

The Leading Woman in the Knowledge-Based Economy

Diana Elena ZAHARIA
(ȘTEFĂNESCU)¹,
Bogdan ȘTEFĂNESCU²

¹PhD, “Valahia” University of
Târgoviste,
diana.estefanescu@yahoo.com

²PhD Student, “Valahia” University
of Târgoviste,
bogdanstefanescu@yahoo.com

Abstract: *This scientific approach takes into account the analysis of the leadership type, present in the Romanian cultural institutions in terms of identifying the opinion and attitude of the members of the organizations towards the management, as well as the level of their involvement in the accomplishment of the management act, considering that these are important elements that ensure the achievement of the organization's objectives. The research methods used are the following: Observation and analysis of documents and quantitative analysis based on questionnaires.*

Research Question: Is women accepted as a leader in the contemporary knowledge-based economy?

Research hypothesis: Does the gender of the leader influence the organizational performance of cultural institutions in Romania?

Purpose of the research: To make a comparison between leadership styles related to gender differences.

Keywords: *leadership; woman leader; organizational culture and climate; organizational performance.*

How to cite: Zaharia (Ștefănescu), D. E., & Ștefănescu, B. Ș. (2022). The Leading Woman in the Knowledge-Based Economy. In I. Panagoreț & G. Gorghiu (vol. ed.), *Lumen Proceedings: Vol. 18. Globalization, Innovation and Development, Trends and Prospects (GIDTP 2019)* (pp. 247-259). Iasi, Romania: LUMEN Publishing House.
<https://doi.org/10.18662/lumproc/gidtp2022/25>

Introduction

Equal opportunities and treatment are based on the effective participation of each person in social and economic life [22], regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, etc. The European Union considers equal opportunities as a fundamental right according to article no. 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Gender equality, non-discrimination and ensuring accessibility are the necessary conditions for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Thus, the Common Regulation establishes the objective of "eliminating inequalities and promoting equality between women and men" (Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). Regulation on the European Social Fund no. 1304/2013 (article no. 7 - Promoting equal opportunities between men and women) stipulates that "the member states support specific punctual actions, in order to increase the sustainable participation, for employment, women, as well as the increase of the number of employees. women, diminishing gender segregation, combating gender stereotypes in the labor market, promoting reconciliation of personal life with professional life and equitable sharing of care responsibilities between women and men" [12].

Gender Equality Strategy 2010-2015, Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth - EU 2020 Strategy.

"Gender equality implies an equal level of affirmation, visibility and participation for both genders in the sphere of private life as well as public life; aims to promote the participation of women and men in society ", this is the definition of equal opportunities and treatment between men and women, given by the European Council. Directive 2010/41 / EU on the application of the principle of equal treatment between women and men, which carries out independent activities; Directive 2006/54 / EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment between women and men in the field of work and employment.

Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment between men and women:

- Art. 1. Alin (2) "For the purpose of the present law, by equal opportunities and treatment between men and women, it is meant to take into account the different needs, capacities and aspirations of men and women";

- Art. 2. Alin (1) "The measures to promote equal opportunities and treatment between men and women and to eliminate discrimination on the basis of gender are applied in the public and private sectors, in the fields:

work, health, education, culture, politics, involvement in decision making, access to goods and services, establishment, development of an entity. "

Hypotheses and theories that explain the differences between the leading woman and the leading man

In this article we will analyze gender differences in leadership using assumptions and theories identified in the literature. Assumptions and theories that explain the differences between the female leader and the male lead:

- Differences in efficiency and achieving success as a leader;
- Biological differences between men and women;
- Real differences or perception [4].

➤ Differences in efficiency and achieving success as a leader

Within this theory, the role of socialization is recognized and gender-specific roles are explored.

➤ Biological differences between women and men

This theory is based on the hypothesis that the man has innate leadership qualities that are inaccessible to the woman.

➤ Real differences or perceptions

The factors that make the difference are: the woman's self-confidence, the experiences, the predominance of the style approached in the organization and the woman's perception of the leadership. Successful leadership quality is reflexively associated with typical male behavior.

Studies show that there are more men in leadership positions than women. If a woman adopts a typical masculine behavior, in order to be successful as a leader, she will automatically be considered lacking in femininity.

The woman's docility, submission and reserved attitude may be associated with incompetence. Therefore, in order to be successful, a woman must have a typically masculine attitude [3].

