HIERARCHY OF NEEDS, PERCEPTION AND PREFERENCE FOR LEADERSHIP STYLES WITHIN A POLICE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

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Abstract

The present research investigates Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the leadership style (perceived and ideal) in a sample of employees of a police school. The purpose of this study was to identify and propose solutions to improve the managerial activity. Based on Maslow's theory for understanding human motivation, we developed a measurement scale for human needs. Based on Lewin's theory of leadership style, we developed two measurement scales, one for perceived leadership and one for ideal leadership style. Agreement of judges was used to obtain valid measures. Reliable α-Cronbach coefficients were obtained for internal consistency of the measurement scales. We conducted correlational and comparative analyses between variables, regarding each professional category (police officers, police constables, civilians). The results contradict Maslow's theoretical model for human needs, challenging the order imposed by Maslow's pyramid. The order of the importance of needs differ from one category of personnel to another. Regardless of professional status, physiological needs are generally more significant than other needs. Comparing the perceived leadership style with the ideal style, all groups would prefer a less autocratic leadership style than it is, and more democratic than they perceive it. In addition, civilians would like a more permissive style of leadership than it is the perceived style. Perceived leadership styles are correlated differently with staff needs. Practical implications and contribution of the research are discussed.

Keywords: perceived leadership style, ideal leadership style, hierarchy of needs, human needs.

1. Introduction

Until 2002, the Romanian Police, as a public safety and order assuring institution, subordinated to the Ministry of Administration and Interior (M.A.I.) was a military institution, managed by military personnel in an authoritative manner. Thereafter, professionals with civil training were appointed on management positions, having various approaches to management and leadership.

Police schools have had a tumultuous historical evolution. For the most part of their existence they were more likely military than educational institutions, staff and students being involved in operational actions and specific missions. The changes regarding the missions and organizational structure of Police required different managing and leadership actions. If in cases of military intervention, the authoritarian (autocratic) leadership style is appropriate, providing the speed and accuracy of order fulfillment in critical or decisive situations, in other cases, a more democratic style is required.

Demilitarization of Police, massive hiring of civilians (external source) between the year 2005 and 2007 and the significant changes concerning the missions and task of law enforcement institutions, resulted in a heterogeneous body of staff belonging to the educational institutions of Police, a body of teachers and administrative personnel, differing in terms of professional status and training, but also in terms of needs. Since human resource is the primary factor of survival and performance in any organization (public or private), the managerial success or failure depends on the motivation of the human resources. Thus, it is essential for the management to identify and understand the personnel needs, in order to coordinate and direct the work behavior of the employees.

2. Defining concepts and methods used

There is a great amount of literature about management and leadership without a clear delineation between these two concepts. In 1903, Taylor defined management as "knowing exactly what men want to do and seeing that they do it in the best and the cheapest way" (Lazăr *et al.*, 2006, p. 11). Later, Robertson showed that "the management is the art or method of directing, guiding and managing the work of others in order to achieve objectives, decision making process and leading process" (*apud* Ilieş *et al.*, 2005, p. 9). More recently, specialists in organizational behavior described management as "the art of working with and through others in order to achieve the organizational objectives in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and ethics" (Kiniki *apud* Ilieş *et al.*, 2005, p. 10). We notice that the "managerial-oriented administration focuses on outcomes" (Hinţea, 2011, p. 178).

Today, leadership is defined as "the art of leading people in order to accomplish their work assignments, by their own will, thing that provides the appropriate motivation for them to devote their efforts in achieving common goals" (Duţu, 2008, p. 7). J. Clement considers the leadership as "the process by which a person sets a goal or direction for one or more people and determines them to act together with competence and full commitment in order to accomplish that goal" (Clement *apud* Lazăr *et al.*, 2006, p. 242).

Public sector leaders have more ambiguous measures of performance in large part because they pursue multiple goals simultaneously and many of the outcomes are non-economic and thus harder to measure (van Slyke *apud* Ţigănaş *et al.*, 2011, pp. 215-216). In Romania, the image of a successful leader in the field of public administration is still centered on an image developed around hierarchic authority, privilege of structures, an omnipotent figure who is capable of resolving all problems of the organization (Hinţea, Ringsmuth and Mora, *apud* Ţigănaş *et al.*, 2011, pp. 215-216).

Another distinction developed in the literature is between management which refers to the administration of a business, and leadership which refers to the influencing of the subordinates.

Because the present study is aimed at analyzing the leadership style in relationship to the authority exerted by the leaders, we will refer to the three main types of leadership, most popular and simple classification of leadership styles developed by Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lipitt and Ralph White (1939) which includes three categories: autocratic (authoritarian), democratic and "laissez-faire".

