Center for the Study of Western Hemispheric Trade
Texas A&M International University

WORKING PAPER SERIES
WP 2022-002
June 2022

Transcendental Leadership: The Path for True Leaders

Raúl López-Palomino
Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León

Joel Mendoza-Gómez
Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León

Adriana Segovia-Romo
Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León

Transcendental Leadership: The Path for True Leaders

Raúl López-Palomino[1]
Facultad de Contaduría Pública y Administración, Centro de Desarrollo Empresarial y Posgrado de FACPYA, Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, San Nicolás de los Garza, Nuevo León, México

Joel Mendoza-Gómez
Facultad de Contaduría Pública y Administración, Centro de Desarrollo Empresarial y Posgrado de FACPYA, Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, San Nicolás de los Garza, Nuevo León, México

Adriana Segovia-Romo
Facultad de Contaduría Pública y Administración, Centro de Desarrollo Empresarial y Posgrado de FACPYA, Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, San Nicolás de los Garza, Nuevo León, México

This paper presents the development of transcendental leadership theory and a pilot group test. The focus of this research is to study the constructs of leadership identity, followership, leader/follower relationship, leadership educational process, and organizational context in relation to transcendental leadership. We validated the dimensions of the constructs of the research cause-effect model with qualified experts in the field of leadership, using their feedback to adjust the measurement instruments and survey perspective. Additionally, content validity was made through content analysis of an extant literature review and content expert item analysis. We established preliminary construct validity and reliability based on the confirmatory factor analysis of pre-test data from the pilot group using a questionnaire for transcendental leadership in the workplace. The final transcendental leadership scale (based on a 7-point Likert scale) showed robust preliminary explicit theoretical grounding, suggesting that the initial conceptualization of the cause-effect model was positively related, and its measurement was comprehensive. The preliminary results of the pilot group revealed that creating a positive work environment is essential to developing future leaders at all levels. The study will be implemented in a sample of Mexican industries in the private sector located in the state of Nuevo Leon, Mexico. Contributions of the present research on transcendental leadership are discussed in the concluding section.

Keywords: *Transcendental leadership, leader identity, followership, effective leadership*

I. Introduction

New ways and approaches in leadership are emerging to face the challenges of our actual human communities and organizations. As cited by Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009, 422): "Leadership is no longer simply described as an individual characteristic or difference, but rather is depicted in various models as dyadic, shared, relational, strategic, global and a complex social dynamic."

[1] Address correspondence to Raúl López-Palomino, Facultad de Contaduría Pública y Administración, Centro de Desarrollo Empresarial y Posgrado de FACPYA, Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, Av. Universidad S/N Cd. Universidad, 66455, San Nicolás de los Garza, Nuevo León, México. Email: raul.lopez.longyoung@gmail.com

We argue that, in the past, most researchers paid little attention to the essence of leadership which is embedded in our human nature of living and developing with dignity, prosperity, and quality of life. Transcendental leadership fulfils this perception.

Transcendental leadership previously incorporated features of other leadership approaches, such as transactional and transformational leadership. In short, the notion of transcendental leadership has been defined by Cardona (2000) as a contribution-based exchange relationship. In this relationship, the leader promotes unity by providing fair extrinsic rewards, appealing to intrinsic motivations of the followers, and developing their transcendent motivation. Later, Sanders, Hopkins, and Geroy (2003) proposed that the transcendental theory of leadership comprises three dimensions of spirituality (consciousness, moral character, and faith) that incorporate the managerial facets of transactional theory and the charismatic aspects of transformational theory to enhance leadership effectiveness.

However, research has failed to clearly state the relationship among these theories with transcendental leadership. Liu´s (2008) research on transcendental leadership and organizational citizenship behavior recalled that existing leadership and motivation theories based on the assumptions of a stable environment, certainty, and cognitive rationality are unable to solve the existential vacuum. So, Liu found that it is necessary to recognize the significance of spirituality in the workplace as a new approach to motivate employees effectively and help organizations to compete and cooperate successfully in the global economy.

