Ciencias administrativas
REVISTA DIGITAL FCE - UNLP

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Ciencias Administrativas | Año 13 | N° 25 Enero – Junio 2025
https://doi.org/10.24215/23143738e154
ISSN 2314 – 3738 | http://revistas.unlp.edu.ar/CADM

ARTÍCULO CIENTÍFICO

PERCEPTION OF LEADERSHIP STYLES AND PRODUCTIVITY IN HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION

PERCEPCIÓN SOBRE LOS ESTILOS DE LIDERAZGO Y LA PRODUCTIVIDAD EN EDUCACIÓN MEDIA SUPERIOR

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Resumen / Abstract

The objective of this research is to assess the perception of administrative workers of a Technological Higher Secondary Education Institution in Tabasco, Mexico, about leadership styles and productivity, as well as the correlation that exists between both variables. Quantitative method was used; the study had a non-experimental, cross-sectional, descriptive, and correlational design. The data collection instruments were validated through exploratory factor analysis and reliability was calculated through Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. A total of 141 workers assigned to five departments of the administrative area took part in the study. The results showed the participative leadership style as the predominant one and the highest level of productivity was found in the commitment dimension. Pearson's correlation showed the existence of a negative correlation with the authoritarian style and a positive correlation between democratic and participative leadership styles and productivity.

Key Words: leadership; productivity; higher secondary education.

El objetivo de esta investigación es valorar la percepción de los trabajadores administrativos de una Institución de Educación Media Superior Tecnológica en Tabasco, México, sobre los estilos de liderazgo y la productividad, así como la correlación que existe entre ambas variables. Se utilizó la metodología cuantitativa, el estudio tuvo un diseño no experimental transversal, descriptivo y correlacional. Los instrumentos de recolección de datos se validaron a través del análisis factorial exploratorio y la confiabilidad se calculó a través del Coeficiente Alpha de Cronbach. Participaron 141 trabajadores adscritos a cinco departamentos del área administrativa. Los resultados señalaron al estilo de liderazgo participativo como el preponderante y el nivel más alto de productividad se encontró en la dimensión de compromiso. La correlación de Pearson mostró la existencia de una correlación negativa con el estilo autoritario y positiva entre los estilos de liderazgo democrático y participativo con la productividad.

Palabras clave: liderazgo; productividad; educación media superior.

Clasificación JEL: I21, J24, M11	Recibido: 20/05/2023	Aprobado: 16/11/2023	Publicado: 31/12/2024

Introduction

The administration in educational institutions oversees applying an efficient and effective system to achieve an optimum teaching-learning process to meet the demands of society (Martínez Aguirre, 2012). On the contrary, when there is inefficient management, this is reflected in all the processes of educational services and their productivity levels (Altamirano, 2006).

Leadership has been considered as one of the most important characteristics of bosses, managers, directors, or administrators, who guide workers to achieve the productivity of organizations. According to the above, this research was conducted in a Technological High School in the State of Tabasco, Mexico; in it a remarkable variation was observed in the fulfillment of the objectives in terms of punctuality in the delivery of work and in the efficiency and effectiveness of the activities. To achieve the objectives, each department is directed by an area manager, who is continuously rotated to different departments and therefore each one of them implements its own leadership style, which suggests that this could be the cause of the variability in the levels of labor productivity.

Given the above, the objective of this research is to assess the perception of administrative workers at a Technological Higher Secondary Education Institution in Tabasco, Mexico, about leadership styles and productivity, as well as the correlation that exists between both variables. This article presents the concepts of leadership and the theories that support it, mentions the concept of productivity and the factors that influence it, and explains the relationship between leadership and productivity. Subsequently, the method used, the characteristics of the study subjects, the validation and reliability of the research instruments, the statistical results and the conclusions are explained.

Literature review

Leadership

Leadership has been conceptualized as the relationship between individuals who lead and those who are led, it refers to the behavior of directing and coordinating the activities of a group of people towards a common goal (Sfantou et al., 2017). A leader must have vision to design strategies so that organizations are competitive and know how to successfully face the challenges they face (López-Lemus et al., 2020). Leadership scholars affirm that leadership style influences its effectiveness, adding that democratic and autocratic leadership styles have been extensively studied, but this topic has moved towards research and practice (Nguyen et al., 2021).

