

# THE MEDIATION ROLE OF INNOVATION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP STYLES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE; A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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## Abstract

Although the determinants of organizational performance have received much attention, which is due to the essential role of performance maximization to the organization, there are still undiscovered determinants that predict organizational performance improvement. This paper proposes a conceptual framework that nominates the strategic leadership style dimensions as making strategic decisions, engaging with external stakeholders, performing human resource management activities, motivating and influencing, managing information, overseeing operation and administration, managing social and ethical issues, managing conflicting demands, which affect the organizational performance through the innovation mediation.

Keywords: strategic leadership style, innovation, organizational performance

## 1. Introduction

The organizational performance origins go back to studies carried out by various authors, such as Richard et al. (2009), who addressed that since one person employed another, their work was evaluated based on the relationship cost-benefit. This is known today as human performance itself, which has its effects on the organization since it is the sum of all the efforts of its collaborators. It began to be measured in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, mainly by military and government organizations due to their large size, hierarchical structure, and geographic dispersion. In the 1950s, according to Georgopoulos and Tannenbaum (1957), performance was "the extent to which an organization, as a social system, fulfilled its objectives." From this background, various authors began to have an interest in the subject and developed definitions for analyzing it and study the relationship it had with productivity and how to improve systems to increase it.

## 2. The Modern Strategic Leadership Model

For decades the human being has been interested in the definition and composition of leadership, therefore individuals achieve high levels of productivity and efficiency, it is from 1950 on where the profile of leaders, their influence on the media and their skills, even as a person with distinctive personality traits, make you stand out as a leader. On the other hand, historically, the human being feels inclined to wield his good leadership roles to cultivate his capacities to

motivate and influence. Strategic leaders must make important decisions to achieve success within organizations, where directors or senior levels always closely observe the external and internal environment, in the constant search to discover market opportunities, measure capabilities, achieve recognition of threats, develop a vision of the future, anticipate changes that companies may experience.

Bergh et al. (2016) define strategic leadership as the ability to understand the different complexities experienced by the organization and its environment. So, it is a new concept that relates to senior management. To be effective in this role, the leader must know about the organization its history, strengths, culture, as well as its weaknesses, as well as how the company is aligned with the environment, trends to improve current and future alignment. Kowo and Akinbola (2019) define it as the aspect of leadership that is associated with orientation, clear vision, culture, service, in addition, ensuring that everyone within the organization goes in the same direction, aligning the set of values with vision, as well as easy-to-execute initiatives. Consequently, the values and vision are enduring, and the strategic imperatives are short-term with durations ranging from one to two months or one to two years.

Marange et al. (2018) define strategic leadership as the ability to move on several fronts at the same time, which are not complementary when faced with contradictory demands and pressures. Consequently, in the changing context, this concept is not limited only to achieving that things are executed by people, in situations of uncertainty, changes, the ability or charisma to communicate is not enough, so that, in a totally competitive, leaders must have the ability to mobilize human talent to share projects, this is achieved with a vision of the future, review of processes and an open attitude.

The Modern Strategic Model proposed by Davies and Davies (2006). This model is proposed as the transformation of processes in the formulation of strategies in relation to the evolution of the organization. They point out that there are forced changes in the forms of modern production and in the organizational systems, bordered by emerging paradigms that come from the globalization processes; In particular, it evolved through the integrated production and marketing system, it went from production processes in rigid manufacturing to flexible automation. The components of the traditional or classic strategic model of organizations are represented in an equilateral triangle made up of the organizational structure, human behavior, and processes with technologies (Gumus et al., 2016).

