Leadership Orientations of Russian Working Adults: Do Age, Gender, Education, and Government Work Experience Make a Difference?

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Abstract Working people often have different notions and attitudes toward leadership based on cultural background and context as well as various demographic traits. This study examines the leadership orientations of 519 Russian working adults based on age, gender, education, and government work experience. It appears that they are more relationship-oriented than task-oriented. Task-oriented leadership is the preferred style in government sector. Age and gender appear to be significant factors in determining the difference of task-oriented traits as older Russian people tend to be more task-oriented than younger Russian people and Russian males are more task-oriented than Russian females. Education appears to make a difference in the relationship but not in the task scores. In this paper, Russian history, culture and leadership, as well as the behavioral approach to leadership are presented along with practical implications and suggestions for managers, practitioners and future studies.

Keywords Culture · Government experience · Leadership · Relationships · Russia · Tasks

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Introduction

Individual behavior and expectation are influenced by culture. The GLOBE project showed that leaders have different core values and tacit beliefs based on culture (House, Javidan, Hanges, and Dorfman 2002). It is congruent with Hofstede's beliefs that local leadership and management practices are greatly impacted by national culture (1993). In today's diverse business world, understanding different employee behaviors and expectations in different countries is perhaps among the ultimate goals that managers and leaders need to achieve. The purpose of this study is to examine the leadership orientations of Russian working adults based on age, gender, education, and government work experience. More specifically, this paper addresses the following research questions: Are Russian working adults more task-oriented or more relationship-oriented? Do age, gender, education, and government work experience make a difference in their leadership orientations? In this paper, the Style Questionnaire, provided by Northouse (2007), is used to obtain a general profile of a person's leadership behaviors regarding task and relationship orientations.

There is quite a strong argument for the importance of national culture in forming managerial values and conditioning managers' behavior (Hofstede 1980, 1991; Holt, Ralston, and Terpstra 1994; Terpstra and David 1985). Several studies have used Hofstede's cultural-value measures (power distance, individualism, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance) to explore the characteristics of culture in a number of countries including the United States and Russia (Bollinger 1994; Hofstede 1991; Hofstede and Bond 1988; Matveev 2002). Russian management does not fit easily internationally recognized practices. The profile of effective business leader in Russia is influenced by historical features of the nation and is affected by peculiarities of society in transition.

We chose Russia for the following reasons. The economy of Russia is the eight largest economy in the world by nominal value and the sixth largest by purchasing power parity. GDP was forecasted at \$2,117.8 billion in 2013 by IMF (Australian Government 2013). Russia has emerged from a decade of post-Soviet chaos and disintegration to reassert itself as a major player on the world stage - both politically and economically. Russia has undergone significant changes since the collapse of the Soviet Union, moving from a globally-isolated, centrally-planned economy to a more market-based and globally-integrated economy. Economic reforms in the 1990s privatized most industry, with notable exceptions in the energy and defense-related sectors.

The Russian approach to business is very heavily influenced by Russian cultural characteristics and the impact of the Soviet past. In fact, Russia ranks fairly high on the World Bank Group's index of difficult places to do business. Russia has had difficulty attracting foreign direct investment and has experienced large capital outflows in the past several years, leading to official programs to improve Russia's international rankings for its investment climate. The protection of property rights is still weak and the private sector remains subject to heavy state interference.

In 2011, Russia became the world's leading oil producer, surpassing Saudi Arabia; Russia is the second-largest producer of natural gas; Russia holds the world's largest natural gas reserves, the second-largest coal reserves, and the eighth-largest crude oil reserves. Russia is also a top exporter of metals such as steel and primary aluminum. Russia joined the World Trade Organization in 2012, which will reduce trade barriers in

Russia for foreign goods and services and help open foreign markets to Russian goods and services.

Business culture, leadership, and context can be an important predictor of a manager's behavior and leadership orientation. We propose that national culture and demographic differences impose constraints on the leader's behaviors regarding task and relationship orientations of working adults in Russia. We believe that this study is necessary to generate clear predictions about the role of demographic factors regarding task and relationship orientations in effective leadership in Russia.

