Can Leadership-coaching Mind-set Substitute that of Crisis Management in Higher Education?

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Abstract

The purpose of this research lies with exploration of the contrast between management (crisis management) and leadership styles in senior to junior levels of communication in higher education across Ukraine. The term 'crisis management' includes the three stages, i.e. pre-crisis, crisis per se, and post-crisis management in higher education. The hypotheses are to examine the extent to which crisis management style prevails over leadership or vice versa in current educational settings and implementation feasibility of coaching educational culture along with leadership. This study mainly used a qualitative approach to reach the set objectives under the research aim. The evidence obtained in the course of initial stage of the experiment and study demonstrates a huge gap between best practices in theory and practical innovations in and around the country. Identified decrease in performance excellence in the times of pandemic in higher education proves a burning need for changing styles in leading an educational institution, teaching and learning modes. Conclusion suggests moving from the known pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis management to the tactical leadership coaching, situational and strategic leadership coaching styles, respectively.

Keywords: Crisis Management, Leadership Coaching, Tactical Leadership Coaching, Situational Leadership Coaching, Strategic Leadership Coaching, Higher Education.

Introduction

It is of high value today that leadership moves to the frontline of the global management, and the educational area makes part of it (Kotter & Cohen 2012; Heath & Heath 2011). It is obvious that the educational system per se, in a broad sense of the word, has exhausted its major traditional resources in the digital era, on the first hand, and for the student millennials as a generation, on the other. Thus, in recent years, the higher educational sector inside and outside Ukraine has witnessed many reforms (Goertz, Floden & O'Day 1995; Doyon 2001; Hachtmann 2012; NRR PISA-2018). However, the question remains unanswered: which methodology, tools, techniques and ways of implementing innovative educational products may lead to some significant breakthroughs in education. It is suggested that leadership-coaching mind-set in higher education may cope with the designed role. Leadership in educational management cannot be ignored, either (Collins, 2001). Moreover, leadership roles as inclusive-oriented style in building up effective teams and resulting in efficient communication can oppose to classically designed management styles (Covey, 2004; Peltier, 2009; Laloux, 2014; Rogers, 2016).

For the purpose of the research, management includes all stages of crisis management, where the latter unfolds into four stances – prevention, preparedness, response, and reconstruction (Boin and Hart, 2003), and is a tough task for political and bureaucratic managers / leaders (Boin, 2017). According to Howell (2021), "somewhere in the world there is always a need for crisis management" as it is only a question of the scale and extent.

As reasonably noted by the author, "sometimes the scale of a crisis is global as with the current coronavirus pandemic, other times it's a local crisis such as a natural disaster, an act of terrorism, or a corporate or political scandal" (Howell, 2021). Next, it is argued that management of innovation and change is only one important criterion for evaluating leadership (Holmes, 2017) as there are many ways of achieving results, which may bring organisational change. At the same time, it is agreed that it is inevitable to avoid "persistent tensions between the expectations and realities of crisis leadership" as "crises provide key opportunities for reform" (Boin and Hart, 2003). It is also the culture that matters – ethnic and (non-)religious background, language and awareness concepts, communication and other soft skills, etc. (Schnurr et al, 2017; Bhaduri, 2019; Reeves et al, 2020). Thus, there are hundreds of historically rooted definitions for management and crisis management (Follett, 1940; Davis, 1951), leadership and coaching (Northouse, 2015; Coldwell, 2017; Rogers, 2016). To be more specific, management is defined as: getting things done by other people; tough function of executive leadership anywhere; the art of securing maximum results with a minimum of effort so as to secure maximum prosperity and happiness for both employer and employee and give the public the best possible service; the activity of getting other people to transform resources so that the results add value to the organisation in terms of reaching its organisational goals, etc. (Mee, 1963; Stewart, 1967).

Management in this paper will comprise the notion of crisis management, which sub-breaks into pre-crisis management, crisis management in the moment, and post-crisis management

(Renå & Christensen, 2019; Savchyk, 2019; Hayes, 2021). It is compared to and with leadership coaching (Leonard, Epstein & Tritter, 2009; Pillai, 2013; Obeidat, 2020), which similarly to crisis management, subdivides into situational leadership coaching, tactical leadership coaching, and strategic leadership coaching (Obeidat, 2020). In recent times, scholars have paid more attention to crystallisation of the leadership definition. According to Northouse (2015), "leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal", and Leithwood (2012) defines leadership as the exercise of influence on organizational members and stakeholders in order to identify and achieve the shared vision and goals in an organization.

However, no matter how many definitions may come into sight and analysis, many of those on leadership, leadership and management, leadership and crisis management will be overlapping (Boin & Hart, 2003; Brandebo, 2020; Pillai, 2013; Coldwell, 2017). Consequently, the paper aims to present the concepts of some philosophical approach, which strives to combine leadership and coaching as a substitute of management with leadership at the core. Coaching as defined by the International Coaching Federation (ICF Global) means "partnering with stakeholders [Clients] in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential". Importantly, coaching in higher education in its broad sense of the term refers to effective and result-driven innovation-welcoming communication in a higher educational

establishment, irrespective of the hierarchy, linear or matrix organizational structure, etc.