Leadership has become a skill that recruiters look for in the new personnel of the organizations, it is sought that the workers are capable of influencing, guiding and acquiring the confidence of the workers (Albarrán et al., 2014).

Various authors define leadership as a phenomenon of psychosocial dimensions, it is described through positions that some people show towards others, which are influenced and cause motivation in workers to guide them towards the same goal and shared objectives that generate minimal effort Individually (Ayoub Pérez, 2010; Cequea et al., 2011; Zuzama Covas, 2017).

Productivity

Productivity refers to the competencies and contribution that workers give in the company (Hinojo Lucena et al., 2020; Obando Changuán, 2020). For Guerrero Vega and Vásquez Segura (2017) labor productivity is the result of an individual or joint action of being useful when conducting the elaboration of a product or service where time, space, and resources influence. It is a term used in economic science and related to the production of goods, it is also applied in knowledge-based service organizations, an example of these are educational institutions (Gordillo-Salazar et al., 2020).

Other scholars of productivity link it to resources, products, and time. They conceptualize it as the

relationship between the number of products and resources, using the minimum number of resources to produce in less time, the system is more productive when less time is used (Rodríguez Solis, 2018). In this sense, Chiavenato (2007) supplies a perspective of productivity focused on the human resource, he considers the productivity of human work as the relationship between the time it took to carry it out and the result, he adds that the rational method, interest, and motivation also influence human productivity.

There are several factors that influence the productivity of organizations, the most important is the human resource, attitude, level of training, motivation, and effectiveness of managers (Fontalvo Herrera et al., 2017). Productivity is determined by various factors in which the human factor stands out as the most important in organizations, in this work, effectiveness, commitment and responsibility are analyzed as factors of productivity.

Effectiveness refers to people's ability to perform the work in the established time and without failures, to provide an efficient service and to have an interest in academic improvement.

Commitment refers to job satisfaction, to the application of the institution's values in the job, to the knowledge owned to carry out the work and to the fulfillment of objectives. Responsibility describes the acceptance of tasks in the absence of the boss, the duty in the fulfillment of objectives and inducing collaborative work.

Relationship between leadership and productivity

Several studies agree that leadership styles are positively related to productivity (Cabrejos & Suarez, 2019; Guerrero Vega & Vásquez Segura, 2017; Oliva Flores, 2021; Viloria-Escobar et al., 2016) many organizations have improved their effectiveness thanks to the impact of leadership on productivity considered as one of the most important factors for the success of an organization. The right leadership style tends to improve the productivity and performance of workers within the organization, as well as the trust of followers towards their leaders, this stands for an advantage to meet the objectives and goals of organizations (Berdecía Cruz et al., 2013; González & González Cubillán, 2014; Mateus Camargo, 2019; Rivera Cerpa & Conrado Tobón, 2016).

Therefore, it is crucial for higher education institutions to have individuals who know how to apply the most appropriate leadership style according to the job position as a strategy to obtain better results in productivity, given that these institutions provide citizens with the competent skills and aptitudes to be part of the working world or to continue preparing themselves through higher education. In this sense, Mauricio Delgadillo Iparrazar (2011) states that leadership has become a fundamental component characterized by direction, influence, and dominance, in which management is mentioned as the main actor.

Method

Research design

Research with a quantitative approach due to the use of research instruments where the data presented was collected through a formulated questionnaire, of a non-experimental cross-sectional design because it was applied in a single moment, of a descriptive type and to know the relationship between the leadership and productivity correlation was used, correlational type studies are used to relate two variables or concepts (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza, 2018).

Study subjects.

The study population consisted of 141 workers who work in the morning and afternoon shifts in five departments of the administrative area in a Technological Education Institution in the State of Tabasco (Mexico). Due to the size of the population, a census was taken. Table 1 shows the frequency in gender, seniority, and schooling level.

