

Situational Leadership and Leader Versatility

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Leadership is one of the most complex concepts related to the human being that connects several factors that the leader has to amalgamate and administer in the management of a complex organization. The purpose of this research is to analyze four leadership models that have a clear relationship in their approach to their objectives, their methods, and their evolution. The paper will focus on how this leadership can be applied in the management of a complex organization successfully, taking the IBM Corporation as a model due to the evolution and the changes experienced in the business world.

Keywords: situational leadership, versatility - complex organization

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

The tremendous individual capacities of leaders and their values in the current world, not having the adaptability and flexibility characteristics to face dynamic change scenarios, can have a negative influence on business environments at a global level, directly impacting the different business scenarios. The absence of adaptability will impact their competitiveness and management dynamics by turning them into retrospective executives with no current vision of business environments, failing to adapt to unpredictable change scenarios.

Situations lead to incorporating and managing new leadership skills, many of which are found in the proposal of the versatile and integrative leadership style.

The purpose of this research is to review the specialized literature that will determine whether leadership is closely related to the business environment's different situations and how this relationship applies to the management of the organization. Through versatility characteristics, the leader could use the business resources that include the human resources according to their different abilities, capacities, conducts, personality, and motivation (internal factors), to face the current challenges (external factors) and inherent to the new dynamic business environments.

Considering these internal and external factors influencing a situation during the management of business leadership, the leader's performance will be evaluated through the characteristic of versatility to successfully achieve the objectives of the organization in general and the concept of the complex organization in specific. This is what Hersey and Blanchard (1982), referred to by Sánchez Santa Bárbara

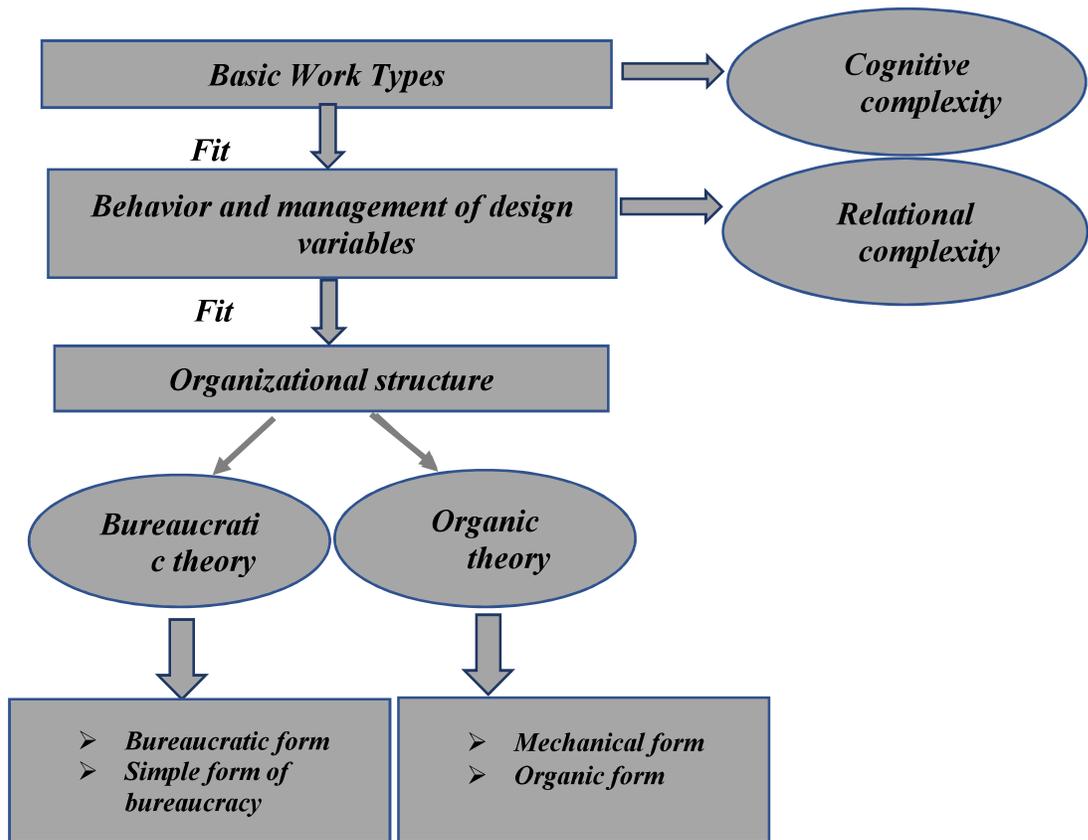
and Rodríguez (2010), call task behavior and relationship behavior in their research on situational leadership.