In the research, situational leadership coaching should not be confused with the concepts of situational leadership (Sopivnyk, 2016), nor should strategic leadership coaching be treated in the context of strategic leadership according to Obeidat (2020). Thus, first, situational leadership coaching would mean respective communication style in management, which presupposes to substitute communication at the times of crisis. Second, tactical leadership coaching would stand for the styles of communication and management, which may go further to push out pre-crisis management. Finally, strategic leadership coaching would refer to the efficiency in communication, and hence, management, for post-crisis management (including the stages of pre-crisis and crisis management, as well). The result would be in application of coaching elaborated methodology for driving change in high school management. Therefore, it is crucial as seen effective for educational leaders to select suitable strategies and respond to specific local (national / ethnic), sociocultural contexts, in which such leaders operate and aim to meet the set goals successfully.

Leadership in the higher educational sector can be easily implemented via coaching technologies (Renton, 2009; Peltier, 2009; Rogers, 2016). As mentioned above, leadership compares to crisis management in the times of the global pandemic (Zvarych & Tysh, 2020), inasmuch as both aim to improve the productivity of the university management and faculty

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teams, and educational state bodies, grow efficiency and help reach key performance indicators for team members inside any educational and/or governmental organization (Hatchman, 2012; Pillai, 2013).

The main aim of this research is to collect sufficient data and analyse to which extent management styles (pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis management) prevail over leadership in higher education in Ukraine, or vice versa in the current educational settings. The terms 'management', 'crisis management', 'management (communication) styles' fit congruent to 'manager', 'senior manager', 'junior manager', 'crisis manager', whereas the terms 'leadership', 'leadership styles', 'tactical leadership', 'situational leadership', and 'strategic leadership' will include relevant roles and jobs of a 'leader', 'mentor', 'supervisor', correspondingly. Speaking of senior managers or leaders, it is to follow that job titles usually associate with rector of a university, vice-rector, dean of faculty, heads of departments (Academics Senior). Mentioning managers, or junior managers (Academics Junior), the paper means syllabus supervisors, programme directors, academic coordinators, and key tutors at a faculty, in particular. The research questions of the study are:

- What do Academics Senior / Junior employ more in their management styles – (crisis) management or leadership approach to communicate progress, innovations and change?
- Can leadership-coaching styles as a potentially changing national mind-set substitute authoritative management styles in higher education in Ukraine?

Literature Review

The literature review shows that there are many significant conceptual shortcomings with the comparison or contrast of leadership in education and educational crisis management. All these relate to the associated literature studies, including the lack of clarity in terms of well-proven evidence-based technologies and the limited applicability within the higher educational institutions in Ukraine and abroad (Boin & Hart, 2003; Leonard, Epstein & Tritter, 2009; Coldwell, 2017). These days, a good number of studies may reveal interests of scholars and academics to crisis management and leadership and their interconnectedness in the times of changes. Scholars discuss various issues, starting from changing things when changes are hard (Adizes, 2010; Gonzalez-Herrero & Smith, 2010; brothers Heath 2011), real life stories on how it is possible to change organizations (Kotter & Cohen, 2015; Reeves et al., 2020), transformational leadership for crisis management (Pillai, 2013), leveraging culture and leadership in crisis management (Bhaduri, 2019) to empowering leadership beyond crisis management (Rydén et al, 2021) and growing a cluster of leadership qualities for future specialists in the agroindustrial sector (Sopivnyk, 2016). To this end, there is little literature found on the comparative study and contrastive analysis of management, or crisis management, and educational leadership as a whole.

Moreover, leadership-coaching technologies with a pool of coaching tools are hardly ever discussed in the academic literature to endorse effective communication for higher

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education (Collins, 2001; Einzig, 2017). Harris (2003, 316-317) propels leadership in teaching but anyway, doubts its smooth and fast implementation in education. At the same time, such coaching techniques as SMART, SMARTER, GROW, SCOTCH, etc. are broadly employed by business communities for everyday operational routines, as well as for strategic planning and goal-achievements (Landsberg, 1997; Lee, 2003) and are barely noted to be used in higher education.

The current situation with the Covid-19 pandemic has already set the new rules of the game (Renå & Christensen, 2019; Rydén et al. 2021), under which circumstance, by the way, leadership is not always associated with the positive dynamics as a game-changer in crisis management (Brandebo, 2020). Kubitskyi and Chaika (2020, 43-48) argue on the extent and scope of destructivism as a result of deploying coaching mindsets for decision-making in the times of crisis and turbulence. It is stated that it is a question of expertise and trained skills and competencies rather than knowledge as hard skills to manage a higher educational institution in the unprecedented times (Obeidat, 2020; Zvarych & Tysh, 2020; Kubitskyi & Chaika, 2020).

