

**INTELLIGENCE, SECURITY
AND INTERDISCIPLINARITY**

MANAGERIAL BEHAVIOUR AS A PREDICTOR OF ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: BETWEEN CONTINGENCY AND TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract:

This article explores the relationship between managerial behaviour and organizational performance from the theoretical perspectives of contingency theory and transformational leadership. Using empirical data collected during doctoral research in an intelligence organization, the study provides a multidimensional view of managerial behaviours that influence performance. The article includes both theoretical insights and practical findings derived from qualitative and quantitative research methods. The results confirm that adaptive, transformational managerial behaviours are significantly correlated with performance indicators in structured and hierarchical institutions.

Keywords: *managerial behaviour, performance, transformational leadership, contingency theory, intelligence organizations, military leadership.*

Introduction

Managerial behaviour is an essential determinant of organizational performance, especially in structures characterized by hierarchy, procedural discipline, and operational complexity, such as military and intelligence organizations. This paper aims to investigate the relationship between managerial behaviours identified within an analytical structure of an intelligence organization and the perceived or achieved level of performance, using internationally validated theoretical models: contingency theories and transformational leadership.

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By articulating an integrated perspective that combines a theoretical component with data obtained from empirical research, the study offers a relevant contribution to understanding how managerial behaviour influences organizational dynamics and decision-making efficiency in environments with high operational demands. The article is structured in four parts: (1) a theoretical analysis of the main explanatory models; (2) an exploration of managerial behaviour in intelligence and military organizations; (3) an applied analysis based on quantitative and qualitative data; and (4) conclusions and practical implications.

Theoretical foundations: explanatory models of managerial behaviour and performance

In order to understand the relationship between managerial behaviour and organizational performance, a rigorous analysis of the main theoretical models underpinning this link is necessary. This chapter brings together three complementary perspectives: contingency theory, transformational leadership, and the concept of organizational performance. Together, these subchapters provide a solid explanatory framework for interpreting empirical data and outline the conceptual framework of the research presented in the applied part of the article.

Contingency theories: models and behaviours

One of the models relevant to the analysis of managerial behaviour from the perspective of contingency theories is the Multiple Linkage Model (MLM), developed in the works of Gary Yukl. It proposes an integrative approach, in which a leader's effectiveness is determined by their ability to influence a set of interdependent variables that affect group performance: subordinates' effort, task clarity, activity coordination, available resources, or organizational support. The model argues that leaders do not directly influence performance, but do so indirectly through these mediating variables, and that their managerial behaviours must be adjusted according to situational factors and group dynamics.

MLM identifies six major categories of managerial behaviours that lead to increased performance:

- (1) goal setting – clearly defining tasks and performance standards;
- (2) monitoring – supervising progress and results;
- (3) problem solving – actively intervening in blockages or conflicts;
- (4) sustaining motivation – recognizing and rewarding efforts;
- (5) developing competencies – training and supporting personal development;
- (6) securing resources - effectively managing the time, equipment, and information needed to achieve goals.

In addition to this model, other contingency theories identify several types of essential managerial behaviours considered to determine performance in an organization: clarifying objectives, removing barriers, and providing rewards (House and Mitchell's path-goal theory, 1975, later revised and reformulated by House, 1996); or appropriately involving subordinates in decision-making (House's normative decision theory, 1975, later revised and reformulated by House, 1996, Mitchell, 1975, later revised and reformulated by House, 1996); or appropriately involving subordinates in decision-making (Vroom and Yetton's normative decision theory, 1973).

Other contingency theories have shown that performance depends on adjusting behaviour according to: the maturity and competence of subordinates, oscillating between directing, supporting, participating, and delegating (Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership model, 1977); leadership style and the favourability of the situation (Fiedler's model, 1967); specifics of the task, group, or situation (Blanchard's situational leadership model, 1977); leadership style and situation favourability (Fiedler's model, 1967); task, group, or organizational specifics (Kerr and Jermier's leader surrogate theory, 1978).

All these models emphasize the contextual nature of effective managerial behaviour and offer us a diverse range of action strategies adapted to institutional specifics.

Transformational leadership from a behavioural perspective

The transformational leadership model, established through the works of James MacGregor Burns (1978) and Bernard Bass (1985), has emerged as one of the most influential paradigms in organizational leadership research. In its consolidated form, this approach is integrated

into the Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM), developed by Bass and Avolio, which proposes an extended typology of leadership styles, organized in a continuum that starts from the passive (*laissez-faire*) style, crosses transactional leadership, and reaches the highest level of transformational leadership.