The autocratic leadership style implies a leader who has clear expectations of what, when and how to do, decides by himself/herself in most cases, refusing any suggestion from subordinates, planning rigorously the subordinates' work, being concerned to control the manners of achieving the tasks. This style is less creative and creates a permanent state of tension and discontent, resistance and limitation with regard to the professional interest of the subordinates. It is recommended in extreme situations when the speed and accuracy of the decision is vital, noting that without the leader, the yield decreases.

Democratic leadership style is characterized by cooperation, training capacity and involvement of the subordinates in setting and achieving the objectives of the institution, in assessing the performance achieved. The style reduces tensions, provides a pleasant socio-professional environment, and, especially, generates the independence of action for group members.

"Laissez-faire" (permissive) leadership style: entire freedom of decision and action is left to subordinates. The leader avoids any interference in management and organization of the group, which take place spontaneously. Although, initially the style favors the installation of a relaxed working atmosphere, after a while, it leads to a lower morale and decreases the effectiveness of the group.

A major component of management is motivation. This is the process of selection, orientation and maintenance of human behavior in the desired direction. Its most important role is "to determine, de facto, the content and efficacy of the leading function, which, in turn, decisively conditions the accomplishment of others managerial functions" (Nicolescu, 2008, p. 291). Motivation comprises all internal and external energies which lead human behavior while work motivation provides the employees with confidence that working according to some established conditions will ensure the satisfaction of his/her needs. Effective use of motivation by managers requires a number of specific native skills and rigorous training. Having a motivated work

force or creating an environment in which high levels of motivation are maintained represents a challenge for today's management. This challenge may emanate from the fact that motivation is not a fixed trait – as it could change with changes in personal, psychological, financial or social factors (Ajang, 2007, p.10).

Many theories have been developed in the field of human motivation. Some of these theories are widely used by today's organizations leaders: Alders (ERG theory), Maslow (Need theory), Vrooms (Expectancy theory), Adams (Social equity theory), Taylor (productivity theory), Herzberg (Two factor theory), Mac Gregory (theory X and Y), Geogopalaus (path goal theory) and Skinner (Reward theory) (Ajang, 2007, p. 10). In-depth review of all the different theories mentioned above is beyond the scope of this paper. However, the personality-based perspective of work motivation within which Maslow's need theory of motivation falls will provide the main support and serves as a foundation for the research reported in this paper. Organizational scholars have paid great deal of attention to the idea that people are motivated to use their jobs as a mechanism for satisfying their needs; thus, this research intends to use the original Maslow's hierarchy of need theory of motivation as a foundation for determining a ranking order of the employees' needs.

Maslow (1943) suggests that human needs can be classified into five categories and that these categories can be arranged in a hierarchy according to their importance. These include physiological, security, belonging, esteem and self-actualization needs.

Physiological needs are the requirements for human survival. They include breathing, food, water, shelter, sex, clothing, sleep and comfort. Safety needs can be seen as a way to meet tomorrow's physiological needs. They include for example, personal and financial security, health, order, and legal protection. Love and belonging needs include social interactions, friendship, love, intimacy, family, community, belonging and relationships. Esteem needs include self-esteem as well as recognition from others. Esteem can come in the form of achievement, status, prestige, recognition, mastery, independence and responsibility. Self-actualization needs relate to becoming more than what we are, and they can come from peace, knowledge, self-fulfillment, realization of personal potential, personal growth and peak experiences (Bradley, 2010).

According to Maslow, a person is motivated first and foremost to satisfy physiological needs. As long as they remain unsatisfied, the employees are motivated only to fulfill them. When physiological needs are satisfied they cease to act as primary motivational factors and the individual moves "up" the hierarchy and seeks to satisfy security needs. This process continues until finally self-actualization needs are satisfied. According to Maslow, the rationale is quite simple because employees who are too hungry or too ill to work will hardly be able to make much of a contribution to productivity or to the achievement of the organizational goals.

A lot of empirical studies on employees' motivation using the original and adapted Maslow's model have been undertaken. These employees' motivation surveys have been conducted in many different job situations, among different categories of employees using different research methods and applications.