Russian Federation

According to Russian Federation Federal State Statistical Service (Goskomstat Russia 2014), Russia (officially, Russian Federation), which is considered a part of Eastern Europe, has a population of about 143.3 million in 2013. Previously a part of the Soviet Union, Russia now comprises of 21 republics, 46 *oblasts* (provinces), 9 *krays* (territories), 4 autonomous *okrugs* (areas), 1 autonomous okrugs, and 2 federal cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg) and is considered the largest country in the world according to its geographic territory. Nominal GDP was 14, 987.70 billion Rubles (or $468.34 billion) (Goskomstat Russia 2014).

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the economy underwent significant evolution from the command, centrally-planned economy to a more market-based economy that joined the ranks of other emerging markets of Eastern Europe. The country's rich natural resources allowed it to become one of the leading producers of oil and natural gas in the world. However, the government is working to implement policies that will reduce its dependence on commodity exports and grows other sectors.

Russian Business and Leadership Style in the Context of Cultural Dimensions

Intercultural management research defines culture as a set of shared attitudes, values, and behaviors that allows people to successfully adapt to their environment. In addition to other management tools, the successful operation of foreign businesses (offices, branches, or subsidiaries) requires a deep understanding of local cultural values and attitudes. Researchers and practitioners consider Hofstede's work (1983) as one of the most influential in intercultural management because there is a strong argument for the importance of national culture in forming managerial values and conditioning managers' behavior.

The set of criteria include power distance (PDI), individualism vs. collectivism (IDV), masculinity/femininity (MAS), uncertainty avoidance (UAI), and long-term orientation (LTO). Figure 1 shows the Russian cultural dimensions according to Hofstede (2012). There are scores for only PDI, IDV, MAS, and UAI dimensions. The score for LTO dimension is not available for Russia.

Power distance (PDI) describes the degree to which an unequal distribution of power within a society is accepted and expected. People from low power-distance cultures are more likely to demand more equality in social and work situations, while

Fig. 1 Russian Cultural Dimensions. Source: Hofstede (2012)

people in high power-distance cultures are more likely to approve inequalities, be comfortable with hierarchic organization structures, and have more reverence for authority and seniority. Russia scores 93 on this measure, which places it in the top 10 % of the most power distant societies in the world (Hofstede 2012). Empirical studies of the Russian system of management have substantiated the findings of high PDI (Bollinger 1994; Matveev 2002).

The business implication of high PDI score is that status roles in such cultures have to be observed and respected in all areas of negotiations, meetings, and other business situations. Elenkov (1995) found that the Russian culture is characterized by higher machiavellism (the use of social power) than the U.S. culture, and the lack of tolerance for new ideas introduced by others (Berliner 1988; Lawrence and Vlachoutsicos 1990; Puffer 1994). Russian managers systematically place a high value on tradition, reflecting a strong respect for established social norms and customs (Puffer 1994). For example, business meetings in Russia are formal, serious gatherings, and casual behavior is considered a sign of disrespect. Decisions are usually made in advance, either one on one or in small groups of decision-makers, with meetings held solely to share information and give direction (Ageev, Gratchev, and Hisrich 1995).

Individualism (IDV) describes the degree to which taking responsibility for oneself is more valued than belonging to a group that will look after its members in exchange for their loyalty. The fundamental issue addressed by this dimension is the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members. Thus, in individualist societies the links between individuals are tenuous and people are expected to look out mostly for themselves and their immediate family. In collectivist societies members belong to tightly woven groups and their interests are protected in return for unconditional loyalty to the group. Russia's low score of 39 indicates a collectivist society, which manifests itself in having close ties with friends and community, and places high importance on networking relationships. Having close communal ties was always a part of the culture especially during its Soviet past. The implication of these ties in the Russian culture is that Russians value personal relationships. They usually work in small teams where people know each other well. Instead of forming a new team for each project (as is often practiced by the Western counterparts), these teams often work together regularly.

