

**LEADERSHIP: RECENT ACADEMIC RESEARCH ITINERARIES SHEDDING LIGHT ON
MORE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership has impacted organizational results in research that revealed the antecedents and consequences of management styles (Bastida, Marimon, & Carreras, 2018). In this way, the scientific literature that considered the leader as a relatively passive agent has been replaced by the vision of an essential role in inspiring employees (Buengeler, Leroy, & De Stobbeleir, 2018). Times of crisis, especially as the current Covid-19 pandemic, represent an opportunity for strategic leaders, with the aim of transforming challenges into victories and, eventually, increasing organizational results (Dirani et al., 2020). Furthermore, leadership plays a crucial role in the survival and growth of companies (Ayentimi, Burgess, & Brown, 2018), as managerial quality is of vital importance, given the current conditions of resource limitation so that the leader needs synchronize strategic and operational actions (Garavan, Watson, Carbery, & O'Brien, 2016).

In this approach, leadership significantly affects organizational results (Melo, 2004). This points out, in the author's view, that the leader's performance is relevant for the realization of organizational objectives in a context of globalized economy. In addition, Barney (1991), when proposing the Resource-Based View, points out that employees can be a proficient competitive differential if they are strategically articulated by a leadership. Corroborating this statement, in the organizational dynamics, the leader becomes vital, acting in an intra and inter organizational way, seeking to be the instrument that accompanies the changes of society (Ivan & Terra, 2017), inspiring the team to reach shared goals (Ahmed, Rehman, Ali, Ali, & Anwar, 2018; Yukl, 2012). Thompson, Buch and Glasø (2020), in turn, emphasize that the exchange between leader and followers cannot be based on abusive supervision, as this can result in negative affects related to work, which would impede the organization's progress.

Moreno, Navarro and Alkazemi (2018) highlight that, in relation to the organizational attributes relevant to the image of leadership in organizations and the characteristics of effective leaders, the behaviors, attitudes and beliefs of employees are influenced by communication leaders and that these impact on organizational decision-making. Still, according to the authors, there is a note that leadership, as it is multifaceted, has been presenting new structures, moving from the traditional focus of "researching leaders" to "researching leadership".

In this vein, due to the importance of this theme, whether for scholars and/or managers, Oc (2018) emphasizes that a substantial amount of studies are still needed to expand knowledge about leadership, and researchers should approach territories that are still unexplored, in order to enhance the effectiveness of organizational management as a whole. This assertion is ratified by Silva, Paschoalotto and Endo (2019) who, when carrying out a bibliometry on the theme, suggest the use of the Web of Science research platform as fundamental for mapping the state of the art on the theme, which base will be used in the present research.

In this perspective, seeking to verify the territories that have not yet been explored in the theme in question, this study focused on drawing the panorama of recent scientific production related to leadership, identifying the current itineraries and revealing new possibilities and challenges for further studies, enabling a new thinking of leadership in the reality of organizations.

In addition, systematic and bibliometric analyzes were carried out to identify the demographic profile of the papers; check the journals and countries that have published the

most about the construct; examine the papers with the greatest bibliographic coupling; analyze co-citations; and present the lexicographic exposition of the keywords of the papers.

2. LEADERSHIP: CONCEPTS, HISTORICAL EVOLUTION, TYPOLOGY AND RELATIONAL STUDIES

The leadership went through several concepts, theories developed in different contexts and times, and researchers from different areas until reaching the current point in the field of organizational behavior. Dorfman (1996) already pointed out two universal characteristics that must be considered in the study of leadership and the management function are influence and trust. For the author, there is no distinction between the leader and the manager, considering that leadership is one of the management functions and, in this sense, the task of the leader and the manager must be the search for setting goals for their subordinates, supporting them in their reach. As a contribution, Bianchi, Quishida and Foroni (2017) point out that the concepts of leader and manager are confused in the organizational field, but that research on the leader is more contemporary and broader, especially when related to the theme of Human Resource Management (HRM).

Thus, when talking about its conceptualization, leadership focusing on persuasion and influence, is defined by Bass (1990, p. 11) as “a power relationship, as an instrument to achieve goals, with an effort to interact, with a differentiated role, like the initiation of the structure and how many combinations of these definitions”, concept that will serve as the basis for this study. Vecchio (2009, p. 146) points out that it is a “process by which a person tries to get the members of an organization to do something they want”, emphasizing that leadership must always be linked to influence (Dorfman, 1996).

