



AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP: HOW PERSONAL LEGACY, EDUCATION, AND IDENTITY CONTRIBUTE TO THE LEVEL OF UNIQUE VISION

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Abstract

Authentic leadership has evolved because of the turbulent times the global market faces in the current century (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). An authentic leader's purpose is to create deep organizational transformation, which will increase the performance of the organization. Authentic leaders have a deep sense of purpose and a strong commitment to their values (George, 2003). They also work according to their individual values, which create unique values for the company as well. This article argues that a leader's unique vision makes connections between the leader's past experience, education, and personal identity and the leader's character, current organizational needs, and future desires or wishes. The research conducted for this article is theoretical, based on qualitative research including case studies, interviews, academic papers, and books. In addition, it involved a semi-structured interview with the leader of Peja Municipality in Kosovo, Mr. Gazmend Muhaxheri. The results of this paper emphasize that a leader's unique vision is influenced by six interrelated factors described chronologically: Past experience, education, identity, personal integrity, self-awareness, and personal authenticity. In order to transform a situation, leadership should set some future goals and then create the vision how to achieve these goals.

Keywords: Authentic Leadership, Unique Vision, Past Experience, Education Background, Individual Identity

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Avolio (2004), authentic leaders are individuals who are deeply aware of how they visualize, think, and know exactly how to act in a process. Authentic leaders are perceived by others as being aware of their own values, knowledge, and strength; aware of the context in which they operate; and confident, optimistic, and have strong character. Furthermore, self-awareness describes how an individual is conscious of his or her own behavioural habits, emotions, wishes, thoughts, and images that flow throughout his/her being (Kegan, 1982; 1994).

The main focus of this paper is to provide insight into the development of an authentic leader's unique vision. The paper aims to understand the impact of past experience, education background, and identity on leader cognition, which would be the basis for creation of a leader's unique vision. Leader

cognition is manifested as a psychological state which a leader experiences, and through this process a leader knows how to influence his/her subordinates with respect to achieve his/her goals (Lord & Hall, 2005). "As a result, one often finds cognitive capacities to be one of the best predictors of leader performance" (Hedlund et al., 2003; Zaccaro, Mumford, Connelly, Marks, & Gilbert, 2000). Leader cognition is an important process for formulating plans and communicating them clearly to subordinates in order to achieve goals for organizational transformation.

The contribution of this paper is in attempt to understand a leader's unique vision as the way a leader operates within a certain situation. The concept of vision describes the path articulated to make a successful transition from the present situation to the future which is real, credible, and optimistic (Nanus, 1992). This paper further elaborates the uniqueness of the vision, which it explains as the

correlation between personal authenticity characteristics and goal characteristics. This paper provides information about the correlation between personal legacy, education, and identity with authenticity. It also explains the relationship between personal authenticity as a source of information, knowledge, and creativity and unique vision as a personal planning horizon with each step elaborated in detail to determine the path that leads to success. Therefore, the specific research question of this article is: Are past experience, education background, and individual identity the determinants of having a unique vision that leads to an organizational transformation?

Furthermore, this paper explores personal legacy, education, and personal identity as roots of authenticity. It then will be easier to understand the leader's unique vision because authenticity is the source of people's actions and thoughts. Specific goals of this paper are:

1. To examine how much people take into consideration their life experience in their decision-making process;
2. To measure how childhood contributes to adult attitudes in order to assess whether the actions and thoughts of a leader are unique or borrowed;
3. To determine if authenticity is a process that evolves over time or remains unchanged;
4. To understand on what level education contributes to individual character, creativity, and knowledge;
5. To describe how personal identity affects a leader's success or failure;
6. To assess whether an authentic leader's behavior is affected by external factors or if a leader behaves based on their personal principals, knowledge, experience, education, and ambitions while making a decision; and
7. To understand the concept of being original while making decisions, and determine if this individual originality can help the leader to be unique and successful.

The next section of this paper explains a leader's unique vision and analyses how individual past experience, education, and identity affects the

leader's unique vision. Thus, a leader's unique vision is developed as consequence of personality development and a leader's self-clearance is the way in which the three individual life factors (past experience, education, and identity) determine a leader's perceptions about the needs an organization and its future goals.

Sections 3 to 6 provide the methodology, results and findings, discussion and future research recommendations, and conclusions, respectively. This paper used the Peja Municipality as a case study for analysing its leader in order to provide evidence of how past experience, education, and identity affected his character and perceptions about the municipality's needs and future objectives.

2. LEADER'S UNIQUE VISION

A leader's goal is to create space for managerial manoeuvring for transformation of the organizational environment in order to increase the overall performance of the company. Authentic leaders are known as individuals who behave purposefully, which means they have a clear vision for an issue, great focus on the path to the goal, and know exactly the end of the desired goal (Moore & Diamond, 2000).

Vision is the main focus of this paper in order to clarify how an authentic leader visualize his/her objectives. Table 1 provides definitions of the concept of vision to understand its original meaning.