Additionally, Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) stated that leaders showing spirituality at work can inspire and motivate employees to develop purpose and meaningful behaviors to transcend their personal interest and increase leadership effectiveness. Moreover, Mitroff and Denton (1999) mention that spirituality is the ultimate competitive advantage of organizations; and Hammer (2010) defined spirituality as an emergent process of progressive psychological integration to higher levels of transcendency and consciousness, considering the person's frame of reference. Sanders, Hopkins, and Geroy (2003) proposed that leaders must integrate spirituality into all aspects of their life, so that they can place spirituality where it belongs: consciousness in the mind, moral character in the heart, and faith in the soul. Therefore, these lines of research suggest that effective leadership should be founded in the spiritual dimension of leadership.

Last, Probert and Turnbull James (2011) proposed that renewing the organization's leadership concept, which comprises all the assumptions an organization has embedded in its culture about leadership, is the most important role of leadership development initiatives. Hannah, Sumanth, Lester, and Cavarretta (2014) stated that certain unique skills, knowledge, orientations, identities, attributes, and other individual factors promote or enable a leader to act authentically in a transformational role, and so forth. They also believe that it is critical to identify those factors to inform effective leader development.

In this paper, we are proposing that leadership should not continue to be studied as a process or style but approached as a social philosophy of the human relationship. We are posing a new perspective based on the essence of leadership and the creation of prosperity, quality of work life, and sustainability in organizations. The aim of our study is to analyze the constructs of leadership identity, followership, leader/follower relationship, leadership educational process, and organizational context in relation to transcendental leadership in a sample of Mexican industries in the private sector located in the state of Nuevo Leon, Mexico, and contribute to literature with a new model of leadership effectiveness in organizations.

In summary, our study reviewed the theoretical framework of transcendental leadership and leadership effectiveness in organizations, proposed a transcendental leadership model based on the

essence of leadership, developed a scale, ran a pilot group, analyzed preliminary results, integrated a discussion of the research, and points out some conclusions of relevant findings.

II. Theoretical Framework

From literature review, we found that Cardona (2000) proposed the original concept of transcendental leadership. Cardona's idea of transcendental leadership implies viewing the transcendental leader as a "servant leader"; so, this notion only allows to infer the possible implications of this facet for leadership effectiveness. Although he proposes that transcendental leadership incorporates features of transactional and transformational leadership, it is not clearly established what the relationship between these theories is. While Cardona´s approach of transcendental leadership is based on the follower's intrinsic motivations development (in which their needs are aligned with the needs of the leader), our focus is on the is on the enhancement of individual and organizational development, prosperity, and sustainability.

Later, Sanders, Hopkins, and Geroy (2003) proposed a conceptual model of transcendental leadership which integrates and builds upon existing leadership theories. Specifically, their model displays transactional, transformational, and transcendental theories of leadership as being linked along a common continuum of locus of control, effectiveness, and spirituality. However, their perspective is unclear on how to relate the different constructs of the three theories and how dependent/mediator variables are related to independent variables, regardless of focusing only on leader effectiveness. In contrast, we are building our transcendental leadership theory on five constructs that generate a positive effect on transcendental leadership, thus creating a process of individual and organizational development, prosperity, and sustainability.

We intend to study the relationship between the constructs of leadership identity [*defined by Day (2001) as the way one thinks about him/herself as a leader*], followership [*a relational role played by followers to influence leaders and contribute to organizational goals (Crossman and Crossman 2011)*], leader/follower relationship [*established when a leader fits into the followers' concept of a leader's profile; then, the leader is accepted and the followers are willing to get involved in high performance behaviors (Tajfel and Turner 1986)*], leader educational process [*defined as every form of development which promotes and motivates a leader´s acquisition of knowledge and mastery to improve his/her potential and performance as a leader (Collins 2001)*], and organizational context [*conceptualized by Amagoh (2009) as a supporting environment, which actively values and promotes a culture of leadership development*], and their influence in transcendental leadership development, so we may contribute to the literature with the Transcendental Leadership 5D Model.

Leader Identity

Muir (2014) mentions that identity research sheds light on several issues which have a tremendous impact on our understanding of the leadership process. As Lord and Hall (2005) stated, an individual's self-conception as a leader is an essential part of an outstanding leadership development. They also set three statements for the key nature of this identity creation: a) it gives a structure to integrate the new knowledge of leadership and skills development; b) it becomes a source for a leader to access new developmental opportunities; and c) it also becomes a source of personal strength to motivate others.

