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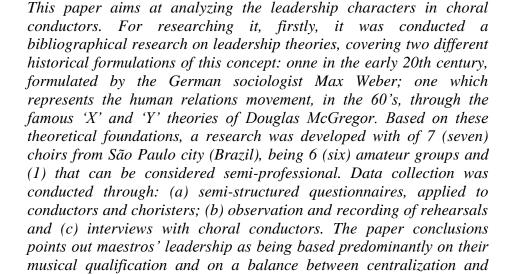ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT
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MAESTROS BEYOND THE BATON: SURPASSING AUTHORITARIANISM AND CHARISMA

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This paper aims at analyzing the leadership characters in choral conductors. For researching it, firstly, it was conducted a bibliographical research on leadership theories, covering two different historical formulations of this concept: onne in the early 20th century, formulated by the German sociologist Max Weber; one which represents the human relations movement, in the 60's, through the famous 'X' and 'Y' theories of Douglas McGregor. Based on these theoretical foundations, a research was developed with of 7 (seven) choirs from São Paulo city (Brazil), being 6 (six) amateur groups and (1) that can be considered semi-professional. Data collection was conducted through: (a) semi-structured questionnaires, applied to conductors and choristers; (b) observation and recording of rehearsals and (c) interviews with choral conductors. The paper conclusions points out maestros' leadership as being based predominantly on their musical qualification and on a balance between centralization and facilitation in management.

Palavras-chaves: leadership theories; leadership; human resources management; maestro as leader; management in music.

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1. Introduction

The figure of the maestro is repeatedly used in the management literature to refer to managerial roles and leadership (MINTZBERG, 1998; DRUCKER, 2007; MANGURIAN; LOCKHART, 2006; HBR, 2004; ALMONDO; MORSE, 2006; GOURVILLE, 2005; LEAVITT, 2003; CHRISTENSEN; MARX; STEVENSON, 2006). From metaphors (as a kind of isomorphism in science, as pointed out by BERTALANFFY, 2003) to the stage, and from the stage to the day to day work of maestros, leadership is an essential ability for conductors. This paper aims at exploring this real face of maestros' work, beyond the glamour of his/her gestures, in the practice of management, during rehearsals and out of them. A symbol of leading teams, managing group works, the choral conductor is the subject of this research. The aim here is to analyze the 'performance' of 6 (six) choral conductor, leading 7 (seven) choirs, in what it deals to their attributes of leadership ability and emotional intelligence sub-abilities of leadership.

Firstly, it was conducted a bibliographical research on leadership theories, covering two different historical formulations of this concept: one in the early 20th century, formulated by the German sociologist Max Weber; one which represents the *human relations movement*, in the 60's, through the famous 'X' and 'Y' theories of Douglas McGregor. Based on this theoretical foundations, it were developed a comprehensive model about maestros' job, detaching the dimensions of musical, vocal, educational and managerial competences, starting from the concepts of abilities (skills) and competences. One of the abilities detached was the ability *to lead*. This model was applied in the empirical research, where there were studied the cases of 7 (seven) choirs from São Paulo city (Brazil), being 6 (six) amateur groups and (1) that can be considered semi-professional. Data collection was conducted through: (a) semi-structured questionnaires, applied to conductors and choristers; (b) observation and recording of rehearsals and (c) interviews with choral conductors. The table below presents the material of research collected in each choir.

Choir ⟋ Collected data	Choir 1	Choir 2	Choir 3	Choir 4	Choir 5	Choir 6	Choir 7
Choristers' questionnaire (number of respondings)	X (35)	X (27)	X (26)	X (30)	X (29)	X (5)	X (35)
Conductor's questionnaire	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Interview with the maestro	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Observation and recording of rehearsal	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Chart 1- Data collected for the research

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Concerning its design, this empirical research combines characters of three methodological approaches:

- *multiple cases study*, defined by Yin (2009) as the research of different cases analyzed in separate, with multiple units of analysis (what do not prevents general conclusions, starting from the results observed in each group);

- *field research*, once it intended to go to the *loci* of its object of study (the choral activity) and collect data among its agents;

- *exploratory opinion research*, social research technique that enables to detach the vision of certain agents on the organizational context that they are insert (GIL, 1995) – in this case, agents are the conductors and choristers.