Education plays an important role in women's perception of the self. Since childhood many girls are educated to be a man, to be in a secondary place in the family, after the husband, to give up career success for family harmony and to dedicate themselves exclusively to the household and to the children. There is also the preconceived idea that a woman cannot have a successful family and career.

It is worth noting that in the last period, a number of women have been asserted in their careers, to which, if you analyze their profile, you find that in their majority they have the status of single or divorced women [10].

A man cannot stand in the shadow of a successful woman, because he cannot stand the competition, because he is educated by family and society as he must be the head of the family, the leader of the family, the leader of the family. And those men who manage to survive with a strong woman are considered by society weak [7].

Society and education are what do not allow the leading woman to be considered equal to the leading man.

Pre-conceived ideas that a man is smarter, smarter than a woman lead to discrimination of the latter. Because of this custom a woman has to work much harder than a man to prove her competence.

Statistics show that women accept lower incomes than men for the same job. A woman is more organized, more attentive to details, more prudent, more rigorous in her actions than a man. Typical male values such as domination, strength and determination are appreciated in organizations [11].

We find Hofstede G. among those who cared about the differences between the female leader and the male leader, and in his attempt to identify aspects specific to the organizational culture, he defined masculinity based on the more arrogant or modest behavior of individuals. In its conception, "masculine" is embodied in proud behavior, highlighting its own qualities, and "feminine" is characterized by modest, compassionate behavior. Hofstede G. found in his studies that in the male societies the domination behavior and the attempts to excel are appreciated, and in the feminine ones these elements are ridiculed.

In his studies, Hofstede G. came to the conclusion that masculinity measures the degree to which a society retains or does not have the traditional role of man to work, to achieve, to have control and power, an aspect that shows that society is differentiated by based on gender, the man has a dominant position in the social and power structures, the woman being controlled, dominated. A low degree of masculinity shows a reduced degree of sexual differentiation and discrimination; women and men are treated in the same way, in all social aspects. Masculinity does not mean disadvantage of women, but inequality, and a certain discrimination of women exists even in women's cultures [9].

Taking into account the behavioral variable, Hofstede G. antithetically prides himself on modesty - the values that put more value. Luthans F. affirmed, based on the analyzes, that masculinity is the extent to which the dominant values of a society are the assertion and enhancement of wealth, and femininity is the extent to which the dominant values of the

society are related to interpersonal relations, caring for others, interest in others quality of work climate [15].

Although always in the position of mothers, husbands, lovers, women have, over time, always been discriminated against men. Until recently, the woman was regarded only as a being that ensured the perpetuation of the human species, having no rights but only obligations. Lately, things have changed, although discrimination has not completely disappeared, it only takes modern forms [13].

It is noteworthy that, over time, women have demonstrated leadership skills based in particular on communication, encouraging expression and orientation towards men, which differs from men who are more task-oriented, delegated, and a way of autocrat leadership [20].

From the point of view of women leaders, the most important factors for career advancement relate to the competence of managing and developing employees, while for men it is important the visibility and awareness of internal policies and procedures. Leading men are more direct, more objective and rational, while leading women are creative, empathetic, and intuitive and demonstrate excellent communication and persuasion skills [14].

There are many myths about the superiority of men as leaders over women, but few are confirmed. Men in leadership positions are no better than women. There are examples of incompetent leaders in one category, and in the other. Between the quality of the leaders and the organizational results there is no doubt and there can be an intrinsically unquestionable connection. It is shown that organizations led by efficient leaders develop, and where leaders are inefficient, organizations suffer from setbacks [17].

Also, it was found that women are not suitable for the position of leader and it is a risk to promote them because: they do not have the firmness of a man and they are not respected by the team, they do not take decisions quickly, they do not take risks, they are suitable for certain trades and less suitable for others, they are subjective and emotional, rather than objective and rational, they have reduced availability to do extra work and to travel when they have family and children, they can become pregnant and missing from the organization for a long time [21].

Women in leadership positions tend to worry more, be more anxious, more anxious, but also more open to feedback and self-development, they are more introspective about their impact on others, they are less confident in their own strengths, Less aggressive and dominant, but more prone to solving problems and cooperation, they have a more pragmatic approach to problem solving and are more implementation-oriented [6].

