Rasgos de liderazgo predominantes en estudiantes de la Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango

Predominant Leadership Traits in Students of the Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango

Traços de liderança predominantes em estudantes da Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango

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Resumen

Los rasgos de liderazgo en los estudiantes vislumbran la adaptación que tendrán en la sociedad y en la vida productiva. Algunos cuentan con un liderazgo innato y otros lo desarrollan a través de un proceso de aprendizaje a lo largo de sus estudios. El objetivo de esta investigación fue determinar el estilo de liderazgo que más predomina en los alumnos de las carreras de Economía, Contaduría y Administración de la Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango. Se utilizó una encuesta para la recolección de los datos. El cuestionario utilizado incluyó 15 preguntas en escala Likert que va del uno, totalmente en desacuerdo, al cinco, totalmente de acuerdo, y se aplicó en el mes de marzo del año 2020 a 66 estudiantes de la institución mencionada. Se trató de un estudio con un diseño no experimental, nivel descriptivo y corte transversal. Los resultados demuestran que los rasgos del liderazgo transformacional son los que predominan en los estudiantes y que la consideración individualizada es la dimensión que más prevalece en ellos, seguida por el carisma. Se concluye que el liderazgo transformacional promueve el trabajo en equipo y mejora el proceso de aprendizaje en lo individual y grupal, lo que genera a su vez ambientes de trabajo dinámicos que permite a los estudiantes una mejor adaptación al momento de incorporarse a las organizaciones.

Palabras clave: liderazgo estudiantil, liderazgo transformacional, liderazgo transaccional, rasgos de liderazgo.

Abstract

The leadership traits in the students glimpse the adaptation they will have in society and in productive life. Some have innate leadership and others develop it through a learning process throughout their studies. The objective of this research was to determine the leadership style that predominates in the students of the Economics, Accounting and Administration careers of the Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango. The survey was used for data collection. The questionnaire used included 15 questions on a Likert scale ranging from one, totally disagree, to five, totally agree, and was applied in March 2020 to 66 students of the aforementioned institution. It was a study with a non-experimental design, descriptive level and cross section. The results show that the traits of transformational leadership are the ones that predominate in the students and that individualized consideration is the dimension that most prevails in them, followed by
Charisma. It is concluded that transformational leadership promotes teamwork and improves the individual and group learning process, which in turn generates dynamic work environments that allow students to better adapt when joining organizations.

**Keywords:** student leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, leadership traits.

**Resumo**

Os traços de liderança nos alunos vislumbram a adaptação que terão na sociedade e na vida produtiva, alguns possuem liderança inata e outros a desenvolvem através de um processo de aprendizagem ao longo de seus estudos. O objetivo desta pesquisa foi determinar o estilo de liderança que predomina nos alunos das carreiras de Economia, Contabilidade e Administração da Universidade Juárez do Estado de Durango. O questionário foi usado para a coleta de dados. O questionário utilizado inclui 15 questões em uma escala Likert que varia de 1, sendo discordo totalmente, a 5, que é concordo totalmente, que foi aplicado no mês de março de 2020 a 66 alunos da instituição estudada. O método utilizado para o estudo inclui um desenho não experimental, com nível descritivo e corte transversal. Os resultados mostram que os traços de liderança transformacional são os que predominam nos alunos e que a consideração individualizada é a dimensão que mais prevalece neles, seguida do carisma. Conclui-se que ter líderes estudantis transformacionais promove o trabalho em equipe, a visão é compartilhada e o processo de aprendizagem é aprimorado individualmente e em grupo, gerando ambientes de trabalho dinâmicos que permitirão aos alunos uma melhor adaptação ao ingressar na escola.