Hersey and Blanchard's (*apud* Ajang, 2007, p. 42) study of industrial employees, ranked: (1) full appreciation of work done, (2) feeling of being, (3) sympathetic help regarding personal problems, (4) job security, and (5) good wages/salaries as the five top motivational factors out of ten factors. Kovach (*apud* Ajang, 2007, p. 42) carried out a similar study of industrial employees in 1981 and again in 1986 and concluded that by 1981 what workers wanted had changed, interesting work was in the first position and sympathetic help concerning personal problems had dropped to the ninth position. Kovach further reported that by 1986 the ranking had changed even further and the top five ranked motivational factors were: (1) interesting work, (2) full appreciation of work done, (3) feeling of being (recognition), (4) job security, and (5) good wages/salary. A survey by Wiley (*apud* Ajang, 2007, p. 42) concluded the following collective rank by respondents: (1) good wages, (2) full appreciation of work, (3) job security, (4) promotions/expectations, and (5) interesting work. The ranked order of motivational factors according to a survey by Lindner (*apud* Ajang, 2007, p. 42) found the following ranking of five out of the ten motivational factors: (1) interesting work, (2) good wages/salary, (3) recognition, (4) job security, and (5) good working conditions. A survey by Ajang (2007) ranked as top five factors that motivate them as future employees as follows: job satisfaction, promotions/expectations, recognition, good salary, and organizational/management styles.

As we can notice, in terms of employees' motivation, surveys have used different motivational factors, some of them (recognition-esteem, salary-safety) taken into account by the original theory of Maslow, some of them very different from the five human needs postulated by Maslow (*i.e.* organizational/management styles).

Regardless of the heavy criticism addressed to the hierarchy of need theory, we believe that this theory has made a significant contribution in the field of organizational behavior and management especially in the area of employees' motivation and remains attractive for both researchers and managers alike. The incorporation of the need theory into the work environment today could be a result of the contributions made so far by Maslow's hierarchy of need theory.

This is, in fact, the main element of leadership. As a result, for an adequate work motivation, it is important for the leader-manager to understand which are the most active and conspicuous needs of the employees. In this regard, Abraham Maslow's basic model indicates that there is a hierarchy of needs, and that those needs on a lower level must be satisfied before moving to a higher level. In other words, when a need is satisfied it no longer motivates the person and the next need replaces the previous one.

Studying the needs of a population, based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, provides useful information concerning the level of motivation achieved by the employees. The results can lead to finding appropriate solutions in order to increase motivation, being an indicator of work behaviors. Depending on the level of the employees' needs, the orienting and directing of their work behavior can take place, in order to meet the needs.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Aim and objectives

The study is aimed at investigating the correlations between perceived leadership style, ideal leadership style and the human needs of the employees in order to identify and propose solutions for the improvement of the management tools. Due to the heterogeneity of the employees in terms of professional status, we also wanted to analyze the difference between categories of personnel (police officers, police constables and civilians) regarding the variables studied.

3.2. Participants

The study was developed using a representative sample of participants from a police school, namely 86 participants, representing approximately 81% of the institution's employees. The sample is composed of 46% women and 54% men. Regarding the professional status, 36 police officers were surveyed (21 teachers/trainers and 15 support staff), 22 police constables (6 trainers, 16 support staff) and 28 contractual civilian personnel (all support staff).
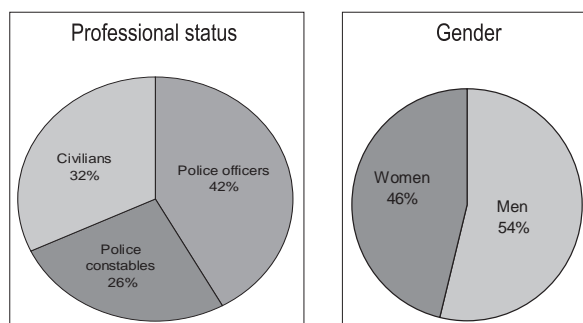
Figure 1: Sample structure based on professional status and gender

Concerning their basic professional training, 35% have military training and 65% civil training; 6% have under 5 years working experience, 17% up to 10 years, 19% have worked between 10 and 15 years, 13% between 15 and 20 years, and 45% more than 20 years.
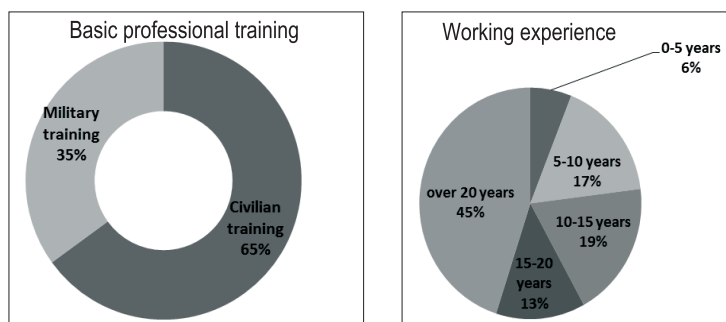
Figure 2: Sample structure based on training and work experience

3.3. Methods for data gathering and processing

The study was conducted between March and April 2011 at the school's headquarters. For data gathering we used three scales of measurement: one for the perceived style of leadership (18 items), one for the ideal one (18 items) and one for needs (25 items).