Female leaders are trained to help and support others and to be involved in actions that result in the development of society, the creation of a pleasant atmosphere at work, the preservation of family values, of sound ethical principles and of the organization's image [19]. Leading men tend to have a stronger motivation for business opportunities, money and profit. They tend to manipulate more to win, they are more charismatic, more courageous, and they take more risks. On the other hand, women in the leading position are more cautious, avoid or reduce risks, tend to withdraw in situations of pressure and fatigue [16].

Leading men's perspective is the chance to gain access to high-paying, well-paid positions, the opportunity to learn and improve and stay up to date with news. Women leaders attach great importance to a relaxed working atmosphere, to having job security, to having good working conditions, to having good relationships with bosses, subordinates and colleagues [2].

Woman can be considered an example of success in career and life. Access to top positions within organizations should be as easy for both women and men as possible [18].

Because, in organizations where the leader is female, less-aggressive, entity-based strategies are used to achieve the "step by step" goals. In such organizations, the interest in the human resource predominates, its motivation is avoided, discrimination of any kind, there is concern for improving working conditions, for achieving a climate of cooperation and for avoiding or mediating conflicts. In such situations, the leadership style approached by the organizations is predominantly democratic, participatory, based on the frequent involvement of employees in the decision-making act [1].

Women's leadership style is defined by dedication, motivation, attitude, sensitivity, power, inspiration, self-confidence. The female spirit has changed customs, helped the woman over time to meet her own standards in relation to personal expectations. The tendency is towards a balance between the male and female horizons, a society in which the leader is no longer a concept that identifies with the man, but defines an attribute par excellence of the woman [8].

Faith in the style of female leadership has been developed based on trust, creativity, innovation and motivation, whose purpose is to put women dedicated to their desire to be efficient leaders with those who are leaders to follow, thus these authentic models laying the foundations of a societies oriented towards sustainable development and progress [5].

Following the centralization of the research results, the following information regarding the gender of the existing leader at the time of the quantitative research was obtained:

- The existence of a female leader in the case of 17.3% of the managerial respondents and 34.3% of the respondents with execution functions, totaling 51.6%;

- The existence of a male gender leader by 16.2% of the management respondents and 32.2% of the respondents with execution functions, totaling 48.4%.

The average central tendency identified at the sample level is 1.48 (Chart 1) and provides us with information on gender equality among leaders and the balance existing at the time of practical research.

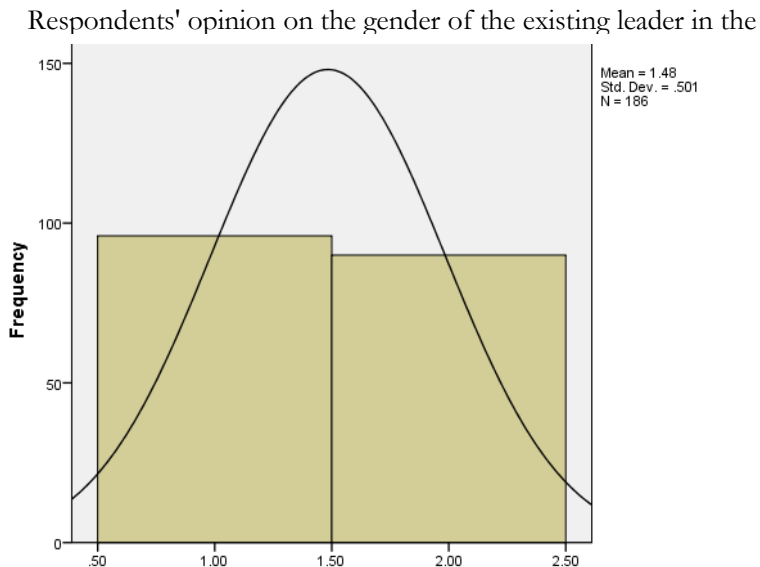


Chart 1.