**Palavras-chave:** Liderança estudantil, liderança transformacional, liderança transacional, traços de liderança.

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**Introduction**

Talking about the influence that a person exerts on others is talking about leadership. However, that influence, according to Palomo (2013), has to be voluntarily accepted or shared. The influence that the leader has is demonstrated in the effectiveness of the total accomplishment of the group. Robbins (1999) points out that the influence that the leader has with his followers is reflected in the goals they achieve as a group.
Now, within the student leadership approach, Rodríguez, Pinto and Galdames (2010) mention that the importance of leadership in university students lies in the quality of the professional practice that they exercise when entering the world of work, which increasingly requires skills. Leadership allows the student to have a critical analysis of her environment. In addition, it allows you to develop a broader vision to know the causes and consequences of what is happening around you (Cáceres, Lorenzo and Sola, 2018). Leadership as a personality trait is very valuable to be able to adapt to the productive society. In the educational area, this trait can be glimpsed in several students. In some it seems innate and in others it develops with some effort through the learning they acquire throughout their university career (Rodríguez et al., 2010). Likewise, according to Pont, Nusche and Moorman (2009), leadership as such has a significant positive relationship with the high level of student learning. In this sense, Castilla (2010) states that a leading student exerts a measurable influence on their peers, they act as motivators in the classroom and generate healthy work environments that allow satisfactory results and improve learning for the group. Hence the interest in carrying out this research, whose objective was to determine the predominant leadership style in students of the different careers of the Faculty of Economics, Accounting and Administration of the Juárez University of the State of Durango (UJED).

The analysis of the data was carried out with the statistical program IBM SPSS version 26. And we will say, by way of advance, that the result was that transformational leadership is the predominant type of leadership in university students. The study presents a literary review that allows validating the information on the study variable and its dimensions. Likewise, the materials and methods used to achieve the objective of the research are identified. In addition, the operationalization and definition of the study variable is addressed. Finally, the results, discussion and conclusions are presented.

**Research Problem**

Do UJED students have a defined leadership style?
General objective

Determine the traits of transformational leadership and transactional leadership that predominate in students of the careers of Economics, Accounting and Administration of the UJED.

Specific objectives

Verify which of the dimensions of transformational and transactional leadership predominates in the students surveyed.

Question

What are the traits of transformational leadership and transactional leadership that predominate in college and university students already specified?

Hypothesis

The transformational leadership style is the most predominant style in university students of the Faculty of Economics, Accounting and Administration of the UJED.

Literary review

Leadership has been a concept constantly studied over the years. According to Izquierdo and Schuster (2010), leadership represents the ability or capacity of a person to influence another to achieve certain objectives of their own free will, and not only that, but also induces and encourages them with great enthusiasm. For their part, Posner and Kouzes (2003) point out that leadership simply represents the ability of a person to mobilize others to desire and fight for shared aspirations.

For his part, Palomo (2013) states that leaders are characterized because their ideals and actions normally mobilize others to achieve common goals; they easily get the support of others without the need to give orders, but others are grateful for their help; followers have confidence and believe in the acts that leaders perform: they present themselves as an example and role model; they seek ways to alter the normal balance of things to give rise to new and revolutionary processes, this indicates that they are not afraid to take risks, since they have a clear vision of what they want and seek ways to fulfill their project; they highly value teamwork, creativity, trends and innovation and, for this reason, they promote and
supervise it by creating the necessary tools and environment so that their learning is fast and complete.

Leadership arises from the interaction between individuals. It becomes a factor that influences areas of personal life such as emotions, motivation, desire to excel and generates good interpersonal relationships. For Pont et al. (2009), the leadership of university students will be reflected in the future as great business leaders, political leaders and social leaders, so it is important to identify those who have characteristics that can be reinforced and guided for a successful future. A leader has certain characteristics that differentiate him from others; In the school area, student leaders are characterized by the organization of their groups and how they influence the performance of their classmates.

Díaz (2020) points out that the development of leadership competence occurs through professional training processes, experiences acquired during life, as well as the support and support of other people who are considered as mentors and help generate structural changes and consolidate effective leadership.

And Chafloque, Espinoza and Salazar (2019) add that these changes can occur in the family, work and social environment through effective communication that clearly transmits the concepts, ideas, values, goals and objectives to be achieved. and, above all, that it transfers a vision to the people who receive the message and in this way are willing to adapt to change voluntarily.