Though it is beyond the scope of the research to determine the role of the leader in a tertiary educational institution and describe their values, virtues, and merits, it is necessary to agree with Covey (1989) and Collins (2001) that the cognitive, psychological and emotional abilities / states / beings of the people that may lead the educational institution to its goals

and objectives are of utter importance. Moreover, their analytical skills and many other soft skills as opposed to hard ones are pivotal in understanding the logistics of decision making in the educational contexts (Einzig, 2017; Sopivnyk, 2016), their mindsets would dictate the rules or ignore limiting beliefs as to the possible outcomes and implementation of strategy plans in higher education (Northouse, 2015; Obeidat, 2020).

This study concluded that crisis management relates closely to the idea of a traditional manager as opposed to leadership in management or substitute for the term 'management' in terms of effective communication, goal-setting for a higher educational institution, decision-making, and achievement strategies. Shared responsibility (Landsberg, 1997) and insights in communication may result in more benefits for an institution as compared with jeopardising instructions in an authoritative way of management. Moreover, delegation (Covey, 2004; Peltier, 2009; Rogers, 2016) is deemed an art for organizing structural behaviours, where schools, high schools, colleges, and universities make no exception for administration driving change and welcoming innovations (Harris, 2003).

This research opens doors to investigate the importance of the leadership-coaching technologies for crisis management in the educational institutions and the sharp need to adopt and cultivate some strategies that may enable to stay well-prepared should crisis or unexpected changes occur (Adizes 2010; Northouse 2015; Savchyk 2019). The carried out

research and analysis of the crisis management and leadership backgrounds reveal some gaps, especially in the context of defining 'leadership in education' and 'educational leadership'. Very often, leadership in education and educational leadership, leadership in the times of crisis and contingency leadership (Pillai, 2013; Coldwell, 2017; Tkachenko, 2011) are seen as interchangeable ideas, or concepts. It is strongly argued that these terms are synonymous. Moreover, it is emphasized that each of them features its specific properties that clearly enough demonstrates the differences. This results in differentiation between the terms of leadership in education and educational leadership. Thus, educational leadership means climax of the managerial activity, ability to influence a person or groups of people, encourage, motivate and engage them to act respectively in order to reach the goals, as discussed above in the literature review. The only aspect broadening the concept lies with the educational sphere of exploring, implementing and cultivating leadership as an individual skill and a group skill.

The study concludes that leadership in education cements and strengthens the concepts of leadership in general and crisis management via the lens of effective communication vertically and horizontally across the educational hierarchy. By means of focusing on a leadership coaching portfolio of tools, leadership in education suggests substituting the boldly called old-fashioned management styles in higher education in Ukraine with more advanced, technologically driven, and highly-efficient technologies of leading an

educational institution to success, reaching the set goals within the optimal timelines, by employing, developing and growing the potential of all and every stakeholder in the educational process. It is pivotal to stress out on the importance of leadership in education in decision-making and in doing educational business at the times of crisis.

COVID-19 brought unexpected challenges to the higher education in Ukraine and globally. It only sharpened the issues of quality performance and quality assessment in high school or university management (The Covid-19 Crisis in Ukraine, 2020; Zvarych & Tysh, 2020).

Ukraine and the bigger part of the world were not ready to an immediate seamless shift to remote study. It explains why leadership-coaching communication as a management style arises a logical and feasible substitute for crisis management, inasmuch in this particular case, pre-crisis management failed in higher education in Ukraine and abroad. Risk management strategies and risk estimates failed (Savchyk, 2018), resources management left much room to be desired (Savchyk, 2019; Zvarych & Tysh, 2020), huge losses in the local and global markets of higher education led to claims, dissatisfaction of teaching quality and communication, technological gaps in the educational settings, unveiled phenomena of real-to-life facts associated with the soft skills of communication, negotiation, mediation, facilitation, or problem-solving in general (Rena & Christensen, 2019; Ryden et al., 2021).

In the local educational market, following Goertz et al. (1995), Doyon (2001) and Hatchmann (2012) from a foreign market perspective, the challenge to the Ukrainian government to drive reforms in education still lies with the fact that "the quality of higher education fails to meet expectations of employers, students and society". Another factor is with the funding and management system, which does not offer incentives to high-end teachers and best performing universities. The other factor as determined by the Cabinet of Ministers is that "young people who lack knowledge, skills or motivation necessary for getting higher education are often admitted to universities" (ESR).