Of the total number of administrative workers, 57.4% are women and 42.6% are men. In terms of seniority, the highest percentage 51.8% of workers have been with the institution for 1 to 10 years, 13.5%

have been with the institution for 11 to 20 years, 24.8% have been with the institution for 21 to 30 years, and the lowest percentage is 9.9% have been with the institution for more than 31 years. In terms of level of education, the highest frequency was for workers with a high school education (48.9%), followed by 37.6% with a bachelor's degree and only 13.5% with a master's degree.

Instruments

The measurement instruments designed by the authors Guerrero Vega and Vásquez Segura (2017) were used as a guide. The "leadership styles questionnaire" was used to define leadership styles and the "labor productivity levels questionnaire" was used to analyze productivity. In both instruments, each item was carefully reviewed to identify clarity, objectivity, coherence and adequate semantics; in addition, each item was adapted to the context of the institution.

The total population was composed of 141 administrative workers; a census was conducted for data collection; the instrument was applied through the Google Forms format since at the time of the research, a worldwide pandemic caused by Covid 19 was taking place.

For the validation of the leadership styles instrument, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed with the maximum likelihood method and Varimax rotation. To know if the data were favorable for this analysis, the Kaiser Meyer Olkin sample adequacy measure (KMO) was calculated which was .832; Bartlett's test of sphericity obtained values of (X2= 1023.434, gl= 120, p≤ .000) with these data the analysis confirmed the factorial structure explaining 59.32% of the variance, indicating that the correlation matrix is suitable for factorization (Moral Mora, 2011).

The AFE validated the leadership construct with three factors: authoritarian, democratic, and participative style. The model determined three factors or dimensions with factor loadings above .5 (Table 2), which shows an acceptable structure (Moral Mora, 2011). After this process, a total of 16 items remained.

On the other hand, to validate the productivity instrument, an AFE was performed with the maximum likelihood method and Varimax rotation. The Kaiser Meyer Olkin sample adequacy measure (KMO) was .892; Bartlett's test of sphericity obtained values of (X2= 1019.862, gl= 78, p≤ .000) with these data the analysis confirmed the factorial structure explaining 67.26% of the variance. The productivity questionnaire was left

Table 1
Frequency in gender, length of service and level of schooling of the study subjects.

		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
GENDER	Male	60	42.6
	Female	81	57.4
WORK SENIORITY	1-10 years	73	51.8
	11-20 years	19	13.5
	21-30 years	35	24.8
	Over 31	14	9.9
MAXIMUM DEGREE OF STUDIES	High School	69	48.9
	Bachelor's Degree	53	37.6
	Master's Degree	19	13.5

Table 2
Exploratory factor analysis of the leadership instrument.

ITEMS	AUTHORITARIAN STYLE	DEMOCRATIC STYLE	PARTICIPATIVE STYLE
1. Descending orders prevail in communication, rather than guidance.	.767		
2.You consider that interaction with your superior is limited.	.800		
3.Decisions are only made by the head of the institution	.723		
4.Your superior communicates with you only to give you orders.	.753		
5.Your superior considers that interpersonal relationships are detrimental to good work performance.	.677		
6.You feel that your superior emphasizes rewards.		.811	
7.Your superior uses material and symbolic rewards as a source of motivation.		.788	
8.Your superior rewards and encourages administrative staff.		.725	
9.Your superior forms spontaneous groups to establish effective interpersonal relationships.		.502	
10.Communication between boss and subordinate and vice versa is assertive.		64	
11.Your superior encourages teamwork for the development of your activities.		36	
12.The level of trust between bosses and employees favors productivity.		100	
13.Your superior gives confidence to your employees.			.698
14.Internal communication systems ease the achievement of objectives.			.710
15.Your superior delegates responsibilities for the better fulfillment of his or her functions.			.654
16.Decisions are consulted at lower hierarchical levels.			.610

with 13 items and three factors: effectiveness, commitment, and responsibility. All items resulted in factor loadings above .4 (Table 3) showing an acceptable structure (Moral Mora, 2011).

Both instruments had a Likert-type scale with 5 response options: 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4= agree and 5= strongly agree.

The reliability of the two instruments was performed through Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (Moral Mora, 2011). Table 4 shows the results obtained: leadership styles with .710 and productivity with a reliability of .908, which stands for acceptable reliability (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza, 2018).