To this end, the following research question is proposed as an argument and objective of the study: In view of the dynamics of change in business environments: Is there a relationship between the leader's behavior and the achievement of an organization's objectives? This is the question that will define the findings of the review and generate a focus on the reviewed academic contributions that will help to shape future mixed (quantitative and qualitative) research concerns.

Future research that will focus on the management of a complex organization will face the changes generated by the environments adapting to that change according to its related resources with the objective of reaching the established business goals.

In figure 1 the complex organization is analyzed by Zapata, Gerardo, and Caldera (2008), as a company in which there is an information concentration for decision making in a few executives, regardless of the level of assets of the company, human resources, and the structure of the organizational areas that also are interrelated among themselves and generate complexity.

FIGURE 1
CONTEXTUAL MODEL OF THE COMPLEXITY OF ORGANIZATIONS



Source: Prepared by Dr. Ronald Mesia 2020

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review work will be divided into three parts: The first part will describe the theoretical framework supported by the literature review of some leadership models under the situational framework such as Fiedler's (1967) contingency model, through the previous research by Rubio (1986) and Cardona (2004); Hersey and Blanchard's (1982) situational leadership, reviewed by Zapata, Gerardo and Caldera

(2008); the leadership shamrock mentioned by Cardona (2004); and Evans' (1970) and House's (1971) path-goal leadership.

The four leadership models will be used as a basis to find similarities or differences in the analysis and then visualize their application in the concept of the complex organization focused on a current, practical, and versatile perspective. To this end, the second part of the research will share analysis and a parallel with a global organization such as IBM Corporation, analyzing the attributes provided by a versatile and situational leadership (characteristic of that organization) that will contribute to the clarification of the convergences or discrepancies in the literature review that will guide towards the recommendations and conclusions of the theoretical review.

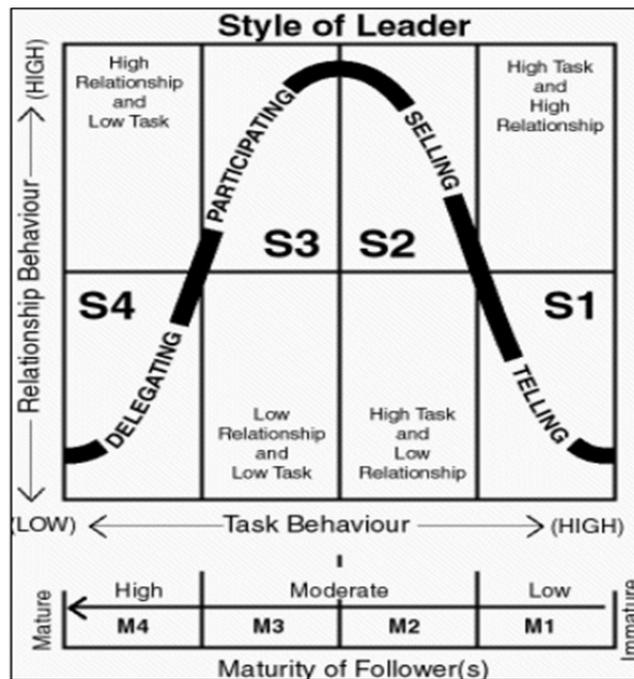
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework will focus on finding impact areas in the exercise of leadership through fundamental factors for decision making such as the environment, the situation, the right time to apply a strategy, to employ what type of resources, what type of work teams, the level of maturity of the work team, and to apply different combinations of strategies for different situations based on the four models referred to in the topic of the structure of the literature review.