Masculinity/Femininity (MAS) may also be referred to as gender egalitarianism and describes the extent to which a society minimizes gender role differences and gender discrimination. A relatively low score of 36 indicates a more feminine society not driven by competitive, success-oriented values. In such a society, the social roles of both sexes overlap and the behavior is adjusted to value more than just material well-being. Western researchers find this score surprising considering that Russia is a high power distance society. Unlike more developed economies where a low MAS score usually means that employees strive for a good work-life balance, Russia was assigned a low score because of how people tend to understate their achievement and avoid outright (masculine) competition. Again, we believe this could be a remnant of the Soviet past where all people were equal and where standing out from the crowd was not admirable.

Uncertainty avoidance (UAI) describes the degree to which members of a given culture perceive and react to an undefined threat and unknown situations. These conditions translate into the level of importance and the desire for predictability in rules; otherwise, the uncertainty engenders anxiety and stress. With a score of 95, Russians exhibit strong uncertainty avoidance, which means that rules and norms are important in order to generate stability. In work situations, this may manifest itself in the need for structure, standardization, detailed planning, and formality. Previous studies found that the Russian style of leadership tends to be centralized and directive. In general, post-Soviet company structures are vertical, with a top-down decision-making style (Ageev et al. 1995). The boss is expected to issue direct instructions for subordinates to follow. Each member of the company knows his or her duties and performs the tasks without asking questions. This structure creates predictable patterns which limit the level of uncertainty consistent with this culture's high UAI score.

Although the overall score in this category is quite high for the country, there probably exist significant discrepancies between sectors of the economy and over time. As the country transitioned towards a market-oriented economy, the entrepreneurial sector was established and began to grow, which means that at least a subset of market participants can tolerate uncertainty and strives in individual decision making.

Long term orientation (LTO) – this score is not available for Russia explicitly. However, we can attempt to derive it from various research studies. LTO dimension demonstrates the extent to which a society shows a pragmatic future-oriented rather than a short-term perspective. Countries that have low scores are short-term oriented, which may manifest itself in a business environment where managers focus on the short-term performance. Because economic/market environment exhibited significant instability during the post-Soviet times, managers consider the markets unpredictable, which forces them to value present more than the future, which in turn further precludes more advanced strategic and investment planning decisions (Carr 2006–2007).

To summarize, the general business environment in Russia was shaped by historical and economic forces that resulted in weak legitimacy of formal institutions. In the business environment, this translates into lack of transparency in corporate governance, limited competitiveness in business strategies, and managers' reliance on personal networks rather than formal institutions (Puffer and McCarthy 2011). High power distance, top-down communication, strong symbols of status and formality (and yet protectiveness in the form of paternalism toward subordinates), low individualism, and high uncertainty avoidance may create obstacles to successful ventures between

Westerners and Russians. Such issues were documented by many studies, including Bollinger (1994); Ageev et al. (1995); Naumov and Puffer (2000), and Kets de Vries (2000). Low trust of outsiders inhibits communication with foreign managers of Western subsidiaries and can undermine organizational initiatives (Ayios 2004; Kuznetsov and Kuznetsova 2005). However, as more foreign businesses expand into Russia, the discrepancies between organizational management styles may diminish and disappear over time.

Study Methodology: Task and Relationship Orientations

This study examines whether Russian respondents are more task-oriented or more relationship-oriented. It also investigates whether there is a difference in task scores as well as relationship scores of Russian respondents based on their age, gender, education and government work experience. The Style Questionnaire (Northouse 2007), which includes 10 items for task orientation and 10 items for relationship orientation, is used in this research. Each item can be rated from 1 to 5. A rating of 1 means "Never" and a rating of 5 means "Always." The scoring interpretation for the Style Questionnaire by Northouse (2007, p. 87) is shown in Table 1 below.

