

# Leadership and Its Importance in Sustainable Development

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## Abstract

*A good knowledge of the current state in the field of leadership has led to a proper understanding of the phenomenon, the types of leadership and the relationships between them and organizational environments. Although there are established typologies and theories of leadership, due to the permanent organizational changes, new factors appear that must be taken into account in order to arrive at a correct and precise evaluation of the leadership concept. The purpose of this article is to establish the key elements regarding the connection between leadership behavior and traits.*

**Key words:** leader, leadership, management, manager

**J.E.L classification:** B30, M12, M19

## 1. Introduction

From the beginning of the organization of society, leadership has been a central theme for mankind.

Leadership is one of the topics of management that has been written and researched the most. The qualities that must be found in a good leader and the weaknesses of a weak leader have been the subject of many debates that have led to the emergence of dozens of theories and models of leadership.

Implicit theories of leadership have existed since ancient times in the form of various advice and prescriptions based on experience and passed down from one generation to another or from mentor to disciple. Courage, risk-taking, motivation, vision have been the most important skills of a leader since ancient times.

## 2. Literature review

In Max Landsberg's view, the formula by which an effective leader acts is:

$$\text{leadership} = \text{vision} \times \text{motivation} \times \text{drive}$$

(Landsberg, 2008, p.32)

The ability to create vision, motivation and drive in a group of people is the essence of leadership.

The positive image of what an organization could become and the way to achieve the goals is the vision of the leader, who must always be looking for new ideas that correspond to the strategy of the organization.

What pushes the members of some organizations to action, is the motivation, the leader being the one who using his skills awakens people's energy.

The necessary element for the organization's projects and initiatives to reach their destination is the drive. The leader must ensure that the organization is on the right track to fulfilling its mission.

In Landsberg's theory, the leader must function efficiently in all three dimensions. The visionary is not a leader if he cannot motivate. The person who sustains the momentum is not a leader if he cannot create a vision that is shared by all. From this triad, the leader's ability to create a common vision and to motivate the organization are the characteristics that differentiate him from the manager.

Table no.1 The difference between managers and leaders

<b>Manager</b>	<b>Leader</b>
Does things right	Does the right things
Is focuses on the present, on short-term results and on the main direction of action.	Focuses on the future, long-term results and perspectives.
Seeks for order	Enjoys change
Limits risks	Takes risks
Appeals more to reason than to emotion.	Appeals to both emotion and reason.

Source: self-processing

### 3. Research methodology

In order to establish the role of leaders in shaping the moral values we must first ask the question: "What must be lead?"

Obviously the answer to this question refers to either individuals or groups / teams.

There are 4 theories of leadership: trait theory; behavioral leadership theory; situational leadership theory; integrative leadership theory. These theories have been developed over time. Behavioral leadership theory began to be researched in the 1940s and intensively researched in the 1950s. Most research has shifted from trait theory to behavioral theory, a theory that focuses on what leaders do and say.

Researchers have tried to find the best leadership style in all situations, trying to identify the differences between effective and inefficient leaders. Behavioral leadership theory has made important contributions to leadership research, but it has never achieved its primary goal of discovering the best leadership style. In the field of behavioral paradigm, research continues today to better understand the behavior of leadership, in all its complexity and the effects it has on employee performance.

### 4. Findings

Organizations need both managers and leaders alike. Without strong managers the organization risks going into chaos, without efficient leaders the organization enters a state of lethargy and no longer evolves.

Despite the development of science and technology, humanity is still looking for leaders to save it. The complex world we live in, a world of accentuated professionalism in which there is an increasing need to meet higher standards, a world in which people live isolated in their own professional and existential life where their own experiences are considered the most relevant but and a world belonging to a community where everyone knows each other and knows what everyone else is doing, has become a concept.

Complexity has become, as the professor at the London School of Economics - the Mitleton-Kelly Gospel - puts it, "a new way of thinking, of looking at the world", an attempt to introduce a relative order into the chaos of new paradigms of thinking.

According to historians, since ancient times in the portraits of leaders appear certain qualities related to the art through which an individual leads others. (Țutorea et al, 2010, p.45)

Systematic and modern studies on leadership appeared according to research in the field, only towards the end of the 19th century.