All definitions describe the importance of vision when an organization faces challenges. Just managing the situation is not enough to keep the organization safe; leadership should provide a well-articulated vision to create conditions for accelerated success in the future (Archbald, 2013).

Based on Figure 1, the final stage labelled Desired Goal is the tangible product or service (objective) accomplished as a consequence of the articulated vision in details that represent an intangible product or service (Idea).

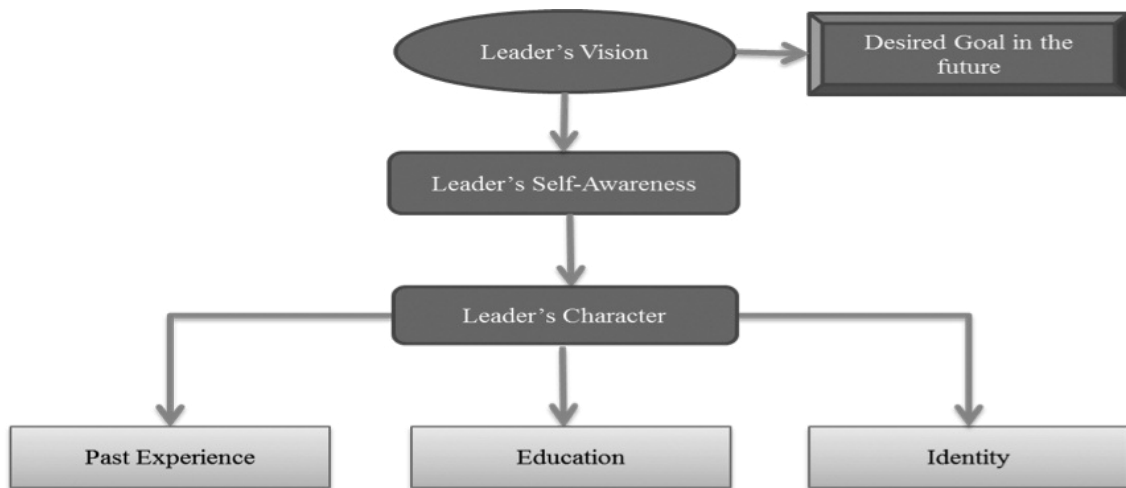
Moreover, goals have to be well developed so that each step needed to achieve all objectives can be articulated. A leader's goals and vision are the

Table 1. Definitions of the Concept of Vision by Different Authors

Author	Year	Definition
Nanus	1992	Vision is the path articulated to make a successful transition from the present situation to the future which is real, credible and optimistic.
Kotter	1996	Vision is the picture which describes the future where people want to be.
Wilhelm	1996	Leaders create their own vision to reach future trends successfully and they have abilities to articulate in detail the vision to their subordinates in order to delegate roles while transforming the vision in practice in order to achieve certain goal in the future.
Douglas, Burtis, & Pond-Burtis	2001	Vision is source of the presence which tends to move in the future in order to change the environment.

Source: Based on D. Archbald, *Vision and leadership: Problem-based learning as a teaching tool*, 2013, p 136.

Figure 1. The Theoretical Model of Article



same; there is only an idea transformation in reality but both contain the same values. In order to successfully transform an idea, vision must be in harmony with a leader's core values. Core values are insight standards which determine character and are considered a source of individual beliefs, attitude, behaviour, and skills (Grusenmeyer, 2016).

According to Kegan (1982, 1994), self-awareness refers to an individual being conscious of his/her own behavioural habits, emotions, wishes, thoughts, and images which flow throughout his/her being. Thus, individual character and self-awareness determine the level of unique vision.

Table 2 presents character strengths which a leader may have. Further analyses of past experience, education, and identity can explain how an individual thinks, acts, and visualizes objectives differently from others.

2.1 The impact of people's legacy on their personal development

This paper provides information about how past experience contributes to personality development. From the earlier psychological investigations into personality development by psychologists and researchers it can be seen that the substantial re-

Table 2. Character Strengths and their Meanings

No.	Character Strength	Description
1.	Honesty	An individual speaks and behaves authentically.
2.	Creativity	An individual has his/her unique way of doing things.
3.	Prudence	An individual hesitates to act.
4.	Judgement	An individual examines the possible results from every angle before making a choice.
5.	Love of Learning	An individual does not lose any opportunity to increase his/her knowledge.
6.	Perspective	Even when an individual does not feel self-confidence, others believe in his/her abilities.
7.	Bravery	An individual is consistent in his/her thoughts and acts based on his/her authentic beliefs and desires.
8.	Curiosity	An individual easily learns how to act in a process.
9.	Leadership	An individual has the ability to transform a situation and includes other people in the process.
11.	Fairness	An individual is involved in a decision-making process without considering his/her personal feelings.
13.	Hope	An individual creates, thinks about, and believes in the possibility of future successes.
14.	Perseverance	An individual is very consistent regarding work.
15.	Social Intelligence	An individual knows exactly how to motivate people to work hard and increase their performance.
16.	Spirituality	An individual believes in the purpose and acts with accelerated steps to fulfil his/her inner beliefs.
17.	Zest	An individual reflects high satisfaction and consistency in a process.
18.	Gratitude	An individual is aware of his/her advantages,
20.	Self-Regulation	An individual has control of his/her own feelings and actions, and likes discipline.
21.	Forgiveness	An individual always gives others a second chance.
22.	Teamwork	An individual leads the group by being loyal & charismatic.