The transformational behaviours of the model are grouped into four main dimensions:

(1) Idealized influence – leaders act as models of integrity, taking risks and reflecting strong organizational values. This dimension is frequently associated with subordinates' trust and team loyalty (Bass and Riggio, 2006);

(2) Inspirational motivation – consists of expressing a compelling and mobilizing vision that generates commitment and a sense of mission. This trait is predictive of group cohesion and clarity of strategic direction (Judge and Piccolo, 2004);

(3) Intellectual stimulation – represents the encouragement of critical thinking, innovation, and creative problem solving. It is essential for the development of managerial skills, as it requires employees to take initiative and reformulate their approaches (Deng et al., 2012);

(4) Individualized consideration – involves paying attention to the needs of each team member, offering personalized support and mentoring. This dimension has positive effects on intrinsic motivation and employee retention (Bass and Avolio, 1994).

The theoretical assessment of transformational leadership reveals a balance between the positive impact on the organizational climate and the need to calibrate the leader's behaviour according to the team's level of autonomy, institutional specifics, and performance requirements (Skakon et al., 2010). In highly disciplined and controlled structures, such as military or intelligence organizations, the full applicability of this model may require significant cultural and structural adaptations.

Organizational performance in theoretical leadership models

In contingency theories, organizational performance is defined as the optimal result of the alignment between leadership style and situational variables (e.g., task structure, leader-subordinate relationships,

and formal power). According to Fiedler's model presented in *New approaches to effective leadership: Cognitive resources and organizational performance*, effective performance occurs when the leader's style (task-oriented or relational) matches the favourability of the situation—suggesting a manager's performance-oriented framework as a predictive variable in context. Other models, such as normative decision-making or situational leadership, define performance as a measure of the effectiveness of decisions and their acceptance by the team—that is, team performance is influenced by adaptive managerial behaviours. Thus, performance is conceptualized both at the individual (leader) and collective (team/ structure/ organization) levels, depending on how the leader shapes the environment and facilitates the achievement of objectives.

In transformational leadership, performance is approached as a multidimensional construct that reflects the organization's results, the level of employee engagement and satisfaction, but also innovation and process efficiency (Sefidan et al., 2021). Recent meta-analyses (Judge and Piccolo, 2004; Avolio et al., 2004) clearly associate the four transformational behaviours with indicators of collective performance, intrinsic motivation, and cohesion (e.g., team performance). In addition, they argue that these relationships coexist with managerial performance in the sense of developing more adaptive leadership, capable of creating a context in which the team can perform structurally and strategically. Recent literature also shows that the positive effects of the transformational style can be mediated or even moderated by contextual characteristics—such as organizational culture or the level of autonomy of members—indicating that performance is not a one-dimensional indicator but varies between the levels of organization, team, and leader.

Managerial behaviour in intelligence and military organizations

Over the past two decades, academic research on organizational performance within intelligence structures has highlighted the essential role of managerial behaviour in defining operational efficiency.

Within the intelligence services from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, behaviours such as intellectual stimulation, decision-making autonomy, promotion of inter-institutional collaboration, and human capital development have been investigated. These are directly correlated with organizational performance indicators such as internal cohesion, strategic innovation, and staff retention.

Recent studies have shown that transformational leadership positively influences morale, adaptability, and the ability of organizations to respond to complex challenges. Numerous meta-analytic assessments have confirmed that leadership styles based on empathy, involvement, and strategic vision contribute decisively to institutional resilience, especially in environments marked by uncertainty, ambiguity, and high operational pressures. Furthermore, leadership models applied in military and intelligence structures confirm that the causal relationships between leaders' behaviours and collective performance are mediated by situational factors specific to each type of organization. Thus, a nuanced understanding of how managerial behaviour influences performance, depending on the institutional context, the type of missions, and the nature of the activity carried out, becomes essential.

Specialized studies indicate that transformational leadership is an essential predictor of organizational performance, especially in rigid, hierarchical structures designed to cope with uncertainty. The most important theoretical contribution in this direction is Walsh's (2016) research, which explores the future of leadership in the US intelligence community, emphasizing the role of transformational behaviours in strengthening strategic and operational efficiency.

In his study entitled "Making Future Leaders in the US Intelligence Community," Walsh (2016) argues that organizational intelligence and decision-making autonomy must be cultivated through transformational behaviours such as intellectual stimulation, encouraging calculated risk-taking, and actively involving subordinates in institutional reform processes. These behaviours have been directly associated with improved strategic performance, operational efficiency, and increased collaboration between intelligence agencies.

A notable example is the study by Kettl and Kelman (2007), which analyses management in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and highlights the importance of encouraging individual initiative and

stimulating autonomy in decision-making. Another study by Ingraham and Moynihan (2001) within the National Security Agency (NSA) emphasizes the impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation and engagement, with positive effects on operational accuracy and analytical capacity. Similarly, research conducted by Davies and Gustafson (2013) within the British intelligence services (MI5 and MI6) shows that leadership styles based on trust and individualized consideration contribute to increased retention among senior analysts, a critical factor in maintaining strategic expertise.

An integrative assessment of these examples shows that the effectiveness of managerial behaviour is not only a result of the individual traits of the leader, but also of dynamic calibration to the operational context and the organizational competence to support adaptive leadership. Thus, for intelligence organizations, leadership development becomes a critical axis of institutional performance, with direct effects on anticipation, protection, and reaction capabilities.