After the presentation of its comprehensive model and of its theoretical bases, the paper presents and analyses data collected through this methodological design.

2. Bibliographic revision

2.1. The competence of management, the ability of leadership

Starting from the ideas of French theories on managerial and pedagogical competences (PERRENOUD, 1999; LE BOTERF 2010), we can propose a comprehensive theoretical design concerning abilities and competences. In this model, abilities are understood as practical knowledge (know how to do), as skills actualized in practical situations-problem. Competences, therefore, would by a complex set of inter-related abilities (practical knowledge) plus theoretical background in the reference area.

Abilities would be, then, independent components of a particular competence. The verbal ability, for example, constitutes at the same time the competences of advocating, making a religious or political speech and many other actions. Yet, when inserted in given competence, abilities are inter-linked. For example, the ability of leadership complements the ability of communication in case of an enterprise manager. It forms an integrated and systemic whole called management competence, consisting of inter-related skills. The *Congrès Force* (a French worker's institution), according to Vieira and Garcia (2004, p. 8), "defines competence as a set of knowledge mobilized in the work situation. Its components are the knowledge or expertise, the knowledge put into practice, know-how, skills, intelligence and professional staff", among others.

Thus, a competence is comprised of related abilities, which involves an advanced theoretical knowledge already acquired by the individual. The theoretical knowledge and the abilities constitute, then, a specific competence. This is defined as a set of requirements – knowledge and abilities – urged by the performance of a particular function, which requires the action of the individual seeking the solution of certain problems and situations (SANT'ANNA; MORAES; KILIMNIK, 2005). The establishment of a dynamic and flexible power is also noted in the idea of competence, which is reorganized in different contexts, depending, for example, on different requirement levels to perform the same function: "The competence of

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the individual is not a state, cannot be reduced to a specific knowledge or expertise" (FLEURY; FLEURY, 2004, p. 48).

In a construction of a model to understand and to analyze choral conductors' job we propose to understand the competence of choral conducting as a wide and complex level, made by four types of competences: educational competence, vocal competence, musical competence and managerial competence (FUCCI AMATO, 2010).

The choral conductor, as a musician, has theoretical knowledge in areas such as harmony and counterpoint and (pratical) abilities, as to play an instrument (e.g., piano), to conduct (in a strict sense, ie., the gestural technique) and to mark the rhythm. In the vocal competence, knowledge on physiology of voice and other areas, besides the ability of know how to sing, are very important. In pedagogical competence, knowledge on teaching methodology, philosophical foundations of education, among other, combine with abilities such as knowing how to learn with the choristers. Finally, concerning managerial competence (MINTZBERG, 2009; FLEURY; FLEURY, 2000), besides some knowledge on administrative theories, maestros develop a high number of managerial abilities, concerning communication, motivation, leadership, strategy, networking, negotiation, etc. In this sense, we propose here to analyze one of these abilities: the ability of leadership.

Synthetically: the competence of management is decomposed in a series of abilities: to know how to assume responsibilities; to know how to improve yourself; to know how to motivate; to know how to lead, among many others. Concerning the leadership ability, this is decomposed in a series of leadership (sub-)abilities of emotional intelligence, as we will describe soon.

2.2. Theories of leadership

2.2.1. Max Weber and the types of *legitimate domination*: the bases of authority

The development of leadership theory has as its basis the ideal types of (legitimate) domination described by Max Weber in its *Economics and Society* (original of 1922). Domination is conceptualized by Weber (1996, p.170) not as a simple influence or power over others, but as authority, "probability of finding obedience inside a certain group, for specific commands (or for all kind of orders)". All domination has in general – as a condition for obedience – a pretension of legitimacy. Obedience is represented by the state in which the obedient individual assumes the content of the orders given to him/her as a "maxims of behavior" (WEBER, 1996, p. 172). Weber distinguished three ideal types, or "pure" types, of legitimate domination, according to the fundament of its (pretension of) legitimacy.