Situational Leadership

It is a theoretical leadership model (Hersey and Blanchard, 1969, 1988), where different patterns of behavior or leadership traits will be useful in certain situations, not following the same optimal effectiveness in different situations. Sánchez, Santa Bárbara and Rodríguez (2010) recognize that a person can have a particular leadership style, but the effectiveness of leadership depends on the adaptation of the leader and his/her style to a particular situation, which includes considering the degree of maturity and capacity of the employees, in order to exercise leadership styles according to the circumstances.

FIGURE 2
PHYSICAL MODEL OF SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP HERSEL BLANCHARD 1982



Source: K, Araujo, 2016

In the situational leadership style two dimensions are identified, the first dimension being supported by the Path-Goal Theory (Evans, 1970; House, 1971, 1996) which is framed within the concept of the nature of the task and its orientation to the achievement of the task, where the task concept is how the leader directs the scheme of distribution of activities towards the employee.

The second dimension is supported by Role Theory (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn and Snoelk, 1964), where the situation has an immediate influence on the leader's hierarchical leadership behavior through his/her communication, attitudes, and support - motivation maintaining interest in it (the task), which Prentice (2005), called the psychological context for the common task.

A psychological context that fits with Osborn and Hunt's (1975) Multiple Influence Model, where the influence of the specific situation determines the leader's behavior or conduct towards his or her employees.

Considering different behavior patterns in relation to different situations offers a more dynamic and flexible vision of leadership in an effective and efficient way depending on the interaction between the employees, the leader, and the situations (Sánchez, Santa Bárbara, 2000). This is recommended through their research by Goodson et al. (1989) and by Blank et al. (1990), by recognizing in his conclusions that adaptation and flexibility as management skills are more desirable than focusing on a single leadership style by executive directors.

Contingency Model

Fiedler's model (1967), has its core in the situation and the leader's reaction to the limits of that situation, and how that reaction influences the interaction with the employees including an additional factor that he calls "power." The model has its core between organizational performance and the leader's attitudes.

Proposing that the performance and effectiveness of groups of individuals in an organizational environment depend on the link with the leadership style and the relationship with the group; the transparency with which concrete information is conveyed for the achievement of an objective; and the power of influence and acceptance of the group regarding leadership.

Understanding power as the handling of structural aspects of authority results in tangible or intangible motivational aspects and vice versa influencing the employee. From a positive point of view, power has important motivational aspects in relation to the employee. This aspect is described by Cardona (2004) as a model that is theoretically more correct than the situational model, but he considers it not applicable in practice.

On the other hand, the most recent contribution of Ganga and Navarrete (2013), where they describe the contingency model based on the categorization of situations as "favorable, unfavorable and neutral," distributing the characteristic of the management effectiveness according to the orientation of the leader towards the tasks of the categorization of favorable and unfavorable situations and through the bias of the orientation to the relations the categorization of a neutral situation, is more effective.

The Leadership Shamrock

It is a simple model that specifies three aspects that the leader should focus on organization objectives, individual needs of the employee, and group cohesion, as stated by Rubio (1986) and Cardona (2004).

In this model, we find important similarities with the concepts of task and relationship that are considered in situational leadership. In individual opinion, leading through the concept of the task and supporting through the concept of the relationship are directly related and combined aspects of effective leadership.

**FIGURE 3
LEADERSHIP SHAMROCK MODEL**



Source: J. Cardona, 2004

This leads to focus that these aspects, coincident in the three aforementioned theories, are basic aspects of the current leadership, but they are not all aspects to be contemplated to exercise effective leadership through the employees in a complex organizational environment. To be a leader, it is not enough to have the technical knowledge and be intelligent by nature; you must also have other attributes and apply them in the different scenarios that are found in today's business activity.

Path-Goal Leadership

In this leadership model, the personal objective of the employee is made compatible with the group objective and the objective of the organization, where it is also appreciated that the concept of task and relationship are closely linked, but with a greater degree of motivation through the individual satisfaction of the employee. Supportive leadership focused on individual and organizational achievement.

Evans' (1970) and House's (1971) Path-Goal Theory, mentioned by Cardona (2004), focuses directly on the acceptance of the leader by the employee, based on the flexibility of the leader in the face of the employee's limitations and how he or she can motivate the employee to overcome these personal or work environment limitations. It is currently one of the approaches where the success of the leader is in clarifying the process so that the employees obtain the achievement of the objectives with fewer setbacks or difficulties, providing advice and, at the same time motivating the achievement of the effective employee performance (Valdivia, 2018).