Burns' leadership theory (1978) is one of the most widely used on this subject; defines two styles of leadership: transformational leadership and transactional leadership. In relation to transformational leadership, Burns (1978) states that it is the ability of a person to positively influence the behavior of others. For its part, transactional leadership defines it as the exchange of incentives to execute or carry out a certain activity. However, Bass and Avolio (1990) add a third leadership style, called laissez-faire leadership. In the words of Norena, Céliz and Guevara (2021), it represents non-leadership or leadership that is not present.

Likewise, Rojero, Gómez and Quintero (2019) refer to transformational leadership as a style that aligns the particular objectives of the collaborators with the organizational objectives, promoting a moral change in the workers to generate positive behaviors in the work teams that improve the performance levels of the organization. For their part, Rojas, Vivas, Mota and Quiñonez (2020) state that horizontal communication and rationality are
important characteristics of transformational leadership, where leaders have a perspective to follow that leads them to respond to prevailing situations of reality.

Along these lines, Fernández and Quintero (2017) state that transformational leadership has four determining dimensions. The first of these is the idealized influence or charisma, which generates the affection or sympathy of the followers to their leader. The second dimension is inspirational motivation, this allows the leader to transfer his vision to others. The third dimension is individual consideration, which represents a model that others can follow. And finally, the fourth dimension is intellectual stimulation, which is characterized by encouraging critical and innovative thinking to creatively solve problems.

For their part, Afsar, Badir, Saeed and Hafeez (2017) point out that the objective of transformational leadership is to generate a change in people towards new levels of needs and aspirations: transform personal values and concepts to stimulate the intellectual part that challenge the current situation and thus achieve innovation in organizational systems and processes that allow them to transcend their own interests and collective benefits and translate into a prosperous future.

In relation to transactional leadership, Pedraja, Rodríguez and Rodríguez (2016) state that it is characterized by having precise control of its followers and the goals they have achieved. Transactional leaders monitor in the short term all the actions of the collaborators regardless of the changes that occur in the climate or in the culture of the organization. In addition to this, Pedraja et al. (2016) point out that the reward according to the goals achieved is the factor that regulate the relationship between the transactional leader and his followers, however, on many occasions, this reward does not favor the personal claims of the followers, because the leader only shows a great interest in achieving the objectives set, having permanent control of the situation and rigid terms of exchange. In this sense, Castillo, Medina, Bernardo, Reyes and Ayala (2019) recommend putting transactional leadership into practice in organizations where there is no motivation to achieve the stated objectives. In other words, providing a stimulus to the worker through recognition or bonuses constitutes an effective mechanism for the organization, through the use of rewards, to function better and more efficiently.

It should be noted that since the Second World War, the transactional leadership style has dominated research on this topic, since it represents a process of formal transactions and exchange with followers, where leaders provide rewards in exchange for the effort of collaborators (Bass, 1985). The reward is effective in satisfying lower-order needs and
represents a way of forcing followers to achieve goals (Delegach, Kark, Katz, & Van Dijk, 2017). Contreras and Barbosa (2013) argue that transactional leadership is based on traditional models, it is based on exchange or transaction, the leader uses power by rewarding or punishing workers based on their performance; it does not go beyond the tasks and is limited to maintaining the normal flow of operations in the organization, without a tendency towards strategic development.

Finally, following Silva, Olsen, Pezzi and Sanjurjo (2016), leadership styles can be combined, because this is a continuous process that is linked to transformational and transactional dimensions, everything depends on each particular situation, since that leaders and followers, in order to achieve goals and objectives, share responsibilities. The main purpose of this study is to analyze the transformational and transactional leadership styles in a population of university students, as well as their characteristics and differences.

**Methodology**

The objective of this study was to determine the leadership style that predominates in the students surveyed. To achieve this, the research includes a non-experimental design, since the study variable did not undergo any manipulation. The study is descriptive, since it shows the main characteristics of the study subject. The information was obtained in a single moment, therefore, the research is cross-sectional.