Source: Based on J. Smith, *Character strengths profile*, 2011, p 4.

sults explain the strong relation between past experience and personality development. An individual's attitude is directly affected by his/her past decisions, and all information gained from past experiences affects future choices (Arad, 2012). According to Festinger (1957), the effect of past experiences on future choices is known as cognitive dissonance, which explains how people wish to have consistency in their way of making professional or life decisions. Most of time people tend to repeat their actions even if there is another, more attractive alternative to be chosen.

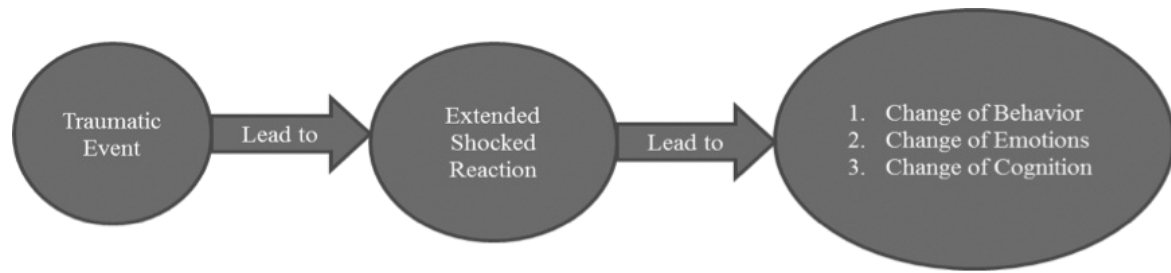
A leader's unique vision depends on how stable the personality of a leader is, including his/her thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and wishes (Tellegen, 1988). The causes of a personality change could be

based on genetic factors, which is known as the essentialist perspective of personality change analyses, and environmental factors, which are described as the contextual perspective of personality change analyses (Neyer & Asendorpf, 2001).

2.1.1 Childhood trauma effects on adult personality

Traumatic experiences have deep influence on a child's physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development. Therefore, all children who survive traumatic events suffer later consequences on their way of living and on how they perceive community, and family, and they will not be fully aware of their core values (Perry, 2003).

Figure 2. The Impact of Childhood Trauma on Adult Personality



Source: Based on D. Perry, *Effects of traumatic events on children*, 2003, p 1.

While facing a traumatic experience, an individual's brain starts to organise for both mental and physical responses to the threat. If the threat con-

tinues for a longer period, the body undergoes deeper physical and mental changes to create proper responses to the threat (Perry, 2003).

Table 3. Cognitive, Behavioural, and Emotional Changes while Experiencing Traumatic Events

Cognitive Change	Behavioural and Emotional Change
Lack of free communication	Shows very aggressive behaviour
Low level of attention while engaging in a task	Lacks deep attention to both positive and negative behaviour
Low level of memory	Shows lack of desire to be involved in society
Lack of interest in developing one's own skills and abilities	Continuously imitates all experienced traumatic events, especially as an adult
Poor success in the learning process	Uses abusive vocabulary
Lack of self-awareness	Feels anxious, fears and avoids real life, instead creating an imaginary world that does not correspond to reality

Source: Based on National Child Traumatic Stress Network, *Early childhood trauma*, 2010.

The cognitive, emotional, and behavioural functions (feeling, facts, thinking, behaving, planning, and rationality) of these psychological components cause mental changes because of the consequences generated by the threat which are faced by the individual. While an individual experiences traumatic events, his/her feelings, behaviour, and thoughts are directed from the most primitive part of the brain. The individual starts becoming isolated from the external world and creates an inner world which is directed by his/her imagination (Perry, 2003).

Furthermore, traumatic events shatter an individual's self-esteem, security, and desire to create a vision for the future; instead, the individual fights

against the threat because the event is always present for a long period for a person who experienced a traumatic event (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2010).

The brain cortex area is responsible for individual emotions, thinking, memory, language, awareness, and consciousness. As such, all these psychological components affect the IQ of a child who suffered a traumatic experience, and thus the person in later stages of life inherits inability to exhibit their true self, including thinking, emotions, awareness of their core values, and self-consciousness (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2010).

2.1.2 Actions in the past affect individual behaviour

This paper correlates past experience with an individual's current behaviour. A cognitive approach explains behaviour as the centre of individual attitudes and beliefs (Morris & Marzano, 2012). An individual uses actions from past experience as a key source of information to guide his/her behaviour in certain situations. This process is considered as an individual learning process when people through repetitive experiences formulate a way of finding a solution for a certain issue (Grings, 1973).

