-oriented. The researcher, therefore, concluded that the earlier dictatorial leadership could have influenced the Romanians styles and values on leadership. However, he argued that the organizational leaders were moving from the autocratic styles to a democratic approach. In fact, a majority of the respondents preferred the democratic-oriented approach as it appeared to favor all the stakeholders (Aioanei, 2006).

Going forward, the organizational leaders in the country will be required to adopt strategies that will consider diversity as major element in the organizations. The numerous multinational firms and foreign employees will bring about diversity. Further, the changing dynamics in the global set-up will require change in the working values and mind-set. Organizational change is inevitable to allow for diversification of various business approaches and management. Romania has unlimited opportunities and needs that the firms need to meet. Business analysts argue that the reorganization of business structures and processes is necessary to permit new way of thinking. In Romania, it will require the leaders to bypass the traditional totalitarian approaches and move to more democratic-oriented styles (Aioanei, 2006). It is for this reason that spiritual leadership appears suitable in the country.

The totalitarian approach lays greater emphasis on the outcomes where the leaders concentrate more on their duties such as supervision. Such leaders appear to concentrate on the institutional interests with little regard on the stakeholders' interests. The followers working for such organizations are rewarded or punished depending on their performance. Further, the leaders are largely interested in retaining the status quo with little regard to the future. They seek faults on the part of followers so that they can advise on the best approaches. As seen previously in Romanian organizations, autocratic leaders did not consider the input from their subordinates. It is for this

reason that the majority of the respondents considered that there is a need to change to the democratic approach where the input of the followers is followed. The task-oriented approach has minimal consideration of the ethical values. The style is effective during emergencies and/or crisis within the organization or nation. This is seen where the bureaucratic procedures are by-passed when quick decisions are required. Negative consequences such as high turnover, reduced morale and working relations are reported under the totalitarian leadership. This results from the fact that the employees work in a less-enabling and motivating environment. As such, creativity among the employees is significantly reduced as the executives lowly regard their input. Northouse (2010) observes that the leadership style adopted by the executives has great influence on the overall performance in an organization.

One is required to inspire the followers towards the path of success by being part of the campaigns. The strategy enables the followers to achieve the objectives while participating in building the society. According to Singh and Venkat (2008), identifying the strategic decisions avoid potential problems that emerge during the selection and implementation of policies. The effectiveness of a leader to command and control is essential. Effective leaders can understand on when and how to respond to the issues affecting their followers. They also influence their followers through the inspirational approach. Positive influence led to the realization of positive outcomes on both the performance and profitability of an organization. It focuses on a holistic approach that seeks to bring out the best for the society and followers. Leaders can instill the appropriate values to their followers through their deeds and inspirational approaches. Great leaders inspire through motivation, coaching and recognition of their efforts. Further, they influence enviable culture and behavior among the followers. It is through the adopted values and norms that the employees within an institution are able to influence changes within the society. Employees and leaders in Romanian organizations

have great responsibility in changing their country for the benefit of all citizens.

On spiritual leadership, social morality is an important element. Social morality fosters the reasoning of the soul so that individuals can administer their affairs in life. With this in mind, the urge for power reduces hence resulting in fair practices and positive outcomes. Rationally acquired knowledge is open to misuse by the people. Such people should ensure they have appropriately ordered and sober character. Devoid of such a mindset, people are likely to turn into cynics and abuse the rule of law. Spiritual leadership considers the law of the land as much as the inner reasoning (Praag, 2004). Through the spiritual reasoning, a leader and their followers can easily examine the impacts of their deeds to the society. Sometimes, the leaders and their followers undergo risky moments to ensure that their actions are ethical and beneficial to majority of the people. One also needs to have an accommodative nature that enables one to handle diverse values, needs and expectations.

Ordinarily, the perspective on management has changed in both practice and theory over the last century. The changes have been necessitated by the advancement in technology, globalization and business organization, among others. Another critical and sometimes overlooked component is the human psyche and societal values. While the impact can be positive or negative, their impact on management cannot be underestimated. The human factor in the management of enterprises is important in the contemporary society (Singh, 2015). It is for this reason that firms are currently expected to consider issues such as business ethics, and sustainability. Spiritual leaders are required to identify the most pressing needs in Romania such as poor governance structures, poor economy, and weak institutions among others. Such leaders use their interpersonal capacity helped in influencing the better policies (Praag, 2004). They are also required offer guidance on things that will result to both short-term and long-term benefits. In

Romania where the institutions are undergoing massive changes, effective and appropriate leadership is required. Issues such as integrity and accountability are expected of the organization leaders as seen in various research studies. Being articulate on the vision, the leaders make sure that their followers understand the importance of upholding good values. Using their wisdom, the spiritual leaders learn from their mistakes to help in drawing inspiration. A great leader draws inspiration from other people, religion and institutions, among other social facets. In return, they develop incentives that they use to pass the virtues to the people around them. Adherence to the truth helps in instilling discipline among the followers by compelling them to be truthful in their actions (Pruzan & Mikkelsen, 2007). As such, they use their wisdom and critical thinking to ensure that the organizations benefit all the stakeholders. They also entrench participative ideologies where the followers are engaged in formulating appropriate policies. Their visionary views draw admiration hence resulting in sustainable businesses. All along, spiritual leaders believe in simplicity to enhance the interests of the followers (Kille, 2007).