Source: by the author

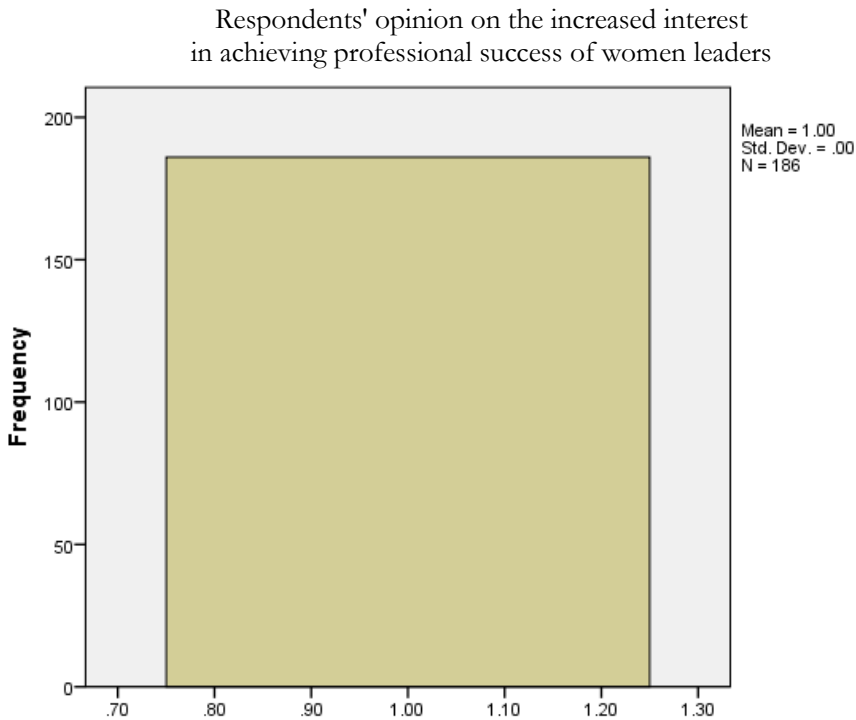


Chart 2

Source: by the author

Following the respondents' opinions, the following information regarding the increased interest in achieving professional success of the leading women resulted:

- 33.3% of the respondent managers and 66.7% of the respondents with execution functions, total 100% have a positive opinion.

The maximum central tendency identified at the sample level is 1.00 (Chart 2.), and we found that the respondents, regardless of the hierarchical position, unanimously appreciated the increased interest of the leading women in order to achieve professional success. Women with leadership status tend towards performance through their determined attitude and ambition.

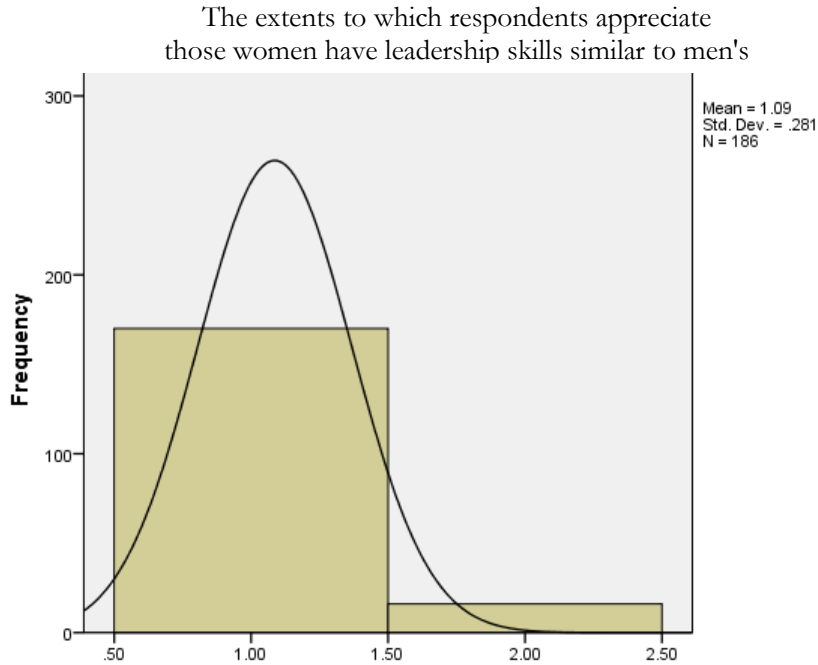


Chart 3.

Source: by the author

The extent to which respondents appreciate that women have leadership skills similar to men's, provides the following information:

- 33.3% of the respondent managers and 58.1% of the respondents with execution functions, total 91.4% have a positive opinion.
- 0% of the respondent managers and 8.6% of the respondents with execution functions, 8.6% have a negative opinion.

The high central tendency identified at the sample level is 1.09 (Chart 3.), and we found that respondents appreciated that women have similar leadership skills as men. Leadership skills are not gender specific.