The organizational aspects of work have evolved, from those with an authoritarian leadership style to one with a more comfortable work environment, then to organizations where people are empowered, encouraged and supported in their personal and professional development. A much more pleasant working environment has been created in which employees have come to contribute to increasing labor productivity.

According to researchers Gregory Stone and Kathleen Patterson, who conducted a study of the phenomenon of leadership historically in 2004, "early leadership studies emerged in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, which helped transfer the American economy from an agricultural to a an

*industrial one, producing a change in the behavior of leaders towards those who follow them".* (Gregory & Patterson, p.3)

People have been discussing the art of knowledge since the time of Plato. But still the same problem always arises, we are obsessed with leadership. During the Enlightenment, philosophers like Voltaire argued that only by applying reason could people control their destiny. Thus in the twentieth century two beliefs emerged from this notion of rationalism: a belief in progress and a belief in human perfection.

With the writings of Sigmund Freud and later Max Weber, Western man's faith in rationalism and progress was destroyed. The current search for leadership is a direct consequence of their work. Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, theorized that under the surface of the rational mind there is the unconscious. He assumed that the unconscious was responsible for a significant proportion of human behavior. (Mardar, 2013, p.118)

Weber, Marx's brilliant sociologist and leading critic, also explored the limits of rationality. For him, the destructive force operating in institutions was, as he called it, technical rationality - a rationality without morality. Technical rationality represents a particular form of organization - bureaucracy. Bureaucracies, he said, were to be feared not because of their inefficiency but because of their efficiency and ability to dehumanize people. Weber believed that the only power that could withstand bureaucracy was charismatic leadership. But this, too, was a rather tangled theory, considering that throughout history there have been inspirational and transformational warlords, who have also been charismatic leaders, like Hitler, Stalin, and who have committed unimaginable atrocities. (Zlate, 2004, p.74)

However, Weber's concerns about bureaucracy did not affect the views of other theorists who prepared and anticipated research on what we now call "classical management theories" and "scientific management."

Classical theorists have focused on the design of organizational activities, while scientific management has focused on the systematic management of individual jobs.

Henri Fayol, one of the classical theorists, defined management as a whole that includes five elements:

1. Forecasting and planning
2. Organization
3. Leadership
4. Coordination
5. Control

For Fayol, management means looking ahead, which makes the forecasting and planning process a central activity.

In terms of scientific management, Frederick Taylor made a significant contribution, advocating for a management with a strong emphasis on control, efficiency, quantification, predictability and jobs. It has initiated studies on time-movement variables to analyze and properly frame workloads and to improve worker productivity in order to achieve the highest possible level of efficiency. Taylor's ideas led to heated controversy over the alleged inhumanity of his system, which reduced the worker to the level of an efficient machine.

The leading position in the theory of scientific management aimed at establishing and implementing performance criteria, in order to meet organizational objectives. The leader focuses mainly on the needs of the organization and not on those of each member.

Although different in approaches, classical management and scientific management have similar objectives: organizations are rational and must function as efficiently as possible to achieve the highest level of productivity. (Zlate, 2004, p.76)

Although these two theories have proven to be productive, emerging theories have encouraged leaders to recognize that people are not machines and should not be treated as such.

The post-bureaucratic change that took place in the mid-1940s shifted responsibility for the success or failure of the organization to the people. The founder of the Movement for Human Relations, Elton Mayo, following his research, demonstrated the importance of groups in determining individual behavior at work. His studies have led to a deeper understanding of the human factor in the work process. His works also highlighted the importance of an adequate communication system, oriented especially from the bottom up, ie from workers to leaders.

Research has shown, as he himself said, that "*a leadership is successful or not insofar as it is unreservedly accepted by the group, as an authority or as a leader.*" Around the 1950s, a new theory of leadership began to work based on the idea that people are effective when their needs are met. Thus, leaders began to redirect their attention to meeting the needs of employees. (Mardar, 2013, p.121)

Frederick Herzberg developed and modified Maslow's Theory of Hierarchy of Needs, concluding that there are two groups of factors / needs: motivators and hygienists that influence the increase of motivation and employee satisfaction. (Mardar, 2013, p.124)

It soon became clear that leading people who have their own authority is a much more satisfying and enjoyable job than checking every move performed automatically.