The analysed studies converge towards the conclusion that performance in intelligence organizations depends a lot on the ability of leaders to adopt flexible managerial behaviour, focused on team development, supporting innovation, and assuming a strategic vision. Transformational leadership seems to be the form of leadership that best resonates with the dynamic needs of these structures, providing an effective framework for adaptation and sustainable institutional performance.

Research methodology

The research on the relationship between managerial behaviours and performance was based on a mixed design, combining qualitative and quantitative methods in a logical sequence intended to ensure both depth of exploration and empirical validation of the results. The investigation was conducted in an intelligence organization within the military sphere, structured hierarchically and characterized by a strongly normative institutional culture. The specificity of the research is given by the fact that it targeted an analytical structure responsible for processing and integrating information, which provided a unique perspective on managerial behaviours in a context where accuracy, discipline, and adaptability are essential criteria for performance.

The qualitative component of the research was built on the basis of semi-structured interviews, selected to provide an opportunity to capture both general perspectives and specific details regarding the exercise of managerial functions. The interview was designed using a “funnel” model, starting with broad conceptual questions and moving on to specific questions about everyday managerial practices and experiences.

Between August and September 2022, 18 managers from the analytical structure were interviewed, selected from a total population of 58 management positions, covering two hierarchical levels: managers of the staff (level 1) and managers of the managers of the staff (level 2). This diversity ensured representativeness for both operational and strategic levels, with geographical coverage at central and territorial levels.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face at the organization’s headquarters and lasted an average of 90–120 minutes. To ensure data quality and consistency, they were conducted by two research operators, with minor differences in style being noted and managed methodologically. All material was transcribed in full and subjected to thematic content analysis using an inductive approach. The categories of analysis focused on four major dimensions: (1) defining and measuring organizational performance; (2) identifying managerial behaviours perceived as effective; (3) characteristics of coordinated teams; (4) organizational context and contingent factors that enhance or diminish performance. The use of the qualitative method allowed the identification of subtle nuances in the way managers perceive performance, the detection of tensions and informal coordination mechanisms, as well as the highlighting of deficient behaviours, rarely documented in strictly quantitative approaches.

In the second stage of the research (July-August 2023), a quantitative methodology was used to validate and extend the conclusions resulting from the qualitative analysis. The main tool was the MLQ-5X (Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire) questionnaire, developed by Bernard Bass and Bruce Avolio, internationally recognized for measuring transformational, transactional, and permissive (*laissez-faire*) managerial behaviours. It was adapted to the specificities of the

military intelligence organization, respecting the linguistic and cultural particularities of the Romanian context.

The questionnaires were administered in a 360° system, meaning that each manager was evaluated both through self-assessment and by subordinates, colleagues, and superiors. A total of 733 questionnaires were administered, corresponding to 333 unique respondents, 55 of whom held managerial positions. This method allowed for the triangulation of perspectives and the reduction of self-assessment biases, a phenomenon frequently encountered in organizational studies.

The questionnaire measured five dimensions of transformational behaviour (idealized influence—attributes, idealized influence—behaviours, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration), three dimensions of transactional behaviour (contingent reward, active management by exception, passive management by exception), and permissive behaviour (*laissez-faire*). At the same time, the tool assessed three criteria of perceived performance: extra effort made by subordinates (EE), perceived efficiency of the manager (EFF), and satisfaction with leadership (SAT).

The collected data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, looking for associations between managerial behaviours and performance indicators, but also for differences based on socio-demographic and organizational variables—age, gender, hierarchical level, job experience. The analysis revealed consistent trends, such as the positive association between transformational behaviours and performance, but also notable differences between managers' self-assessments and the assessments made by subordinates or colleagues.

At the same time, the research has certain limitations that must be acknowledged. The selection of respondents for interviews was non-probabilistic, being limited to a single intelligence organization, which restricts the possibility of external generalization. In addition, the interviews were conducted by two operators, which may introduce minor variations in the application method. Last but not least, the sensitivity of the field investigated imposed certain constraints on access to data and information, which may limit the openness of respondents. Nevertheless, the methodological robustness and

consistency of the convergent results from the two stages allow for the formulation of conclusions relevant to understanding the relationship between managerial behaviours and performance in military intelligence organizations.

Research results

The analysis of the four transformational behaviours is structured to provide both a qualitative synthesis and a quantitative interpretation for each behaviour. This integrated approach allows us to outline a complete picture of how transformational leadership, through its essential manifestations, can concretely influence an organization's results, while also providing benchmarks for the development of leadership strategies adapted to specific contexts.

Individualized consideration. In organizations with a rigid hierarchical structure, such as military or intelligence organizations, the manifestation of this managerial behaviour poses significant challenges, but also brings significant benefits in terms of human resource development and organizational performance. In this section, we sought to identify how individualized consideration behaviours manifest themselves in the perceptions of managers and employees, as well as their relationship to perceived performance.