Complex Organization

A complex organization today can be approached from the internal and external dimensions in which it develops and how it projects its vision of a sustainable future. The complexity level is generally determined by the dynamics of the stability or instability of global markets and by the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the organization's internal and external customers.

During uncertainty times, the management of internal and external resources to obtain the expected results must have an adequate dynamism to be able to minimize the complexity. Managing uncertainty

and the dynamics of change are the fundamental mission of today's effective leader, and one of their skills is to communicate and manage diversity.

In Hall's opinion (1996), who bases his interpretation of the organizations' complexity supported by what Hage and Aiken (1967 p.79-80) have contributed, on the internal order, the division of work, the hierarchies and the interrelationship between them and the productive processes, an opinion which it is incorporated to make a parallel analysis.

There is an affinity between the dates of the concept of complex organization discussed by Hall (1996), and the reviewed leadership theories, which date from similar years, regarding the theoretical framework of the situation that is in line with the current reality of the new integrative leadership needs for a complex organization influenced by the new business environments of the time.

Leader's Versatility

The intersection and influence point that we find in the literature review and in a current practical approach to situational leadership evolved towards an integrative leadership of dynamic business scenarios in a complex organization is the versatility and adaptation of the leader to the emerging situation, whose complexity is also supported by the changing environments and uncertainty both inside and outside the organization.

Dynamic business situations that need as answers or reactions a high degree of innovation in management, flexibility, scenario management that is a priority to integrate them towards the common goal of the organization. It requires a high level of management of the internal and external diversity of the organization, considering that the versatility of the leader is that intersection and influence point between an evolved situational leadership and his/her management in a complex organization Hall (1996).

As stated by Barreto (2010), "A leader must be developed as a manager, educator and motivator capable of generating knowledge, clarifying objectives, establishing effective communications, evaluating different scenarios and risks, making correct decisions, and managing changes." Versatile and integrating leadership, which aligns external day-to-day change with the internal change that must be generated within the organization in order not to become outdated, creating an assertive internal environment based on the cultural diversity of employees and their capabilities.

Integrating this diversity into the organizational culture as a positive factor towards the new markets and customers, regardless of the other management functions that are inherent to their professional capacities and that are considered as essential in the opinion of the essay's author, all these mentioned scenarios are integrated and aligned according to the objective of the business results.

Developing internal skills of employees to manage the uncertainty of today's business environment as a team.

Linking Situation, Versatility and Complex Organization

This paper links versatile leadership through the theoretical framework of situational leadership and the effective development of a complex global organization such as International Business Machines Corp. (IBM, 2018). The versatile - situational leadership style proposes the following attributes to manage:

- The integration of the employees among themselves according to the vision, mission, and values of the corporation.
- To integrate within the organizational environment, the proactive management of uncertainty both in the short term and in the long term by developing the initiative of the employee.
- To integrate capacity and simplicity towards global and multicultural learning.
- To integrate the flatness of information and knowledge.
- To integrate an environment of authenticity and trust that implies an ethical performance in the organization's decision making.
- To integrate a global operation with clear roles that avoid duplication; to integrate a shared and virtual leadership.

The shared and virtual leadership is a term that has as a principle what has been stated by Gil, Alcover, Rico, and Sanchez (2011) where the evolution of technology and the dynamics to the change that gives the globalization (current scenarios of a complex organization), imply an effective leadership that in itself is integrating through the virtual teams, where the versatile situational leader has a leading mission, integrating different scenarios, in order to manage a global, current and dynamic organization successfully.

Based on this, we want to focus on and analyze this leadership style in terms of a global organization such as International Business Machines Corp. (IBM).

International Business Machines Corp. (IBM)

IBM Corporation is a leading information technology, and business consulting organization ranked 31st in the Fortune 500 by the end of 2019 (Fortune 500 - 2019). It has the largest number of patents registered in the United States (140,000 since 1920 and 8,500 patents registered in 2019) and is active in 170 countries with a worldwide workforce of approximately 414,400 professionals, promoting diversity, developing its business activity focused on customer needs, providing information technology solutions and business consulting services (IBM 2019).