According to Bandura (1974), the concept of behaviourism is deeply related to the concept of conditioning, which describes the correlation of experiences throughout life. Therefore, the term conditioning describes the learning process that individuals gain from past experiences and then use to react cognitively in future decision-making processes. From this point of view, actions from past experience and current behaviour are related unconsciously. People act in the same way when situations are repeated. Most of the time, individual behaviours are made habitual, and thus the decision-making process is easier for an individual because the case is familiar for him/her (Triandis, 1980).

2.2 The effect of education on authenticity

This paper elaborates two characteristics of non-cognitive skills: nature characteristics describe how personality traits are heritable, and nurture characteristics explain how personality traits are formed by external factors such as social factors, family background, and environmental factors (Dahmann & Anger, 2014). Therefore, these two mechanisms (nature and nurture) are dependent on each other and are crucial factors which form an individual's skill advantages (Cunha & Heckman, 2007).

Nurture also includes the educational factor which does not affect directly personality traits (Dahmann & Anger, 2014). Therefore, the benefits of education for an individual include the gaining of knowledge and skills.

This paper uses the perspective of psychology to explain how educational experiences affect cog-

nitive skills. Educational experiences increase an individual's critical reasoning and raise intelligence, so people can gather information about an issue and learn how to interpret the information to others when required (Rutter, 1983).

Consciousness is one of the five primary personality traits; the concept refers to being aware of one's core values, be self-organized and be active while planning to act (Barrick & Mount, 1993). People who are conscious about their actions know exactly in what experience they are involved. This personality trait (consciousness) is very much related to academic achievement during education (Abe, 2005).

Extraversion is a personality trait associated with interpersonal experiences. People who are extraverted are socially acceptable. During the educational period they learn how to work, behave, and contribute for the betterment of the group (Jackson, 2011).

Individuals who exhibit the neurotic personality trait may not succeed in the duties in which they have to provide solutions because since elementary school they have been emotionally unbalanced and cannot benefit from a teacher's instructions (Lounsbury et al., 2003). People with low neuroticism have less stress and can perform better in school and in the decision-making process (Jackson, 2011).

Openness to experiences is the final personality trait. Individuals who are open can create large horizons of life opportunities. For example, their career depends on individual abilities to accept every experience as a chance to learn something.

2.2.1 Education, cognitive skills, and vision

The most important goal of education is to equip an individual with appropriate knowledge to think critically and solve difficult problem in order to survive in the society (Kraft, 2016). Educational researchers study the learning process through different experiments and measures, but they make assessments in cooperation with psychological scientists, who claim that the learning process is totally related to individual cognitive skills (Borman, Hewes, Overman & Brown, 2003; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010).

Psychological scientists study the development of cognitive skills. The focus is on the three most important cognitive abilities: processing speed, working memory, and fluid reasoning (Cowan et al., 2005). These three inter-related cognitive abilities change over time; they start to develop in the early stage of life or in childhood and continue throughout the adulthood, and it is this process that creates the differences between people's performances in certain decision-making processes.

Processing speed is a cognitive ability which describes how efficiently information can be processed (Kail & Salthouse, 1994). Working memory capacity is a cognitive ability which describes how the level of different information can be processed, and in the case of a high level, how much it is maintained in mind (Cowan, 2005; Gathercole, Pickering, Knight, & Stegmann, 2004). Fluid reasoning is a cognitive ability which describes the ability to find the best solution to a problem (Tuholski, Laughlin & Conway, 1999).

This paper further elaborates cognitive skills acquisition as the process of problem solving (VanLehn, 1995). Scientists are curious to analyze problem solving because facing a difficult problem can cause deep disorientation (Duncan, 1959). The problem-solving process is considered as a fundamental criterion of change from one situation to another in order to achieve the objective of transformation (VanLehn, 1995).

2.2.2 The development of rationality

Intelligence and rationality are two different concepts; an individual could be intellectual and irrational at the same time (Reyna & Farley, 2006; Stanovich, 2006). Both of these concepts (intelligence and rationality) are individual cognitive abilities which a person uses to manage situations. However, according to Toplak, West, and Stanovich (2013), judgment and decision making are two consequences of rational thinking because an individual must take into consideration all the information and analyze it in order to avoid uncertainty and provide balanced solutions for a certain case.

Thinking rationally means having a future objective with a clear vision including the usage of appropriate information, knowledge, and skills for a

certain issue. Therefore, an individual has to be authentic and aware of his/her values and characteristics of the issue in order to reach the objective set in the beginning. Rationality is not inherited genetically but is developed as a consequence of many life experiences. Cognitive scientists mention two categories of rationality: instrumental and epistemic rationality (Toplak, West & Stanovich, 2013).

Instrumental rationality describes how an individual's behavior is in favour of profit maximization or utility maximization in a certain situation (Baron, 2008; Dawes, 1998). Epistemic rationality refers to how an individual uses his/her beliefs in a decision-making process; this type of rationality also is called theoretical rationality (Manktelow, 2004).