It is not argued that in Ukraine the educational reality is different from the described. On the contrary, the situations may even grow darker when analyzing the data about university enrolments from region to region, moving from the capital city universities north, east, west, and southwards (Friedman & Trines, 2019). However, it is emphasized that with the analysis and comparison of crisis management (Hayes, 2021) and leadership in education (Kubitskyi & Chaika, 2020) as its substitute, it will become possible to find smart solutions with long-lasting effect. It is supposed that under the theory grounded approach for crisis management (Ryden et al., 2021) and with a coaching technology-based portfolio of leadership in education (Lee, 2003; Renton, 2009; Laloux, 2014) – university management, faculty staff, and students may gain efficient knowledge as a knowledge-based hard skill, acquire the necessary soft skills for effective communication in the forms

of moderation, mediation, brainstorming, facilitation, etc., feel the desired motivation, and easily reach the set goals in the educational settings.

The research results originally aim to prove that "no quality change is possible with the old techniques and ways of management"; next, it is strongly believed that "only a change in dominating cognitive, mental and behavioral patterns of the administrative and teaching staff may lead to higher efficiency and quality performance in management and education". Therefore, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study emphasize the implementation of leadership-coaching styles to substitute conventional (crisis) management styles in communication and would allow for the expected outcome of the educational reform in Ukraine and serve a potential 'good practices' ground for the global implications.

Methodology

This study used qualitative method that adopted the ethnographic case study approach for analysis of the obtained data. It was intended to identify and determine the preferences of university administration in management / leadership styles in communicating change and work / cultural tolerance in higher education in Ukraine. Leveraging culture, languages, and leadership in the times of crisis (Bhaduri, 2019) may require new approaches to communication. Sound understanding of cognitive, mental, and behavioral patterns in management styles (Pillai, 2013; Coldwell, 2017) may lead to positive changes in higher

education for increased efficiency ratio, in both management and education. Besides, the hypotheses set required thorough academic investigation and exploration of global best practices in (crisis) management and leadership-coaching style delivery (Pillai, 2013). To this extent, qualitative method appeared relevant for the study. The research rests on the ethnographic study approach found proper to meet the main aim and objectives. It is assumed that the data received from the study, as adequately interpreted in connection to the locations and that provide a more comprehensive view of the current developments in higher education in Ukraine, embody into the case study as a form determined by Tesc (1990) and Sopivnyk (2016).

This research was carried out at four universities in Ukraine, covering the centre (Kyiv, capital city), the east and the west. The purpose of case study required survey and feedback from the respondents, samplings, processing the populations and analysing the results. The outcome was to identify the preferred management / leadership style in driving change and innovations in higher education in Ukraine and determine the risks and perspectives for the future for the educational reform. Purposeful sampling (Mertens, 1998) provided for profound plunge into shortlisted cases abundant with linguistic layout, which helped analyse and determine dominating management / leadership patterns in thinking and behavior of university administrations. The list of participants included 315 respondents, among which were 57 administration officers (Academics Senior), 145 academic

supervisors, curriculum and syllabus leads, heads of departments and chairs, etc. (Academics Junior), and 113 master students and PhD seekers, who would be teachers and academics in the future, and may wish to test themselves in manager's / leader's roles and give feedback on the current organizational communication structure.

Academics Senior and Junior were selected by virtue of their over 5-year experience in managerial roles in a higher educational institution. According to the aim in the hypotheses, Academics Senior were supposed to demonstrate the fullest potential possible for leadership rather management roles and lead by example for Academics Junior. Students in master's programmes and postgraduates were expected to provide feedback on the management / leadership styles by administration and Academics Junior as the skills and competencies demonstrated in their thinking and behavioral models.

To conduct the research, it was decided to send emails to respondents and invite to fill in the blanks with open-ended questions and a "wink-choice" questionnaire (making a choice only between two suggested pre-set answers A or B). A "wink-choice" questionnaire aimed to give no thinking time for decision-making and reflexing. It aimed to collect instant ticks for the most appealing wordings, which in the end underlay the typical and adopted ways of thinking and management / leadership behaviors (Downey, 2014). Lastly, phone calls and personal discussions in meetings provided with consent to participation in the survey,

ethical confidentiality undertakings as to the names and findings (Renton, 2009; Rogers, 2016; Landsberg, 1997), and agreement to make the results available to public provided the terms of the mutual agreement were followed. The survey focused only on management / leadership patterns in communicating everyday operations, delivery of goals and strategies, driving change and innovations by Academics Senior and Junior in higher education in Ukraine. Therefore, no legal, financial, regulatory, reputational, nor ethical risks are existing or pending. The qualitative questionnaire included 13 open-ended questions drafted to follow excellence in management and leadership (Council for Excellence in Management and Leadership framework; Lee, 2003) so that every respondent had a chance to freely express their vision and understanding of proper techniques and styles to perform efficiently in higher education (Rogers, 2016). Another leaflet with pre-set responses (A or B) tested agility, critical thinking and fairness. It was arranged to compare the answers with the two surveys and analyse degree of adaptation to newly emerging response environments. In the beginning, the questionnaires were distributed among some academic staff to ensure the wordings were clear, concise and easy-to-understand to respond. Some changes were made to the drafts before the questionnaires were piloted (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The result of the survey was 28-30% of the e-mails, which remained unanswered with the three groups, Academics Senior, Junior and students, despite 3 kind reminders had been forwarded within 10 days. The explanations varied from lack of time to "too busy" with other priorities. Ultimately,

after the analysis and final touches put to the findings, 7 respondents commented that if the answers could have been audio-recorded, it would have facilitated the process and they would have completed the surveys.