Leadership theorists have begun to introduce the notion of "behavioral elements" into their work.

At the same time, a new theory of organization and leadership emerged. This is based on the idea that people work more efficiently when their needs are met, and if this happens, they are likely to participate in increasing labor productivity which influences the evolution of the organization.

Douglas McGreogory, considers that the traditional organization, is based on some concepts / hypotheses regarding nature and human motivation, which he called Theory X and Theory Y or Theory of Hypotheses man-work relationship. (Landsberg, 2008, p.71)

This theory is one of the emotional sphere, being built on two different hypotheses regarding the motivation of employees. One hypothesis is that people may have negative motivation (which outlines Theory X) and another is that they may show a positive motivation (Theory Y).

Comparing the two theories, it is necessary to re-examine the premises according to which managers manage human resources, considering that the two theories correspond to different types of management: participatory style - Theory Y and authoritarian style - Theory X.

The social transformations of the 1960s and 1980s changed society's focus from increasing economic well-being to ensuring social rights and equality. The development of technology and the advent of the computer transformed leadership into a complex process, in which leaders were forced to focus on the customer, with or without concern for the organization to survive. (Landsberg, 2008, p.79-80)

Traditional methods of leadership were no longer effective in an ever-changing society. This was the factor that required the preparation of other research in leadership and society, so that organizations are prosperous and profitable.

The situational theory of leadership has evolved. Compared to Fiedler's model, which assumes that leadership style is difficult to change, the approach proposed by Hersey and Blanchard shows that effective leaders are able to adapt their leadership styles. The main criterion that leaders follow in adopting this leadership style is the maturity of their followers. Maturity is given by two factors:

1. Ability to perform tasks
2. Confidence that they will succeed.

Research has shown that in the late 1970s, many leaders turned to transactional leadership, the most important method of leadership still seen in today's organizations. The fundamental theory of this method of leadership is that leaders offer rewards for employee flexibility, a concept based on bureaucratic authority and the legitimacy of the leader within the organization.

In 1978, MacGregor Burns introduced the concept of transformational leadership to the literature, the research being expanded and refined by Bass and Avolio. According to Burns' conception, the transformational leader requires subordinates to transcend their own interests for the good of the group, organization, or society, to take into account the long-term needs to develop themselves, not the immediate ones. The organization is the main concern of this type of leadership.

## 5. Conclusions

Leadership or the science of leadership is the process of leading, directing and influencing the activity of members of an organized group to achieve the goals of the group.

Leaders are those people who guide and influence subordinates to achieve the goals of the group. They set a direction, a vision of what the future will be like to produce the changes needed to reach that direction. Try to recruit employees to make the changes needed to achieve that direction. Try to

recruit employees who share their vision. They motivate and inspire employee teams, oversee employee needs, values and emotions.

Leaders perform several essential functions:

- are responsible for generating and maintaining the required level of effort;
- are responsible for directing the group members' efforts in ways that promote group supervision and achievement of goals;
- facilitates group relations;
- meet the needs of group members;
- helps the group to move in complementary directions with the mission and, at the same time, keep the group united;
- provides a logical and emotional support point for people trying to understand the causes and consequences of organizational activity.

Moreover, the essential functions of leaders can be deduced from a semantic point of view regarding the word leadership, it coming from the verb to lead whose meanings are either:

- to lead, to guide, to guide, to be at the forefront, to open (the road), to direct, to command, to be a guide / guide, to show (the road) etc.
- show the way (for an individual or a group), be in harmony, guide, induce, influence, act and / or think and / or feel and / or behave in a certain way.

Therefore, leadership, although it cannot be translated into Romanian by a single word, can be defined as a management process or as the staff that performs this management process. It is also very important to note that there is no universal definition of leadership because it has been and is studied in different ways.

Transformational leadership is a high-level evolution in leadership paradigms, highlighting a strong concern for people and production. The last few decades have brought major changes to the leadership process, leading to questions about how future leaders should look and behave. Thus, the portrait of such a leader still remains difficult to achieve.

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