This paper further elaborates the development process of rational thought. A rational thought is divided into two main parts: crystallized rationality and fluid rationality. Fluid rationality is the basic component of rational thought because it describes how a person faces a problem through reflection, which leads a person to the desired outcome (Stanovich, 2011, p. 193). Individuals who use this concept of rationality (fluid rationality) are prudent when they provide arguments about an issue; they are totally aware of the advantages and disadvantages of certain decision process; they don't act emotionally in the process, but try to provide rational choices. Crystallized rationality is separated into two parts: facilitators and inhibitors. Facilitators refer to how important it is to use scientific arguments in order to make a successful decision about an issue. An individual tries to gather enough information about the problem and then behaves professionally during the analyses of this information (Toplak, West, & Stanovich, 2013).

2.2.3 The improvement of creativity

This paper evaluates how individuals develop creativity and evaluates sources of innovation in individuals. First, creativity means generating new imaginative ideas that cause a radical transformation of the situation while individuals are involved in a decision-making process (Newell, 1972). Therefore the main objective of creativity is for the individual to think beyond prevailing boundaries, raising

individual curiosity and avoiding conventional procedures, ideas, and rules (Candy 1997; Schlange & Juttner, 1997). According to Amabile (1992), creativity has three main features: knowledge, creative thinking, and motivation.

Knowledge means gathering all information needed to make a relevant choice. Critical thinking describes how individuals behave based on their personality traits in a decision-making process (Amabile, 1992). There are four characteristics that form critical thinking:

1. Challenge arguments with others and try to get rid of the status quo in the decision-making process,
2. Draw on previous experiences from different life situations,
3. Dare to get in difficult situations and make the best choice possible,
4. Ability to step away from a situation and return to it later with a totally new perspective.

There are two ways in which motivation increases creativity. Intrinsic motivation describes how an individual works based on his/her internal satisfaction, interest, and values; whereas an extrinsically motivated person works in the short term in order to get immediate reward (Adams, 2005).

Schools are the most important part of the development of individual creativity and innovation. Numerous activities, programs, and techniques are promoted by schools in order to help students to increase their creative and innovative abilities. Brainstorming is one classroom activity which teachers should use in order to help students to develop numerous ideas for a certain issue independently and logically in their own way (Adams, 2005)

2.3 Personal identity as a source of uniqueness

The concept of individual identity from the perspective of psychology means how an individual uses his/her past experience in order to build a unique image. Self-identity connects dots from past experience, the current situation, and future goals to create a narrative identity. Therefore a narrative identity shows that there is a continual process between life periods which built the individual identity.

Individuals try to create their self-identity in order to be definable and recognizable in the society in which they live. But the question is, does identity change over time or is it constant for a long period? The analyses show that there is a relation between numerous identities or being the same person and qualitative identity, which depends on whether an individual may be the same person with his/her past experiences or wants to develop his/her own identity based on future life goals (Bostrom & Sandberg, 2011).

2.3.1 Self-transcendence as an element of personal identity

According to many researchers, identity is considered as a false mask behind which an individual hides, not showing his/her true personality values. This happens for many reasons, one of which is that individual personality traits reflect an individual perspective and not a collective perspective. Self-transcendence means that an individual can communicate with other social factors in the world not by covering himself/herself with a false identity but by consciously using his/her inner core values to create wonderful interpersonal communication (Frankl, 1966).

Furthermore, an individual may see him/herself from different external angles and behave in a situation in an unlimited variety of ways (May, 1958, p. 74). Transcendent capacity gives an individual unlimited space for maneuvering to get the best solution in a situation. Therefore when involved in any situation a person can be motivated not by his/her inner core values but by universal values, which is considered to be a meta-motivational process (Maslow, 1971).

2.3.2 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations will satisfy personal needs

Motivation describes how an individual is inspired by internal or external factors to act in a process (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Motivation reflects individual energy, direction, and consistency which leads to a desired goal. Therefore motivation is at the centre of psychological studies because such researchers find it to be part of biological and cognitive regulation (Ryan, 2000).

There are two measures of motivation: level of motivation, or how inspired an individual is while is involved in a task, and goal orientation, which means an individual can be motivated only in tasks in which /she shows interest (attitude, goals, and beliefs) (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Thus an individual's performance in a decision-making process is totally dependent on his/her leadership and motivational abilities (Nader, 2016).

3 METHODS

First, a theoretical literature review was conducted to gather data on current academic research papers published by different authors. Next, the leader of Peja Municipality was interviewed.

The complexity of the topic required the use of the qualitative method to gather data. To find what factors affect an authentic leader's unique vision, this study used credible data sources from e-libraries, books, websites, and YouTube interviews and lectures delivered by different professors.