Data Analysis and Findings

The research went into the data analysis stage after the populations had been collected from the respondents employed at universities in different regions in Ukraine and the time limits had been met. The survey team (age groups of 23-30 and 30-45-year olds) went through the answers a few times to make sure all the encoded communication was properly deciphered and accounted in the tables. To summarise the data and facilitate the findings, Schnurr et al. (2017) and Renton (2009) believe that discussions in groups similarly to personal talks may detect the bottle-necks in cultural (mis)understanding, especially when stereotypes, polycultural / multicultural facets may reveal and meet actual workplace, which was implemented in the course of the data analysis.

Fig. 1 Number of respondents invited, per tertiary educational institution

Tertiary institution in education, name	Academics Senior, person (100%)	Academics Junior, person (100%)	Students (masters & PhD seekers), person (100%)
NUBiP Ukraine	15	35	30
Kharkiv Academy for Humanities and Education	15	37	28
Donetsk National Technical University	14	35	26

Drohobych State Pedagogical University after Ivan Franko	13	38	29
TOTAL, person	**57**	**145**	**113**

In the course of data collection on the samplings, it was identified that the level of willingness to engage and participate in the survey differed from university to university (Fig. 2). However, the ratio weight remained more or less above average, i.e. from 28% to 30%, largely. The respondents who agreed and took part in the survey and answered the open-ended questions and did a 'wink-choice' pre-set answer test made 70% for Academics Senior, 74.5% for Academics Junior, and 72.5% for the mentioned class of students, respectively, across the country from east to west via the central part of Ukraine.

Fig. 2 Number of respondents engaged proactively, per tertiary educational institution

Tertiary institution in education, name	*Academics Senior, person*	*Academics Junior, person*	*Students (masters & PhD seekers), person*
NUBiP Ukraine	12	28	22
Kharkiv Academy for Humanities and Education	10	30	17
Donetsk National Technical University	8	27	24
Drohobych State Pedagogical University after Ivan Franko	12	23	19
TOTAL, person	**40**	**108**	**82**

It should also be noted that the criteria of engaging leadership and inclusivity were analysed.

The open-ended questionnaire consisted of 13 questions to reflex on preferable mode of communication for efficient results in higher education in the respondents' opinions so that enabling the survey team to draw on findings and measure the trends and inclinations for management or leadership-coaching styles in communication, authoritativeness and instruction giving or delegation and trust in the people and teamwork. Below are the headings of the open-ended questions for respondents' reflexion.

1) SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) in the managerial and/or leadership experience – respondents described their own understanding what worked well and what lacked efficiency in quality performance; also, they elaborated on opportunities and possible threats if they kept on moving similarly, as well as forecast consequences for a university.

2) GROW model (Goal, Reality, Options, and Will) – respondents could provide their personal vision or as instructed and shared by the top administrator in the university on future goals, resources – current and /or required, variables for implementation of the plan, and what they did / would do and how they acted / would act to carry out the designed strategy of the institution.

3) (Crisis) management VS leadership styles in communication – respondents commented on the most appropriate ways to carry on with university mission statement and increase HR portfolio and students' enrolment in the times of crisis, enhance reputation of the university, learning / self-learning and teaching, etc.

4) Best qualities of a manager / leader – respondents were invited to illustrate best managers / leaders in the educational settings and explain why / why not the mentioned were considered according to the best characteristics, qualities, and properties as attributed to such managers / leaders. Besides, they compared the characteristics of a manager and leader with each other, and concluded for which

context such were found the most suitable and assessed themselves in fitting these roles.

5) Crisis management VS situational leadership coaching – respondents had to agree / disagree what worked and would work best according to their retrospective / perspective in the times of changes and COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and relevant repercussions in higher education, in particular. They were invited to illustrate the unexpected situations encountered with the coronavirus pandemic and transition to remote study and work, and explain their models of behaviour (what they did, how they coped, why they made such decisions).

6) Post-crisis management VS tactical and/or strategic leadership coaching models in communication and management styles – respondents commented on their actions after the lockdowns and unlocks in the local educational market, bringing to the top the weaknesses and threats to be avoided in the future. It was critical to follow here the respondents' linguistic patterns, which enabled faster and deeper understanding of their cognitive and mental dominants in communication and conduct.

7) Difference between a manager and a leader as to engagement, motivation and commitment – respondents discussed what makes a manager different from a leader or vice versa if any at all, and were invited to furnish the descriptions with personal examples (the recent 2-3 years).

8) Conflict of interest at work – respondents analysed their past experiences or hypothetical cases under which a conflict of interest may arise, and expected steps and actions by a manager / leader and/or their stories from the work field files.