In this essence, the role of the leader is the exercise of influence so that individual and collective efforts reach shared goals (Yukl, 2012), serving as a bridge between a more effective HRM, through strategies, policies and practices, and the perception of these practices by employees (Bianchi et al., 2017).

With regard to historicity, leadership has evolved into theories that have not developed in an organized way, but that will be portrayed in a chronological order. Trait theory focuses on personal characteristics and attributes, which differentiate leaders from their followers and, in addition, effective leaders from ineffective ones (Bowditch & Buono, 2002). For Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (2009), this aspect, from the mid-1990s, distinguishes the great man from the masses. However, seeking to examine the similarities and divergences between leaders, the number of traits attributed to a born leader increased with the advance of research, becoming more and more mixed and without a clear standard (Vecchio, 2009).

Thus, due to the constraints of the trait theory, researchers set out to seek another direction for understanding the phenomenon of leadership: the behavior exhibited by leaders. One of the first studies, from 1940, was that of Ohio State University, looking for independent dimensions of the leader's behavior (Chemers, 2000; Melo, 2004).

With a research objective similar to that of Ohio State University, the University of Michigan, through the Survey Research Center, investigated, in 1950, the relationship between the behavioral characteristics of leaders with effective performance. According to Bowditch and Buono (2002), the results revealed two dimensions: employee orientation (interpersonal relations) and production orientation (technical and practical aspects of the work).

Another study widely cited in the behavioral trend refers to The Blake and Mouton managerial grid dated 1964. Through a graph, the researchers proposed combinations between the concern with production (x-axis) and with people (y-axis), generating leadership or management styles and, as a result, they highlighted that the best or most effective

management style would be team management, as it emphasizes the concern with managerial action based on both productivity and people (Vecchio, 2009).

However, as pointed out by Schermerhorn et al. (2009), behavioral theories played a modest role in identifying relationships between leadership behavior and group performance, as they did not consider situational factors that can also interfere with organizational success or failure. Thus, in order to obtain a more complete and accurate understanding, some models have taken contingency attributes into account (Chemers, 2000; Vecchio, 2009), recognizing that leaders are not in a vacuum and that leadership is not an individual phenomenon isolated from the environment (Oc, 2018).

In the contingency perspective, one of the classic theories stems from the seminal study of Fred Fiedler, from 1967, when proposing that effective leadership is based “on the degree of adjustment between a leader's style and the extent to which a specific situation allows him to exert influence on the group”, that is, favorability of a situation (Bowditch & Buono, 2002, p.126). Another theory, from 1971, is based on the teachings of Robert House, entitled “path-goal theory”. Vecchio (2009) emphasizes that, in this approach, the leader must help his subordinates in the trajectory to be followed to reach the general objectives of the group and the organization, emphasizing that, for this, the leader can adopt different leadership styles depending on the situation requires, whether its behavior is directive, supportive, participatory or oriented towards achievement.

Still in this sense, in 1973, two approaches deserve to be highlighted, namely, the leader-member exchange and the leadership-participation theory. The first, also known as exchange between leader and followers (LMX), is based on the fact that the treatment of the leader is different with each one of his subordinates, thus creating the group inside, which has a special relationship with the leader, receiving evaluations performance, and the outside group, which does not have this relationship (Melo, 2004). The second, on the other hand, emphasizes a sequence of rules that must be followed, as its scholars argue that the behavior of the leader must adjust to the structure of the task (Schermerhorn et al., 2009). Bowditch and Buono (2002), based on the leadership-participation theory, argue that five styles of decision-making leadership should be adopted, ranging from the highly autocratic, through the consultative to the oriented.

The theory of situational leadership, also with a contingency focus, was based on the Fiedler model, in mid-1977. In this perspective, the maturity of followers is the main situational attribute, and when maturity increases, behavior should be more oriented to the relationship and less task-oriented (Vecchio, 2009).

The latest set of studies, called new leadership theories, encompasses, in addition to other approaches, the charismatic, the transformational, the transactional and the visionary (Bianchi et al., 2017). As assumptions, the charismatic approach comes from the theory of traits while the transformational-transactional is a resumption of behavioral and contingency movements (Fonseca, Porto, & Borges-Andrade, 2015).

Charismatic leadership makes room for the followers to attribute to the leader heroic or extraordinary leadership skills in specific behaviors (House, 1977). Conger and Kanungo (1998) address five characteristics that differentiate charismatic from non-charismatic leaders: charismatics have a vision and they are willing to take personal risks and face high costs to achieve it; they are sensitive to both environmental limitations and the needs and feelings of their followers; and exhibit different behaviors than ordinary ones.