Firstly, the *rational* domination would be that developed by the construction of a rational normative system, imposed or consensually established. In this case, the obedience to the leader is obtained by the appeal to the obedience to the norms. The belief in the legality of ordinations addressed to one and in the rightness of the duty of obeying it are the bases of rational domination (WEBER, 1996, p. 172). A second type of domination is based on tradition, which grants authority to the inheritor of a power constructed and perpetuated through times, conceived by the led as having an aureole of sanctity (WEBER, 1996, p. 172). Finally, the last ideal type of domination consists in the charismatic domination, which "rests

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in the extraordinary surrender to the sanctity, heroism or exemplarity of a person and to the orders by this person created or unveiled" (WEBER, 1996, p. 172).

These Weberian elaborations are (some of) the main bases of the modern theory of leadership developed in the managerial and entrepreneurial discourses. An example of an appropriation of the Weberian analysis by the administrative theory is the propose of translating leadership into bases of authority: the *tradition* (obedience to – and reproduction of – traditional practices or moralities), the *charisma* (factor intrinsically linked to the personal style of behavior), the *formal authority* (derived of the organizational hierarchy), the *technical competence* and the *political basis* (style of interpersonal relations management).

2.2.2. Douglas McGregor and the *'X'* and *'Y'* theories

Strongly influenced by the humanistic psychology of Maslow, McGregor, in his book of 1960 *The human side of enterprise*, developed a theory that detaches two different (*ideal*, in the Weberian sense) types of management: the first one, 'traditional' ('X' theory), focused only in the physiological and security necessities of the worker, representing an rigid and authoritarian ('fayolian') style of management and control; the second theory ('Y'), closer to the proposals of *human relations movement*, focused in patterns of workers' integration and selfcontrol and directed to usually unsatisfied levels of their necessities (as love and self-esteem) – levels that, because still unsatisfied, can influence behavior and motivation once being satisfied (MCGREGOR, 2006). McGregor's theory can be presented as (ideal) types of managers conceptions about how to manage with people and what managerial style should be implemented. This representation is presented in the next chart.

'X' theory	'Y' theory
People are lazy	People are valiant and active
People avoid the exigent work	Work is so natural as to play or to rest, and can be also a source of satisfaction or of suffering
People need to be controlled and directed, and also threatening and punishment can be used to make the organizational goals accomplished	People can be self-motivated and self-directed, since being stimulated; threatens and punishments only produce a bigger work-related dissatisfaction, when, by the other side, self-actualization is a reward
The external discipline is demanded	People can self-discipline themselves
People avoid responsibility	People search for and accepts responsibility
People are ingenuous and without initiative, do not have ambitions and prefer being directed to direct others	People are creative and competent, but their potential is underutilized in organizations

Chart 2 – McGregor's theory (Source: the authors, based in McGregor, 2006)

The typology of led behavior conceived by leaders models the leadership styles and, therefore, the motivational process adopted and implemented. In a traditional conception of management (or administration), as presented by 'X' theory, this activity is understood as *doing things or make the organization works through and despite people*. The manager has a *Cartesian* perspective, based on the foundations of 'exact' or 'technological' sciences, which – once transported to the analysis of human behavior – intents that this should be mechanical

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and guided in a completely rational form – this is the concept of *homo economicus*, the symbol of an unlimited rationality finding the maximization of happiness, profits, etc., as conceived by the classical economists as Adam Smith. In this sense, one starts from the premise that man is motivated primarily and mainly by economic reasons. As the financial result of production of goods and services is controlled by the organization, the company has to pay their employees and collaborators accordingly to the strictly necessary to maintain them (instrumentally) administered, controlled and motivated, in a minimum possible (and economically profitable) level. The human emotions and perceptions are disregarded and conceived as irrational factors that cannot interfere in individual interests inside organization. This vision prescribes that emotions, desires and necessities felt by people have to be neutralized and controlled by a systematical planning and organizational control. Being intrinsically irrational, man is fundamentally an incapable and lazy being, from what emerges the necessity of being rigidly controlled to satisfy organizational plans, goals and objectives, which are really opposed to the individual interests (MCGREGOR, 2006).