Within military and intelligence organizations, managerial behaviours are not only influenced by the rigors of hierarchical structure and specific organizational culture, but also become essential factors in shaping individual and collective performance. Qualitative data extracted from the interviews conducted in this research reveal a constant and striking presence of individualized consideration in the discourse and behaviour of the interviewed managers. Of the 18 participating managers, 14 exhibited explicit behaviours of this type, suggesting a generalized tendency to orient management toward relational, empathetic, and individually supportive dimensions, even in highly normative organizational contexts.

The most frequently mentioned behaviour was involvement in the development of subordinates. This indicates that managers do not limit themselves to formal supervision, but seek the professional and

personal growth of team members. For example, actions such as “providing constructive feedback,” “encouraging participation in courses,” or “supporting personal training initiatives” were frequently mentioned. This behaviour is supported in the literature as a relevant predictor of organizational performance, as it increases employees’ intrinsic motivation and commitment to the organization.

Another significant element was the attention paid to individual needs and expectations, which denotes a leadership style focused on the person rather than the formal position held. Managers showed interest in employees’ personal issues, their aspirations, and adapting tasks to individual skills and abilities. In a system where uniformity is often the norm, this individual adaptability can make a decisive contribution to maintaining emotional balance and team cohesion. One example is provided by a senior manager who said: “I usually have regular one-on-one discussions with each team member, not just for evaluations, but to understand their expectations and needs. Often, these discussions reveal issues that, if resolved, significantly improve team dynamics.” This behaviour reflects not only a transformational approach, but also an effective strategy for preventing conflict and optimizing human resources.

The participatory leadership style emerged as an expression of consideration by involving employees in the decision-making process. Although less frequently mentioned, this behaviour has significant implications for building trust, reducing resistance to change, and stimulating initiative. In the same vein, behavioural flexibility has been identified as a form of contextual adaptation by managers in relation to team dynamics and mission requirements. One of the managers surveyed stated: “Our manager has a habit of asking his colleagues how they are feeling and if they need help, without this seeming like a formality. It has become part of our team culture to support each other, and this motivates us even in difficult times.” Thus, it can be seen how transformational behaviour generates not only a positive bilateral relationship, but an entire organizational culture based on support and empathy.

All these behaviours highlight a clear orientation towards transformational leadership in the sense of individualized consideration.

Their importance in organizational performance is supported not only by their frequency in respondents' discourse, but also by how they correlate with positive perceptions of job satisfaction, team cohesion, and goal achievement. The analysis of the responses highlights the fact that employees deeply value this dimension of individualized consideration, and managers who apply it consistently are perceived as authentic leaders. In addition, it is noteworthy that this approach does not require additional material resources, but only time, attention, and availability—intangible resources that are essential in transformational leadership.

In conclusion, the overall qualitative analysis outlines the profile of a military manager who, despite institutional constraints, exhibits behaviour oriented toward the individual appreciation of employees. This behavioural model transforms an authority-based relationship into a professional partnership, in which performance is stimulated not only by orders and directives, but especially by understanding, support, and personal appreciation.

Managers who show individualized consideration tend to pay attention to the needs, aspirations, and unique characteristics of each employee, which directly translates into an increased perception of performance at the organizational level. Qualitative responses indicate that employees feel more motivated, respected, and involved when they are given personalized support and when their uniqueness is recognized.

From a quantitative perspective, statistical analysis of the correlation between items measuring individualized consideration and performance perception scores reveals a moderate positive association: $r = 0.52$, $p < 0.01$. This result supports the validity of the qualitative observations and indicates that perceptions of performance are influenced by the quality of the direct relationship between managers and subordinates. Furthermore, comparative assessments between groups showed that employees who reported a consistent presence of behaviours considered individualized associated these behaviours to a significantly greater extent with a positive perception of team effectiveness and organizational climate.

Interestingly, the differences between managers and employees in terms of the perception of performance generated by individualized consideration are minimal, suggesting a consensus on the beneficial

effect of this behaviour. This convergence of perceptions is important for organizational cohesion and for aligning managerial values with employee needs.

On the one hand, the qualitative analysis highlighted a series of recurring behavioural patterns within the organization, which include displays of empathy, openness to dialogue, adjusting communication style to individual needs, and offering personalized support based on the specific difficulties encountered by subordinates. These behaviours are perceived by respondents as essential for creating a positive organizational climate based on trust and collaboration.

On the other hand, quantitative analysis validates these observations through significantly high scores for the perception of individualized consideration among employees, in direct correlation with managerial performance evaluations. A positive association was found between the scores obtained on items measuring individualized consideration and the perception of team effectiveness, motivation level, and job satisfaction.

In terms of convergence between qualitative and quantitative results, a high degree of consistency is noted. The examples provided by respondents in qualitative interviews are consistent with the high scores obtained on items defining individualized consideration. At the same time, it is noteworthy that this component of transformational leadership has a compensatory role, especially in organizations where there are structural limitations or bureaucratic restrictions. Managers who exhibit individualized behaviours are perceived as facilitators of performance, despite systemic constraints.