With regard to the transformational-transactional dichotomy, the transactional is seen as an exchange between leaders and subordinates that happens daily and this is associated with a specific performance; in turn, the transformational would try to reshape the organization's internal strategies (Vecchio, 2009). In addition, Avolio et al. (2009) highlight that the first type of leadership, transformational, punishes subordinates if the performance is not expected

and the second, transactional, inspires the followers so that the behavior goes beyond expectations, contributing to a better organizational result.

In addition to these theories, visionary leadership is conceptualized by Nanus (1992, p. 8) as “creating a realistic, credible, attractive vision of the future for the organization”. In this vein, there are also studies in the academic literature that propose new nomenclatures: environmental leadership (Gouldson, Carpenter, & Afionis, 2015); shared leadership (Wu, Cormican, & Chen, 2020); contextual leadership (Oc, 2018); creative leadership (Mitra & O’Regan, 2020); electronic leadership (Darics, 2020); ethical leadership (Neves, Almeida, & Velez, 2018); and implicit leadership (Solansky, Gupta, & Wang, 2017).

As for relational studies, recent research has shown leadership relationships with other themes. As antecedents of the construct, we can mention personality diversity (Zhou, 2016); stress (Harms, Credé, Tynan, Leon, & Jeung, 2017); and the team's internal environment (Serban & Roberts, 2016). As a consequence of the theme, the following studies can be highlighted: the leader's mental well-being (Weiss, Razinskas, Backmann, & Hoegl, 2018); organizational commitment (Jain & Duggal, 2018); financial performance in small companies (Jing, Avery, & Bergsteiner, 2020); and human resource management and green innovation practices (Singh, Giudice, Chierici, & Graziano, 2020).

Regarding the levels or typology, Yukl (2012), based on the theories of leadership, considers the individual process to be one that is centered on the leader, taking the trait theory as an example; the dyadic process, which are theories focused on the relationship between leader and followers, as in the case of leader-led theory; and the group process, in which the focus is on the group, based on the premise that the leader contributes to its effectiveness, and that contingency theory is an example. For Fonseca et al. (2015), the levels can also be classified as micro-organizational (individuals), meso-organizational (teams or work groups) and macro-organizational (organization), paying attention to the fact that, although each has its own variables of interest, there may be interactions between them.

As for the scales and instruments used to measure the perception of leadership in theoretical-empirical studies, one can mention that of Melo (2004), when validating a model that adopts three factors related to the management style: task, relationship and situation. Avolio and Bass (1991) proposed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which verifies the subordinate's perception of his superior's leadership style. The questionnaire is grouped in transformational, transactional and passive (*laissez-faire*) leadership styles. Brow, Treviño and Harrison (2005), in turn, developed the Ethical Leadership Scale, with an exclusive focus on ethical leadership.

Nowadays, people have a fundamental role in ensuring the achievement of organizational objectives (Ramos, Mota, & Corrêa, 2016) and, in order for this to be effective, fundamental changes are necessary in order to achieve new requirements for the management style, such as: developing a customer-oriented culture; create business strategies that emphasize differentiation; redesigning business processes; manage knowledge and information; develop new leadership styles (McCarthy, Puffer, Vikhanski, & Naumov, 2005). For Yukl (2012), the leader can present behaviors that are task oriented (planning, monitoring activities, solving problems), for people (support, development, recognition, empowerment), for change (vision, incentive innovation) or to the external environment (market monitoring, networking).

Thus, it can be concluded that, although leadership is contextualized as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, it is fundamental for the proper functioning of organizations (Day & Antonakis, 2012). In this sense, leaders assume a central role in processes of change and reduction of uncertainty (Neves et al., 2018), adopting a special connotation as examples and inspirers for their teams in promoting healthier and more collaborative work environments, as well as in the search the effectiveness of human resource management strategies and the

achievement of better organizational results. Especially in the Covid-19 pandemic period we are experiencing, it is more important than ever to put people at the center of the change program (Amis & Janz, 2020).

3. METHOD

Considering the objective proposed for this paper, a descriptive study was carried out that had as method the systematic review of the literature and the data analyzed with bibliometric analyzes. For Meneghini and Packer (2010), the bibliometry focuses on the dissemination of research, going beyond quantitative dimensions, associating research results with researchers and the knowledge and innovations they produce. Thus, bibliometric analysis is seen as flexible, as it assesses the typology, quantity and quality of information sources, producing reliable scientific indicators to map academic production (Silva, Hayashi, & Hayashi, 2011).