Per the literature, there are two types of self-identity: independent and interdependent. Banaji and Prentice (1994) mention that an independent type of self-identity is based on an individual sense of uniqueness, self-sufficiency, or independence from others, and the interdependent self-identity is grounded on the extent an individual defined oneself in relation to others or by becoming part or a member of a social group. Additionally, Lührmann and Eberl (2007) explored the dynamics of identity construction and suggested four relevant aspects related to leader identity: motivations, conformity and authenticity, power, and relationships.

By contrast, Wilber (1979) defined a very simple process to establish an identity. When someone tries to answer the question, "Who am I?", a very simple event happens; one sets a mind limit that crosses all fields of experience; thus, what is inside that limit is perceived as myself and what remains outside is excluded from oneself. This way, the identity totally depends on the place the individual establishes as the limit. Besides, when an individual identifies him or herself, they choose mainly one facet of their totality which is more representative of his or her authentic reality. That receives different names: mind, personality, psyche, or ego. This view is connected to Mitroff and Denton's (1999) perspective, in the sense that spirituality is the basic feeling of being integrated by one's complete self, others, and the entire universe.

Even though there are many different definitions of leader identity, we selected the one by Day (2000), defined as the way oneself thinks about him/herself as a leader. As well, we found three more relevant dimensions for leader identity development: leader self-concept [*the actual identity in action according to three components: self-perspective, present goals, and possible choices of self (Lord and Brown 2004)*], authenticity [*defined by individual virtues and ethical choices, showing the relation between oneself and immediate experience (Rogers 1961)*], and spirituality [*an emergent process of progressive psychological integration to higher levels of transcendency and consciousness (Hammer 2010)*].

Finally, we reviewed some relevant studies of leader identity. One investigated the role of leader identity and the motivation to lead, and it showed an emphasis on behavior modeling, which can be used to develop identity, and motivation factors, which produce leadership effectiveness (Waldman, Galvin, and Walumbwa 2012). Findings suggest that behavior modeling is a technique to develop transformational leadership behavior. Another study observed how the power dimension is involved in identity construction and identity deconstruction. Nicholson and Carroll (2013) found evidence to demonstrate how power is displayed among members of a group as well as between members of the group and authority figures. Hence, the use of power has the potential to influence options, interactions, situations, and meaningful personal discoveries. Therefore, considering the relationship between leader identity and the motivation to lead and leadership effectiveness, we propose that leader identity influences transcendental leadership growth, thus:

Hypothesis 1: A leader's identity influences performance of transcendental leadership in organizations.

Followership

The concept of followership has recently become an important field of research in leadership literature. Kellerman (2008) mentions that an enormous quantity of studies has focused on how to be a good leader, but there is only a minimum literature on how to be a good follower. Organizational members in followership positions may exhibit proactive behaviour that does not conform to conventionally docile notions of followership (Cunha et al. 2013). As said by Cunha

et al. (2013), transcendent followers are those who contribute within and across each of the levels of self, others, and the organization. These kinds of followers, who display high competence at all levels, will contribute to the enhancement of company sustainability in dynamic environments, as well as generate a high level of firm performance.

In line with this notion, Crossman and Crossman (2011) proposed that followership is a relational role in which followers can influence leaders and contribute to organizational goals. In other words, followership is the way in which the traits, attributes, and behaviors of followers influence leadership effectiveness and, consequently, highly impact results and organizational performance.

In addition, Singh and Pethe (2003) found that subordinate development could be another dimension of leadership, which needs to be explored in the context of the influence effect on leaders, empowerment, counselling, mentoring, and inspiring behaviors. This means that follower development refers to increasing a subordinate's competence, enhancing their self-worth, and encouraging them to perform beyond expectations. Higher competence not only improves performance but also amplifies the self-image of an individual. In the same way, follower development takes place when the superior is willing to develop subordinates. Moreover, Meindl, Ehrlich, and Dukerich (1985) proposed a social constructionist theory to illustrate the relationship between followership and leadership, arguing that the way followers build their understanding of the leader is in terms of a leader's personality, behaviors, and effectiveness, and this understanding affects leadership significantly.

Furthermore, Shamir (2007) suggested that leadership effectiveness is both a product of good followers and good leaders. So, more work needs to be done to study how a follower's needs, identities, expectations, values, and attitudes determine leader behavior; how a follower's support and acceptance of the leader affects the leader's behavior, self-efficacy, and self-confidence; and how followership is constructed across different fields and cultures.