The results of qualitative and quantitative analyses of individualized consideration clearly highlight the relevance of this transformational behaviour in shaping organizational performance, both from the perspective of managers and employees. Individualized consideration, defined by the leader's ability to respond to the individual needs of subordinates, to listen to them, to support them, and to treat them as partners in the leadership process, generated positive reactions and favourable evaluations in most of the responses analysed.

In conclusion, individualized consideration proves to be an important predictor of perceived performance in the organization, with

a significant impact on the dimensions of team satisfaction, efficiency, and cohesion. However, its maximum effectiveness is achieved in combination with other transformational behaviours and in a flexible organizational framework that allows direct and frequent interaction between leaders and subordinates. This finding suggests the need for an integrated approach to leadership development in organizations, in which individualized consideration is cultivated alongside other dimensions of transformational leadership.

Idealized influence. In complex organizational environments, such as the military or intelligence, idealized influence behaviour becomes all the more relevant as it leads to strengthened team cohesion, increased loyalty, and sustained performance in tense and unpredictable environments.

In qualitative research, data analysis revealed a consistent prevalence of this dimension in respondents' discourse, regardless of hierarchical level or professional experience. Respondents identified idealized influence in both character traits (integrity, courage, responsibility) and behaviours (direct involvement, personal example, risk-taking).

This dimension was frequently correlated with leaders' ability to generate trust and respect, as well as their ability to motivate through behaviour, not just words. Thus, ethical behaviour and visible commitment were considered sources of perceived performance, being evoked by respondents in various contexts: crisis situations, difficult decision-making processes, or critical moments for the organization. Repeatedly, managers who demonstrated consistency between discourse and action were perceived as positively influencing team morale and organizational cohesion.

The interpretation of qualitative data shows that idealized influence is not only perceived as a desirable trait, but as a necessity in organizational environments characterized by risk, uncertainty, and pressure, as is the case with intelligence organizations. Personal example, the leader's willingness to "expose" themselves alongside the team, and commitment to common goals are described by respondents as differentiating factors between effective and ineffective managers.

Furthermore, leaders perceived as role models generate a modelling effect on the behaviour of subordinates, which indirectly contributes to collective performance.

It is important to note that idealized influence is closely linked to the ethical dimension of managerial behaviour. Respondents' answers indicate a clear rejection of behaviours perceived as opportunistic, ambiguous, or duplicitous. Managers who adopt such a style are associated with decreased motivation, trust in organizational goals, and performance perception. Employees are willing to make extra efforts, voluntarily engage in difficult activities, and accept contextual constraints when the leader is perceived as authentic and involved.

A notable aspect of the data is the emphasis placed by respondents on value congruence between the leader and the organization. This congruence is seen as a key element of idealized influence, in the sense that leaders who live the organization's values beyond mere statements are perceived as legitimate. In contrast, a lack of congruence leads to cognitive dissonance among employees and decreased leadership effectiveness. Leaders' ability to remain steadfast in the face of external pressures, protect the team, and maintain strategic direction are interpreted as forms of moral and symbolic influence, with a profound impact on team performance.

Qualitative analysis of data on idealized influence shows that this managerial behaviour is perceived not only as effective but also as indispensable for generating performance in a demanding organizational context. Respondents identify idealized influence as a source of cohesion, mobilization, and commitment, but also as an ethical filter necessary for validating leaders in a strict value system.

The managers interviewed highlighted that leaders perceived as having high idealized influence are characterized by authenticity, the ability to convey stable values, and the assumption of decision-making responsibility in tense contexts. A common example is that of the leader who "not only demands performance, but is the first to generate and support it in the field." This type of attitude has been consistently associated with a high level of loyalty and commitment from employees.

The quantitative analysis shows that the average scores for idealized influence behaviour are among the highest of the

transformational dimensions, both in the attributive (IA) and behavioural (IB) components. For example, the average score for IA was 4.39, and for IB it was 4.41—on a scale of 1 to 5—indicating a strongly positive perception from respondents. These quantitative results validate the qualitative data, confirming the presence and importance of idealized influence behaviour in the managerial practice evaluated.

Overall, the integration of the two approaches—qualitative and quantitative—provides a coherent and convergent picture of the central role played by idealized influence in defining effective managerial behaviour. This not only inspires trust and respect, but also acts as a catalyst for individual and group performance.

Idealized influence behaviour, analysed from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective, emerges as one of the most significant dimensions of transformational leadership in terms of its impact on organizational performance. This dimension reflects the leader's ability to act as a role model, to convey a set of firm beliefs, and to assume moral responsibility in a manner perceived by subordinates as authentic and inspirational.