The perspective calls for obedience and teamwork in all the functional departments in an organization. Great leaders who use their wisdom create structures and policies that pass the time of time. Being the main planners, the leaders are required to assess whether the plans, principles and instructions issued conform to the objectives of an institution. Such leaders utilize their competencies to ensure that ethics and sustainability are considered at all times. Contemporary economists consider that the limited resources and limitless human needs have compelled the adoption of ethical leadership. As such, wisdom is required to ensure that the leaders adopt the right management principles and styles (Northouse, 2010).

Spiritual leadership is derived from the need to understand the needs and emotions of the followers. The leaders utilize the competencies of

their followers to realize the much-needed outcomes. As such, interpersonal skills are important ingredient as they are to understand to understand and recognize the input of every member and unit within their jurisdiction. Further, the organizational leaders motivate and reward their employees to enhance positive outcomes. According to Vugt, Hogan & Kaiser (2008), good relations between the leaders and the followers result in a desirable working environment. With good leadership, according to Levine and Boaks (2014), the followers can create an efficient platform that leads to higher performance. Romanian organizations have to adopt democratic leadership style and structures. This will lead to positive performance as well as enhance the realization of appropriate linkage between the business environment, leadership styles, structure and processes. Such achievements are not easy without an inspirational and selfless leader to drive the process. Individuals who have adopted spiritual leadership styles devise corporate strategies that consider the interests and expectations of both the external and internal components. Spiritual leaders adopt approaches that balance the interests of all stakeholders, including government, business owners and citizens. It is all about generating satisfaction among all stakeholders. The organizational leaders in Romania need to influence policies that will enable the country attract firms and talents from across the world.

It should be lost that there are leaders who utilize their positions for self-gain, especially dictators, as was the case previously in Romania. Such leaders may perform well while disregarding the interests of other stakeholders. In some cases, failure among leaders may be self-imposed and misuse of the power hence the influence that comes with leadership may create failure situations. Other leaders convert their confidence into an ego, which may make them focus more on themselves as opposed to the whole team. Some pursue forceful goals by exploiting the influence that they may have over their followers. The leaders may transform their vision into an obsession that they

refuse to let go of despite indications of their inevitable failure. A leader may fail due to their lack of resilience in pursuing goals. Whereas the leaders should be objective in setting their objectives, they should not set very low ambitions or quit at the first sign of an impending failure (Sean, Bruce, & Fred, 2011). Nonetheless, leadership styles differ on most occasions depending on the organizational goals and situations. Challenges also emerge in creating acceptable values that are acceptable to all since one cannot be forced to subscribe to the established values and norms. It is upon the leader to understand the vision, goals, ethics and approaches that will enhance the achievement of objectives at all levels. Spiritual leadership requires individuals to possess skills such as honesty, courage, intelligence, open-mindedness, and fair-mindedness. Further, such leaders serve the needs of all stakeholders irrespective of their race, religion, and gender. Letting the subjects take part in the decision-making process is important for the future of the Romanian organizations. Spiritual leadership is imperative in most institutions as it is consistent with the changing environment and contemporary needs. Organizational leaders who lead from a spiritual perspective realize recognition, happiness, and success (Pruzan & Mikkelsen, 2007). As Kouzes & Barry (2011) identified, it is necessary for the leaders to consider the diverse values and interests within their organisations. The achievement of high performance and positive attitude among the employees is dependent on the leadership strategies adopted within an organization.

## Conclusion

Great leaders can understand and champion for the needs of all individuals. Adopting the right values will enhance the realization of improved outcomes that benefit the citizens. As has been identified in the discussion, spiritual leaders can inspire their followers through approach on matters affecting the society. The change from autocratic to democratic perspective in Romania has been

instrumental in the adoption of ethical values and philosophies within the country's institutions. Such achievements are only achievable if the organizational leaders are committed and transformational to guide the reform process. With the world becoming more dynamic, the organizational leaders need to inspire the people in the contemporary society in areas such as business, politics, and religion. It is through progressive thinking that the leaders influence the followers towards the progress of all members of the society. Leadership is not all about the style and techniques adopted by the leader but rather opening the heart and trying to understand the interests, needs and contributions of all stakeholders towards a common goal. Considering the economical, ethical, and social facets is necessary to develop integrative and agreeable business approaches in Romania.

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