Last of all, we have discovered that research of the followership construct is in its infancy and defined as a relational role played by followers to influence leaders and contribute to organizational goals (Crossman and Crossman, 2011). Also, it is important to examine three dimensions of followership: competency and personal growth patterns [*one's capacity to be aware of personal strengths and weaknesses, and become responsible to develop and manage oneself effectively (Kelley 1988)*], values [*the concepts or beliefs guiding the election or evaluation of behaviors according to the relevance of specific situations or events (Cropanzano et al. 1992)*], and performance motivations [*the improvement of the follower's performance motivations to enhance his/her capacity, increasing his/her self-value and willingness to perform above expectations (Singh & Pethe 2003)*].

In summary, after our review of the followership research, we found little literature on the topic, most of which were qualitative and theoretical studies. This is not surprising due to the novelty of the construct in leadership research. In a recent study, Cunha et al. (2013) proposed that a transcendent follower is someone who displays competence in managing relations with self, other constituencies, and the organization. They found that followers with a high level of competence in the three domains will contribute to the sustainment of the organization in dynamic environments. Therefore, transcendent followers with high levels of competence in all domains will be associated with high levels of organizational performance compared to followers with any other combination of competences. In another research project, Benson, Hardy, and Eys (2016) used a constructivist approach to investigate how interpretations of followership are observed in different settings where leadership and followership emerge. As a result of their research, they

realized that the presence of outsiders, the character of the task, the phase in the decision making process, the appropriateness of the objective, and relational dynamics influenced which follower behaviors were perceived as suitable from the leader's perspective. Therefore:

Hypothesis 2: Followership is positivly related to transcendental leadership and will contribute to high levels of organizational performance in dynamic environments.

Leader/Follower Relationship

As illustrated by Gerstner and Day (1997), the central idea of the leader-member exchange theory is that the quality of the relationship between the leader and followers alters the impact on the relevant outcomes. Thus, leadership occurs when leaders and followers are capable of developing effective relationships, resulting in mutual and incremental influence (Uhl-Bien 2006).

In a recent study on the role of spiritual leaders, Rego, Cunha, and Oliveira (2008) suggest that leaders who promote followers' personal development and self-determination as well as respect for their personal inner lives, foster positive interpersonal relationships, and are courageous, open-minded, kind, compassionate, loyal, and respectful of their followers, stimulate several positive effects. Collaborators become happier, more commited to work, develop better social exchanges with leaders, and increase their sense of self-worth. Findings also indicate that leaders who abuse their power, disrespect the personal and inner lives of collaborators, instigate bad interpersonal relationships among team members, and are dishonest, cruel, unkind, lazy, and discriminative of followers, produce a number of negative consequences among followers and teams. The negative effects of these types of leaders are: low performance, higher turnover, bad team climate, passivity, retaliation, disobedience, and the psychological damage of employees.

Leader behavior is one of the main influences in leadership, even though follower traits are important too. Also, the personal characteristics of followers can influence the way they experience leader behavior. When followers viewed fair treatment by leaders as more positive, they developed organizational citizenship behaviors (Asgari et al. 2008). Similarly, Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) mention that the basic assumption of a leadership process approach is that leadership only occurs through combined acts of leading and following. Therefore, the constructionist approach studies how individuals engage in following behaviors in order to construct leadership. Additionally, making a break between the traditional conception of leadership – based on the leader and its traits – and a new conceptualization of a more open leadership suggests that other constructs like followership, organizational context, and the leadership educational process should be integrated.

In Avolio, Bass, and Jung´s (1999) concept of transformational leadership effectiveness, the leader should: purport to raise the employees level of consciousness about making valuable contributions in their work; promote that followers engage in collective benefit instead of self-interest; inspire and motivate followers to strive beyond their prescribed duties; stimulate employees to look at new ways of solving problems and consider rational solutions; and provide individualized consideration by showing respect, acting as a mentor, and treating employees with dignity.

Therfore, we embraced leader/follower relationship definition of Tajfel and Turner (1986), where the relationship is established when the leader fits into the follower concept of a leader's profile, then the leader is accepted and the follower is willing to get involved in high performance behaviors. Moreover, as we analyzed different perspectives of leadership studies, we hit upon three relevant dimensions concerning the leader/follower relationship: trust [*related to the degree of*

reliability one individual places in another and is willing to depend upon (McKnigth, Cummings, and Chervany 1998)], leader/follower traits [*defined by the set of characteristics of a leader, emerging to develop different relationships with followers and affecting the quality of relations, and producing important alterations in relevant results for the leader and followers (Gerstner Day 1997)*], and adopted leadership roles [*leadership configurations that appear when different players enter the space of leadership (Chreim 2015)*].

