



Emerging concept of systemic leadership in higher education organizations

Concepción emergente del liderazgo sistémico en organizaciones de educación universitaria

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research was to generate an emerging conception of systemic leadership in organizations of university education in Venezuela with the purpose of proposing theoretical alternatives based on the experience of social actors in the context of managerial positions. Based on the interpretative paradigm agreements. The theoretical conception of systemic leadership was reconstructed from the conformation of five (5) subcategories: 1. Systemic thinking, 2. This allowed the construction of an emerging theorization. Among the relevant conclusions, it is necessary to develop systemic thinking, which implies generating a broad vision of the future that shapes human beings and their socio-cultural relationships, as this allows conceiving reality from the parts that make it up and transcending to new mental models that allow directing teamwork.

Descriptors: leadership; educational administrators; teacher administration relationship. (Source: UNESCO Thesaurus).

RESUMEN

La investigación tuvo como propósito generar una concepción emergente del liderazgo sistémico en organizaciones de educación universitaria en Venezuela con la finalidad de plantear alternativas teóricas en función de la experiencia de actores sociales en contexto de cargos gerenciales. En función de los acuerdos del paradigma interpretativo. Se reconstruyó la concepción teórica del liderazgo sistémico desde la conformación de cinco (5) subcategorías: 1. Pensamiento sistémico, 2. Dominio personal, 3. Modelos mentales, 4. Construcción de una visión compartida, 5. Aprendizaje en equipo. Lo cual permitió construir una teorización emergente. Entre las conclusiones relevantes es necesario, desarrollar el pensamiento sistémico, esto implica generar una visión amplia sobre el devenir que configura al ser humano y sus relaciones socio cultural, por cuanto esto permite concebir la realidad desde las partes que la conforman y trascender a nuevos modelos mentales que permitan direccionar el trabajo en equipo.

Descriptores: liderazgo; administrador de la educación; relación docente-administración. (Fuente: Tesauro UNESCO).

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Research articles section

INTRODUCTION

The university educational organizations, by its characteristic illustrates society with scientific knowledge, being called to continuously review its management processes in line with global trends, thus generating a better service, demonstrating in praxis, tangible facts about the postulates preached by its philosophy. The systemic aspect in a complex, dynamic, uncertain world is constituted as an option within the planning, foreseeing and addressing weaknesses in the required time, generating permanent institutional improvement (Nieto-Licht, 2013).

Therefore, university educational organizational management, working with the systemic approach, promotes leadership that merges the strengths of human talent, generating synergy to the achievement of organizational objectives and goals, promoting personal-professional development (Hernández-Palma et al. 2018), articulating the systemic where the effort is important to achieve the necessary quality, (Medina-León et al., 2019). This implies recognizing strengths and weaknesses for self-recognition and of the other as a work team, understanding that they are part of an organizational system where it becomes recurrent to work on effectiveness based on continuous improvement (Núñez-Rojas & Díaz-Castillo, 2017).

Continuing with the above, when working in an organization open to changes and transformations, continuous improvement, teamwork, effective communication and synergy for self and other's recognition, (Cobbett, 2016). University educational organizational management in Venezuela, are called to integrate the systemic approach because it allows working based on the optimization of the resources available, being pertinent to place human talent as a pioneer of the processes developed (Hamilton, 2019). University education organizations should promote and adopt systemic management changes as an option to work based on competencies and continuous improvement (Elgart, 2017).

The paradigmatic transcendence towards the progressive adoption of the systemic approach, allows building a non-traditional vision on leadership, being important to use certain elements for this purpose (Starr, 2017), in addition to taking into account the strategic management as it allows working from a synergistic perspective of teamwork, being important, according to (González-Millán & Álvarez-Castañón, 2019), to promote the ethical function of the manager, a transversal situation to the application of systemic leadership as systemic modeling in the organization.

For their part (van-Dorssen-Boog et al., 2020), emphasize that the paradigmatic change should lead to the generation of systemic self-leadership as management where each actor behaves as a leader, so that synergy develops on a fundamental level on the managerial and productive processes (Heather, 2020), stresses the importance of assuming a new systemic logic, where all parties are positioned, this could be generated from the university research role, as highlighted by (Vainauskienė & Vaitkienė, 2021), when they explain a knowledge management transcending the academic, to work on merging knowledge, skills, to enhance weaknesses, being cooperative work an option for the promotion of systemic leadership.

In relation to knowledge management as a systemic vision, (Bom-Camargo & Bolívar, 2018), comment on its genesis from the fifth discipline, human talent by understanding this process has a significant value to achieve organizational goals. It is the leader's function to motivate human talent to be in the wheel of corporate discernment in order to generate an organizational management in function of assuming an active part of the process.