The student population of the Faculty of Economics, Accounting and Administration of the UJED for the January-July 2020 cycle, from the first to the fifth semester, was 1043 students. The observations were collected using the survey technique. A non-probabilistic sample of 66 students was used. According to Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2014), this type of sample is used in research when there is no complete access to the population and the researchers decide to select the study sample based on certain characteristics, so it becomes a case study. In this sense, there are three very important points to highlight that support the non-probabilistic sample: 1) it seeks to know the very particular characteristics of the respondents in relation to transformational and transactional leadership, to later generate intervention processes, 2) being a non-representative sample, it is not sought to infer in the population, what is sought is to have elements that later allow developing or recommending actions to promote these types of leadership in young people and 3) the data was collected on the last day of academic activities due to the suspension of classes due to
the sanitary measures taken by the educational authorities to protect themselves from the 2019 coronavirus disease (covid-19).

The measurement instrument used was the "Student Leadership Questionnaire", an adapted version validated in Spanish samples by Molero, Recio and Cuadrado (2010) of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, which measures the transformational, transactional, corrective and passive leadership style. However, for the purposes of the research presentation, and returning to Ramírez and Sgambatti (2008), who point out that transformational and transactional leadership styles are more common in university students and the other leadership styles are better reflected in productive activities within organizations, it was decided to only apply the items corresponding to transformational leadership, which includes the Charisma dimension and the Individualized Consideration dimension, and to transactional leadership, which includes the Contingent Reward dimension with a total of 15 items on the following Likert scale: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Indifferent, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly agree.

The student leadership questionnaire is based on the transformational and transactional approach proposed by Bass and Avolio (1990). To achieve the general and specific objective of the study and respond to the proposed hypothesis, descriptive statistics were used. Thus, the average of the perceptions and the main traits of the respondents were obtained, which are shown in graphs and different tables.

Next, in Figure 1, you can see the hypothesized study model according to the methodological approach of the research.

**Figure 1.** Study variable and its dimensions

![Source: self made](image_url)
Results

The results were obtained by processing the data in the statistical program IBM SPSS version 26. Firstly, the reliability of the instrument used in the research was obtained, which presented a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.905, that is, a reliable result due to a which is very close to 1.0, since, according to Hernández et al. (2014), while the coefficient closer to 1.0 greater reliability. The questionnaire used in the research contains the general data of the students surveyed: it includes the degree they are studying and the period they are studying, in addition to age and gender.

Table 1 shows the distribution of students in relation to the career they study. It stands out that 54.4% study Economics and International Business, with a total of 36 students. The rest of the university students are distributed in the Administration career, with 24.2%, and in the Accounting career, with 21.2%.

Table 1. Distribution of students by career

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frecuencia</th>
<th>Porcentaje</th>
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<td>54.5</td>
<td>54.5</td>
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<td>Administración de Empresas</td>
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<td>24.2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>21.2</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: self made

Table 2 shows the distribution of the students according to their age, gender and the period they are studying. It can be seen that 65.2% of the university students surveyed are between 19 and 20 years of age. In relation to gender, it is observed that 57.6% are women, represented by 38 students. Likewise, more than 90% of those surveyed are in the first and third semester of their careers.
Table 2. Distribution of students according to their age, gender and period they attend

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<td>Edad</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19 años</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21 años</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22 años</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Género</td>
<td>Femenino</td>
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<td>Masculino</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Cuarto Semestre</td>
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Source: self made

To determine the leadership style that predominates in the university students surveyed, a descriptive statistical analysis was carried out, which shows the average perception of the students in relation to the traits of transformational leadership and transactional leadership that they present. Table 3 shows the average perception of the Student Leadership variable, which includes the two types of leadership. Likewise, it shows the mean perception of transformational leadership traits and transactional leadership traits. It can be seen that transformational leadership has the highest mean, which is 4.0429, that is, an acceptable mean in relation to the Likert scale used in the questionnaire.
Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the study variables

<table>
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<th>Máximo</th>
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<td>1.20</td>
<td>5.00</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

Source: self made

Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics of the dimensions included in transformational leadership and transactional leadership analyzed in the research. It is observed that the Individualized Consideration dimension, which corresponds to transformational leadership, is the one with the highest mean, 4.1848, followed by the mean of the Charisma dimension, which corresponds to the same leadership style.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of the dimensions of the study variables

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Source: self made
Discussion

After the interpretation of the results, we proceed to discuss them based on the general objective of the research, which was to determine the predominant leadership style in students of the Economics, Accounting and Administration careers of the UJED. In this sense, Rodríguez et al. (2010) state the importance of leadership training programs, which must include a methodological design that deepens the influence component, present both in individual and group relationships.