To summarize our analysis of diverse studies on the leader/follower relationship, we selected two empirical investigations that shed light on the impact of leader/follower relations in leadership effectiveness. Zhu, Avolio, and Walumbwa's (2009) research established two relevant hypotheses: (a) follower work engagement will be moderated by follower traits; thus, the relationship between transformational leadership and follower work engagement will be stronger when followers have more positive qualities; and (b) when leaders observe that a follower's positive traits are less than the follower's self-reported characteristics, the follower's work engagement will be negative. The results of the experiment concluded that the two hypotheses were confirmed ($\gamma = .31$, $\rho < .05$; $\gamma = -.02$, $\rho < .01$). Therefore, it is evident that examining follower's traits, followership research, perceived roles, and leader's perception of followers is relevant in future leadership studies.

In the second study, Soane, Butler, and Stanton (2015) theorized that follower personality may influence leadership perceptions, and that the effective perceived leadership may affect performance. They used social identity theory, transformational leadership, and personality theory to develop their research on leadership effectiveness and performance. Results displayed that transformational leadership was related to leadership effectiveness and performance ($r = .87$, $\rho < .001$), and personality influenced perceptions of leadership. The key implication is that leaders should take followers' personalities into account and adapt their leadership style accordingly to create better performance. Consequently:

Hypothesis 3: The leader/follower relationship positively affects transcendental leadership effectiveness and performance in organizations.

Leadership Educational Process

As suggested by Groves (2007), a formal leadership development program is the systematic effort to plan and improve the competence and quality of leadership in organizations. Leadership development programs have become a priority of leading companies in the industry. In fact, the speed of changes in the business world, in technology, and in political and social environments have increased the need for effective leadership development programs (Cacioppe 1998).

In a meta-analysis conducted by Collins (2001) in 54 studies from 1984 to 2000, it was found that a more systemic approach to leadership development has emerged, and 16 other studies focused on organizational performance as an expected outcome of leadership development. Furthermore, it has been shown that leadership development programs are more important to global organizations than traditional ones, due to the proliferation of communication channels, matrix organizational structures, cross functional responsibilities, distance, time, and cultural backgrounds (Friedman 2000).

Recently, Cumberland et al. (2016) suggested that globalization in the twenty-first century has become a key issue. Therefore, the evaluation and development of global competencies of leadership is a relevant topic of the human resources agenda, including personality aspects, knowledge, skills and behaviors. Even in organizations that adopt a wide range of perspectives,

we can find four relevant standpoints: self-awareness development, didactic training, experiential assignments, and total immersion experiences.

Brungardt and Crawford (1986) consider that the leadership educational process involves every form of development to promote, motivate, and expand the knowledge and required mastery to increase the leadership potential and performance of individuals in leadership positions.

Last, we may define the leadership educational process as every form of development which promotes and motivates a leader´s acquisition of knowledge and mastery to improve his/her potential and performance as a leader (Collins 2001), and conclude that it has a great impact on leadership effectiveness due to essential factors which include: self-awareness development [*knowledge about oneself, own values, beliefs, organizing principles, and feelings structure and their consequences in the current experience of their own life (Ryle, 1949)*], assimilation of positive mental models [*manner of simplifing the envrironment, using established patterns to understand every new experience or situation (Rhinesmith, 1992)*], and key business and leadership competencies [*required specific knowledge, skills, and traits to be effective in the workplace (Lucia and Lepsinger, 1999)*].

Finally, after an extensive review of the literature, we were unable to obtain any quantitative investigations on the topic of the leadership educational process, so we selected two qualitative studies to shed light on the positive relation between the leadership educational process and leadership effectiveness. The first study by Hind, Wilson, and Lenssen (2009) explored how organizations can develop leaders who have the necessary competences to ensure the sustainability of an organization. Results reveal that, whilst the qualities and skills of responsible leadership can be identified, a further mediating concept to be considered is "reflexive abilities," which are posited to explain their transformation into individual managerial behaviors. In the second one, Baron and Parent (2015) analyzed the process of developing authentic leadership in a training context. The results presented a process starting with an exploration phase, in which participants increased their self-awareness and identified their leadership issues, identified new behaviors to address those issues, and tried those behaviors to evaluate the outcomes. The results also showed that training practices activated and enabled participants to develop three dimensions of authentic leadership: self-awareness, relational transparency, and balanced treatment of information. For that reason:

Hypothesis 4: The leadership educational process influences transcendental leadership self-awareness, relational transparency, and sustainability in organizations.