In this way, the strategies for the achievement of an adequate intelligent organization in permanent learning are built as a team, when the members manage to understand that the knowledge prior to joining the company, experiences, technical knowledge, know-how, is an essential part of the knowledge that the institution intends to transmit, in this way, systemic knowledge management is developed in proposition of providing the external customer, multiple possibilities of having quality services according to the needs and social context where they are, in the university case, allows to produce new academic offerings, patents, tangible solutions to society based on scientific knowledge (Gutierrez, 2017).

The social interaction of human talent in the organization, facilitates the pursuit of an organizational culture based on optimal performance, assuming the paradigmatic transcendence of the traditional business model to the systemic, being important to highlight the validity that, for this purpose, plays the funnel metaphor (Whittle, 2010), in reason of pointing out a route of

processing information to knowledge, being relevant to have emphasis on the role of the leader, as they should be considered ethical behavior in achieving the organizational goals set.

The knowledge funnel allows to process in three phases, the perceptions of human talent, until it becomes knowledge by means of new products, new services, new processes; thus a management in proposition of learning by doing is approached, learning in channeling the organizational goals, favorable situation, allows to be in vanguard to assume stability and positioning of the market. In the university educational organizations in Venezuela, an adjustment must be made on the fly with the intention of adapting to the global academic challenges faced by the training in the university centers, especially when there are various approaches to the knowledge-based society, ICT, as sources of economic productivity.

This calls for a paradigmatic change, generating reflection on the existence of universities in the coming years, as human beings are facing a new industrial revolution, this being digital - cybernetic, where traditional job positions could be reduced, projecting unemployment, unless part of the population adapts and assumes training in the new trends, essentially operated by the Internet. The organizations of university education in Venezuela must project themselves to diversify their operation in function of new products, services, processes, for which, the individual knowledge of the human talent is not enough, it is necessary the synergy of knowledge to achieve such ends, in relation to face with pertinence its functionality in reason of not being relegated to the global challenges, not doing it implies to be condemned to promote an education out of phase with the global socio-economic reality.

University organizations in Venezuela have the corresponding additives to research and train human talent with the possibility not only to be at the forefront, but also to contribute to other companies to be so, the national economy can find an important ally in universities as a source of knowledge management to promote an interconnected system to raise productivity based on science, institutions are not only there to reproduce graduates, but also to enable them to undertake the generation of actions that process opportunities to meet the global challenges of employment in the decades to come, through the appropriation of the latest generation of ICTs at the service of economic growth.

In summary, systemic leadership is based on epistemic principles that promote the praxeological approach based on uncertainty, complex systems, as operative entities of managerial action, however, they do not have their idiosyncratic genesis in Venezuela, triggering action, towards the exploration of university institutional experiences with the conceptual regenerative purpose focused on unveiling principles leading to new contextualized theories.

Because of the above, the main purpose of the research is presented: To generate an emergent conception on systemic leadership in Venezuelan university educational organizations.

METHOD

The research was developed according to the interpretative paradigm, since the intersubjective meanings of human and social actions were studied in relation to the research phenomenon, interpreting the codes generated from interviews with key informants, constituting the categorical construction to reconstruct the emerging theory.

In continuation, the theoretical ideals of explanation, prediction and control were replaced by understanding, meaning and action; processes developed through the hermeneutic circle (Gadamer, 1975). Likewise, the design used was qualitative, where the researcher appropriates the method and its entire process, making accepted decisions to understand the research reality during the pre-initiation, beginning, development and culmination of the research.

The key informants or subjects, cooperating with the research, for Goetz & Lecompte (1988), are "people who are long-time residents of a community, members of fundamental institutions or connoisseurs of the cultural ideals of the group" (p. 134), that is, people with a high degree of experience with the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, it was made up of five (05) teachers with experience in middle management, attached to the Universidad Nacional Experimental Francisco de Miranda (UNEFM), who were codified, counting on a methodical

analytical process on the information provided, such codification is constituted by a number and two letters (see table 1).

Table 1: Coding of key informants

Key informants	Assigned coding
Key informant 1	D01P
Key informant 2	D02C
Key informant 3	D03B
Key informant 4	D04T
Key informant 5	D05S

Source: Own elaboration.