In the classic strategic model, the mechanistic context of management remained in an organization as a closed system, with static schemes for executing decision-making and leadership processes. The processes of strategic transformation of organizations are in a paradigm transition; they need a new leadership role to the traditional one and therefore, a person who guides in a different way, with a new style. Hence, the following relationship distinguishes the transition from the leadership practices of the classical model and the leadership practices of the modern strategic model, as shown in table 1 (Kanyangale, 2017):

**Table 1: Comparison of Classic Strategic Model and Modern Strategic Model**

No	Classic Strategic Model	Modern Strategic Model
1	Current practices.	Visionary practices
2	Product oriented.	Process and prospect oriented (client).
3	Stoic and confident.	Confident but without arrogance
4	Seeks to acquire knowledge.	Seeks to acquire and capitalize on knowledge

5	Guide people's creativity.	Seeks to release and nurture people's creativity
6	Determined workflows	Workflows influenced by relationships by hierarchies
7	Articulates the importance of the determines	the importance of integrity by the integrity actions
8	Demand respect	Willingness to earn respect
9	Tolerates diversity	Look for diversity
10	Reacts to change in the environment	Acts to anticipate environmental change environment
11	Serve as the great leader	Serve as a leader and a great member of the group
12	See employees as resources	It sees the citizens (collaborators) of the organization as a critical resource
13	Operates through a mental state	Operates through a global mental state domestic
14	Invest in capital formation	Invest in the continuity of employee human development

A leader must be creative or innovative, but he must also ensure that his team of people is also creative. In this sense, the leader has to have a vision, transmit it and motivate his collaborators to act in line with the strategic objectives of the organization. Leadership, in recent years, has become a focus of detailed studies; Social scientists have tried to evaluate, analyze and define the nature and origin of leadership in different fields: religious, military, political, psychological, institutional, business and university, among others. However, many aspects of research on this topic are still unknown (Shin and Park, 2021). In an attempt to give objective, rational and rigorous explanations about leadership, various theories, models and approaches have been developed to address the study of this variable in organizations dedicated to the production of goods or services. In an effort to study the variable in question, an attempt was made to identify the characteristics that differentiate successful leaders (Sarabi et al., 2020).

The proposal of charismatic leadership and transactional leadership also arises, as well as transformative leadership to finally reach the strategic leadership style whose approach has motivated and increased current interest with direct relationships with visionary leadership and leadership of excellence, with whom they share similar characteristics in the strategic development of institutions in a globalized and competitive world, even more, so where we permanently see a level of competitiveness (Houck, 2019). Current trends and an extremely competitive environment make oil and gas companies have the need to use optimal management strategies, particularly in the area of generating organizational innovation (Bhardwaj et al., 2021).

In this sense, leaders lead organizations to think of teams as a standard work strategy, since achieving and maintaining success in modern organizations requires skills that are practically impossible to achieve with employees who act individually, so putting into practice teamwork cannot be postponed, substantive and in turn central to the performing work within the operation process or in the directorates or heads of the organization (Adiguzel et al., 2020).

Likewise, other theoretical models have been developed, such as the attributions referring to the interpretation that the leader uses to cause the performance of her employees; In addition, visionary leadership is oriented to see beyond the present, proposing new goals and creating new ideas to achieve goals. The proposal of charismatic leadership and transactional leadership also arises, as well as transformative leadership to finally reach the strategic leadership style whose approach has motivated and increased current interest with direct relationships with visionary leadership and leadership of excellence, with whom they share similar characteristics in the strategic development of institutions in a globalized and competitive world, even more so where it constantly sees a level of competitiveness (Bakardjieva et al., 2018).

According to this model, leaders should focus on modernizing the organization via several assistance concepts. These concepts integrated together toward achieving the organization goals, which stated by Samimi et al. (2020) as making strategic decisions, engaging with external stakeholders, performing human resource management activities, motivation and influencing, managing information, overseeing operation and administration, managing social and ethical issues, and managing conflicting demands. Hence, the lower notable performance evidenced in the Libyan oil and gas industry is attributed to the deficits of leaders in meeting these dimensions. This study employs this theory as it explains what strategic leaders have to implement and perform to maximize the final outputs of the organization.