The two scales of leadership (one for perceived leadership and one for ideal leadership style) measure the three styles identified by Lewin (autocratic, democratic, and permissive) as independent dimensions, meaning that six items measure autocratic style, six measure the democratic style, and other six items measure the permissive one. The content of the items included in the two leadership scales is very similar. The difference consists in the formulation of items (that requires different analysis). For example: "My chief decides what I have to do and how" (autocratic, perceived); "I would like my chief to decide what I have to do and how" (autocratic, ideal). The participants were asked to rate their agreement with the statements on a five point Likert scale (1 – totally disagree, 5 – totally agree).

For the measurement of needs we used a five factor scale referring to the five categories of needs identified by Abraham Maslow. For each need we used five different items. Each item representing each need was distributed randomly within one group of items. Each group of items formed a subscale. Each subscale contained a single item per need. The participants were asked to make a hierarchy in each group of items, according to the personal importance of each element (item). The most important element in each group of items was rated with 5 by the participants and the least important with 1. All groups of items (subscales) contained one element representing each need. For physiological needs we used elements required for human survival such as "food", "sleep", "sex", for safety needs, seen as a way to meet tomorrow's physiological needs, we used items as "workplace safety", "economic stability", "having a place to live", for belonging needs that refer to social interactions, we included items like "friendship", " family", "relationships", for esteem needs we included items like "social status", "recognition", "self-esteem", and for self-actualization needs we included items such as "personal growth", "perfectionism".

All items were created by the authors, based on inter-evaluators agreement. We performed reliability analysis to test the reliability of each subscale of the three scales. All subscales have reliable ᾱ-Cronbach coefficients. Statistical analyses were performed applying the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, release 10.0. Correlation analyses were performed to test possible associations between variables. t-Tests were performed to test the significance of differences between means.

4. Interpretation of the results

4.1. Correlations between needs

Regarding the category "officers", the physiological needs are positively correlated with the sense of belonging and the need for esteem. The need for belonging is also correlated positively with the need for esteem and with the need for self-actualization. Also regarding the officers, the need for esteem is correlated positively with the need

for self-actualization. Regarding the constables, the need for safety is correlated negatively with the need for belonging, and the need for esteem correlated positively with the sense of belonging and self-actualization.

Regarding the civilians, the only needs that were correlated are the need for esteem on one hand, and the need for belonging and self-actualization on the other hand (positively correlated).

Looking at these results, we can observe that the physiological needs are connected with other needs (belonging and esteem) only for officers. The physiological needs of constables' category and the civilians' category are not correlated with other needs for the same professional category. They seem to be distinct entities.

Analyzing all correlations obtained between needs, as a function of professional category, we find that the needs of officers seem to be more interconnected than the constables' needs and also than the civilians' needs. The civilians' needs are the less interconnected. This aspect stresses the differences between the three professional categories, taking into account the interconnections of needs. There are also some similarities on this matter. Regarding all three categories, we found correlations between the need for esteem, on one hand, and the need for belonging and the need for self-actualization, on the other hand.

In our opinion, there is a logical link between the need for esteem and the need for belonging, and between the need for esteem and the one for self-actualization. The arguments are listed below.

The esteem needs represent a desire to have high evaluation of themselves from others and from themselves. This give them confidence in the face of the world and the sense of being useful and necessary (the sense of adequacy). From this point of view, we tend to see the need for esteem as an emotional component (self-loving as opposed to feeling inadequate, inferior or self-hating). Also, love and affection from others, together with their possible expression, being accepted by others (the sense of belonging) give birth to a sense of adequacy of oneself. This is an emotional need that all people in our society (with pathological exceptions) have.

Regarding self-actualizing, this concept reflects the tendency or desire of somebody to become everything that one is capable of becoming (a better person). Thus, self-actualization requires a good esteem, and this fact leads to an increased self-affection.

In other words, we tend to consider that the sense of belonging, the need for esteem and the need for self-actualization, together serve for an emotional purpose directed to oneself (the central link being the need for esteem). The physiological need and safety needs do not serve to an emotional purpose directed to oneself, although the satisfaction of these needs results in the reduction of the internal tension and the lack of satisfaction results in increasing tensions; these two needs are more directed to survival and less directed to self (animals also have these two needs – food, water, sex, have protection mechanism for better survival: fight or flight, playing dead, camouflaging in the colors of the environment).