Respondents' opinion about women who are more concerned about the quality of relationships at work than men

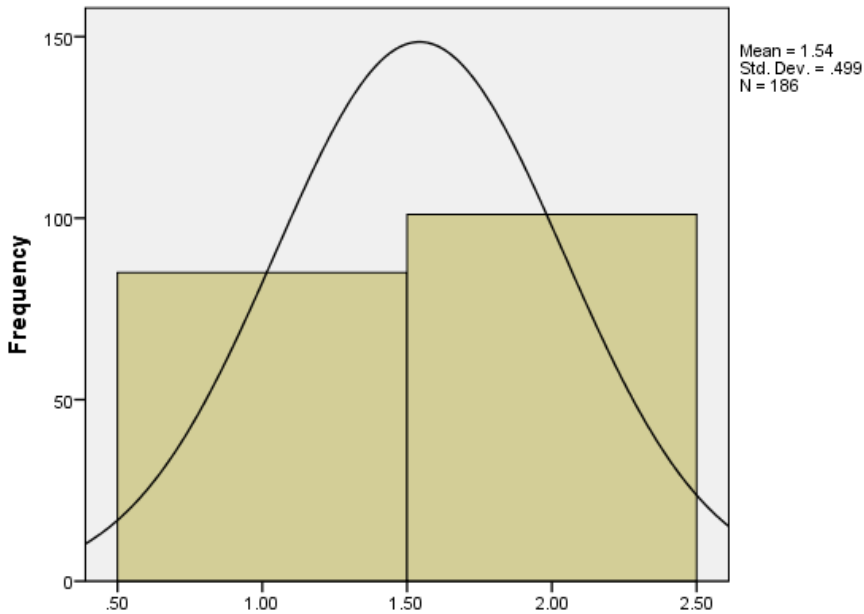


Chart 4.

Source: by the author

Respondents' opinions about women who are more concerned about the quality of work relationships than men are supported by the centralization of the answers and give us the following information:

- 13.4% of the respondent managers and 32.3% of the respondents with execution functions, a total of 45.7% have a positive opinion.

- 19.9% of the respondent managers and 34.4% of the respondents with execution functions, a total of 54.3% had a negative opinion.

The relatively average central tendency identified at the sample level is 1.54 (Chart 4.), resulting in the fact that women are no more concerned about the quality of human relations at work than men.

Respondents' opinion regarding the existence of social stereotypes and perceptions regarding female versus male leaders

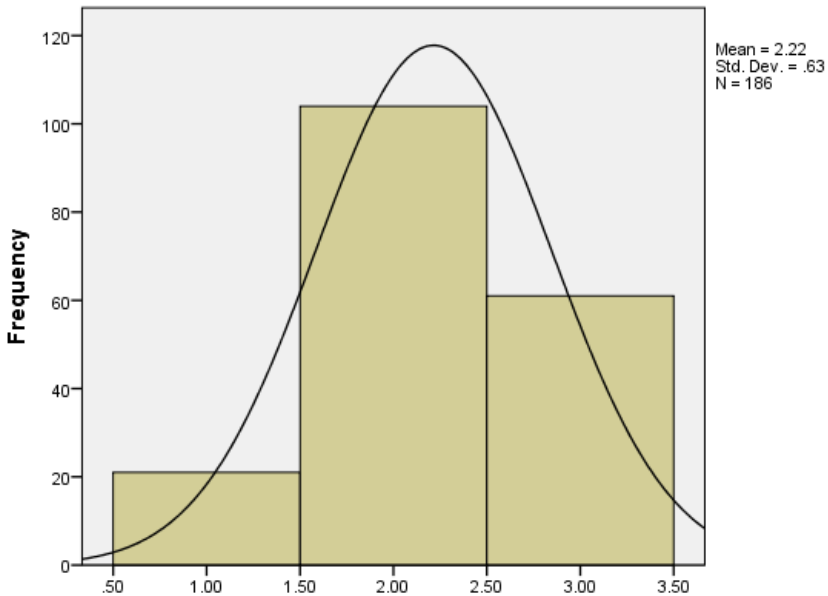


Chart 5.