Qualitative analysis has shown that idealized influence is frequently associated with behaviours that demonstrate congruence between values and actions, integrity in decision-making, and personal commitment to collective goals. Participants' statements illustrated that transformational leaders not only set high expectations, but also demonstrate through their own behaviour how these standards can be achieved. For example, one respondent described a leader as follows: "He is the first to arrive, the last to leave, and the only one who does not ask for anything he would not do himself." Such statements clearly reflect modelling through behaviour and portray the leader as a source of inspiration and ethical consistency.

The quantitative dimension of the research supports this interpretation, indicating average scores of over 4.3 (out of 5) for both components of idealized influence: attributes (IA) and behaviours (IB). This not only confirms the respondents' overall positive perception, but also indicates a high level of internalization of these behaviours in the managerial culture of the organization studied. Thus, IA and

IB behaviours validate each other qualitatively and quantitatively, providing a coherent and robust picture of idealized influence.

The integration of the two types of analysis revealed a number of relevant correlations between idealized influence and demographic variables. For example, female managers are more often associated with this type of behaviour, both in subordinate evaluations and in self-evaluations, highlighting a possible link between more empathetic leadership styles and the transformational dimensions of leadership. Similarly, managers with long tenure and superior managerial experience demonstrate a stronger inclination toward idealized influence, suggesting that this behaviour is reinforced over time and through exposure to complex decision-making contexts.

From a transformational leadership perspective, idealized influence plays a central role in generating organizational performance. It contributes to the development of trust, the shaping of employee behaviours, and the alignment of individual values with institutional ones. When leaders act according to their own convictions, without ethical compromises and with a clear orientation towards the collective good, the organization gains moral stability, increased commitment, and sustained performance.

Inspirational motivation. Qualitative analysis of inspirational motivational management behaviour highlighted a number of relevant dimensions within the organization investigated. This behaviour is mainly expressed through the ability of leaders to convey a clear vision, to generate commitment and enthusiasm among employees, and to encourage a sense of belonging to the organization's strategic objectives. The data obtained through interviews and content analysis painted a relatively coherent picture of how inspirational motivation is perceived and implemented.

A constant theme in respondents' statements is the importance of communicating a clear direction and a common mission. Managers who were perceived as inspirational were those who managed to rally their teams around meaningful goals, generate a sense of purpose, and ensure consistency between words and actions. This consistency of values is central to building the credibility of an inspirational manager.

The vision expressed by a manager is not only a strategic goal, but also a means of motivating and mobilizing human resources around a common ideal: “Let’s take the unit to a level of nationally recognized excellence.” This vision has a strong symbolic value, facilitating the alignment of employees with a common direction, which, according to transformational leadership theory, contributes to increased involvement and, implicitly, organizational performance.

Significantly, employees indicated that inspirational motivation is not just the result of persuasive speech, but of a constant attitude of support, encouragement, and recognition. Almost all interviews mentioned the importance of empathy and active listening, signalling that inspirational managers are those who value the ideas of others, promoting a culture of continuous learning and personal development.

Inspirational motivational behaviour is reflected in the way the leader appeals to high professional values: “professionalism and dignity in everything we do.” This type of discourse resonates deeply with the professional identity of employees in intelligence organizations, contributing to the internalization of values and the creation of an organizational culture focused on excellence. This internalization indirectly leads to an improvement in the quality of work and accountability, factors that are positively correlated with performance.

Qualitative data has shown that leaders who express clear visions, convey optimism, courage, and confidence, and succeed in creating a sense of common purpose within their teams are rated as more effective. A telling example is the statement by a manager who said, “I made sure to explain to my colleagues why the strategic direction is important and to make them believe that they can actively contribute to success.” This type of expression is frequently associated with positive evaluations of team performance.

We also identified a form of inspirational motivation—creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect: “I give people confidence and encourage them to think freely and creatively.” In a bureaucratic and hierarchical environment, such as that specific to military or intelligence organizations, this behaviour takes on strategic value, as it combats rigidity and promotes adaptability—essential elements of modern organizational performance.

At the same time, quantitative analysis confirms this relationship: the scores obtained for items measuring inspirational motivation (IM) correlate positively and statistically significantly with items assessing perceived organizational performance. The correlation coefficients range from 0.47 to 0.58, indicating a moderately strong association. This finding indicates that, in the respondents' perception, the presence of an inspirational leader is directly associated with higher levels of perceived performance in the organization.

Also, high levels of inspirational motivation are often accompanied by a positive assessment of the organizational climate, which can be an important mediator in the relationship between leadership and performance. Qualitative statements show that employees perceive a positive atmosphere and increased collective commitment when leaders adopt an inspirational style.

A significant issue identified is the difference between managers' and employees' perceptions: while managers believe they provide sufficient motivational stimuli, employees often feel a lack of genuine involvement or valuable feedback. This perception gap indicates that inspirational motivation may often be overestimated by leaders and underestimated by those they lead.