Overall, regarding all professional categories, only one negative correlation was obtained between different needs. This one is between safety needs and the need

for belonging in the case of constables with other needs. The need for safety is independent from every other need, in the case of the other two groups. In terms of Maslow theory (Bradley, 2010) this negative correlation would indicate that the need for belonging, once being satisfied, would be replaced with the need for safety (these interpretation takes into account also the mean difference obtained between this two variables). If one need decreases, than another increases (or arises). This rule is questionable overall, because of the positive correlations between most needs as well as independence of needs in other cases. For example safety is independent from other needs, for officers and civilians – there is not necessary for other need to decrease in order for the safety need to occur.

The officers' needs are more interconnected than the constables' needs and also than the civilians' needs. Due to this fact, we can consider that when one need is satisfied (for example the need for esteem), more other needs will be also satisfied through. The needs being less interconnected, in the case of the constables and civilians this rule is weaker, but still available. This hypothesis is difficult to be tested in studies by experimental manipulation of needs. Because we found some differences regarding the pattern of correlation between needs as a function of professional status, it could be also interesting to see if this pattern of correlation of needs can be replicated on other populations, after controlling for the "social/professional status".

4.2. Correlations between the leadership styles

In a previous research (Raus and Haita, 2010, pp. 258) using the same data we obtained the correlations listed below that are valid for the entire lot of participants, regardless of the professional category:
- "The correlations between the three dimensions of the perceived style of leadership:
  - The autocratic leadership style has a significant negative correlation with the democratic leadership style ($r = -0.51$, $p<0.0001$) and with the permissive one ($r = -0.27$, $p = 0.01$).
  - The democratic style has a significant positive correlation with the permissive style ($r = 0.39$, $p<0.0001$).
- The correlations between the three dimensions of the ideal style of leadership:
  - The ideal autocratic leadership style has a significant negative correlation with the ideal democratic leadership style ($r = -0.286$, $p = 0.008$) and with the ideal permissive one ($r = -0.216$, $p = 0.046$).
  - The ideal democratic style does not correlate with the ideal permissive style".

When we analyzed the correlations for the three categories separately, as a function of professional status, the correlations previously obtained are kept only regarding the officers, and in their case only regarding the perceived leadership style, respectively: the perceived autocratic leadership style is correlated negatively with the perceived democratic and with the perceived permissive styles. Also the perceived democratic style and the perceived permissive one are positively correlated.

Regarding the other two categories (constables and civilians), the relations between leadership styles are kept only in part: for constables the perceived autocratic style is correlated negatively with the perceived democratic and, for civilians, the perceived democratic style is correlated positively with the perceived permissive.

This partial correlations (for each category obtained somehow complementary one for each other) contribute (from different directions) to the effect of the global correlations (obtained for the entire group, regardless of the professional category, in the study mentioned above). Regarding the ideal leadership styles, the democratic and the permissive ones are not correlated, for any of the groups (professional category), similarly with the results from the previous study (N=86 participants). But, for the ideal styles, we obtained negative correlations between autocratic, on one hand, and the democratic and permissive, on the other hand. Analyzing the new correlations obtained this time, separately for each group, it seems that the data collected from officer's group contributed to the relation between autocratic and permissive, while the data gathered from constables contributed for the relation between autocratic and democratic. The data gathered from civilians did not contribute to these relations at all.

4.3. Correlations between leadership styles and needs

The perceived styles are correlated with needs, in a different way, from one group to another. The need for safety is negatively correlated with the perceived permissive style for the officers' group, and also negatively with the perceived autocratic style for the constable's group.

For civilians, the physiological needs are positively correlated with the perceived democratic style. There are no other correlations between other needs and other perceived styles for any of the groups. This indicates that, in general there are no reciprocal influences between perceived leadership styles and needs. The nature of the relationship between the need for safety, on one hand and the perceived permissive style for officers and the perceived autocratic for constables, on the other hand, need further analyses and explanations.

Regarding the ideal styles, we found significant correlations with needs, only between sense of belonging and the ideal autocratic style for officers (positive correlation) and between ideal autocratic style and the physiological needs for civilians (negative correlation). Regarding the constables, there is no significant correlation between the needs and the ideal leadership style. Taking into account these few correlations, and only for the two groups out of three, this makes us consider a small influence of needs on preference for one style or another, and vice-versa.