The inclusive criteria were: 1. To be teachers with managerial experience in university education organizations. 2. To put into practice during their management leadership approaches based on systemic, complexity. Having experiences relevant to the research phenomenon. The collection, selection and processing of information was based on the ethnographic experience between researchers and key informants, for this purpose:

- Participant observation
- Open interviews
- Content analysis
- Systematization of experiences

Using resources such as tape recorder, anecdotal record, which supported the theorization of the phenomenon investigated (Martínez, 2008). Following the above, the interpretative phase of the hermeneutic circle was developed (Gadamer, 1975); establishing an ethnographic experiential process with key informants, revealing meanings about the phenomenon, complemented with interviews, a nomenclature was elaborated in order to organize, analyze information and present it as research results.

RESULTS

The results are presented taking into account the researcher's precognitions, taking him/her to the intersubjective plane, getting involved with the phenomenon to become familiar with and understand it (Schütz, 1979), in the light of evidence issued from the interviews conducted, then generating categorical structuring, a vision impregnated by both key informants and researchers, as shown in table 2, revealing itself:

Table 2: Category Matrix

Category	Code	Subcategories	Key Informants
		Systemic thinking	D01P, D02C, D03B, D04T, D05S
		Personal domain	D01P, D02C, D03B, D04T, D05S
Systemic leadership	SL	Mental models	D01P, D02C, D03B, D04T, D05S
		Building a shared vision	D01P, D02C, D03B, D04T, D05S
		Team learning	D01P, D02C, D03B, D04T, D05S

Source: Own elaboration.

Based on the information analyzed, we proceeded to reconstruct the theoretical conception of systemic leadership (input), consisting of five (5) subcategories: 1. Systemic thinking, 2. This made it possible to construct an emerging theorization related to the phenomenon under investigation (output).

Emerging concept of systemic leadership

Systemic leadership is conceived as an experience that teachers must develop in an integral way, that is, to be a leader-manager carrying out their teaching, research and extension responsibilities. This is intended to motivate the members of the institution through a humanistic relationship based on win-win. For this it is necessary to develop systemic thinking, this implies generating a broad vision of the human future, its socio-cultural relationships, as reality is conceived from the parts, transcending to new mental models oriented to direct teamwork, integrating vision to achieve common goals, from lifelong learning. Continuing with the above, the emerging categories on systemic leadership are highlighted:

Systemic thinking: Understanding the reality that surrounds the human being from the various aspects of thought, i.e., there must be the polyvalence of knowledge to understand the phenomenon unveiled before the human being, which is divergent from the various edges, i.e., the political, social, spiritual, economic, among other constituent strata of the performance of the phenomenon, therefore the leader must have the broad vision to articulate the globalized towards the concrete in today's society.

Personal mastery: It is understood from the Self-knowledge. Emotional management. Assertive communication. Motivator. That is, the leader must have a high domain, to articulate the necessary motivation to promote in the rest of the human talent of the organization, the necessary participation to consolidate the processes that lead to the achievement of common goals.

Mental models: It implies transcending the way in which the leadership and management processes are being worked in the institution, therefore, there cannot be a systemic leader from the vertical performance or under the vision of the boss, it is necessary to work towards articulating the perspective of understanding the phenomenon from the parts that make it up.

Construction of a shared vision: Institutional policies should promote the achievement of common goals, based on strategic plans that allow joining efforts towards cooperative work for institutional consolidation. The self-taught role is an essential part because it generates the possibility of inquiry to learn about scientific and technological advances, contributing significantly to the common good as a social product.

Team learning: Systematic leadership is learned through collective learning by doing, that is to say, the previous competencies cannot be developed effectively if collective learning is not achieved in favor of the institution. This segment promotes synergy with purposes focused on corporate growth, betting on group effectiveness as an organizational support. Los significados que permiten configurar el liderazgo sistémico del docente como eje integrador de las competencias gerenciales se configuran desde las vivencias etnográficas que los informantes le brindaron al fenómeno en estudio, las cuales se basan en lo emocional, motivador, en el modelo conductual que deben proyectar a los seguidores, a la formación continua con fines intelectuales y técnicos.

The systemic is understood as the person's ability to perform various tasks from a humanistic vision, that is, the teacher must perform his duties with a managerial aptitude, either in learning or in administrative positions, maintaining a relationship of respect, equality, but above all motivating, fostering interpersonal relationships conducive to promoting an organizational climate in accordance with effective coexistence, where all members recognize that they are taken into account to contribute their best to the common achievement, therefore the healthy affective aspect plays a key role in the meanings given by the informants to the phenomenon investigated, summarizing the following; a good leader is one who treats his peers with empathy and assertiveness, as shown in Figure 1.