By other side, the 'X' theory presents some counterpoints and variations that, in a first view, seems to deviate from the managerial behavior described, but in substance maintains the same principles. In an extreme, management can be rigid and inflexible, with direction methods which include coercion and threatens (in general, disguised), and a severe supervision, what would be directed to correct the natural human deficiencies to work. In another extreme, but also inside 'X' theory, there is a softer management, in which behavior is controlled and directed through methods of worker's persuasion, in the form of gratifications, satisfaction of individual requests, praises, permissions, flatteries; the search is for creating, though superficially, a climate of apparent harmony and freedom. Although these two extremes are apparently opposed, both are founded in the same conceptual and 'ideological' bases: they presupposes that productive labor is an unnatural form of behavior for most people and, then, its necessary to persuade and press them to obtain, in some form, profitable results for the organization. As McGregor (2006) pointed out, both types of 'X' theory and all the variations that are between its extremes are deficient because do not recognize – and do not stimulate – the human tendency to develop creation and assume responsibilities in crescent levels.

The conception of management developed under the influence of the various theories designed in the *human relations movement* ('Y' theory) rejects the pragmatism and 'mechanicism' of the traditional theory of administration (or management), and understands the organizational efficiency based on the contributions of human and behavioral sciences – mainly modern psychology, cognitive sciences, etc. Maslow is the author-paradigm for this idea of management. Managing involves organization and functioning of the different productive elements of organizations – money, material and equipments, people – positioned all, in the case of enterprises, to the accomplishment of profits. The passivity and resistance to the compliance of organizational goals is not an innate character of human being, but is the result of bad experiences. Indeed, even potentially, the capacities of motivation, assumption of responsibilities, behavior direction to personal development and organizational goals, all this is present in people. Management, in this sense, has the goal of construct conditions for people recognizing, releasing and actualizing their own potentialities. Essentially, to manage is to create organizational conditions and operational methods that make possible to achieve personal aims and to direct efforts to accomplish the goals of the organization. For it, there is

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the necessity "of creating opportunities, releasing potential, removing obstacles, encouraging growth, providing guidance" (MCGREGOR, 2006, p. 352). This scope is accomplished through managerial techniques as the administrative decentralization and delegation of tasks (empowerment), expansion of functions and works signification, participation of workers on administration and self-evaluation of performance.

3. Results and discussion

The next chart show the leadership bases of maestros, according to choristers evaluation.

According to choristers, the basis of their maestro leadership is (mainly):	Choir 1	Choir 2	Choir 3	Choir 4	Choir 5	Choir 6	Choir 7
His charisma	63,64	48,0	48,15	62,07	*	51,85	55,88
His musical competence	85,71	95,83	85,19	96,55	80,0	93,33	97,14
His formal (hierarchical) authority	15,15	32,0	33,33	60,0	40,0	51,72	40,63
The pleasant way in which he deals with people	58,82	48,0	44,44	7,69	20,0	25,0	43,75

Chart 3 – Maestros' bases of authority: evaluation by the choristers

[*for 50%, 'this is a basis, but not the only one']

The *charismatic* attitude seems to not constitute itself as a strong sustaining basis of leadership in the case of the researched conductors; their *musical competence*, by the other side, is unequivocally the main factor of respect mobilization by the part of the choristers, presenting excellent indexes (between 80% and 97%) in all the choirs: to lead a choir are essential the foundational attributes of technical (musical) competence. To let lead is intrinsically linked to the demonstration of specific knowledge by the part of the leader. The indexes concerning *formal authority* reinforces that choral activity is permeated by horizontal interpersonal relations, in which maestro is part of the team, and not the boss, what leads to the rare importance of conductor's hierarchical/ formal position in the group. Being nice in interpersonal relations is also an attribute that subsides the support for a maestro, but do not sustain his/ her leadership in face to that choristers who are more exigent in technical-musical dimension and who search the own actualization mainly through the performatical quality of the group in which they take part. Therefore, the pleasant behavior of maestros do not sensibly interfere in work dynamics – in the cases researched, this work is fundamentally directed to the consecution of a clear goal – to sing well. The so different indexes concerning this last basis (between 7% and 58%) translate that the musical affinity that bonds the choir is so strong that its members can support behaviors not always guided by high levels of education and sensibility, and also more rigorous behaviors.

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In maestros' view, the bases of their leadership were evaluated as detached in the next chart.