Regarding the achievement of a systematic literature review, the protocol proposed by Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan (2008) was adopted in three stages. The following steps were followed: (a) formulation of the research question; (b) set of inclusion and exclusion criteria; and (c) quality of the literature, the latter being used after the identification of the five most cited papers (verified by the Web of Science platform). Starting the systematic review, in the first step, item (a), research problem was elaborated, that is, how to draw the panorama of recent scientific production related to leadership, identifying the current itineraries and revealing new possibilities and challenges for studies further?

Then, in order to achieve item (b) of the protocol, a survey of scientific publications on leadership was carried out in January 2020, in the Web of Science (WoS) database, for its coverage (dates from 1990) and quality, by bringing together the main high-impact international journals (Chadegani et al, 2013). Nevertheless, the adoption of this database is in line with the trend highlighted by Zupic and Cater (2015), in which bibliometric studies in the field of Management frequently adopt WoS. The keyword used was “leadership” in the titles, abstracts, keywords or “keywords plus”, totaling 101,239 publications. Following, delimiting the temporality for the last three years, that is, from 2017 to 2019, seeking to portray the recent state of the art of the construct, 28,880 works were obtained. Then, filtering the results for the document type “paper”, 23,236 studies resulted. Finally, there was a triage for areas related to the object of this study, namely: business economics, psychology and public administration, and 8,122 papers returned, which comprised the *corpus* of present study. Step (c), quality criteria, was used after checking the most cited papers, those highlighted in the research agenda. Thus, we sought to identify published papers with a high impact factor through the journals indexed by the Journal Citation Report (JCR).

Continuing, Silva et al. (2011) suggest that software be used as a way to increase bibliometric analysis and also to generate networks of scientific collaboration. In this sense, according to the authors' recommendation, to present the results obtained, the VOSviewer 1.6.10 software was used, making it possible to group papers in clusters. This grouping, as suggested by Kronberger and Wagner (2002), assumes that papers that make up a cluster would have foci of similar investigations. To complement the data analysis, content analysis based on the discussion about the association or the analysis of relationships will be used (Bardin, 2016), seeking to identify, in addition to the frequency with which the words appear in the full paper, the relationship between those elements. The results of these analyzes will support an agenda for further studies.

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In order to identify the demographic profile of scientific production regarding leadership, the evolution of the number of publications per year is presented. The year 2017

covered 29% (2,348 studies) of papers found and the year 2018 covered 32% (2,638 papers) of the total. In relation to 2019, it appears that there was an increase, compared to the previous two years, totaling 39% (3,136 papers), which signals an increase in the interest of researchers in the theme. It is noteworthy, according to Lord, Day, Zaccaro, Avolio and Eagly (2017), that there will still be a substantial amount of papers published on leadership in the next hundred years; however, the form, effects and developments of the theme may differ from what is observed in research today, whether in relation to new themes, in the revision of its concept, as well as in its extension beyond business and government systems.

As for the journals with the most publications, we highlight the *Journal of Business Ethics*, with 2.6% of publications; *Frontiers in Psychology*, with 2.3% of publications; followed by *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* (2.1%); *Journal of Nursing Management* (1.4%); *Leadership* (1.3%); *Leadership Quarterly* (1.2%); *International Journal of Educational Management* (1.2%); and *Journal of Leadership Studies* (1.1%). The other journals published less than 1% of the total each. It is worth mentioning that, of these eight journals with more publications, four of them are specific to the theme of leadership, confirming their relevance in the scope of organizational studies.

Following, the annotation of the list of references in a paper reflects the researcher's knowledge construction process and also addresses the conversation established by him with his peers (Grácio, 2016). In this sense, Zupic and Cater (2015) emphasizes the application of two methods to build measures of influence and similarity, making it possible to map thematic, theoretical and/or methodological proximity among the authors, papers, journals, countries or other units of analysis, relating the citations, they are: co-citation and bibliographic coupling. "Co-citation is the most used and validated bibliometric method and bibliographic coupling can be used for new publications which are not cited yet, emerging fields and smaller subfields" (p. 432).

For the analysis of the 8,122 papers resulting from the review, the VOSviewer software was used, in which it is possible to perform a bibliographic mapping identifying groups of associated publications (Eck & Waltman, 2017). Thus, in an effort to identify how the theme is found in the literature, a study of bibliographic coupling was carried out, measuring the relationship between two papers based on the number of common references cited by them (Grácio, 2016).