The specific hypotheses for this study are as follows:

- *Hypothesis 1:* Russian respondents will have significantly different task scores than relationship scores.
- *Hypothesis 2:* Russian respondents who are 26 years old or older will have significantly different task scores than Russian respondents who are 25 years old or younger.
- *Hypothesis 3:* Russian respondents who are 41 years old or older will have significantly different task scores than Russian respondents who are 40 years old or younger.
- *Hypothesis 4:* Russian male respondents will have significantly different task scores than Russian female respondents.
- *Hypothesis 5:* Russian respondents with high school degree or less will have significantly different task scores than those with higher degree.
- *Hypothesis 6:* Russian respondents with no government experience will have significantly different task scores than those with government experience.

Table 1 The scoring interpretation for the style questionnaire

Scores	Descriptions
• 45–50	Very high range
• 40–44	High range
• 35–39	Moderately high range
• 30–34	Moderately low range
• 25–29	Low range
• 10–24	Very low range

- *Hypothesis 7:* Russian respondents who are 26 years old or older will have significantly different relationship scores than Russian respondents who are 25 years old or younger.
- *Hypothesis 8:* Russian respondents who are 41 years old or older will have significantly different relationship scores than Russian respondents who are 40 years old or younger.
- *Hypothesis 9:* Russian male respondents will have significantly different relationship scores than Russian female respondents.
- *Hypothesis 10:* Russian respondents with high school degree or less will have significantly different relationship scores than those with higher degree.
- *Hypothesis 11:* Russian respondents with no government experience will have significantly different relationship scores than those with government experience.

A convenient sampling procedure was adopted for selecting the target respondents. The target respondents are Russian adults who are 17 years of age or above. The English version of the survey was first translated into Russian then was back-translated into English. Both the original English and the back-translated versions were compared and checked by three university professors to insure the validity of the instrument. They concluded that there was no significant difference.

This study applied the self-administered survey method, which helps eliminate the errors caused by the subjectivity of interviewers and provides greater anonymity for respondents. This is really helpful in achieving high response rate because Russian people sometimes feel uncomfortable to reveal their ideas and thoughts through survey questionnaires.

The questionnaire was made available as a webpage with a direct link that could be attached to email, as well as a hard copy that could be handed out directly, to respondents by the authors and their contacts. This helped increase the response rate as Russian people prefer to deal with surveys that are provided by someone they know such as an instructor, lab assistant, etc. Informed consent, explanation of study, procedure of maintaining confidentiality, and detailed instructions on how to complete the questionnaire successfully were included. The authors assumed that if the respondents read and proceeded to take the surveys (either hard copy or online), they consented to the survey. For those questionnaires completed through the web link, the data were automatically saved and converted into a database in excel format file for analysis. For those questionnaires completed through hard copy format, the data were entered manually. Majority of respondents are managers, management consultants, analysts, economists, data analysts, financial advisers, budget analytics, marketing managers, portfolio managers, specialist from federal, state and local governments from Moscow, Chelyabinsk, Saratov, and Ulyanovsk. There were 611 questionnaires obtained, of which 519 were fully completed and ready for use. The response rate was 85 %.

SPSS software was used for data analysis and hypothesis testing. This study used *t* test at .05 level of significance to compare differences of the means of a paired sample and independent samples.

As seen in Table 2, 167 respondents were from the age of 17 to 25 (32.2 %); 132 from the age of 26 to 30 (25.4 %); 174 from the age of 31 to 40 (33.5 %); and 46 from the age of 41 and above (8.9 %). There were 397 female respondents (76.5 %) and 122

Table 2 Demographic Variables (*N*=519)