4.4. Comparisons between needs

The officers considered the physiological needs being significantly more important than the others: safety, esteem, belonging, and self-actualization. These are the differences between needs regarding the officers.

The constables also considered the physiological needs as significantly more important than other needs, except the need for self-actualizing, also lower than the

physiological needs but not statistically relevant. Constables also consider the need for self-actualization as more important than the need for esteem and the one for safety.

Civilians displayed similar differences regarding needs, having more similarities with the group of constables and less with the group of officers: the physiological needs of civilians are more important than all other needs, except self-actualizing. The need for self-actualization is more important than the need for esteem and the one for safety (until this point we see a similar pattern with the group of constables). Instead, the sense of belonging of civilians is more important than the need for safety, the need for esteem is more important than the one for safety, and the last but not least the need for self-actualizing is more significant than the sense of belonging.

In summary, for all groups, the physiological needs are statistically more significant than other needs, except the need for self-actualization for police constables and civilians. However, these needs are the most conspicuous of all categories of staff (due to increased mean, even whether in terms of the significance of the difference it is not relevant for police constables and civilians).

Between the response pattern of constables and the one of civilians there are some similarities, in terms of hierarchy of needs. The officers displayed a different pattern of response compared to the other two groups. Although for all categories of personnel the physiological needs are stronger than other needs, we do not notice other relevant similarities with the original hierarchy of needs, regarding our samples. For police constables and civilians the need for self-actualization is more important than the needs for safety and esteem. This fact contradicts the original model of human needs. Maslow believed that the need for self-actualization is the last need human strives to accomplish.

It is worth noting that the officers need for esteem (or status) is the least important, being on the top of the pyramid, and this is maybe due to the fact that they already satisfied this need, benefiting from the highest professional at the organizational and institutional level (although the differences of the means are not statistically relevant, overall they still rated this need as being less important).

If we had to accept a hierarchy of human needs based on data obtained in this study, this would be according to Figure 3 below:
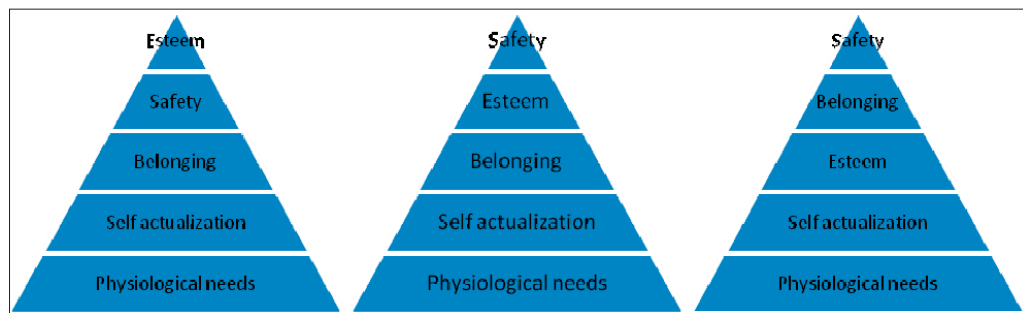
a. Police officers   b. Police constables   c. Civilians

Figure 3: Hierarchy of needs in the studied sample

Maslow said that needs must be satisfied in the given order. This means that a need arises only if the need below is satisfied. We agree with the fact that there is a hierarchy of human needs in terms of their importance. However, considering the findings of our study, we can assert that this hierarchy is different from one category of personnel to another, but the correlational nature of the needs in some cases, and the independent nature, in other cases suggest that people are not motivated to satisfy only one need level at a time, except in situations where there is a conflict between needs (because there is after all a hierarchy of needs in terms of importance for each category of personnel). Therefore, we believe that it is not necessary to satisfy a need for another need to arise.

4.5. Comparisons between leadership styles

All employees (police officers, police constables and civilians) would like a less autocratic leadership style than the perceived one and a more democratic than they perceive there is. In addition, civilians would like a more permissive style of leadership than is the perceived style.

We mention that we measured leadership styles as an independent variables (for each style at hand we used separate items), because the literature mentions that a predominant style does not exclude another style, although any of them can appear less or more in different periods of time.

This allowed us to remark the fine differences between perceived leadership styles and the ideal style for every category of personnel. We observed that, for example, some of the personnel would like a less authoritarian style of leadership and a more democratic style than it is perceived. However, we noticed that the leadership style is permissive enough. So if the leader wants to become less autocratic and more democratic in order to meet the expectations of subordinates, he should not automatically become more permissive with subordinates, because they consider him permissive enough.