Its headquarters are in New York – USA. The multiculturalism of its employees is one of the evident factors of strength in its business leadership, the strength that contributes to providing business solutions to its customers also multicultural. This multiculturalism management was defined and confirmed by Marchant and Del Rio (2008), in their approach to the opening of new markets and their close relationship with the development of cultural keys by the organizations to conquer those markets to be explored both inside and outside the organization.

After having made a brief description of what IBM represents as a global corporation, we intend to analyze how the situational versatile leadership style has influence or not with the diverse situations of the global business environment such as the continuous innovation, the leadership of groups and teams, the integration of the generational differences, the transmission of the corporate culture, the generation of a motivating organizational environment, the implementation of influence strategies. And given the fact that this connection or disconnection between versatile-situational leadership and a global company that is a leader in its business area and at the same time complex, such as IBM, can be the starting point for further research so that its results can be evaluated for subsequent replication if necessary.

POINTS OF INFLUENCE AND RELATIONSHIP ANALYSIS

The analysis will be focused on finding points of influence and relationship in the framework of versatile situational leadership through essential management factors within the global IBM Corporation, such as:

Continuous Innovation

IBM's primary area of business services is as a global provider of information technology and business consulting services, which represent almost half of the corporation's revenue (IBM 2014). Therefore, continuous innovation is the backbone of its activity.

The versatile (Hall, 1996) and situational leadership (Hersey and Blanchard, 1969, 1988), exposes conceptual components that are reflected and find levels of similarity in what IBM has developed in business practice, valuing the initiative aspect of its employees that is a primary source of innovation along with proactivity and creativity in the function of the uncertainty of the increasingly demanding tastes of the customer.

This similarity is directly related to a comment made by Porter (1990), who states that companies obtain competitive advantages in a globalized environment through the development of innovation provided by the individuals in the organizations, anticipating both local and global needs.

Porter (1990) also highlights the relationship between the development of information, communication, and knowledge in a horizontal way, which plays a leading role in innovation

development. This aspect is congruent with that stated by Machinea (2007), who highlights and points out how information is essential for innovation, emphasizing the importance of the development of central areas such as research and development and market research.

IBM is a corporation that has become a major developer of technological innovations and business solutions. Among the factors that can be highlighted from the management of its different leaders that have an affinity with what has been exposed in the versatile - integrative, situational leadership style, we can mention their capacity to adapt to the market and social changes that are important factors for the improvement of their innovations in different sectors such as the financial, telecommunications, consulting, energy, transportation, health, and public sectors.

Business practice conceptually reinforced by Porter (1990), mentioned by Machinea (2007), stating that the only way to sustain innovation is through continuous improvement. Innovation and change management have a direct relationship linked to the target market. This is what IBM does, and it is what it tries to reinforce with its situational and versatile leadership.

Group Leadership and Successful Teams

The group leadership in today's business environments whose characteristics are generally focused on competitiveness, complexity, and dynamic and constant changes, make a versatile situational leader who seeks efficiency, not centralize all the global management of the organization, as he/she could not do it successfully without implementing levels of shared autonomy, additional to develop and manage other team attributes to create a single mystique depending on the objective of the corporation.

As stated by Gil, Alcover, Rico, and Sanchez (2011), effective leadership promotes team processes that include collective learning, integrity, proactivity, and a positive environment. The versatile and situational leadership, proposed in this theoretical review, visualizes additional components necessary in the versatile management and situational approach of a multinational organization such as IBM, which is to integrate cultural and generational diversity and to promote the shared leadership of specific assigned goals.

Elaborating a parallel with the aforementioned global corporation IBM, we can sustain this development of group management with the management that they as a corporation incorporate, the aspect of multiculturalism, and at the same time with what Marchant and Del Rio (2008) state, when commenting on the opening of new markets and their close relationship as the development of cultural keys by the organizations to conquer those markets to be explored, both inside and outside the organization.

The practice and numerical results of management of workgroups that include as differentiating factor multiculturalism and diversity in general by the current leadership of IBM are reflected in the transformation of the corporation whose main business is currently consulting companies in both enterprises, medium enterprises and corporations worldwide, providing technology solutions in terms of increasingly innovative business.