Empirical Results Obtained

To fulfill the objective of defining the type of leadership that predominates in the institution, descriptive statistics were used for each dimension.

Table 3
Exploratory factor analysis of the productivity instrument.

ITEMS	EFFECTIVENESS	COMMITMENT	RESPONSIBILITY
1. You have the ability to perform your work without errors and in the required time.	.873		
2. You are able to deliver work and activities on time.	.829		
3. Provides courteous and efficient service to other employees of the institution.	.820		
4. You are concerned about improving academically, with training.	.588		
5.You are listened to and your needs as a worker are adequately understood.		.809	
6.You are satisfied with the work you do.		.702	
7.You apply the institutional values in your job.		.651	
8.You have the proper knowledge to perform your job.		.611	
9.You use your work tools or instruments effectively.		.526	
10.The objectives set by the unit are met.		.476	
11.In the absence of your superior, you assume responsibility for the activities to be performed.			.891
12.Assumes responsibility for the achievement of objectives set up by his/her area.			.831
13.Usually manages his/her area with the criterion of "let's do it together".			.563

Table 4
Reliability of instruments

VARIABLES AND DIMENSIONS	CRONBACH´S ALPHA
Leadership Styles	**.710**
Authoritarian style	.822
Democratic style	.764
Participative style	.874
Productivity	**.908**
Effectiveness	.870
Commitment	.823
Responsibility	.803

Table 5
Descriptive statistics of leadership dimensions

STATISTICS	AUTHORITARIAN STYLE	DEMOCRATIC STYLE	PARTICIPATIVE STYLE
N	141	141	141
Maximum	5	5	5
Minimum	1	1	1
Mean	2.75	2.72	3.70
Median	2.80	2.75	3.85
Mode	3.20	2.50	4.00
D.E	1.22	1.13	1.03

Table 6
Productivity levels

DIMENSIONS	PRODUCTIVITY	PERCENTILE	RANGE	%
EFFECTIVENESS	Low	25,00	Values ≤ 16	44
	Medium	50,00	17 - 18	17
	High	75,00	19	16
	Very High	100,00	Values ≥ 20	23
COMMITMENT	Low	25,00	Values ≤ 23	26
	Medium	50,00	24	24
	High	75,00	25 - 28	29
	Very High	100,00	Values ≥ 29	21
RESPONSIBILITY	Low	25,00	Values ≤ 11	13
	Medium	50	12	45
	High	75	13 - 14	22
	Very High	100	Values ≥ 15	20

Table 7
Correlations between productivity and leadership styles

	PRODUCTIVITY	AUTHORITARIAN	DEMOCRATIC	PARTICIPATIVE
PRODUCTIVITY	1	**-.436****	.354**	.443**
AUTHORITARIAN	-	**1**	-.217**	-.361**
DEMOCRATIC	-	**-**	1	.577**
PARTICIPATIVE	-	**-**	**-**	**1**

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (bilateral).

Descriptive statistics

According to the scale used, which ranges from 1=disagree to 5=strongly agree, it is possible to see in Table 5 the results of the measures of central tendency. For the authoritarian style dimension, the most repeated category was 3.2 (mode). Fifty percent of the workers are above the value 2.8 and the remaining 50% are below this value (median). On average, they are located at 2.75 (mean).

In the democratic style dimension, the most repeated category was 2.5 (mode). Fifty percent of the workers are above the value 2.75 and the remaining 50% are below this value (median). On average, they are located at 2.72 (mean).

In the participatory style dimension, the most repeated category was 4 (mode). Fifty percent of the workers are above the value 3.85 and the remaining 50% are below this value (median). On average, they are at 3.70 (mean). These findings clearly indicate the participatory style as the predominant one in the institution.

On the other hand, to identify the level of productivity perceived by participants, quartiles were calculated by dimension (effectiveness, commitment, and responsibility). Each dimension has different scales as seen in the data collection instrument; the scores were obtained by frequency distribution.

For the effectiveness dimension, a minimum value of 4 and a maximum of 20, a kurtosis of 7.87, a skewness of -1.98, a mean of 17.29 and a standard deviation of 2.55 on a scale of 4 to 20 were reported.