9) Effects – respondents communicated their vision and understanding of consequences after decisions made by a manager and leader, the possible risks and risk mitigates in a university and the higher education as a whole within certain timeframe.

10) HR management and People Partner roles in higher education – respondents

answered to which extent they felt at ease to change the widely accepted terms to the newly arising in the digital era when it came about human resources, personnel, their assessment, development and perspectives of employment, length of a tenure track under a contract, remuneration, criteria for promotion, motivation, perks, and incentives, etc.

11) Decision-making for personnel with their failures and achievements – respondents analysed the best in their opinions tools, measures and ways to respond to personnel's failures and achievements, created the system approach or tailor-made discussions, referred to their analytical skills or intuition while making critical decisions at the times of change, and not only.

12) Employment and retaining staff – respondents engaged into hot discussions what was necessary and pivotal as to changes in higher education so that salaries and wages would be satisfactory to the academic and other staff. They also discussed the motivational drivers – careers, science, recognition, financial support, pay rise on a yearly basis, etc.

13) Claims, recommendations, comments if any – respondents were free to choose what to write in this section. That was absolutely critical for identification and classification of the typical mind-set structure and adopted modes of thinking, analysing, expressing thoughts, making claims or suggestions, claiming someone (somewhat, for instance, corruption, low pay, politicians, social and financial challenges, laws, etc.) or seeing opportunities and discussing future goals and perspectives, mission and so on.

The respondents also had a quick review test of their typical behaviour in everyday life at university. The documented findings provide answers A or B, in which A most likely attaches colouring of a manager in a higher educational institution rather than a leader as opposed to the pre-set answer in B.

Discussion

The findings of the study will be presented under two parts. Part 1 will discuss the data collected, processed and analysed according to the level of expressed trends and preferences for managerial or leadership-coaching communication styles in higher education in Ukraine. It will bring to light identified gaps and (un)awareness of Academics Senior and Junior as to the actual state of things in a university and higher education in Ukraine. Besides, it will highlight observances in repeated cognitive, mental, and behavioral dominants by the university staff as noticed, commented and analysed by the respondent students. Thus, it will fit to match and verify whether in their management styles Academics Senior / Junior employ more (crisis) management or leadership approach to communicate progress, innovations and change in the times of crises / post-crises / pre-crises. The part with the data on Academics Junior will reveal existing or unveiling potential for a change in future in higher education provided the conceptual framework and results would be seen progressive and considered for further study, more piloting and implementation for reform purposes in higher education in Ukraine and/or in the world.

Part 2 will dedicate the message to perspectives and recommendations for driving change in higher education in Ukraine as discovered in the research findings and answer the question whether or not leadership-coaching styles as a potentially changing national mind-set would substitute authoritative management styles in higher education in Ukraine.

Dominating trends in communication styles in higher education in Ukraine

The findings of the study provide with the general picture of expressed opinions of Academics Senior / Junior and the students as to the prevailing main trends in management / leadership styles of communication in higher education in Ukraine, as per the universities in different locations in the country. More criteria and results, respectively, deserve comments based on the surveys. Among these are: (i) agility, (ii) critical thinking and reasoning, (iii) willingness to respond, or responsiveness ratio, and (iv) engaging management / leadership and self-motivation. Agility and responsiveness were overlapping in the analysis of the feedback obtained. Following Figures 1 and 2 above, it is possible to conclude that the response rate across the country was more or less similar – three quarters against a quarter. It is fairly above the average. However, it may not be stated from the start what caused such responsiveness. The respondents' comments in follow-up meetings, after the results had been reported, proved that the survey team's skepticism to the data analysis was right and reasonable. To be more exact, those respondents characterising themselves with the management mode as a natural style of cooperation and performance at work (especially Academics Junior) explained that it was a habit to follow the instructions when given and respect to the people in a more senior position. When challenged with a question, that the survey was initiated by their colleague in a more or less equal status, they found it hard to comment and reverted to the said, "*it looks like to be usual conduct when you are approached with an instruction or a request*" (82.5% of the total, who sent their replies).

Such findings empower to conclude that thinking and behaving of majority by Academics Senior / Junior and the students under usual circumstances integrate into management rather leadership styles, firstly. Secondly, willingness to respond and engage into survey was mostly dictated by:

(a) 'Obligation' to participate in the survey, although, there had been none – Respondent 47, "*Mr A asked me if I had done the survey, and I promised I would*"; Respondent 13, *"It is very important to understand that crisis management is the only way to find solutions in the times of crisis, and ability to follow instructions is the key to success"*;

(b) Accustomed mode of performance in a group / team of colleagues (with a smell of authoritative style from the hereditary post-Sovietical past) – Respondent 34, *"By the way, I submitted the survey before Mr F and Mrs J did that"*; Respondent 109, *"I was a leader to my employees and I first did the survey and then asked them to follow me"*;

(c) Possibly, subconscious feeling of performing a job to be praised later or to prevent a situation of being made an 'outsider' of the group / team, who was the one that had not responded in good timing or failed. The latter may refer to the 'herd instinct' at work. – Respondent 207 (oral comments), *"I don't believe the survey results were absolutely confidential, it had never been like that and I guess would hardly be so in the nearest 50 years. I'd rather follow the instruction cautiously, to be on the safe side.*"

Much smaller group of the respondents aged younger and from the "students" spoke of curiosity and intrigue, Respondent 207, "*What's going on?* was my first thought" as "*We had not experienced many surveys at work and interest in our opinions"*. It drives to assume

that was what had caused their readiness to join the survey and do the questionnaires.

