

**Original scientific paper**

## **AGGRESSIVENESS AND ANXIETY AS PREDICTORS OF MANAGEMENT STYLE PREFERENCE**

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**Abstract:** Management represents the activity which has a major importance for the efficiency of performing in any professional area, as well as in sports performing. Different approaches stress different management styles, but the three once defined by Lickert (autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire) are the basic ones. The contingency approach stresses the importance of situational factors for the choice of an optimal management style. The preferences of management style depend on many factors, but personality traits have the major importance. In this investigation, we have chosen the traits of aggressiveness and anxiety which are very important for sport efficiency. These traits have been correlated to the preference of an autocratic, democratic and integrative-situational management style. The investigation has been conducted on a sample of 48 participants. The results show the correlation between aggressiveness and the preference of the autocratic management style and the correlation between anxiety and preference of the democratic management style.

**Key words:** aggressiveness, anxiety, management style

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## INTRODUCTION

Management represents the activity which is realized in different fields, as well as in sports. Management is the process of the core of managing, directing, leading and influencing. There are different functions and dimensions of management, so Katz and Kan give as the essential ones the cognitive dimension which is directed toward the regulations, use of power and the realizing of tasks and the affective dimension, directed toward people, their needs, realizing of mutual trust and good interpersonal relations (Wren & Voich, 1994). There are different approaches to management which describe different styles, but in the base of each division, there are three management styles, defined by Lickert: the autocratic, democratic and liberal management style (Havelka & Lazarevic, 2011).

In the autocratic management style, the leader has the central role, all decisions are made by him and he has total power. He makes an attempt trying to keep the communication flowing in the direction manager-follower, and not encourage communication between group members. A democratic manager includes group members in the process of the defining of the goal and decision-making, encouraging good interpersonal relationships between them, and keeping communication flowing in all directions, as well as trying to anticipate and prevent or resolve conflicts. In liberal management, the role of the manager is the formal one, as he coordinates the independent performance of group members, this style being typical for expert teams (Milojevic, 2004).

In literature, one can often find information about situational and contingency approaches to management which stress that the efficiency of management depends on the specific variables in each situation (Deming, 1996). This approach related management styles with the characteristics of the specific situation, while in its base is the integrative one. The integrative management style unites the elements of the autocratic and democratic styles, where the manager defines the level of including the group members in the process of decision-making, exchanging of opinions, and organizing of activities, depending on the characteristics of the specific situation and each person. Individuals differ from each other by personality traits and needs, and thus, motivation is one of the crucial management functions.

As in the other fields, efficiency in sports depends on the way sportsmen are led, and their personality treats. Different approaches (Tubic, <http://www.uiss.org.rs>) show that the difference between successful and less successful sportsmen is emotional stability, as well as self-control, self-confidence, low anxiety, a need for achievement and dominance, competitiveness, stress

resistance etc. (Cox, 1998). Emotional stability and related with it, emotional control represents the ability of the personality to stay stable in stress situations and to emotionally react on the environmental stimuli in the adequate way. It is obvious that such variables as self-confidence require low anxiety, while the need for achievement and dominance require aggressiveness. Aggressiveness can be argued from different points of view. There are three forms of aggressiveness. First, there is a hostile aggression of violence which has for its aim injuring the other person and the intention to make the victim suffer, while the suffering is reinforcement for the attacker; instrumental aggressiveness, which is also intended to hurt another person, but this aggressiveness is directed toward achieving some important goals, such as money, prestige or victory; assertiveness, which means the use of legitimate physical and verbal resources for goal achieving, but without the intention to hurt someone. Taylor et al. (2003) also recognize the difference between antisocial and prosocial aggression, where antisocial aggression infringes social norms and is opposed to them, while prosocial aggression is dictated by social norms and socially desirable results. The aggressiveness which the coaches are trying to develop in sportsmen is the assertive and prosocial forms of aggressive behavior.

Several theories make an attempt to explain the phenomenon of aggressiveness. In a few theories, sport represents a specific form of sublimation of aggressiveness, and its canalizing in cultural and creative flows. This is based on psychoanalytic assumptions of sexual and aggressive instincts as the determinants of human behavior which are transformed in socially accepted activities by the censure. The theory of social learning views aggressiveness as the result of learning which has a circular effect (Cox, 2007), where one aggressive act leads to the next one, and this form of behavior will be repeated until the cycle is broken from some positive or negative reinforcement. The frustration-aggression theory implies that aggression is the natural consequence of frustration and that every frustration is followed by a readiness for aggressive behavior. In that sense, sport can have the effect of catharsis, that is, the cleaning of accumulated frustration and anger due to unrealized goals.