Qualitative data suggest that inspirational motivation is one of the most appreciated transformational behaviours, but also one of the most difficult to implement in an authentic and sustainable way. This difficulty stems from the need for congruence between the leader's personal values, the organizational culture, and the emotional and professional needs of the team. The qualitative analysis also highlighted that emotional expressiveness, visionary communication, and a positive attitude are elements that contribute significantly to building inspirational managerial behaviour.

In conclusion, inspirational motivation makes a significant contribution to shaping the perception of performance, acting as a link between the leader's visionary behaviours and the perceived results of the organization. This behaviour not only leads to better team orientation towards goals, but also to increased cohesion and a shared sense of belonging and meaning, factors that amplify the perception of organizational efficiency and success.

Intellectual stimulation. Intellectual stimulation is particularly relevant in organizations characterized by operational complexity, rapid change, and constant pressure for efficiency and innovation, such as military structures or intelligence organizations. In such environments, managers' ability to promote an organizational culture oriented toward learning, adaptability, and critical thinking becomes a differentiating factor in performance.

Through intellectual stimulation, leaders not only provide direction, but also build an environment in which team members are challenged to push their limits, take calculated risks, and actively contribute to identifying innovative solutions to organizational problems.

Intellectual stimulation behaviour is clearly illustrated in the responses of managers in the analysed organization, being the second most frequently mentioned transformational behaviour in the qualitative analysis, with 23 explicit references. This strong presence can be associated with organizational initiatives focused on innovation and change, but also with formal policies that encourage the development of new concepts and methodologies.

The analysis of managers' narratives highlights four main directions in which intellectual stimulation behaviour manifests itself:

1. Stimulating creativity and critical thinking in the team—several managers explicitly mentioned the importance of challenging team members to think “out of the box,” giving them decision-making autonomy and the opportunity to come up with innovative solutions, one of them exemplifying: “I constantly challenge my team members to come up with new ideas. I don't expect standard answers, but try to encourage them to look for unexplored options.”

2. Creating a context conducive to innovation—six managers emphasized their role in building an organizational climate that supports experimentation and learning from mistakes, as well as using weekly brainstorming sessions to identify innovative solutions.

3. Stimulating the team by delegating responsibilities and challenges—four managers highlighted that they assign complex tasks to stimulate the intellectual development and analytical skills of their subordinates.

4. Developing new concepts and methodologies—three managers explicitly referred to their personal and team contributions to generating new operational practices or methodologies.

Overall, these behaviours reflect an active commitment to the development of critical thinking, innovative approaches, and continuous learning within the organization. Their relevance in the context of performance is significant, as they contribute to process improvement, team adaptability, and operational efficiency.

From an integrative perspective, qualitative data show that intellectual stimulation is perceived not only as a desirable trait of a leader, but also as a functional necessity in complex organizations such as intelligence agencies. The emphasis on innovation, critical thinking, and generating customized solutions aligns with both institutional requirements and the dynamics of a knowledge-based, rapid-response organization.

All these examples converge to outline a profile of a manager who systematically promotes cognitive autonomy, analytical thinking, and professional accountability. Intellectual stimulation behaviour manifests itself in various ways, from cultivating a learning climate to focusing on unconventional solutions.

It is noteworthy that, in the organizational context investigated, managers who frequently use intellectual stimulation are associated, in the perception of employees, with more autonomous, flexible, and high-performing teams. The behaviours analysed are also relevant for the development of human capital and for supporting innovation as a strategic vector of the organization.

From a qualitative perspective, intellectual stimulation proves to be a catalyst for creativity, innovative problem solving, and encouraging critical thinking among employees. Managers who adopt such behaviour not only generate an organizational climate conducive to change and continuous learning, but also support individual initiatives, which leads to increased engagement and accountability.

Data collected in quantitative research highlights the fact that respondents perceiving a high level of intellectual stimulation associated this behaviour with superior organizational performance. For example, the average scores obtained among managers who frequently exhibit

intellectually stimulating behaviours correlate positively with assessments of innovation, operational efficiency, and the organization's ability to adapt to change. Thus, it can be seen that intellectual stimulation becomes a predictive factor for higher perceived performance.

The results indicate a significant difference between the perceptions of employees who work under managers who actively practice intellectual stimulation and those who work in an environment characterized by a transactional or authoritarian leadership style. In the first case, employees reported a higher degree of job satisfaction, involvement in decision-making processes, and a general feeling of appreciation for their own contribution, all of which are correlated with an increased perception of organizational performance.

Another significant aspect is the link between intellectual stimulation and innovation, an essential element of performance in modern organizational environments. Respondents noted that managers who stimulate critical and creative thinking facilitate the emergence of new solutions to recurring problems, as well as the development of more efficient procedures. These changes often translate into greater organizational adaptability, increased efficiency, and an enhanced ability to respond to environmental challenges.

Analysing the qualitative and quantitative data together reveals a positive correlation between intellectual stimulation and performance perception. Not only is this managerial behaviour valued by employees, but it also actively contributes to the consolidation of efficient, innovative, and sustainable organizational processes.