It was established in 174 countries with a workforce of 414,400 professionals promoting diversity and managing teams through providing autonomy and managing shared leadership (IBM, 2014), which is one of the attributes that make up the vision of situational and versatile leadership and integrating theoretical review.

Integration of Generational Gaps

The generation gap is a positive factor within a global organization. It is in the leader's integrating capacity to know how to channel and amalgamate youth with experience under a concept of Goleman's formative leadership (2005). The presence of generational gaps can be found in every social environment, but it is in the business environment where the integration of knowledge can be generated.

IBM as a global corporation undertook a study called World CEO Survey 2010 where it highlights the strength of multi-generational work as a positive approach to diversity, which is applied within its organization, one of the results of the study mentioned: They discovered that for the Y generation is essential to preserve their hobbies and manage their time, they run away from fixed schedules, and so on.

This generation is the face of change within the current situational leadership positions and in the leader's versatility, which is amalgamated with mentoring and tutoring programs, with programs that promote changing and diverse work teams (in age and experience).

Programs that work as a hinge effect, in order to integrate under the same business objective, the new generations of professionals with the generations of professionals that precede them within the mystique and organizational environment of IBM (Ernest & Young Global Limited - Canilla 2004). Taking audacious risks, proposing new non-routine ideas, amalgamated with the experience, reflection, and advice of an experienced employee is a potential scenario to explore.

Rodríguez and Peláez (2010), when commenting on the integration of generations in an organizational aspect, highlight how important it is to turn a possible conflict into an enriching activity, through mutual knowledge and the complementarity that can be offered by amalgamating generations of employees.

Transmission of Corporate Culture and Generation of a Motivating Organizational Environment

Corporate culture, by general definition, is the set of values and beliefs shared by the members of the organization (Castro and Lupano 2005). IBM's corporate culture is based on values that align business interests with social support interests and a strong institutional commitment. It is based on three basic principles created by Thomas Watson, the founder of IBM: Respect for the individual, providing the best service to the customer, and the pursuit of excellence (IBM 2014).

These three basic principles have evolved from the leaders who have managed IBM, adapting to the situational change associated with the advances in technology that they themselves are innovating and the global markets. For example, the basic principle of respect for the individual has been very well applied to the management of the multiculturalism of its employees and customers; the basic principle of providing the best customer service is focused on the competitiveness of its products - service and its innovation, creating value towards full customer satisfaction.

And the principle of the pursuit of excellence is focused on the flexibility to adapt to change and its proactivity to coexist with the uncertainty of business environments, empowering the collaborators towards common goals but encouraging the initiative and innovation individuality to explore new forms of business and services, providing comprehensive solutions with a global vision as if the employee were the owner of the corporation and in turn the user of the service or product created.

This combines an outstanding principle as an attribute of a versatile and situational leadership, such as integrating within the organizational environment the proactive management of uncertainty in both the short and long term, developing the initiative of the employee. Kotter (2005), refers to this aspect in the comparison of aligning people with organizing staff, highlighting that alignment is a different aspect to solve problems, aligning people is a challenge of communicating the values of the corporation, which allows solid commitments such as creating committed relationships that in turn lead to autonomy, responsibility, and trust, generating the culture of the organization and the motivating organizational environment.

In order to analyze the explicit conceptions of leadership, we worked with a list of 60 leaders' attributes. The procedure included analyzing the uniformity of each grouping, then refining the scales to increase reliability by calculating correlations, excluding those with low reliability (less than 0.4). The following table details the dimensions, the corresponding adjectives, and the levels of reliability (Cronbach's Alpha).