According to the maestro, the basis of his leadership is (mainly):	Choir 1	Choir 2	Choir 3	Choir 4	Choir 5	Choir 6	Choir 7
His charisma	X	*	*	*	**	*	*
His musical competence	*	*	*	X	X	*	X
His formal (hierarchical) authority	X	*	*	*	**	*	**
The pleasant way in which he deals with people	X	*	*	*	*	*	X

Chart 4 – Evaluation by the maestros of their bases of authority

[*the maestros consider that these aspects are "also, but not only' bases of their leadership; ** the maestro considers that these aspects do not influence much in his leadership]

The charismatic bases of the leadership of maestro 1 shows a self-perception that was not aligned to his evaluation by the choristers (63%) – although, this was the best index in this leadership basis in comparison with the other conductors. The other maestros perceive that charisma has a relevance, but not isolatedly or determining, in their constitution as leaders. The choral conductor 5 did not consider this item an important component of his leadership.

Concerning *musical competence*, maestros 4, 5 and 7 are closer to evaluation of their choristers, who gave to them high indexes. The other maestros understand that leadership presents other nuances, and that this is not a fundamental dimension to mobilize the support and the respect from the part of chorister – the choristers, therefore, revealed to valorize in a high degree the qualification of their leaders.

The conductor 1 understands that his *formal authority* is a very relevant component of his leadership – this, in a certain sense, contradicts the indexes obtained with his choristers (15%). Maestro 5 do not consider his formal authority as a relevant attribute of his power in the group – in this case, the relationship of choir and conductor is a strictly professional one, and maestro is only a professional among others. Maestro 7 considers as rarely relevant the formal position that he occupies in the choral structure.

The *pleasant way in which the maestro deals with people* was considered as a relatively important basis of leadership by almost all conductors (who considered this 'also' an important point, 'but not only'). The exception is maestro 1, who had the most certain assessment concerning his action in the choir, and considered this basis as very relevant – in the evaluation of his lead, he obtained the higher index in this dimension (comparing to the other maestros): 58,82%. Once a time, the exception is the conductor 7, who considered this dimension very relevant as a basis of his leadership, and obtained from his choristers an index of 43,75% only in this attribute.

In the next chart are presented the evaluation of the maestros by their choristers, according to the types of McGregor's theory.

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According to the choristers, their conductor is closer to the type:	
Centralizer	*Facilitator*
Choir 1(34,29)	Choir 1 (65,71)
Choir 2 (32,0)	Choir 2 (68,0)
Choir 3 (40,0)	Choir 3 (60,0)
Choir 4 (78,57)	Choir 4 (21,43)
Choir 5 (60,0)	Choir 5 (40,0)
Choir 6 (70,83)	Choir 6 (29,17)
Choir 7 (47,06)	Choir 7 (52,94)
Distant from the group	*Part of the team*
Choir 1 (0)	Choir 1(100)
Choir 2 (3,85)	Choir 2 (96,15)
Choir 3 (0)	Choir 3 (100)
Choir 4 (24,0)	Choir 4 (76,0)
Choir 5 (25,0)	Choir 5 (75,0)
Choir 6 (25,0)	Choir 6 (75,0)
Choir 7 (0)	Choir 7 (100)
Controller of people behavior	*Collector of results based on the goals of the team*
Choir 1 (0)	Choir 1 (100)
Choir 2 (3,70)	Choir 2 (96,30)
Choir 3 (3,70)	Choir 3 (96,30)
Choir 4 (18,52)	Choir 4 (81,48)
Choir 5 (20,0)	Choir 5 (80,0)
Choir 6 (7,14)	Choir 6 (92,86)
Choir 7 (0)	Choir 7 (100)
Cheater of information to the collaborators	*Sharer of information*
Choir 1(2,86)	Choir 1 (97,14)
Choir 2 (3,85)	Choir 2 (96,15)
Choir 3 (3,85)	Choir 3 (96,15)
Choir 4 (19,23)	Choir 4 (80,77)
Choir 5 (20,0)	Choir 5 (80,0)
Choir 6 (7,14)	Choir 6 (92,86)
Choir 7 (2,78)	Choir 7 (97,22)
That always finds a guilty for the errors	*That stimulate the team to meet its goals*
Choir 1 (12,5)	Choir 1 (87,5)
Choir 2 (0)	Choir 2 (100)
Choir 3 (0)	Choir 3 (100)
Choir 4 (30,77)	Choir 4 (69,23)
Choir 5 (20,0)	Choir 5 (80,0)
Choir 6 (21,43)	Choir 6 (78,57)
Choir 7 (0)	Choir 7 (100)