In Figure 1, it is possible to see some papers with greater intensity of bibliographic coupling, that is, with greater total strength of connection between them, subdivided into 8 clusters. The studies by Bakker and Demerouti (2017), Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, Stewart and Adis (2017) and Deci, Olafsen and Ryan (2017) stand out for presenting greater intensity of bibliographic coupling when evaluated in pairs. It is worth mentioning that the focus discussed in these studies indirectly addresses the theme of leadership because it is related to other issues in the field of human resource management and/or organizational behavior, inserted in the area of leadership.

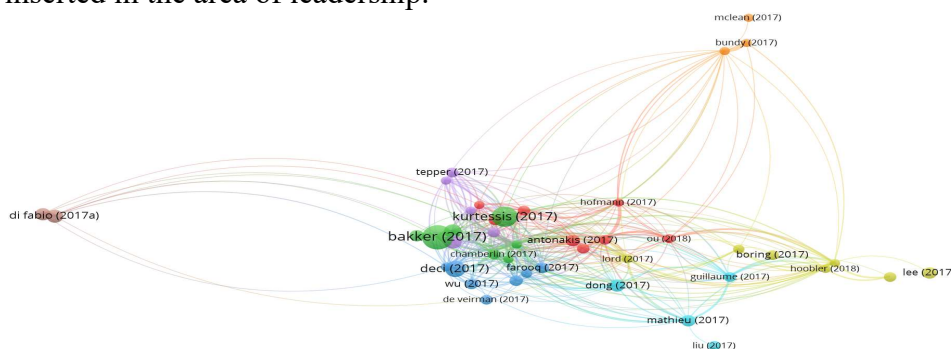


Figure 1. Bibliographic coupling
Source: elaborated by the authors with VOSviewer, 2020.

Thus, beginning the presentation of each of the eight clusters, the cluster represented by the red color addresses themes related to the organizational climate and leadership. Schneider, González-Romá, Ostroff and West (2017) reviewed the literature on climate and organizational culture, presenting an era of studies (from 2000 to 2014) in which the relationship between culture, climate and leadership was addressed. Along the same lines, Hofmann, Burke and Zohar (2017) identified that there has been a significant increase in research on leadership and organizational climate since the last years of the 20th century. Ashkanasy and Dorris (2017), in turn, studied emotion in the workplace, having as some perspectives the leadership and the team, investigated at the group level, and the organizational culture and climate, regarding the organizational level.

Organizational and job performance were thematic addressed in the dark green cluster. Bailey, Madden, Alfes and Flecher (2017), in a systematic review, found evidence that high levels of engagement can improve organizational performance and individual well-being, and that leadership would be one of the five antecedents of job engagement. Furthermore, in a meta-analysis, the influence of transformational leadership on employees' job performance was demonstrated, contributing to an integrative model that shows the relationship of transformational leadership with other mediating variables and performance results (Ng, 2017).

The dark blue cluster collected studies that relate the various types of leadership with behaviors, whether of employees or the organization. Among these associations, we can highlight the one investigated by Newman, Schwarz, Cooper and Sendjaya (2017), when verifying that the followers' proactive personality moderates positively the relationship between servant leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. Wu and Parker (2017), in turn, verified the connection between leadership, support and proactive behavior of employees and, as a result, obtained a positive relationship between the variables.

The yellow cluster grouped papers related to gender, more specifically women invested in leadership positions. Along these lines, Jeong and Harrison (2017) investigated whether the performance of companies was affected when women occupied leadership positions. The authors identified that female representation at higher levels is positively related to forms of long-term financial financing, but negatively related to the short-term stock market. In addition to these, the study by Kossek, Su and Wu (2017), who researched individual and organizational factors that contribute to equality in women's careers, can be presented.

The purple cluster, for its part, gathered papers on abusive supervision in organizations, exploring its causes and consequences. For Tepper, Simon and Park (2017), the term abusive supervision refers to the behavior of organizational leaders, which includes hostility against their direct reports and uncontrolled explosions. In the study by Mawritz, Greenbaum, Butts and Graham (2017), it was demonstrated that the compromise of the supervisor's self-regulation mediates the relationship between subordinate deviation and abusive supervision, providing a stronger basis than the social exchange theory.