## **METHOD**

The focus of this research has been searching for a connection between the personality traits of aggressiveness and anxiety with the preference of the democratic, autocratic and integrative management style. The general hypothesis is related to the assumption that there is a relation between these

traits with the preference of the particular management style, while the specific hypothesis is related to the assumption of a link between anxiety with the preference of the democratic, and aggressiveness with the preference of the autocratic management style. For measuring personality traits, the scales from the KON-6 test, made by Kostas Momirovic, has been used. For measuring of aggressiveness, the Scale SIGMA was used, while for measuring of anxiety, the ALFA Scale was used. For measuring the preferences of management styles, the Scale made for the need of this research. The values of the Cromach Alfa Test for the scales for the management style preference are the following: for the Scale for measuring autocratic management - style 0.74; for the Scale for measuring the democratic management style - 0.79; for the Scale for measuring the integrative management style - 0.69. The investigation has been conducted on a sample of 48 managers and coaches of the Sport Clubs in Nis: ZFK Masinac, FK Radnicki, FK Zeleznicar, RK Zeleznicar, Zok Student and OK Nis. For results elaboration, the Pearson Coefficient of Correlation was used.

## RESULTS

The obtained results show a significant correlation between the investigated personality traits and the preference of a particular management style.

**Table 1.** *The correlation between anxiety and aggressiveness with the preference of the management style*

	The preference of the autocratic management style	The preference of the democratic management style	The preference of the integrative management style
Anxiety	0,017	<b>0,216**</b>	0,058
Aggressiveness	<b>0,292**</b>	0,119	<b>0,148*</b>

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient shows the correlation between the ALFA factor- anxiety with the preference of the democratic management style on the level 0.001, which means that with the growing of anxiety, the preference of the democratic management style also grows. Also, the SIGMA factor - aggressiveness shows the connection with the preference of the autocratic management style, significant on the level of 0.001, as the connection to integrative management style, significant on the level 0.005. With the growing of aggressiveness, the preference of the autocratic and also partly the integrative management style increase.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The obtained results confirm our hypothesis about the relationship between anxiety with the preference of the democratic and aggressiveness with the preference of the autocratic management style, and also, the relationship between aggressiveness with the preference of the integrative management style.

The ALFA factor (the regulator of defensive functions) which measures the level of anxiety is responsible for the majority of neurotic disorders. It is similar to the dimension of neuroticism-emotional stability in Eysenc's and anxiety as the factor of the second order in Cattell's theory of personality. For Eysenc, neuroticism represents the consequence of the interaction between genetic predispositions and the amount of stress to which the individual is exposed in his or her personal experience, and the anxious personality is described as being slow, rigid, dependent, and suggestible, with a weak volition, without emotional control and with a weak resistance toward stress. For Cattell, anxiety is the state which is present in all people, but when it crosses the border in frequency and intensity, than it becomes a personality trait. Anxiety is also related to unresolved internal conflicts and feelings of guilt. Our research shows the connection between anxiety and the preference of the democratic management style, which means that an authoritarian atmosphere does not suit the anxious personality, because it produces even more additional conflicts by itself, and the authoritarian manager can be a source of additional fear. Such a result is in accordance with the results of Michigan's studies which show that supervisors oriented toward people and caring for them achieve, among other things, a decreasing of anxiety. Deming (Deming: Nacionalni institut za poslovni menadzment SAD, 2001: 33-34) also writes about such a preference of anxious people when stresses that people are inclined toward inhibit them from successful functioning, and if they are functioning in an atmosphere full of fear, the results are low performance, stress, medical and personal problems.

The SIGMA factor (the regulator of reactions of attacking) activates the programs for destructive reactions and is the indicator of the level of aggression. The direct activation of this program produces primary aggression, while their secondary activation, through the signals from the regulator of defense, produces secondary (defensive) aggression. Thus, we got in the research the relationship between this factor and the preference of the autocratic, but also integrative management style. The authority of the aggressive-competitive person can be found in its narcissism. So, the powerful narcissistic person acquires an environment which admires him or her, while a weak narcissistic

person compensates its weakness by identifying with the narcissistic idealized group, based on one's own membership. It is clear that such an individual picture is not in accordance with the diversity and tolerance of the democratic atmosphere, so one can understand why increasing aggressiveness leads to the preference of the autocratic management style. An inclination toward the integrative management style could be explained by the other side of aggressiveness, manifested through expansively by the results of Cattell and Styles, who find that importunate-aggressive persons are independent, critical, ready to lead those who are under him or her, and to oppose supervisors.

For sportsmen, the traits of anxiety and aggressiveness are of a great significance. Sport requires low anxiety, emotional control, as well as the presence of aggressiveness. One can conclude that democratic decision-making is not the most suitable form of leading, because the coach is the one who decides at the moment which changes in the team should be made, what should be played, etc. In the situation of match-playing, there is no time for a conference. Based on the obtained results in this research, one can hypothesize that decreasing anxiety leads to the decreasing of the democratic management style's preference, which is in accordance with the situations related to sport.

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