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age	17 to 25	167	32.2	32.2	32.2
	26 to 30	132	25.4	25.4	57.6
	31 to 40	174	33.5	33.5	91.1
	41 and above	46	8.9	8.9	100.0
	Total	519	100.0	100.0	
Gender	Female	397	76.5	76.5	76.5
	Male	122	23.5	23.5	100.0
	Total	519	100.0	100.0	
Education	Earned a high school degree or less	86	16.6	16.6	16.6
	Bachelors Degree or working on earning it	66	12.7	12.7	29.3
	Masters Degree or working on earning it	348	67.1	67.1	96.4
	Doctorate Degree or working on earning it	19	3.7	3.7	100.0
	Total	519	100.0	100.0	
Government Experience	1 to 5 years	57	11.0	11.0	11.0
	6 to10 years	29	5.6	5.6	16.6
	11 or more years	13	2.5	2.5	19.1
	none	420	80.9	80.9	100.0
	Total	519	100.0	100.0	

male respondents (23.5 %). There were 86 respondents who earned a high school degree or less; 66 respondents who earned bachelor degree or were working on earning it; 348 respondents who earned master degree or were working on earning it; and 19 respondents who earned doctorate degree or were working on earning it. In this sample, 420 respondents had no government experience (80.9 %); 57 respondents had 1 to 5 years of government experience; 29 respondents had 6 to 10 years of government experience (5.6 %); and 13 respondents had 11 or more years of government experience (2.5 %).

Results

As presented in Table 3, the average scores of Russian respondents for task orientation fell in "moderately high range" (*M*=35.1252) and their relationship orientation average fell in "high range" (*M*=40.085). This difference was statistically significant (*t*= −11.062, *p*=.000). Therefore, hypothesis 1 *"Russian respondents will have significant-ly different scores for task and relationship orientations"* was supported. There was a statistically significant difference between the average scores for task orientation and relationship orientation of Russian respondents. Russian respondents are more relation-ship oriented than task oriented.

Table 3 Task and Relationship Scores of Russian Respondents

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Sum_Task_Scores	35.1252	519	9.75500	.42820
Sum_Relationship_Scores	40.0848	519	6.28080	.27570

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95 % Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Sum_Task_Scores - Sum_Relationship_Scores	−4.95954	10.21375	.44833	−5.84031	−4.07876	−11.062	518	.000

Task Orientations

As seen in Table 4, hypothesis 2 *"Russian respondents who are 26 years old or older will have significantly different task scores than Russian respondents who are 25 years old or younger"* is supported ($t=-2.149$, $p=.032$). There is a significant difference in the mean task scores between respondents who are 26 years old or older ($M=36.82$) and respondents who are 25 years old or younger ($M=31.55$). Russian respondents who are 26 years old or older are more task-oriented than those who are 25 years old or younger.

As seen in Table 4, hypothesis 3 *"Russian respondents who are 41 years old or older will have significantly different task scores than Russian respondents who are 40 years old or younger"* is supported ($t=-5.937$, $p=.000$). There is a significant difference in the mean task scores between respondents who are 41 years old or older ($M=38.07$) and respondents who are 40 years old or younger ($M=34.84$). Russian respondents who are 41 years old or older are more task-oriented than those who are 40 years old or younger.

As seen in Table 4, hypothesis 4 *"Russian male respondents will have significantly different task scores than Russian female respondents"* is supported ($t=3.990$, $p=.000$). There is a significant difference in the mean task scores between male respondents ($M=38.16$) and female respondents ($M=34.19$). Russian male respondents are more task-oriented than Russian female respondents.

As seen in Table 4, hypothesis 5 *"Russian respondents with high school degree or less will have significantly different task scores than those with higher degree"* is not supported ($t=1.676$, $p=.094$). There is no significant difference in the mean task scores between respondents with high school degree or less ($M=36.73$) and respondents with

Table 4 Hypothesis Testing Results (Task Scores)

Hypotheses (Task Scores)	Group Size		Group Mean		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	1	2	1	2	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
H2: Age (17–25 age group against 26 and above)	167	352	31.55	36.82	1.39	.240	−5.937	517	.000	−5.27012
H3: Age (17–40 age group against 41 and above)	473	46	34.84	38.07	.90	.344	−2.149	517	.032	−3.22589
H4: Gender (male against female)	122	397	38.16	34.19	8.26	.004	3.990	517	.000	3.97250
H5: Education (High School Degree or less against Higher degree)	86	433	36.73	34.81	1.82	.178	1.676	517	.094	1.92655
H6: Government Experience (No Government Experience against With Government Experience)	420	99	34.09	39.53	8.08	.005	−5.108	517	.000	−5.43716

$p<.05$

higher degree ($M=34.81$), although Russian respondents with high school degree or less scored higher than those with higher degree.