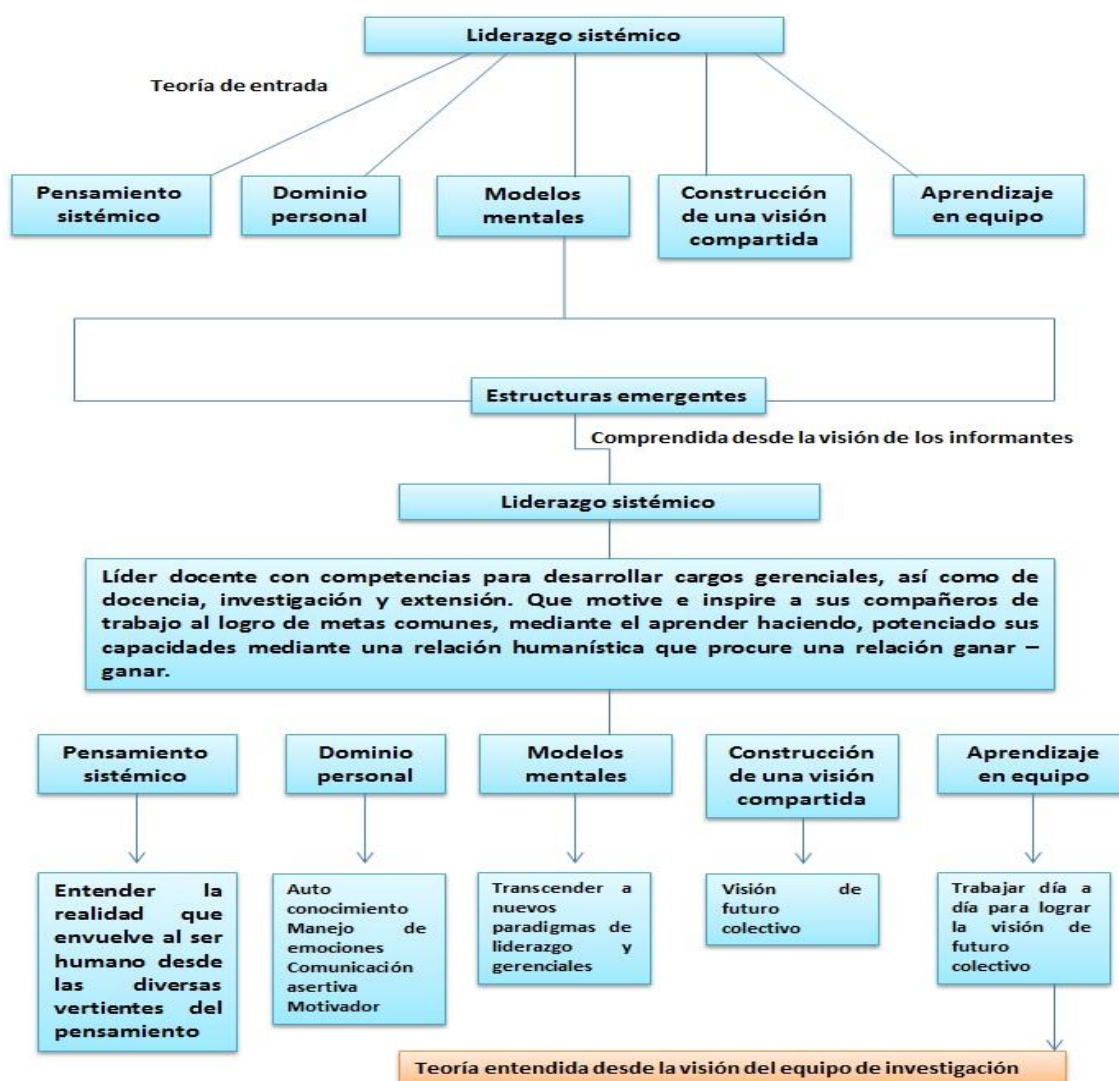


Figure 1. Systemic leadership matrix from an emerging vision. Source: Own elaboration.

Theorization

The theorization from the vision of the hermeneutic circle is circumscribed to the comprehensive phase, exposing itself as an emerging theory concatenated in organizing from key informants, a contribution in consolidating new educational managerial visions in the Venezuelan university context, with the purpose of proposing a theory from the social needs, being this the beginning of the existing theoretical postulates, in this sense, it contributes in the optimization of the processes to innovate and generate the active, protagonist, ethical participation, under a systemic leadership, in such sense, it is presented:

Systemic leadership as an integrating axis of managerial competencies, is an element to be developed by the university professor, as this allows him to perform in a holistic way, his functions (teaching, research and extension), configured from the learning environments to the performance of administrative positions. In this itinerary, he/she must promote personal potentialities, academic-technical training, to configure an interactive vision with the members of the organization in an integrative way, taking into consideration that each human talent must contribute his/her potential in favor of the institution.