Based on personality traits, individuals might be aware of their core values, which they then use to build a strategic plan to achieve their goals. Therefore qualitative research is better for analysing the development of individual personality and how personality is affected by past experience, education, and identity in the process of individual self-awareness, which is known to be a basic characteristic of the leader's vision. The president of the Peja municipal institution, Mr Gazmend Muhaxheri, was interviewed as a case study for this research.

The data for the first section of qualitative survey were acquired through a face-to-face interview with Mr. Gazmend Muhaxheri. The questionnaire was semi-structured, providing questions about individual past experience, education, and identity, and it lasted three and a half hours. Furthermore, Mr Muhaxheri allowed the researcher to participate in a cabinet meeting to observe whether some of the information given in the interview was consistent with a real situation the leader faces in practice.

4 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The results from the interview were compared with the theoretical research. The overall results derived from this paper strongly emphasize the importance of having a leader with unique vision. A leader's unique vision is influenced by six interrelated factors, described chronologically:

1. Past personal experience (describes the correlation of personal culture, thoughts, and acts);
2. Personal education (education effects our way of thinking, feeling, and acting in certain situations);
3. Individual identity (consists of values, beliefs, and attitudes for operating with members of social groups);
4. Personal integrity (always behaving and acting based on values and beliefs);
5. Self-awareness (behavioural habits, emotions, wishes, thoughts, and images);
6. Personal authenticity (values, emotions, abilities, etc.).

Past personal experience describes the correlation of personal culture, thoughts, and acts. In very short sentences, Mr. Muhaxheri explained how past experience contributes to his level of unique vision. Mr. Muhaxheri claimed that unique vision means how individual core values are related to the individual's future goals. Therefore, Mr. Muhaxheri explained how his core values were affected by past experience and he elaborated his personality development across time.

Mr. Muhaxheri said that he was an independent child because his parents did not limit him to work based according their wishes. He claimed that he is creative just because of his parents' contribution. He insisted that family culture contributed to increase his mental capacities including judgement, vigilance, and communication. Mr. Muhaxheri claimed that his ego is evidently more developed because he was used to thinking about how to survive in difficult situations, and now in every circumstance he relies only on his thoughts and finds a solution based on his beliefs. Life experiences help him to be aware of his core values and be self-regulated.

Table 4 to 9 present results from the theoretical discussion and from a transcript of the interview. This paper analyses the degree of similarity of the results from both types of research in order to make its conclusion.

Table 4: Comparison of Results of Theoretical Research and the Semi-Structured Interview to Examine How a Leader's Unique Vision is Influenced by Past Personal Experience

Results from Theoretical Research	Results from Interview
An individual's attitude is directly affected by his/her decisions in the past, and all information gained from past experiences influence future choices (Arad, 2012).	Unique vision means how the individual's core values are related to the individual's future goals
An individual uses actions from past experience as a key source of information to guide his/her behaviour on a certain issue. This process is considered as an individual learning process when people through repetitive experience find their way of arriving at a solution (Grings, 1973).	An individual's past experience has an impact on the individual creative development
According to Festinger (1957), the effect of past experiences on future choices is known as cognitive dissonance, which explains how people wish to have consistency on their way of making professional or life decisions.	Family culture as part of an individual's past experience contributes to increasing his mental capacities including judgement, vigilance, and communication
Past experience (family culture) helps a child to build self confidence in a social group (Benabou & Tirole, 2001).	Past experience can develop an individual's ego

Personal education affects our way of thinking, feeling, and acting about certain issues. According to Mr. Muhaxheri, efficacy helps students to develop cognitive abilities, which is a very important factor for an individual's intelligence such as being more creative, vigilant, and rational in a decision-making process.

The leader of Peja claimed that if a student shows academic development, then automatically he/she creates a basis for cognitive skills development. Finally, cognitive skills development means having a great opportunity to be creative and build a clear vision for the objective an individual intends to achieve. Furthermore, the leader of Peja claimed that individuals in the early stage of life need assistance to make them realize their talents, and school is one of the first institutions which can provide both assistance and the experience of others to use as guideline to achieve success.

Table 5: Comparison of Results of Theoretical Research and the Semi-Structured Interview to Examine How a Leader's Unique Vision is Influenced by Personal Education

Results from Theoretical Research	Results from Interview
According to Heckman (2007), educational experiences lead to a change of non-cognitive factors	Personal education develops cognitive abilities
Educational experiences increase the individual's critical reasoning and raise the intelligence (Rutter, 1983).	Personal education prepares individuals to be creative and build a clear vision for the future
Personality traits have a neurophysiological construction that distinguishes the individual thoughts, behavior, and attitudes, which should be in harmony with the specific environmental criteria (Roberts & Jackson, 2008; Tellegen, 1991).	Personal education helps individuals to realize their talent
Rationality concept is not inherited genetically but is developed as a consequence of many life experiences, including education (Toplak, West & Stanovich, 2013).	Education affects individual judgement skills

Individual identity consists of values, beliefs, and attitudes to operate with members of certain social groups. Mr. Muhaxheri claimed that identity values and personality values have the same meaning, but there is one element which differentiates between these two concepts. The leader of Peja assumed that authenticity creates the distinction between person-

ality and identity. He said that he works based on his core values, which means that his behaviour and attitudes are in accordance with his personality values.