Especially in organizations with complex and dynamic missions, such as intelligence or military structures, intellectual stimulation becomes an essential strategic advantage for maintaining long-term performance.

In conclusion, the correlation between intellectual stimulation and performance perception is significantly positive, both from a quantitative and qualitative perspective.

Managers who apply this behaviour cultivate an organizational culture based on learning, innovation, and shared responsibility. Therefore, intellectual stimulation not only enhances perceived

performance but also contributes to the sustainability and efficiency of the organization as a whole.

Intellectual stimulation is an essential managerial behaviour in an organizational landscape characterized by volatility and complexity. The research results support its integration into models for training and evaluating leaders in organizations, especially in strategic and highly specialized ones, contributing to the development of adaptive and effective leadership.

The quantitative and qualitative data from the research indicate a consistent and positive association between the frequency of transformational behaviours and the perceived level of organizational performance, confirming the theoretical hypotheses in the literature.

Idealized influence and inspirational motivation are directly correlated with indicators such as team cohesion, trust in the leader, and voluntary involvement, which are recognized predictors of long-term performance. Intellectual stimulation promotes innovation and adaptability, contributing to performance, especially in complex operational contexts or situations of rapid change. Individualized consideration has a direct impact on job satisfaction and staff retention, which are essential for maintaining performance over time.

The synergy between the four behaviours maximizes performance, creating a balance between strategic orientation, motivation, adaptability, and human resource stability.

Critical analysis of the direct correlation between transformational behaviours and performance

It is important to note that the relationship identified between transformational behaviours and organizational performance should not necessarily be interpreted as a direct causal one. The existence of a significant correlation can also be explained by the influence of contextual factors, such as organizational culture, institutional structure, or available material and human resources, which can simultaneously shape both the leadership style of leaders and the level of performance achieved by the organization. Furthermore, performance can be strongly influenced by external variables—such as economic dynamics, legislative changes, or geopolitical instability—factors that are beyond

the control of managerial behaviour and that can artificially diminish or amplify the observed effects.

The literature warns that excessive expression of transformational behaviours, in the absence of adaptive adjustment mechanisms, can lead to undesirable effects, such as emotional overload of the leader, risk of burnout, or the creation of excessive dependence of team members on the manager's personalized vision.

Equally, individual differences among team members—such as personality traits, level of professional experience, or degree of autonomy—can act as moderating factors that influence how transformational behaviours are received and translated into performance, reducing the uniformity and predictability of managerial impact.

Methodological caution is required in interpreting the results, as the data obtained reflect a specific organizational and temporal context, which limits the valid extension of the conclusions to other types of organizations or institutional situations.

Conclusions

The integrated analysis of qualitative and quantitative data confirms the central hypothesis of the research: transformational behaviours—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—have a significant and positive impact on organizational performance. When manifested in a balanced and context-appropriate manner, these behaviours contribute to strengthening cohesion, increasing motivation, stimulating innovation, and maintaining job satisfaction.

Idealized influence is notable for its ability to generate trust and loyalty, having a direct effect on voluntary involvement and the level of cooperation within the team. Inspirational motivation supports collective morale and resilience, especially in times of uncertainty or high stress. Intellectual stimulation proves essential for adaptability and innovation, while individualized consideration contributes to staff retention and the creation of a positive organizational climate.

The results suggest that maximum performance is achieved not through the isolated manifestation of one of these behaviours, but through a harmonious combination of them. This complementarity

allows leaders to respond effectively to a wide range of challenges while maintaining a balance between strategic objectives and team wellbeing.

The research also highlighted relevant differences between hierarchical levels and between managers' self-assessments and subordinates' perceptions, which not only confirms the theoretical hypotheses but also introduces critical nuances regarding their applicability. This dissonance is an original contribution, showing that the effectiveness of managerial behaviours cannot be assessed solely in terms of theory-data convergence, but must also be analysed in light of institutional constraints and divergent perceptions within the organization.

The practical implications are manifold. First, the results suggest the need for management training programs that include the development of transformational and skills tailored to the military and intelligence specificities. Second, they indicate that organizational performance does not depend exclusively on compliance with rules and procedures, but also on the ability of leaders to provide individualized support, inspire, and stimulate innovation under structural constraints. Third, the analysis highlights the importance of multi-perspective (360°) assessment to capture the gaps between self- assessments and collective perceptions, which is essential for realistic institutional calibrations.

In conclusion, the research demonstrates that, in military intelligence organizations, transformational leadership can be a vector for sustainable performance, but its effectiveness depends on the congruence between stated and practiced behaviours, the organization's ability to support innovation, and the willingness of leaders to adapt international theories to local specifics. These findings open up new avenues of research and provide a useful applied framework for strengthening managerial culture in highly complex strategic organizations.

It should be noted that the observed relationship between behaviours and performance may be influenced by contextual and individual factors, which requires caution in generalizing conclusions. The study provides a solid basis for the development of leadership training and development programs aimed at cultivating a balanced transformational style oriented toward sustainable results.

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