TABLE 1
CRONBACH'S ALPHA

Dimension	Adjectives	Definition	Reliability (alpha)
Charismatic or value-based leadership	Trustworthy, enthusiastic confidence builder, able to anticipate situations, honest, smart, intuitive, fair, lógV 00, motivating, excellence-oriented, positive, forward-looking. Sincere, visionary, willful.	It is a leadership dimension based on solid moral principles (values). Therefore the leader obtains his/her objectives by inspiring, motivating and expecting high performance from their followers	Items IB Alpha = 0.94
Group-oriented leadership	Effective manager, communicative, reliable, avoids conflicts in the group, manages the groups in a proper, informed way, ingenious, effective negotiator, organized, solves problems	It is a dimension that involves the design and management of work groups, trying to implement group cohesion for the achievement of the goals.	Items= 10 Alpha = 0.91
Self-Oriented Leadership	He/she competes with the members of his/her group, self-centered, elusive, non-cooperative, not very explicit, unsociable, solitary	It is a dimension of leadership with negative connotations that emphasizes the safety and protection of the leader.	Items= 7 Alpha = 0.82
Participative Leadership (*)	Authoritarian, dictatorial, dominant, elitist	It is a classic dimension of leadership that consists of involving followers in decision making.	Items= 4 Alpha = 0.71

(*) were treated as inverse elements

Source: Castro and Lupano 2005

The results achieved confirm the theoretical propositions exposed where different organizational cultures give different importance to each dimension. This analysis concluded that the charismatic leader characterizes good leaders to those flexible cultures that have long-term goals and a lot of institutional commitment, as far as bureaucratic and structured organizations are concerned these characteristics seem less important, (Castro and Lupano, 2005).

Implementing Influence Strategies

The factor of implementing influence strategies is closely aligned to the leadership of groups through and the use of communication for effective management in a given situation. The influence through communication, which not only involves words but actions and attitudes, a versatile and situational leader with a vision of effectiveness implements the open door method, is the way the leader communicates the objectives so that his or her audience or employees act in a desired and natural way to achieve business goals.

Cardona (2000), in reference to Rost (1991), states that there is an "influence relationship" between the leader and the employee, which should be naturally non-coercive in order to generate a healthy organizational environment. The IBM corporation, through research called "The customer-driven company," goes further with its influence strategy, which not only extends it to the interior of the corporation but also to the exterior, applying more open, collaborative and reciprocal interrelationship models to the external customer. (IBM 2014)

This influence relationship within the leadership environment has a two-way sense as Cardona (2000) points out, by mentioning that the influence relationship is dynamic where both the leader and the employee create a mutual link of influence in the face of the emerging situation, where the attitude of listening to that is an inherent part of communication is a very important action that the versatile and effective leader has to develop.

Based on Cardona's (2000) contribution, and with a perspective of focusing the business on the customer, an application can be seen in the IBM Corporation to create an external link of influence, also in two ways. Visualizing a new type of connectivity and influence by empowering the internal customer and the external customer. Managing influence in an emerging business situation through effective communication by creating an organizational environment of trust that includes feedback of positive traits that is directly related to the emotions of the employee and the customer that results in being able to develop contribution synergies.

This contribution triggers initiatives for innovating new products by taking advantage of the development of innovative ideas from both sources (employees and customers), and this is also where one of the characteristics of the versatile and situational leader is strengthened by effectively handling the emerging aspect of today's business environment.

Barreto (2012), coinciding with Cardona (2000), states that a leader must be developed as "a manager, educator, and motivator capable of generating knowledge, clarifying objectives, establishing effective communications, evaluating different scenarios and risks, making good decisions, and managing changes." Such versatility of functions to be managed are essential skills to influence current situations and scenarios of organizations and even more so in the face of competitiveness, complexity, and uncertainty of the dynamism of these business scenarios.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Leadership is a complex aspect that connects several factors where the leader has to amalgamate, administer, and manage complex organizations. The theoretical review concludes by answering the question posed: Is there or is there not a relationship between the leader's behavior influenced by the business situation and the achievement of the objectives of a complex organization? Confirming that the current leader employs situational leadership that has evolved as environments and situations have also evolved, becoming a leader that integrates scenarios and is versatile in managing them.

Where the innovation, the technological generational combination, the particular culture of the employee, the diversity, the fact of being change generators from inside the organization, and the demand of the market, influences the decisional behavior of the current leader. They are generating new leadership skills, which, taking the situational leadership approach as an important starting point, requires

more integrated management of diverse scenarios of the leader who, together with his/her basic management skills, can successfully manage a complex and dynamic organization.

It is aligning the external change of the day to day to the internal change that must be produced within the organization, creating an assertive internal environment, as seen in the case of IBM Corporation, which is a subject of recommendation for further studies to identify and quantify the success and effectiveness of these new leadership skills in the business dynamic.

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