According to Mr. Muhaxheri, he uses his identity in certain situation and he claims that identity as a concept includes his internal and external values. Therefore, Mr. Muhaxheri pointed out that individuals who use their identity to perform a task are not authentic because their behaviour, thoughts, and attitudes also depend on external factors.

Mr. Muhaxheri assumed that communication skills are part of identity because they help point out general values and make communication easier than using only personal values, which for the counterpart may be not acceptable, so that communication would be difficult, making it difficult to gain the required positive results.

Table 6: Comparison of Results of the Theoretical Research and the Semi-Structured Interview Examining How a Leader's Unique Vision is Influenced by Individual Identity

Results from Theoretical Part	Results from Interview
Self-identity connects dots from past experience, the current situation, and future goals to create a narrative identity (Bostrom & Sandberg, 2011)	Authenticity is the only element which differentiates between identity values and personality values
Personal identity refers to one's goals, beliefs, and values (Schwartz, 2001)	Individual identity includes both personality core values and external environmental values
Individual identity from the perspective of psychology means how an individual uses his/her past experiences in order to build a unique image of himself/herself (Bostrom & Sandberg, 2011)	Individual identity creates an opportunity for having better communication skills

Personal integrity means that leaders always behave and act based on their values and beliefs. Mr Muhaxheri claimed that part of his character is also his personal integrity which is developed based on his future priorities. He is not influenced by people's opinion about his activities and behaviour and never changes his priorities because of any difficult circum-

stances. All activities he selects to work on are based on his perception of future goals. He emphasised that the BOREA Ski Complex is a project which no one believes to be a success because it has required decades, but he believes in it and now is finishing it.

Table 7: Comparison of Results of the Theoretical Research and the Semi-Structured Interview Examining How a Leader's Unique Vision is Influenced by Personal Integrity

Results from Theoretical Part	Results from Interview
People use their thoughts in order to evaluate what behaviour to use and how to act in a decision-making process (Bandura, 1974)	High level of respect for hierarchical structure
People are used to acting in the same way when situations are repeated and they do not accept interference from any external factor (Triandis, 1980)	An individual with high personal integrity is not influenced by people's opinions about his/her activities and behaviour and never changes priorities

Self-awareness includes elements such as behavioural habits, emotions, wishes, thoughts, and images. Mr. Muhaxheri claimed that leaders should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of their vision in order to build a set of goals which convert vision into reality. Furthermore, leaders must be aware of their skills, knowledge, and abilities. From that perspective, a leader should be successful in job delegation, which is the most important part of success.

Table 8: Comparison of Results of the Theoretical Research and the Semi-Structured Interview Examining How a Leader's Unique Vision is influenced by Self-Awareness

Results from Theoretical Part	Results from Interview
According to Kegan (1982, 1994) and Jordan (2002), self-awareness describes how an individual is conscious about his/her own behavioural habits, emotions, wishes, thoughts, and images which flow through his/her being	Leaders should be aware of their vision and core values and be aware of the environment in which they operate.

Personal authenticity (values, emotions, abilities, etc.) in the case of the leader of Peja show an authentic leader who creates his vision based on his own values and abilities. Mr. Muhaxheri claimed that he doesn't want to be a perfect leader, but he wants to advance his goals. He doesn't work based on his emotional state, but tries to be rational in his decision making. He works based on deadlines, under pressure, and believes that he can perform better in a task. He communicates his vision partially to his subordinates because he believes that the technical staff need daily orders. He works based on an individualist perspective and because of the responsibilities the president of Peja has in the status of his position, he does not allow anyone else to interfere. He believes in success only if everyone respects the hierarchy in the organization. Finally, the leader of Peja Municipality is a quiet person who talks directly to his subordinates, and each task is provided with a deadline that must be respected without further compromise.

Table 9: Comparison of Results of the Theoretical Research and the Semi-Structured Interview Examining How a Leader's Unique Vision is influenced by Personal Authenticity

Results From Theoretical Part	Results from Interview
Rogers (1959) described personal authenticity as the way individuals are in harmony with their basic nature and appropriately see their personality traits including values, emotions, abilities, etc.	An authentic leader creates his vision based on his own values and abilities
Authentic leaders are known as individuals who behave purposefully, which means they have a clear vision for an issue, great focus on the path to the goal, and know exactly the end of the desired goal (Moore & Diamond, 2000).	An authentic leader does not work based on his/her emotional state but tries to be rational in decision making
Rogers (1959) emphasised that authentic leaders are known as individuals who think and act based on their true character.	An authentic leader works based on deadlines, under pressure, and believes that he/she can performance better in a task

5 DISCUSSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

A leader's unique vision is a topic which must be analysed from the perspective of psychology, and further analyses of this topic are related to the individual's cognitive skills development. Factors which contribute to the level of unique vision are various, including past experience, education, modified identity, cognitive skills, self-awareness, self-regulation, self-integrity, level of creativity, level of rational choices, and a large spectrum of social factors.