### 3. Literature review

According to Para-González et al. (2018) there are three dimensions of organizational performance. The first of these is sales-based performance, which includes items such as sales income, profits, and return on investment. The second dimension is organization-based performance, the main elements of which are product leadership, quality of service, and customer satisfaction. The third dimension is called supply chain performance, which includes elements such as resource performance and cost reduction. On the other hand, Almatrooshi et al. (2016) propose that in organizations, performance is determined by leadership skills whose structure is made up of cognitive intelligence skills, emotional intelligence skills, and social intelligence skills.

According to Hilton et al. (2021), organizational performance can be defined from different factors, including: a) efficiency, related to the inflows and outflows of resources; b) effectiveness, related to business growth and employee satisfaction; and finally, c) financial results, related to the return of assets, investment and profit growth. Another approach to organizational performance is found in Koohang et al. (2017), who define it as the “growth in sales, profitability, new products, the sales segment of new products, the market segment, the return of capital and the rate of return. Despite the various research on the term organizational performance, there are some areas of opportunity to continue the exploration of this concept. According to George et al. (2019), these areas of opportunity are: a) performance evaluation in supply chains; b) the integration of the different domains; c) data interoperability. According to the authors, the performance of an organization is understood as a process through which results or objectives are achieved through a series of components and indicators that are set according to what is to be achieved.

Shao (2019) mentions that the superior performance of an organization is not a matter of luck, it is largely determined by the leader's choices. Senior leaders have a responsibility to understand the environment of the organization, to consider what it will be like in five to ten years, and to set a course for the future in which everyone can grow. Strategic leadership is one capable of creating, based on the strategic objectives of the organization, a vision and mission appropriate to its context and its external power constellation, and the appropriate values and culture for its climate and internal power constellation.

Several previous studies, such as Jaleha and Machuki (2018), Houck (2019), Najmi et al. (2018), and Priadana et al. (2021), confirmed the significant role of strategic leadership toward organizational performance. The impact of strategic leadership on organizational performance through the leaders' vision translates the organization's optimal objectives. The importance of properly conceptualizing leadership lies in correctly establishing what it means by it and avoiding the ambiguity of its use since the term Leadership has varied throughout history. Popper (2002) points out: "It is important to differentiate between what a leader is and what a ruler is, because the confusion of both terms is common since ancient times. The line that divides both terms can be very thin and difficult to establish as the case of obeying the ruler out of fear of punishment, for imitating the behavior of the other inhabitants, or thinking that the leader exercises irrational coercion to make his followers obey. For this, it is important to define what it understands by leadership".

#### **4. Conceptual framework establishment**

The functions, approaches or responsibilities of the leaders have changed, given the competitiveness and involvement of work teams, the notorious participation or improvement of companies in quality processes, the specialization of collaborators, the reduction of the workforce (Northouse, 2018). It is also the result that the old leadership model no longer works well, where the center of the group or work teams was in the leader, who assumed control of most of the communications of its members, according to traditional and modern leadership management approaches (Odili, 2019). In the context of the new role of leadership, the scenario is in a paradigm transition of strategic transformation processes in organizations. As such, the transition from a traditional strategic model to a modern one is proposed, where a different leader from the past is generated, which leaves traditional practices to adopt a new style of leadership, strategic leadership that manages to maintain strategic competitiveness (Onyango, 2017).

Shimengah (2018) demonstrates the relationship between strategic leadership and the level of innovation in an organization. The author used data from six countries where he found that strategic leadership behavior has a positive relationship with executive influence on product quality and innovation in a specific organization. Samuel et al. (2017) obtained results that confirmed the significant and positive effect of a change in strategic leadership on the survival probability of organizations. Another of the results obtained from this study was that the banks with the highest survival rate are those that have decided to focus on activities where they find a solid competitive position, that is constantly interested in innovation and in the offer of new financial products for the customers. Liao et al. (2019) describe strategic leadership includes aspects such as interpersonal dynamism between the individuals involved in a team process. Leaders must create strategies and build systems, but they must do so across many organizational barriers and in coordination with other leaders or actors who may be doing the same thing at the

same time (Archer and Cameron, 2012). This challenge of leading and delivering results across organizational barriers is one of the fundamental tasks of collaborative strategic leadership.