As seen in Table 4, hypothesis 6 *"Russian respondents with no government experience will have significantly different task scores than those with government experience"* is supported ($t=-5.108$, $p=.000$). There is a significant difference in the mean task scores between with no government experience ($M=34.09$) and respondents with government experience ($M=39.53$). Russian respondents with government experience are more task-oriented than those with no government experience.

Relationship Orientations

As seen in Table 5, hypothesis 7 *"Russian respondents who are 26 years old or older will have significantly different relationship scores than Russian respondents who are 25 years old or younger"* is not supported ($t=-.930$, $p=.353$). There is no significant difference in the mean relationship scores between respondents who are 26 years old or older ($M=40.23$) and respondents who are 25 years old or younger ($M=39.71$), although Russian respondents who are 26 years old or older scored higher than those who are 25 years old or younger.

As seen in Table 5, hypothesis 8 *"Russian respondents who are 41 years old or older will have significantly different relationship scores than Russian respondents who are 40 years old or younger"* is not supported ($t=-.518$, $p=.604$). There is no significant difference in the mean relationship scores between respondents who are 41 years old or older ($M=40.54$) and respondents who are 40 years old or younger ($M=40.04$).

Table 5 Hypothesis Testing Results (Relationship Scores)

Hypotheses (Relationship Scores)	Group Size		Group Mean		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	1	2	1	2	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
H7: Age (17–25 age group against 26 and above)	167	352	39.71	40.23	.09	.761	−.930	517	.353	−.54879
H8: Age (17–40 age group against 41 and above)	473	46	40.04	40.54	1.66	.199	−.518	517	.604	−.50331
H9: Gender (male against female)	122	397	39.75	40.19	.97	.324	−.665	517	.507	−.43230
H10: Education (High School Degree or less against Higher degree)	86	433	41.33	39.84	1.44	.231	2.012	517	.045	1.48724
H11: Government Experience (No Government Experience against With Government Experience)	420	99	39.96	40.60	2.16	.142	−.900	517	.369	−.63167

$p<.05$

As seen in Table 5, hypothesis 9 *"Russian male respondents will have significantly different relationship scores than Russian female respondents"* is not supported ($t=$ $-.665$, $p=.507$). There is no significant difference in the mean relationship scores between male respondents ($M=39.75$) and female respondents ($M=40.19$), although Russian female respondents scored higher than Russian male respondents.

As seen in Table 5, hypothesis 10 *"Russian respondents with high school degree or less will have significantly different relationship scores than those with higher degree"* is supported ($t=2.012$, $p=.045$). There is a significant difference in the mean relationship scores between respondents with high school degree or less ($M=41.33$) and respondents with higher degree ($M=39.84$). Russian respondents with high school degree or less are more relationship-oriented than those with higher degree.

As seen in Table 5, hypothesis 11 *"Russian respondents with no government experience will have significantly different relationship scores than those with government experience"* is not supported ($t=-.900$, $p=.369$). There is no significant difference in the mean relationship scores between with no government experience ($M=$ 39.96) and respondents with government experience ($M=40.60$), although Russian respondents with government experience scored higher than those with no government experience.