The cluster represented light blue color explores the nature of the team's tasks and structures. Mathieu, Hollenbeck, Knippenberg and Ilgen (2017) reviewed the evolution of team research over the past century, addressing aspects of leadership styles. The authors advocate shifting the focus from individuals within teams to a focus on the team itself and on larger team systems. In this perspective, Liu, Nederveen and Hertogh (2017) identified some concepts that influence the development of collaboration between project teams, among them leadership, communication and trust.

The orange cluster consists of studies that investigate crisis management, focusing on its background and results. In the study by Bundy, Pfarrer, Short and Coombs (2017), the factors that influence leadership in crises are highlighted, highlighting what would be the responsibilities in the process of leading an organization in the pre and post-crisis phases,

among which we can highlight quick and efficient decision making, as well as the opportunity to learn from the crisis. In another investigation, there was an attempt to relate crisis management to resilience, noting that some leadership styles are more effective than others, depending on the stage of the crisis, and that the reaction of leaders to the crisis can affect the results, concluding that leadership is critical to actively facilitating resilience (Williams, Gruber, Sutcliffe, Shepherd, & Zhao, 2017).

Finally, the brown cluster is associated with studies that essentially focus on healthy organizations, underlining the link between business profitability and the well-being of employees through the creation of environments conducive to the health and safety of employees. For Di Fabio (2017b), some leadership styles, namely, the servant, the ethical and the sustainable, have contributed to the growth of healthy organizations. Additionally, in another study, Di Fabio (2017a) argues that for the development of the psychology of sustainability, the leadership must direct the group's actions so that it can deal with challenges, mobilize energy, promote sustainable development and thus achieve well-being group members.

After the coupling analysis, the co-citation analysis, shown in Figure 2, identifies the fundamental and most influential papers in the scientific community in the studied subject (Grácio, 2006). Also according to the author, the scientific community points out that the proximity and the interlocution of two documents suggest the establishment of connections in the process of forming new knowledge. Thus, the results showed that some of the studies that had expressive co-citation were: Bass (1990), Avolio and Bass (1991) and Brow, Treviño and Harrison (2005).

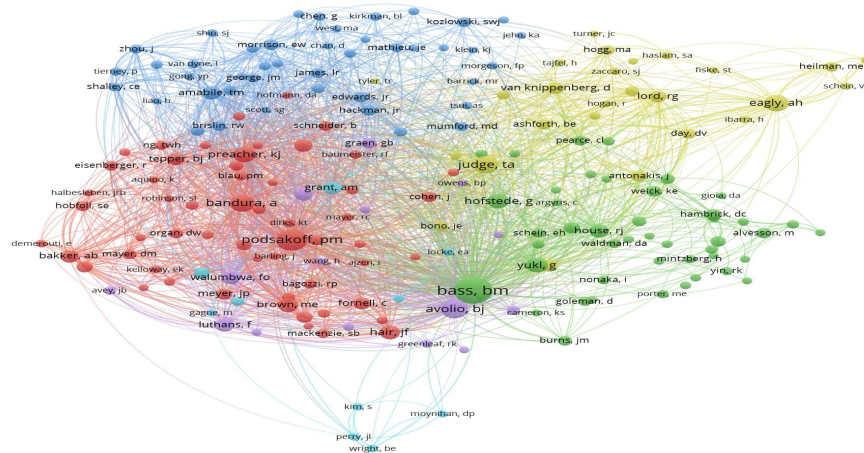


Figure 2. Co-citation
Source: elaborated by the authors with VOSviewer, 2020.

Then, the identification of the interaction between authors from different locations was carried out (Grácio, 2016). According to the results generated by VOSviewer, the United States has a greater number of partnerships with authors from other countries. Continuing, England, China, Australia, Holland, Germany and Canada are presented. Consequently, it is evident that the theme is on the agenda of several countries and continents, confirming its strategic character of extending the study of the phenomenon to various parts of the world, in a constant tone of internationalization.

In addition, the most frequent keywords were analyzed in the 8,122 papers, through the co-occurrence network, shown in Figure 3. In the lexicographic view of the words contained in the examined textual corpus, it appears that the font size of the word reveals whether it was cited many times (large font) or few times (small font), and words with at least 100 occurrences were selected, due to the diversification and large volume of papers.