In the 21ˢᵗ century with the world changing fast, these respondents commented on a special need for agility in professional behavior including study and work (Hopkins, 2008), as well as engaging management / leadership, under which each element in the society / work matters along with the relevant roles and responsibilities (Sinek, 2011; Pillai, 2013). Consequently, some Academics Junior and students mentioned:

Respondent 14, *"Such new approaches to collect opinions are bringing a hope for the qualitative changes at university in the future"*,

Respondent 193, *"To see that some of our professors are adapting to the critique by the students is some light in the end of the tunnel"*,

Respondent 201, *"It is so cool that some …. [administration officers] may shut up when we come and claim poor quality"*, etc.

It may not be stated that such replies (please see the latter) by administration officers speak much of leadership and tolerance, including respect to everyone. Rather, it may be treated as risks and threats to lose some students when these break the contracts, and university may experience shortage in the expected income – Respondent 24, *"Students have become too rude and self-confident. They are not scared to be expelled"*;

Respondent 32, *"Students lost feelings of respect to the senior people. They manipulate to leave the university unless we speak to the professors about their exams and more chances*

to take tests, unbelievable!!!"

However, the same conduct by Academics Senior would tend to be characterized as agility – ability by administration to respond to the requirements of modern world (Lee, 2003; Laloux, 2014), adapt to the arising changes and estimate risks borne by shift in generations, thinking and behaving styles of the youth (Northouse, 2015; Ingrams et al, 2020). It also may be seen as self-motivation to change behavioral patterns in communication with the junior staff and students (Hachtmann, 2012). The previous century tyrannical notes in speeches and punishment measures are gone, administration understand that their usual styles of the past behavior have become ineffective, the new ones have not replaced them yet. Listening to claims and bogging up time remain the less evil of any.

Next, following the 13 open-ended topics for discussion, 96% from the replies by Academics Senior / Junior demonstrated a bright demonstration and incline for authoritative style in communication, neglect of other peoples' opinions. The research findings enabled this conclusion by the adopted fairness ratio - the replies in writing were matched to the responses of the respondents in follow-up meetings and calls. When matched with a deviation of 5-10%, the answer was considered fair:

Respondent 55, "*Of course, I listen to people in the meetings. But **they cannot know** the best ways, they are not in my shoes*";

Respondent 70, "*Why **should** I respond to the claims and requests of the students? Are they*

experts in my field? If yes, why are they here? They may go and work if they know it better. I'm not keeping anyone here."

Most of the answers on the SWOT-model, GROW and comments on qualities of the manager and leader provide solid ground to conclude that university administration in the sector of higher education in Ukraine may only write / talk well about leadership, but find next to impossible to demonstrate such qualities and competencies:

Respondent 15, "*Leaders lead people, they **teach them** to grow and respect each other. I'm sure my colleagues respect me. They **never dare** ignore my instructions.*"

According to the above quote, it can be interpreted that Academics Senior / Junior / students are aware of leadership and quality readings on new global trends in higher education. They do not cope and still require more time to incorporate and demonstrate leadership in the working environment. As regards open-ended questions and topics on comparison of the pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis management and tactical, situational, and tactical / strategic leadership-coaching models in communication, the answers varied extensively.

Respondent 39, "*Crisis management may not be compared to situational leadership: with COVID-19 we were in crisis for all the time along, and tried hard to cope, **without proper resources**. It was on everyday basis. It is not about situational leadership when one day you are a leader, and another day you are not.*"

Respondent 117, "*Tactical and strategic leadership are really good for our university especially after the crisis. The crisis revealed all the weak points in management and*

*performance. It means that Rector and Vice-rectors **should** analyse everything and implement the safeguards in the future*", etc.

Academics Senior and Junior discussed (crisis) management and leadership as knowledgeable instruments in their experiences. The results identified low levels of critical thinking and reasoning in many situations. Academics Senior / Junior often confused terms of management and leadership, and treated them synonymously or in an integrative way. They failed to trace where their strongly expressed managerial cognitive and mental patterns dominated over welcoming change and variability of leadership-coaching communication.