5. Conclusions and practical implications

The research results contradict Maslow's hierarchy of needs, concerning the order of each need in the hierarchical construction. If we have to prioritize human needs based on our data, indeed, physiological needs are at the bottom of the pyramid for all categories of staff, as the model postulates. But from the second need to the top of pyramid, the order postulated by the model in question is no longer kept for every category taken into study. The second need is the need for self-actualization, although Maslow's model assumes that the need for security is the second priority. From the third need to the top, each category has a different configuration in terms of their importance. For the police officers and police constables, the need for belonging is posted in the middle of the pyramid, being the third in importance, while for the civilians the need for esteem outweighs the need for belonging. It is surprising that the need for safety, a need that Maslow considered almost basal, appears at the top of the pyramid for police constable and also for civilians.

Because we did not find significant connections (in number and intensity) between needs and leadership styles it can be considered more likely that this two variables do not take effect up on each other (changes in leadership style do not produce effects in human needs and vice versa).

However, it is worth noting by the managers that the mechanism of motivating employees by handling needs is rather insensitive to the leadership style adopted. Therefore, in terms of motivation, intervention of the manager should be focused on other aspects. One of these could be the orientation of employee's behavior by linking performance of individual activity with rewards so the meeting of the conspicuous needs of each individual to be significantly conditioned by results of his work. This thing is difficult to achieve in present, because there is no realistic reward system in the public sector, specifically adapted to the general and particular environment of the educational unit. This should be correlated with the objectives and performance indicators of each job. Although, obtaining necessary income for daily living influences much stronger and directly the meeting of physiological needs, this also obviously competes to the satisfaction of other needs (although the link between them is less clear). In the case of our study, primacy of the physiological needs should indicate, to the management staff, that the behavior of subordinates is orientated to obtaining the means of survival.

Because the leadership style adopted by the management staff of the unit studied is not influenced by human needs in general and does not produces changes in the needs, the use of a particular style by leaders will have to be based on the analysis of organizational culture and also on the particular situations for which the decision have to be made.

Considering the results of the study, we outline at least two possibilities for optimization of the managerial tools:

– Knowing the personnel needs and using the existing means at the time allows the manager to act upon the needs of personnel and thus obtain the effects of orienting the work behavior in the desired direction.
– The conclusions of this study can be the scientific foundation for the responsible structures in order to design policies and strategies in the field, a new reward system, one strongly related to individual and collective performance.

Our results are valid only regarding the personnel of a police educational unit, but we consider this research as a valuable starting point in the field, for understanding organizational behavior in terms of universal human needs.

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Appendixes

1. Correlation analysis between the variable studied, regarding each category of personnel based on professional status

1.1. Correlation analysis regarding "officer" category

Table 1: The correlations between leadership styles and needs

Variable 1- Need	Variable 2- Leadership style	r	p
Need for security	Perceived permissive style	-0.38	0.02
Need for belonging	Ideal autocratic style	0.33	0.04

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

Table 2: The correlations between different needs

Variable 1- Need	Variable 2- Need	r	p
Physiological needs	Need for belonging	0.43	0.009
Physiological needs	Need for esteem	0.33	0.04
Need for belonging	Need for esteem	0.36	0.02
Need for belonging	Need for self-actualization	0.37	0.02
Need for esteem	Need for self-actualization	0.43	0.009

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

Table 3: The correlations between the perceived leadership styles

Variable 1 Perceived leadership style	Variable 1 Perceived leadership style	r	p
Autocratic style	Democratic style	-0.64	<0.0001
Autocratic style	Permissive style	-0.41	0.01
Democratic style	Permissive style	0.35	0.03

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

Table 4: The correlations between the ideal leadership styles

Variable 1 Ideal leadership style	Variable 1 Ideal leadership style	r	p
Autocratic style	Permissive style	-0.38	0.02

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

1.2. Correlation analysis regarding the category of "constables"

Table 5: The correlations between leadership styles and needs

Variable 1- Need	Variable 2- Leadership style	r	p
Need for safety	Perceived autocratic style	-0.43	0.04

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

None of other needs correlated with none of the three ideal leadership styles.