This research provides information about how past experience influences a leader's unique vision. Cognitive dissonance describes how past experience influences an individual's future choices, where an individual is used to showing consistency in all undertaken steps to reach desired success (Festinger, 1957). The transcript of the interview with the leader of Peja provided sufficient information about the impact of past experience on the leader's consistency, including the following:

1. The leader of Peja sets deadlines for duties delegated to his subordinates and he is very strict about these deadlines.
2. The leader of Peja asks his subordinates for weekly reports in order to assess their performance in order to avoid status quo.

Education is very important for making rational choices, being creative, and developing cognitive skills. The effect of education on an individual is identified as a non-cognitive feature which depends on external factors including family and environmental factors (Dahmann & Anger, 2014). However, according to Rutter (1983), educational experience helps people to develop their cognitive skills including their reasoning capacities and interpretation of thoughts or information. Based on empirical research, education plays a basic role in the development of cognitive skills, including better information processing and interpretation of data.

The theory of this field shows that there is a relation between numerous identities or being the same person and qualitative identity, which depends on whether an individual may be the same

person with his/her past experiences or wants to develop his/her own identity based on future life objectives (Bostrom & Sandberg, 2011). The empirical research supports the second alternative, in which an individual creates his/her own identity due to certain circumstances.

Individuals in Kosovo hesitate to be part of any social experiment when a researcher may gather real raw data about features of individual personality including their thoughts, beliefs, and behaviour. They suspect abuse of the results of any experiment, and therefore refuse to cooperate.

This research is the first effort to assess deeper performance of leaders in public and private institutions in Kosovo. Leaders in Kosovo are assessed based on their image and not because of their vision for achieving common goals. The main purpose of this research is to measure the vision of the leader of Peja municipal institution.

This research creates the basis for further research in order to better understand the leader's unique vision. Further analyses of differences between individual personality and individual identity would create an opportunity to assess the level of individual authenticity while performing a task. Further research into the differences between these individual psychological features (personality and identity) will make possible the identification of individuals who behave, think, and act based on authentic or false values.

One possible future research topic would be "Sustainable Leadership: Leaders' unique visions", whereby individual personality could be analysed and used for transforming the current situation into a new one which has better opportunities for the current and future generations.

6. CONCLUSION

The main idea of this study came from real-life experience and theoretical background. The success of an organization is measured based on its competitive advantages in a certain industry. All organizations should continuously transform their organizational abilities in order to be a step ahead of their competitors. In order to transform a situation, leadership should set future goals and then create the vision for how to achieve these goals. Vision determines the success of an organization and it is very important to examine how vision is formed. This paper explains that vision is composed of individual values and that past experience, education, and identity contribute to it.

Vision can be unique only if it is articulated clearly. A leader who has a unique vision express his/her personality including thoughts, attitudes, abilities, and knowledge of certain issues. From the perspective of psychology, not all individuals can clearly express their values. Individuals who cannot express themselves clearly cannot be authentic. Therefore, authentic leaders work based on their core values because they are aware of them, and they can use them in order to make correct calculations about how to achieve a certain goal.

Therefore, a leader should be aware of his/her core values, including abilities, skills, beliefs, and thoughts, in order to know how to act in a process of transformation. This paper concentrates on how past experiences, education, and identity contribute to personality development because a leader should have a good personality in order to have a good vision for an issue.

EXTENDED SUMMARY / IZVLEČEK

Preučevanje avtentičnega vodenja se je razvilo zaradi turbulentnih časov v poslovnem svetu v zadnjih desetletjih (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Namen avtentičnega vodje je v ustvarjanju globoke preobrazbe organizacij. Avtentični vodje posedujejo globoko zavedanje omenjenega namena in so močno zavezani svojim vrednotam (George, 2003). V skladu z njimi tudi delujejo, kar ustvarja enovite vrednote njihovih združb. V članku pišemo o tem, kako je enovita vizija vodje posledica preteklih

izkušenj, izobrazbe, osebne identitete ter karakterja vodje, pa tudi trenutnih potreb organizacije in bodočih potreb in želja združb. Pristop članka temelji na teoretičnem pregledu ter se kasneje nasloni tudi na kvalitativno raziskavo, ki vključuje študije primerov, intervjuje, akademske članke in knjige. Vključevala je tudi polstrukturiran intervju z vodjo občine Peja na Kosovem, g. Gazmendom Muhaxherijem. Rezultati članka poudarjajo, da je enovita vizija vodje pod vplivom šestih medsebojno povezanih dejavnikov, ki so opisani v časovnem zaporedju: pretekle izkušnje, izobrazba, identiteta, osebna integriteta, samozavedanje in osebna avtentičnost. Da se lahko prilagajajo posameznim situacijam mora vodenje postaviti cilje za prihodnost in nato oblikovati vizijo doseganja ciljev.

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