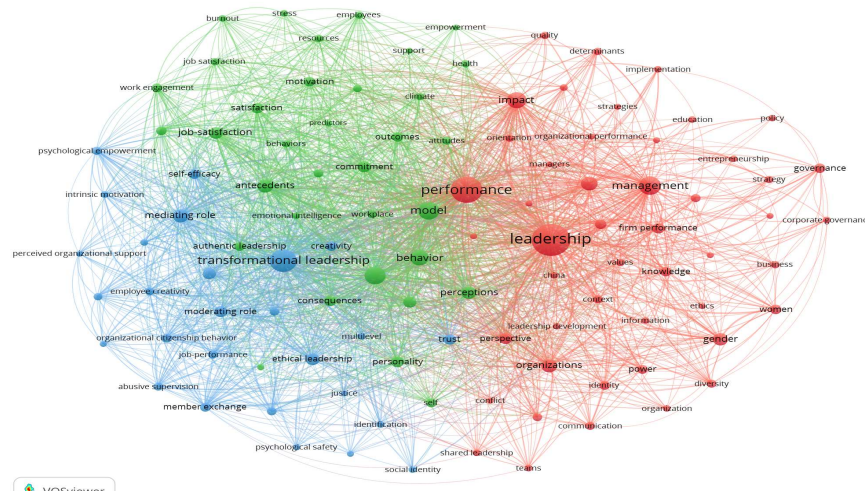


Figure 3. Co-occurrence of keywords
Source: elaborated by the authors with VOSviewer, 2020.

Following this criteria of the keywords found, 9,572 of them were “leadership”, as shown in Figure 3, which was expected because it was the theme of the study.

In the sequence, the word “performance” occupied the second position. The relationship between leadership and performance can be highlighted in several studies. As an example, Lemoine and Blum (2019) found that the effect of servant leadership on job performance is stronger for women leaders than for men. On the other hand, Javed, Rashid, Hussain and Ali (2019) suggested that when socially responsible companies have leaders with strong values, they practice excessive social responsibility, which undermines their financial performance.

In addition to these, “transformational leadership” occupied the third position. In one of the studies, the author approaches that, in order to meet many complex requirements in today's turbulent times, the necessary changes must start from a new approach to people management, in particular, from the role of transformational leadership, emphasizing its importance in modern organizations. (Glód, 2018). Highlighted in the theoretical framework of the present study as one of the new leadership theories, Vecchio (2009) already suggested that leadership should have as a premise the remodeling of the organization's internal strategies, which is corroborated in the recent study by Zhu, Wang, Yu, Müller and Sun (2019).

Notably, Figure 3 draws attention to the term “model”, which had a relevant frequency in the articles. In addition, "antecedents", "consequences", "moderating role" and "mediating role" demonstrate the effort that has been engendered by researchers in demonstrating a preference for different methodological procedures of a quantitative nature.

Some other associations with several constructs were also revealed in Figure 3 confirming the strategic character of the theme and highlighting important results at individual, group and organizational levels. In this sense, the research results point out some constructs related to leadership in the three years investigated in this review: gender (Keck, 2019; Haidar, 2018; Huszczo & Endres, 2017); job satisfaction (Meng & Berger, 2019; Moon & Jung, 2018; Singh & Satpathy, 2017); and social identity (Slater, Coffee, Barker, Haslam, & Steffens, 2019; Pagliaro, Lo Presti, Barattucci, Giannella, & Barreto, 2018; Cassar, Bezzina, & Buttigieg, 2017).

5. RESEARCH AGENDA: NEW CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

In order to develop an integrated agenda for future research based on the agendas proposed by the five most cited papers, we used the Web of Science citation report, in order to build a complementary proposal.

In this sense, the most cited article, following the steps of the systematic review, was that of Kurtessis et al. (2017), who verified, through a meta-analysis, the antecedents and consequences of perceived organizational support. Leadership was studied as an antecedent of perceived organizational support, with the following results: supervisors' support behavior is closely related to support; concern for the leader's well-being has a strong relationship with support; and various types of leadership contribute substantially to support. Future investigations are encouraged to the extent that one must seek to associate the perceived organizational support with the well-being, leadership and employees' job performance.

In another meta-analysis, the second paper, Hoch, Bommer, Dulebohn and Wu (2018) compares three emerging forms of leadership (authentic, ethical, servile), based on ethical and moral behavior, with transformational leadership. In the presentation of the results, it is pointed out that, although conceptually distinct, high correlations were found between transformational leadership and emerging forms, so that there is some empirical redundancy in the research already carried out on the subject. For future studies, the authors highlighted investigations that identify normative measures to more uniformly capture the presence or absence of ethical behavior by leaders.