Source: by the author

Respondents' opinions regarding the existence of social stereotypes and perceptions regarding female versus male leaders provide the following information:

- 2.2% of the respondent managers and 9.1% of the respondents with execution functions, total 11.3% answered yes;
- 31,2% of the manager's respondents and 24.7% of the respondents with execution functions, a total of 55.9% answered negative;
- 0% of the respondent managers and 32.8% of the respondents with execution functions, total 32.8% refused to express their opinion.

The relatively high central tendency identified at the sample level is 2.22 (Chart 5.), resulting in the respondents, regardless of their function, accepting without prejudice to be coordinated and led by either a woman or a man. The employees take into account the human and professional qualities of a performance leader to follow, his gender being them regardless.

Conclusions

Knowing and learning the style of effective leadership should be the goal of all managers because: - human capital is the most important resource for any organization, and the role of the efficient leader is to use with responsibility this resource that generates organizational performance; - Women are increasingly active in professional life, which is why the leader's gender should not be an impediment to achieving the goals.

References

- [1] Adair, John. The Leadership of Muhammad (PBUH). 2010.
- [2] Collins, Jim. Business Excellence, Curtea Veche Publishing House, Bucharest. 2012
- [3] Pocol, Cristina Bianca; Moldovan&-Teselios, Călin. Women Entrepreneurship in Romania: A Regional Evaluation. Bulletin of the University of Agricultural Sciences & Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca. Horticulture, 2014, 71.2.
- [4] Gardner, Howard, Laskin Emma, Leading minds. Life Stories of World Leaders., Three Publishing House. 2014
- [5] Goleman, David, What it means to be a good leader, Curtea Veche Publishing House, Bucharest. 2014
- [6] Goleman, David, Leadership: the power of emotional intelligence, Curtea Veche Publishing House, Bucharest. 2016
- [7] Goleman, D., McKee, A. and Boyatzis, R., Emotional intelligent in leadership, Curtea Veche Publishing House, Third Edition, Revised and added, Bucharest. 2015
- [8] Hill, Napoleon, The power of belief, Second Edition, Curtea Veche Publishing House, Bucharest. 2012
- [9] Hofstede, Geert, Management of multicultural structures, Economics Publishing House, Bucharest. 1996
- [10] Gender Equality Index Report (2013), ISBN: 978-92-9218-312-7; doi:10.2839/9948 and Gender Equality Index Report 2015 – Measuring gender equality in the European Union, ISBN: 978-92-9218-814-6; doi:10.2839/763764
<http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Gender-Equality-Index-Report.pdf>
- [11] Report of the European Parliament on the careers of women in the scientific and university environment and the „glass ceilings” encountered (2014/2251(INI)) from 20.07.2015; Commission of the Woman Rights and Gender Equality; Raportor: Elissavet Vozemberg.

- [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-
//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A8-2015-0235+0+DOC+XML+V0//RO](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A8-2015-0235+0+DOC+XML+V0//RO)
- [12] [http://www.fonduri-ue.ro/images/files/documente-
relevante/orientari_beneficiari/Ghid.egalitate.sanse.1.pdf](http://www.fonduri-ue.ro/images/files/documente-relevante/orientari_beneficiari/Ghid.egalitate.sanse.1.pdf)
- [13] Mcgrath, James, The wise manager – 90 important ideas for profitable business, 2017
- [14] Kotter, John P., Matsushita Leadership, Pocket Publishing House, 2015
- [15] Luthans, Fred, Organizational Behavior, McGraw Hill International Editions. 1992
- [16] Manz, C. C., Sims H.P. Jr., Leading workers to lead themselves. The external leadership of self-managing work teams., Administrativ Science Quarterlz. 1987
- [17] Baig, Mirza Yawar, Leadership Lessons from the Life of Rasoolullah: Proven Techniques of How to Succeed in Today's World. 2012
- [18] Niculescu, Maria, Vasile Nicolae, Epistomology – an interdisciplinary persepective , Bibliotheca Publishing House, Târgoviște. 2011
- [19] Rosenzweig, Phil, The halo effect, Publica Publishing House. 2010
- [20] Ceptureanu, Sebastian Ion and Eduard Gabriel Ceptureanu, Women Entrepreneurship in Romania: the Case of North East Development Region. 2014
- [21] Vagu, Paraschiv, Stegăroiu Ion, Leadership from theory to practice, Bibliotheca Publishing House. 2006
- [22] Caras A. Etica si dezvoltare comunitara. Iasi: Lumen, 2016.