The interrelationship among strategic leadership, organizational innovation, and organizational performance have received less attention within the literature. This attributed to the much attention toward other several leadership styles such as transformational, transactional, authentic, democratic, autocratic, servant, and so on. The strategic leadership concept is considered as an extension of leadership style development. In this regard, several previous studies such as Bergh et al. (2016), Kowo and Akinbola (2019), Marange et al. (2018), and Ilyas et al. (2017) revealed a significant impact of the strategic leadership style on organizational performance. Also, several previous studies such as Cortes and Herrmann (2021), Samuel et al. (2017), Fontana and Musa (2017), and Zuraik and Kelly (2019) found that strategic leadership impacts organizational innovation significantly.

According to Kim (2020) it should be noted that without an effective leadership strategy, the institution would be able to influence the external environment for its benefit, which is why the strategic leader has the responsibility of becoming an information and influence expert. Therefore, it is important to mention the essentials of knowing what is happening inside and outside the organization, in its internal and external environment; with a view to knowing the opportunities and influencing such events for the achievement of the organization's objectives; that is, the strategic leader must have a network of influential advisers or collaborators in both environments, that is, be in direct contact with all those people or leaders of any ideology who have the ability to directly and indirectly influence the government or opinion public.

Priadana et al. (2021) addressed that every competitive company requires strategic, proactive leaders capable of facing challenges or changes, guaranteeing permanence in the markets, especially in companies with few material and technical resources or that have significantly neglected human resources. As the coaches of sports teams, they work directly to create a positive mind of triumph with encouraging expectations for the future. Thus, the positive perception of the world and the relationship of the leader over his followers necessarily influences the achievements.

According to Kowo and Akinbola (2019) the direct effect of strategic leadership on organizational performance relies on the characteristics of strategic leadership, which are the roles of the strategic leader, they allow the director's actions to be specified in terms of the performance expected of him as the main driver of the institutional strategy. According to this approach, the roles of the strategic leader show his actions within the lines that guide the organizational work, in accordance with the purpose of creating favorable conditions for the achievement of the established goals. Taking into account the previous approach, the roles of the strategic leader allow characterizing his actions in attention to the performance expected of him as a professional and agent of the shareholders.

Jia et al. (2018) refers that the capacity for supervision and the need for self-realization are very important for innovation in organizational management. However, from a general point of view, it can be said that until now, a profile of the successful leader has not been formulated or structured, that is, centered on a list of the significant characteristics referring to how leaders are. This result motivated subsequent research to direct its attention to behavioral theory, where leadership is defined and explained based on what leaders do. From this perspective, the leadership scale was proposed, in which various styles of leadership are examined, from leadership centered on the boss to that centered on subordinates; Likewise, the studies carried out

by the Ohio State and Michigan universities showed that leadership is actually two-dimensional since leaders can demonstrate a high or low degree of concern for work and people.

Within this context, the interest in explaining leadership according to the situation arose and, as such, it was oriented towards situational theory where it is necessary to identify both the specific critical variables in the situations that are being analyzed, and the relationship between said variables leadership traits and behaviors. If we analyze the proposals of the aforementioned theorists, with respect to leadership, they agree that leadership is oriented to achieve efficiency and effectiveness considering both personal variables and the tasks of the positions or directions that occur in the organization and the characteristics of the situation or context where it works. As new needs and demands arise to improve the behavior of organizations, new approaches are developed, such as strategic leadership focused on decision effectiveness related to the quality of the decision, employee commitment, time, employee development, and generating innovation.