Likewise, the results of the present investigation coincide with what was proposed by Cáceres et al. (2009), who point out in their study that charisma is one of the personality traits of student leaders that stands out the most. In addition, they recognize the support and support that they give to their colleagues, and in this way they become transformational leaders.

For their part, Aguilar, Arana, Argueta, Linares and Marroquín (2015) state the importance of identifying characteristics of a leader in students. And in this work, Aguilar et al. (2015) show that the leadership personality traits that university students present, at least those that made up their study sample, are homogeneous regardless of gender, that is, both men and women present determining traits of a leader, and among the most highlighted is individualized consideration, which also coincides with the results of this study. According to Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2014), the academic results of students increase when there is an alignment between leadership, research and practice within the professional training of university students, who, in this way, acquire the tools necessary to transform reality when joining organizations, in addition to having effective teaching and effective learning provided by their teachers.

Within the limitations of the research, it can be pointed out that only a small non-probabilistic sample of the enrollment of the Faculty of Economics, Accounting and Administration of the UJED was studied, in addition to the fact that only two dimensions of transformational leadership were analyzed and only one dimension of transactional leadership. However, the study has the strength of analyzing important traits of the personality of a student leader who is in the first grades of study and this will allow to promote and encourage early through intervention processes through strategic actions the development of leadership skills in the university students surveyed to increase their academic performance in the group and individually. That said, one of the areas of research opportunity is to address a higher enrollment, in addition to studying the personality traits...
of student leaders in other faculties of the UJED to find out which style of leadership predominates in them.

**Conclusions**

Student leadership is reflected in young leaders who, within their school area, have a great influence on the performance of their peers, the teams where they develop reach high levels of learning and, consequently, have great opportunities to excel in the field. In this sense, it is concluded that the university students surveyed that make up the case study present a transformational leadership style, since, according to the results, the traits and behaviors that most predominate in the students are individualized consideration and charisma, for which the research hypothesis that was raised at the beginning of the study is accepted.

Having students with transformational leader characteristics can generate an advantage in the education service provided, since university students are capable of building a shared vision, promoting common goals among their peers to improve the learning process in groups and in the individual and thus improve the quality of the educational service. One of the essential elements of academic training in students is the development of leadership, which must be reflected in the educational model of the institution. For this, the achievement of the different academic activities depends to a large extent on the creation and development of student work environments free of imposition, with a great participation of young people that allows the achievement of institutional objectives. In this sense, the transforming student leadership of university students facilitates this process. In addition to the above, transformational leaders are required who can contribute to the adaptation to change in the different organizations. These leaders must emerge from the classroom; There, interpersonal skills, critical thinking and efficient decision-making must be developed.

It is of the utmost importance to address transactional and transformational leadership theories because they clearly and consistently manifest the characteristics that leaders must possess to successfully face all the changes that are generated in the environment. It should be noted that, at present, organizations have a greater social responsibility, which allows guiding and promoting, through a leader, meaningful and enriching work for their workers. From the information obtained from different sources, it
is also concluded that leadership is a competence that is essential for the proper functioning of organizations, which allows guiding and orienting employees towards the same goal.

The foundations and results of the leadership styles that are addressed in this research provide different parameters that can be adapted to the situational requirements and needs of the institution studied. Implementing the two styles of leadership depends on the purposes of the institution; The functionality of each style should be considered, since effectiveness in individual and collective objectives could be achieved if the application of each one is interspersed.

**Future lines of research**

The analysis of the results of this study is of the utmost importance for the institution studied because it shows the traits and behaviors of the young people who are part of its enrollment, which can be specifically aligned with the objectives of the careers they study. In addition, it contributes to future lines of research to address leadership styles in university students from other educational institutions and their relationship with academic performance, research and their incorporation into the productive sector, all through intervention processes.
References


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