Additionally, in order to identify the meaning, background and results of engagement in the literature, the research by Bailey et al. (2017) was conducted through a systematic analysis of narrative evidence. The conceptualization of engagement in the literature can be treated in different ways, according to the authors. Regarding the construct's antecedents, five factors stood out: psychological states, work project, leadership, organizational and team factors, and organizational interventions. Moving to the focus of the association of engagement with leadership, several studies have examined this relationship, namely: positive association between transformational leadership and engagement; between leader confidence and engagement; and between leadership and authentic engagement. Other findings collected talked about engagement related to charismatic leadership, ethical leadership and coaching. Few studies have found negative links between negative aspects of leadership with oversight and abusive engagement. Finally, the authors concluded that high levels of engagement are beneficial to employees and that good management and leadership practices tend to raise this level. As suggestions for future research, there was a greater exploration of engagement linked to people management practices and leadership behaviors.

Another widely cited study is that of Di Fabio (2017a), who discusses the contribution of sustainability psychology and sustainable development to the well-being of organizations at all different levels. It deals with sustainability in terms of improving the human being's quality of life beyond the ecological, economic and social environments. The psychology of sustainability and sustainable development requires leadership styles that recognize and respect the importance of relationships in organizational contexts for the well-being of employees. In this way, the author proposes new leadership styles that demonstrate awareness of the importance of relationships and the construction of positive narratives in organizational contexts to mobilize energy, deal with challenges and promote both sustainable development and the well-being of people in organizations. As future directions, it suggests that healthy societies and organizations can be improved by focusing on the well-being of individuals, groups and organizations in a culturally diverse world. For that, Di Fabio (2017a) states that interactions between levels that combine individual and collective approaches are necessary, in addition to short and long-term objectives and results, reducing personal and contextual threats, as well as increasing health and well-being.

Figuring as another article very cited, the same author, Di Fabio (2017b), emphasizes the importance of a primary preventive approach in relation to individuals, groups and organizations, advocating positive psychology or, according to the term used by the author, positive health psychology occupational. For Di Fabio (2017b), a healthy organization leads

to a successful business, pointing out a strong link between organizational profitability and employees' well-being. For this to be undertaken, the author suggests that some current innovative leadership styles can contribute significantly to healthy organizations, namely: ethical leadership, sustainable leadership and servant leadership, as these leadership styles focus on promoting the potential of employees, allowing let them come to fruition and achieve well-being.

In order to unify the aforementioned agendas, some paths for future research can be designed. The invitation to conduct longitudinal studies, according to Lord et al. (2017), is especially important because the effect of leadership occurs over time. In addition, according to Hoch et al. (2018), it is through longitudinal research that there is more contribution to knowledge about the effects of behavioral, attitudinal and relational perception of new forms of leadership.

We also endorse these new forms of leadership that advocate the importance of people's well-being in organizations. Based on positive psychology, which enables a reassessment of human potential and virtues (Paludo & Koller, 2007), a new awareness of organizations is necessary in order to develop new approaches, from a preventive perspective to promote environments of healthy work (Di Fabio, 2017b). When happiness is similar to psychological well-being (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000), leadership takes on a special connotation to influence employee behaviors and attitudes (Moreno et al., 2018). It can be added as a suggestion for future studies the challenges of leadership in organizational results and in the human resources management in times of crisis, such as the current public health calamity.

In addition, another important gap is related to the scarcity of studies on the antecedents of leadership, since the main emphasis on research has been its consequences (Hoch et al., 2018). In addition, the importance of a multidisciplinary approach is accentuated by the inspiration that work in other disciplines has already provided (Lord et al., 2017). Thus, areas such as social and developmental psychology, sociology and economics can also provide insights that inspire research towards more effective leadership (Lord et al., 2017). A multiple approach is also relevant when combining quantitative and qualitative methods and techniques, advocating a better understanding of the phenomenon, in addition to its measurement, in order to promote advances in research on leadership in organizations.

6. CONCLUSION

By presenting the state of the art of scientific production and identifying research itineraries on leadership in organizations, we have achieved the objective of this systematic review of the literature. However, it should be noted that our study is limited to a single database, although it is the one with the highest coverage and brings together high impact journals, so that we are far from exhausting the literature on the subject.

Regarding the theoretical implications, we move forward by gathering the agendas of the five most cited studies in the leadership literature, elaborating an integrated proposal of new challenges and research perspectives on the theme.

As practical contributions, we hope that the collected results will contribute to the achievement of new research that will encourage the development of more contemporary proposals in the study of leadership, and that may inspire organizational actors to implement more proactive and effective management with a focus on results and well-being. Thus, academic discourse can be effectively translated into managerial practice.

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