The commitment dimension had a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 30, a kurtosis of 1.13, a skewness of -0.70, a mean of 25.04 and a standard deviation of 3.53 on a scale of 6 to 30.

The responsibility dimension showed a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 15, a kurtosis of 5.06, a skewness of -1.45, a mean of 12.56 and a standard deviation of 1.93 on a scale of 3 to 15. The results of the productivity levels are presented in Table 6.

To identify the relationship between leadership styles and productivity, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used. Table 7 shows that productivity has a negative relationship with the authoritarian style and a positive relationship with the democratic and participative styles. This finding indicates that when authoritarian leadership is applied, productivity tends to be lower and when democratic and participative styles are applied, productivity tends to be higher.

Conclusions

The study describes the perception that administrative workers have about the predominant leadership style in the institution, the level of productivity and the correlation between leadership styles and productivity. In

this section, the results obtained in the research are synthesized and interpreted.

To meet the objective of assessing the perception of the administrative workers of a Technological Higher Secondary Education Institution on leadership styles, descriptive statistics were used for each of the leadership styles, authoritarian, democratic and participative. The measures of central tendency showed that the prevailing leadership style is participative. This finding shows that there is trust between bosses and employees, consensus is sought for decision making, teamwork is encouraged, communication is assertive to ease the achievement of objectives, decisions are delegated to the different levels of the company and relationships between people are harmonious. For the authoritarian style and the democratic style, the results were very similar where the answers ranged between 2= disagree and 3= neither agree nor disagree, with a tendency towards the latter, which shows that these two styles are not defined in the institution.

On the other hand, to identify the perception of the productivity level of the participants, the quartiles were calculated for each of the dimensions: effectiveness, commitment and responsibility. Frequency distribution was used to obtain the scores and define the levels per dimension to identify in which of them there was greater productivity.

The results of the effectiveness dimension show the highest percentage (44%) in the low level of productivity, the high level obtained 16% and 23% was for very high. For the commitment dimension, the results show the highest percentage (29%) at the high level of productivity, the low level had 26% and the percentage for very high was 21%. For the responsibility dimension, the highest percentage (45%) was for the medium level, the high level estimated 22%, the very high level obtained 20% and 13% for the low level.

With these data it is possible to recognize that the highest level of perceived productivity was in the dimension of commitment, since the sum of the percentages of the high and very high levels is equal to 50%, therefore, it is assumed that in the institution this percentage of workers are satisfied, the values are applied in the jobs, they have sufficient knowledge to perform the job and they comply with the objectives set. However, it is advisable to keep in mind that more than a quarter of the study subjects are at a low level of commitment. It is noteworthy that almost half of the workers consider themselves to have low effectiveness and less than a quarter perceive themselves to have a very high level of effectiveness. On the other hand, in the dimension of responsibility, less than half perceive themselves to be at high levels, so it is important to take this result into account as an opportunity for improvement in this factor. These data clearly show the need to design and implement effective strategies to improve productivity in the institution.

To check if there is a positive relationship perceived by administrators between leadership styles and productivity in the administrative workers of a Technological High School located in Tabasco, Mexico; the Pearson correlation coefficient was applied, which indicated the existence of a negative relationship between the authoritarian style and productivity, and also indicated a positive relationship with the democratic and participative styles. Therefore, the hypothesis cannot be accepted for the relationship between the authoritarian style and productivity; but it is accepted for the democratic and participative styles.

Limitations

Although the present research supplies valuable information on the relationship between productivity and leadership, the findings show certain limitations. First, being a descriptive correlational study, it does not allow finding the causes of the relationship between leadership and productivity; the study could be complemented with qualitative research to clarify the causes of the low results found in the effectiveness and responsibility dimensions of the productivity variable. Secondly, the study population is composed of administrative workers from a technological high school, therefore, the results cannot be generalized to other educational institutions. Thirdly, there may be other variables that influence productivity; in this sense, it is suggested to carry out research that analyzes variables such as organizational climate and job satisfaction.

Acknowledgments

To the administrative workers of the Higher Secondary Education for answering the questionnaire during the Covid 19 pandemic

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