Discussion and Implications

It was hypothesized that Russian respondents will have different scores for task and relationship orientations, and the current study supported this proposition. We can conclude that Russian respondents are more relationship oriented than task oriented. Older Russian respondents are more task-oriented than younger respondents. More specifically, Russian respondents who are 26 years old or older are more task-oriented than those who are 25 years old or younger; Russian respondents who are 41 years old or older are more task-oriented than those who are 40 years old or younger. There is a significant difference in the task scores based on gender. Russian male respondents are more task-oriented than Russian female respondents. The study also found a significant difference in task scores based on government experience. Russian respondents with government experience are more task-oriented than those with no government experience. However, no significant difference was found in task scores based on level of education. Education does not make a difference in the task scores of Russian respondents.

In relationship scores, the study found no significant differences based on age, gender, and government experience even though all of the scores fell in the high range as expected. However, education seemed to make a difference in relationship scores of Russian respondents. Russian respondents with high school degree or less are more relationship-oriented than those with higher degree.

In Russia, relationship orientation seems to be the prevalent leadership style. This supports the conclusion of Batchelder (1996) study that "relationships are more important than results and interpersonal reality can often become external reality." However, people who work in government sector seem to prefer task-oriented leadership style. This finding supports previous studies conducted in several countries including Vietnam and the Netherlands (Nguyen and Mujtaba 2011; Nguyen,

Mujtaba, and Ruijs 2013). Older Russian people tend to be more task-oriented than younger Russian people. This is not surprising considering that the older system operated in a command-style economy with well-defined tasks and outcomes while the new, market-oriented economy requires flexibility and entrepreneurship. This finding concurs with Nguyen et al. (2013) study which found that older Dutch working adults are more task-oriented than younger Dutch working adults. As expected, Russian males are more task-oriented than Russian females. Emotions often prevail over females' mind and passions prevail over material interests. While solving a problem, Russian females would listen to their hearts, but not to their minds. Russian females consider their organizations as a part of their personal space and expect more interest in their problems and more care from the company's side. Feminine society is not driven by competitive, success-oriented values in Russia. In theory, Russia's business culture advocates equality for women in the workplace, but in practice, the status of women is much lower in comparison to other developed countries. While many Russian women work, few hold high-ranking positions.

Limitations and Recommendations

There are several limitations that need to be addressed in this study. First of all, this study was conducted on an adult population available and receptive to our survey. These adults were from several cities in Russia including Moscow, Chelyabinsk, Saratov, and Ulyanovsk. Future studies can include adults from other cities and regions in the country. Secondly, because of the small sample size, the results cannot be generalized to the larger population. Future studies can extend to larger sample size with similar population. Finally, this study only focused on Russian respondents. Future studies can examine the task and relationship orientations across cultures.

Since the cultural parameters of a country culture, as well as the behavioral approach to leadership, can have a serious impact on its economic performance, competitiveness and everyday business practices, we think that the study of these parameters is indispensable for a better understanding of the processes at work. At the same time one must be mindful of the particular geopolitical situation and historical development of Russia since these have caused drastic changes in economic and social aspects as well as cultural pressures in the course of the previous century, which the society has had a difficult time to process. Therefore the values of leadership orientation we presented in this paper are reflective of the situation in the first decades of the 21st century, but in all likelihood will undergo further changes with the passage of time.

Conclusion

Recognizing leadership orientations of the employees can help leaders and managers better manage their subordinates. This study showed that Russian respondents are more relationship-oriented than task-oriented. In government sector, however, they prefer task-oriented leadership style. Age seems to be a factor in the difference of task-oriented orientation as older Russian people tend to be more task-oriented than younger Russian people. Gender also makes a difference in the task-oriented orientation as

Russian males are more task-oriented than Russian females. Finally, level of education makes a difference in the relationship scores of Russian respondents but not in the task scores.

This study has delved into the similarity and difference of task and relationship orientations of Russian working adults. It provided more empirical results regarding the leadership orientations of Russian adults based on gender, age, education, and government work experience. The study also provided many real-world implications in doing business or in dealing with Russian working adults that managers and practitioners who work with this population can benefit from. Before starting any business in Russia or with Russian companies, it is strongly advised that one should do some serious research into the way in which business is executed in the country and gain a thorough understanding of Russian business culture and Russian leadership orientations.

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