A systemic leader develops the empathic-synergic virtue with people, motivating and inspiring the fulfillment of common goals, building an organization where one learns by doing, because the emotional self-knowledge is inspired as a source of constant rediscovery, allowing to contribute

to the common achievement. This leadership is not punitive in its actions, that is to say, it does not look for culprits, locates and seeks solutions to problems, encourages creative thinking to transcend in the midst of crises in the educational institution.

This implies developing new mental models in teachers, since the systemic vision is acquired progressively as the mind is trained for this purpose, i.e., it can be learned, it is necessary to promote a reflective introspection on both personal and professional management. Therefore, systemic leadership in the operation of the institution is not decreed, but is formed through an institutional management committed to constant change, constituting an "intelligent organization".

The systemic leader works day by day to transcend as a person and professional, recognizes his weaknesses and mistakes, to turn them into strengths that allow him to contribute and inspire collective progress, through a cooperative vision of reality. In this sense, a culture based on the subject-subject relationship is generated, where intersubjectivity based on mutual respect and understanding of diversity can consolidate unity, understood as the collective search for excellence, efficiency and innovation.

From this point of view, systemic leadership becomes an integrating axis of managerial competencies, since an excellent manager must be an excellent leader, especially when he/she must motivate and be a model for subordinates towards the goals proposed by the institution. Therefore, he must work from the professional management in accordance with what he has learned in formal education, as well as he cannot leave aside the personal, that is to say, he must be "human" to generate in the other, the motivation and security necessary to exploit his capacities towards the success of the organization.

Systemic leadership is interconnected with management to promote actions such as respect, equality, innovation, safety, motivation, training, among other qualities, in order to manage collective thinking towards imaginaries that allow visualizing the educational organization as an entity for constant success. Each actor that conforms it from its responsibility must contribute to give the best, therefore, everyone has the responsibility to be a leader, working from that vision in continuous learning as a method to achieve excellence.

This new perspective generates the possibility of having a circular - horizontal management, where it is understood that each member is important and has a talent to develop at the service of the collective, if this is not developed, there is a risk of generating apathy that does not allow to assertively articulate the Win - Win relationship in the organizational members, towards institutional achievement based on the constant development of human potential as the primary source.

The current trend is towards the knowledge society, where individuals not only learn, but also solve social problems, therefore, systemic leadership corresponds to this reality, the university is called to become an intelligent organization, that is, it must redirect the way it has been working, to configure the necessary approach to consolidate a teaching performance corresponding to such perspectives. In this sense, it is necessary to transcend the traditional mental models with which the UNEFM works, being the way to this end, an institutional plan that involves the formation of leadership and systemic management in all the actors that make it up, from the diversity of each member, It is necessary to unlearn and learn again to structure the necessary metanoia to achieve a systemic organization in order to provide a response to the real social needs.

The renewal of the leader must focus on continuous training, in this sense, the organization promotes institutional policies towards constant learning by managerial and technical competences, towards a systemic managerial vision, which involves the mental metanoia of the individual to make it collective, this maintaining the institutional diversity, only that under this approach each person works in the common achievement, through a systematic plan to work, orderly, contextualized to the concrete reality of the institution, the managerial participation is important to focus the effectiveness in the achievement of common goals. Systemic leadership allows to link managerial competences in an innovative, creative, transforming, humanizing and ethical teaching action, hence the importance of working under this approach, promoting a new working model in line with the new trends of managerial leadership promoting learning by doing as a means of organizational perfectibility.



CONCLUSION

The trend in educational organizations on leadership and managerial competencies is towards teamwork, where all members of the organization contribute synergistically in the institutional changes that must be developed to have a company able to exploit its capabilities based on emotional management as a fundamental basis for being a leader-manager, articulating cooperative work towards conflict resolution. As revealed by the key informants, systemic leadership is visualized as an opportunity to generate transformations in the organization, to configure actions where the leader is involved as a manager of the knowledge society where one learns by doing, innovating, creating, encouraging protagonist participation, by means of teams that focus from their potentialities to develop an inter-subjective Win-Win relationship, through an assertive, motivating and inspiring communication to the managerial-pedagogical action, understanding the socio-cultural context where the individual develops to articulate the parts towards a systemic whole in constant renovation.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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