Respondent 23, "*There are no good experts and highly-qualified professionals in the educational market today because the old professors with good knowledge **no longer** may deliver quality in classrooms to students who **are unwilling** to study. It is **impossible***"

From the above and similar responses as to HR management, decision-making, effects, motivation, claims, and recommendations, it became evident that the dominating cognitive and mental patterns of the Academics Senior / Junior / students are destructive rather than constructive. Such patterns underline an incline to claims, seeing no variability and broadening horizons for resources – time, finance, marketing, people, environments, etc. It is assumed that management approach in universities prevails over leadership as

Academics Senior and Junior are unaware of how effective communication via adopting a coaching culture, including flexibility and variability in thinking, decision-making and communicating may produce better outcomes in higher education in Ukraine.

Perspectives and recommendations based on the findings

The findings of the research proved reasonability of Section 13 in the open-ended questionnaire. The respondents' answers were divided into two main groups – those with claims and no hope for changes in the future, fears and limiting beliefs, and those with suggestions and ideas, which would improve the educational system and beliefs into successful transformations.

Respondent 202 mentioned, *"We are not abandoned. The staff need some specific training to improve their digital and communication skills"*,

Respondent 176 commented, *"The curricula may bring more value when they are designed for the students to integrate theory and practice, and soft skills are at the core"*,

Respondent 203 specified, *"If only our administration started speaking foreign languages and open up for best practices globally, perform for the changes sincerely rather than bureaucratically, we would catch up with the other world, even more – well-weaponed with profound theory in hard skills and putting on more practical skilled experience, we would lead the European educational markets for cert"*.

The above quotes highlight the main streamlines for recommended changes in higher

education in Ukraine:

(i) Specifically arranged training for the university staff,

(ii) Modifications and amendments to traditional curricula to make them more 21st century-student-oriented,

(iii) Webinars, international conferences, round tables, etc. to promote academic mobility, exchange of experience, that would enhance skills in effective communication in an empiric way,

(iv) Local and global best practices to be noticed, analysed, integrated and implemented into the new styles of efficient team building, cooperation, and collaboration in higher education in Ukraine and abroad.

The findings of the study proved that the managerial and authoritative style in communication and performance in higher education in Ukraine significantly prevails over leadership. Awareness of Academics Senior / Junior / students of their personal modes in communication may not guarantee their desire to change and start leading educational reforms in the country and transforming the educational space in Ukraine in the area of higher education. At the same time, the student respondents and younger Academics Junior became excited at the results and their insights. Moreover, 79% of such respondents made action plans for their further individual growth and commented on perspectives in the future of higher education in Ukraine if only coaching culture were implemented in higher educational institutions, which would definitely affect personal lifestyles, as:

Respondent 208 said, *"You may not be a leader at work and a victim at home"*,

Respondent 77, *"Leadership is not only an art, it's your lifestyle"*.

Implications of this study and limitations

As regards the existing and possible outcomes of educational leadership coaching in the sector of higher education in Ukraine and globally, the list below is not exhaustive. The limitations circle round time-consuming and costly launch and implementation of leadership-coaching in higher education in Ukraine. Nevertheless, application of coaching technologies as a fundamental value in higher education and implementation of leadership coaching in universities will undoubtedly result in:

(i) Positive transformations at the deeper levels for both the educational establishment, as well as staff – administration and faculties, moving further to students and applicants,

(ii) Time-lasting effect, which will lead to more transformations and crystalized vision of the desired in education, and not only maintain the achieved, but also proceed faster and more efficiently for implementing new projects in education at the local and international levels,

(iii) Psychological (including emotional and mental) support for everyone involved into the transformational processes, which will strengthen beliefs and self-confidence, lead to higher motivation of educational leaders and faculty members,

(iv) Result-oriented approach digitally "smarted",

(v) No bias and limiting beliefs, which will broaden the mental and emotional horizons and enable trans-border opportunities for global educational collaboration.

Conclusion

It is substantiated that leadership in education is different from educational leadership. Moreover, the key role of leadership in education connects to leadership coaching, which links to types of transformational change for the educational leaders in the times of crisis accounting for emergency criterion. Consequently, it is distinguished between leadership situational coaching, leadership tactical coaching, and leadership strategic coaching. To conclude, the leadership coaching in situational crisis management, or situational leadership, describes the "what" after Sinek (2011) as to steps and actions that should be taken. The leadership coaching in pre-crisis management, or its substitute tactical leadership, discloses the "how" approach in leadership by predicting the future events, minimizing / mitigating risks and looking into breakthroughs, cutting-edge technologies and innovations in the education system. Finally, the leadership coaching in post-crisis management, or strategic leadership, creates the world of the better future not only in Ukraine, but also across countries, parts of the world, and continents to drive change and welcome innovations in higher education. The constraints – time consuming launch and implementation, costly for some institutions, bureaucratically hard to move it further, unwillingness of elderly and senior staff, may be ignored in the light of the coaching views: "Leaders find solutions and look up to bring positive changes, managers estimate risks and leverage their liability".

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