Table 6: The correlations between different needs

Variable 1- Need	Variable 2- Need	r	p
Need for safety	Need for belonging	-0.48	0.02
Need for belonging	Need for esteem	0.55	0.008
Need for esteem	Need for self-actualization	0.44	0.03

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

Table 7: The correlations between perceived leadership styles

Variable 1 Perceived leadership style	Variable 1 Perceived leadership style	r	p
Autocratic style	Democratic style	-0.66	0.001

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

Table 8: The correlations between ideal leadership styles

Variable 1 Ideal leadership style	Variable 1 Ideal leadership style	r	p
Autocratic style	Democratic style	-0.47	0.02

r = correlational coefficient
P = level of statistical significance

1.3. Correlation analysis regarding the category "civilians"

Table 9: The correlations between leadership styles and needs

Variable 1- Need	Variable 2- Leadership style	r	p
Physiological needs	Perceived democratic style	0.39	0.03
Physiological needs	Ideal autocratic style	-0.50	0.006

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

Table 10: The correlations between different needs

Variable 1- Need	Variable 2- Need	Correlation	r	p
Need for belonging	Need for esteem	Positive	0.36	<0.0001
Need for esteem	Need for self-actualization	Positive	0.49	0.008

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

Table 11: The correlations between perceived leadership styles

Variable 1- Perceived leadership style	Variable 1- Perceived leadership style	r	p
Democratic style	Permissive style	0.42	0.02

r = correlational coefficient
p = level of statistical significance

The correlations between ideal leadership styles – there are no significant correlations between the ideal leadership styles.

2. Comparisons between the variables studied regarding each category of personnel based on professional status

2.1. Comparative analysis regarding the category "officers"

Table 12: Comparisons between needs

Variable 1-Need	Variable 2-Need	Comparison	t	p
Physiological needs	Need for safety	M1>M2	4.5	<0.0001
Physiological needs	Need for belonging	M1>M2	5.1	<0.0001
Physiological needs	Need for esteem	M1>M2	5.6	<0.0001
Physiological needs	Need for self-actualization	M1>M2	3.5	0.001

M = the mean of the group
t = pared sample t-test
p = level of statistical significance

There are no significant differences between other needs, compared two by two.

Table 13: Comparisons between the leadership styles

Variable 1- Perceived leadership style (V1)	Variable 2- Ideal leadership style (V2)	Comparison	t	p
Autocratic style	Autocratic style	M1>M2	5.22	<0.0001
Democratic style	Democratic style	M1<M2	-6.03	<00001

M = the mean of the group
t = pared sample t-test
p = level of statistical significance

There is no significant difference between the ideal permissive style and the perceived permissive one.

2.2. Comparative analysis regarding the category "constables"

Table 14: Comparisons between needs

Variable 1-Need	Variable 2-Need	Comparison	t	p
Physiological needs	Need for safety	M1>M2	5.32	<0.0001
Physiological needs	Need for belonging	M1>M2	2.15	0.04
Physiological needs	Need for esteem	M1>M2	3.52	0.002
Need for safety	Need for self-actualization	M1<M2	-2.79	0.011
Need for esteem	Need for self-actualization	M1<M2	-3.12	0.005

M = the mean of the group
t = pared sample t-test
p = level of statistical significance

There are no significant differences between other needs, compared two by two.

Table 15: Comparisons between the leadership styles

Variable 1 Perceived leadership style	Variable 2 Ideal leadership style	Comparison	t	p
Autocratic style	Autocratic style	M1>M2	2.96	0.007
Democratic style	Democratic style	M1<M2	-2.10	0.04

M = the mean of the group
t = pared sample t-test
p = level of statistical significance

There is no significant difference between the ideal permissive style and the perceived permissive one.

2.3. Comparative analysis regarding the category "civilians"

Table 16: Comparisons between needs

Variable 1-Need	Variable 2-Need	Comparison	t	p
Physiological needs	Need for safety	M1>M2	9.00	<0.0001
Physiological needs	Need for belonging	M1>M2	4.20	<0.0001
Physiological needs	Need for esteem	M1>M2	3.20	0.003
Need for safety	Need for belonging	M1<M2	-4.23	<0.0001
Need for safety	Need for esteem	M1<M2	-4.45	<0.0001
Need for safety	Need for self-actualization	M1<M2	-6.46	<0.0001
Need for esteem	Need for self-actualization	M1<M2	-3.11	0.004
Need for belonging	Need for self-actualization	M1<M2	-3.02	0.005

M = the mean of the group
t = pared sample t-test
p = level of statistical significance

There are no significant differences between other needs, compared two by two.

Table 17: Comparisons between the leadership styles

Variable 1- Perceived leadership style	Variable 2- Ideal leadership style	Comparison	t	p
Autocratic style	Autocratic style	M1>M2	4.79	<0.0001
Democratic style	Democratic style	M1<M2	-3.20	0.003
Permissive style	Permissive style	M1<M2	-2.93	0.007

M = the mean of the group
t = pared sample t-test
p = level of statistical significance