When contrasting the postulates of the different authors, convergence is perceived in stating that strategic leadership is a determining factor in the development of the organization, impacting in turn on strategic direction, adding dynamics and skills to processes, seeking innovation that involves transformation to the new. In general terms, strategic leadership is defined as the ability to anticipate, empower people to generate transformation or expected strategic change within the business, through motivation and good direction, impacting on the strength of oil and gas industry, thereby generating dynamics in the processes that give way to innovation and transparency towards the new.

For the purpose of investigating the impact of strategic leadership style on the oil and gas industry performance through innovation. This study adopts the dimensions of strategic leadership styles from the study of Samimi et al. (2020), as shown in figure 2, which are selected to be tested toward improving the oil and gas industry performance, taking into consideration the mediation effect of innovation factor. The following figure 2 shows the proposed conceptual framework for the current research:

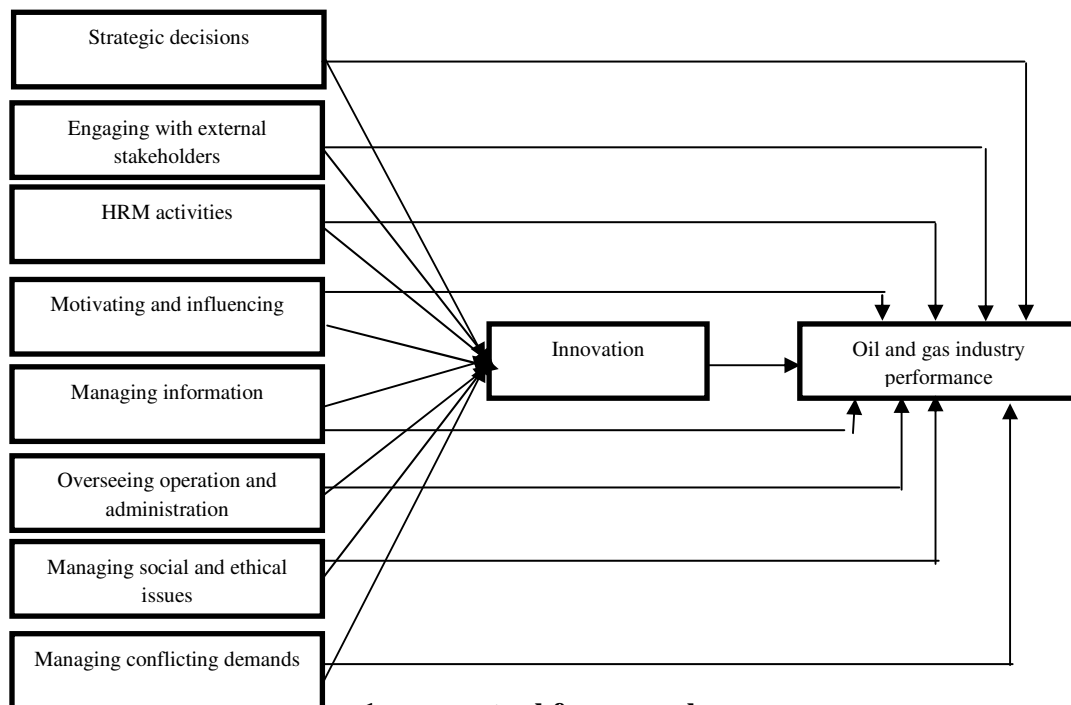


Figure 1: conceptual framework

## 5. Conclusion

The concept of a leader can be influenced by various factors, the cultural context, social distance, or familiarity with the people it identifies as leaders and the stereotypes it has. In the history of the study of leadership, it observes how the authors have defined leadership according to their needs and the cultural context of the place and time. The strategic leadership concerns about the leader that understand the different complexities experienced by the organization and its environment. The modern business environment exposes innovation as an integration factor that must be concerned. The strategic leadership integration with the innovation will ensure a better organizational performance as it provides innovative decisions to be taken toward the organization's operation. The proposed conceptual framework by this study assumes the innovation factor as a channel of strategic leadership to maximize the final outputs of the organization.

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