Chart 5 – Evaluation of the maestros by their choristers concerning McGregor's types

The maestros 1, 2 and 3 presented characteristics of a *facilitating* leadership (between 60% and 68%), according to their choristers. The conductors 4, 5 and 6 are considered *centralizers* (between 60% and 78%). Maestro 7 is equitably evaluated as centralizer and facilitator. The indexes concerning the evaluation of maestros as *part of the team* are very expressible (between 75% and 100%) – the detach is to maestros 1, 3 and 7, with the index of 100%.The *collection of results based on the goals of the team* presents high indexes (between 80% and 100%), what represents the essentiality of this attitude in the workgroup: a proposal is

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accorded by all and concert concretize the goals designed. The maestros had a good evaluation concerning *information cheating* (indexes between 80% and 97%) – this reinforces that technical-musical, managerial, interpersonal and other kind of communication are essential to the group's productive effervescence.

Concerning *stimulus to the team to meet its goals*, the evaluation carried out by choristers detaches indexes of excellence (100%) for maestros 2, 3 and 7; indexes between 78% and 87% for maestros 1, 5 and 6; and, for maestro 4, index of 69,23%. This variation can be understood as a result of different conceptions from the part of conductors – some understand that aspects intrinsically related to choral practice, as the beauty of performed pieces, are sufficient to stimulate the team and, therefore, they believe that an 'provoked incitement' is not necessary for the results the group looks for.

In a general view, the choral conductors revealed – according to his choristers-led – a leadership style closer to the type participative and democratic (the 'Y' theory of McGregor), producing a better equilibrium between characters of centralization and facilitation. A higher degree of decentralization is not obtained because of the high quantity of tasks – administrative and others – concentrated in the hands of maestros, with low levels of delegation (empowerment).

The self-evaluation of maestros according the types of McGregor's theory is present in the next chart.

According to the maestro, he is closer to the type:	
Centralizer (Maestros 2, 3)	*Facilitator* (Maestros 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
Distant from the group (none)	*Part of the team* (Maestros 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
Controller of people behavior (none)	*Collector of results based on the goals of the team* (Maestros 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
Cheater of information to the collaborators (none)	*Sharer of information* (Maestros 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
That always finds a guilty for the errors (none)	*That stimulate the team to meet its goals* (Maestros 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

Chart 6 – Self-evaluation of maestros according to the types of McGregor's theory

In the choirs 2 and 3, the maestro pointed out that the day to day of the groups, and the amplitude of tasks that he carries out, produces the result of oscillation between attitudes of centralization and facilitation. All the other maestros understand that they assume more facilitating attitudes.

The unanimity of maestros understand themselves as part of the team, collector of results, cheater of information and stimulators of the team to the meeting of goals. The registered indexes in the evaluation of maestros by singers confirms the reality of this description – an exception, in a certain way, is the equilibrium between characters of autocratic and democratic leadership in the balance 'centralization-facilitation'; this nuance was not noted by the conductors in an accurate form, except by the maestros 2 and 3.

4. Conclusion

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This work faced two myths of the maestro picture as a symbol of management and leadership: charisma and authoritarianism. The charisma factor was relativized concerning conductors bases of leadership since the evaluations detached the importance of technical competence of these musicians: maestros are also managers and teachers, but musical dominium is what counts for the choristers let themselves to be led for an artist who knows what he/ she is doing.

In the analysis of McGregor dimensions, the balance between characters of centralized and facilitate management or leadership pointed out that the order-obey scheme is also in its last days in choral environment. This confirms Mintzberg's impression: "When the maestro walks up to the podium and raises his baton, the musicians respond in unison. Another motion and they all stop. It's the image of absolute control –management captured perfectly in caricature. And yet it is all a great myth" (MINTZBERG, 1998, p. 141).

Finally, data analyses show take into account that a subjective evaluation by choristers naturally tends to high indexes for their maestros, since the inquired choristers are people who voluntary decided to take part in the choir and dedicate the own time and attention to this activity (concerning the amateur groups) – therefore, they choose the group to take part (sometimes because of its conductor) and, if they stay in the choir, it is because they obtain some satisfaction – also in a minimum degree, concerning the interpersonal relationships with the other singers and concerning the way in which certain conductor directs and managers a group.

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