Organizational Context

During the last few decades, organizations have recognized the importance of a positive organizational context to promote leadership development. A positive climate provides leaders with a safe environment to face challenges without fear of honest pitfalls. Therefore, organizations which promote learning cultures will reinforce the value and meaning of failures as a source of positive acumen for a leader's success (Avolio and Hannah 2009**).** Following the same line of thought, Bass (1999) refers that a leader who endorses organizational renovation will encourage the emergence of warm organizational cultures that are oriented towards creativity, problem solving, experimentation, and risk taking.

Beugré, Acar, and Braun (2006) mention that transformational leadership will emerge as a dominant form of leadership when the existing perception of the external atmosphere is volatile

and ambiguous. They argue that transformational leadership is not a consequence of leaders' attributes, but a response of leaders and organizations when facing an external environment behavior. External factors such as globalization, strong business competition, and technological change create objective uncertainties and relevant facts which create the need of adaptation in an organization.

On the other hand, Avolio et al. (2004) suggest that the relevance of meaningful work has become more and more important for organizations, aiming to keep a healthy climate and quality of life at work, as well as better performance of employees. Also, Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) argue that spirituality contributes to organizational performance and generates individual benefits: physical and mental health of employees, personal growth, resilience, self-worth feelings, developing of potential, and stress reduction. Liu (2008) mentions that spirituality has increased its importance in the administration of organizations. Many definitions and measurements have been proposed to apply it in the context of management (e.g., Conger 1994; Benefiel 2003; Freshman 1999; Mitroff and Denton 1999; Sheep 2004) and concluded that spirituality is a mediator variable in the workplace, where spirituality has a positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior, which is positively related to organizational effectiveness.

On the other hand, Amagoh (2009) argues that formal mentoring is a fundamental component of leadership development programs and produces great benefits to organizations, such as: improvement of individual and organizational effectiveness, career advancement, and organizational development. However, the main focus of mentoring has been improving management, and little attention has been placed on mentoring for leadership development (Muir 2014).

In conclusion, we appreciated that there is a strong tendency in organizations to generate conditions and positive environments for leadership development, as well as to cultivate leader competencies to establish a work atmosphere where people can improve their performance and quality of work life. Additionally, Amagoh (2009) conceptualized the organizational context as a supporting environment, which actively values and promotes a culture of leadership development. Three dimensions which may produce and contribute to a positive organizational context are: mentoring [*a process where a more experienced individual (mentor) and a less experienced one (protegee) of the organization or profession establish a one-to-one relationship to benefit the development of the protegge (Mullen, 1994)*], organizational values [*key factors affecting the organizational climate and influencing the way an organization is managed (Hendel amd Kagan 2014)*], and a positive work environment [*nurturing work environment to support employees' development of skills and required capacity to face challenges at work in an appropriate manner (Boverie, Grassberger, and Law (2013)*].

After reviewing many studies on the organizational context related to transcendental leadership, we selected two. The first is an empirical research by Woolley, Caza, and Levy (2011) which examined how leaders' and followers' attributes influence results in follower development and authentic leadership. They investigated how the psychological capital was related to authentic leadership and suggested that a positive work environment is a mechanism mediating this relation. They confirmed that a positive work environment is a mediator between authentic leadership and psychological capital ($\beta = .83$ & $\rho < .05$). The second study by Hendel & Kagan (2014) analyzed the association between perceived organizational values and organizational commitment in relation to an ethnocultural background. They consider that organizational values are the bond between individuals and their organization, and found a significant positive correlation between organizational values and organizational commitment ($r = .25$ & $\rho < .01$). The association between

the perceived importance of values and organizational commitment, related to a demographic profile, modified the effect of organizational values on organizational commitment. For example, in a hospital in Israel, when the individual is male, Muslim, orthodox religion, and has a lesser academic education, the effect of organizational values on organizational commitment is higher. Hence:

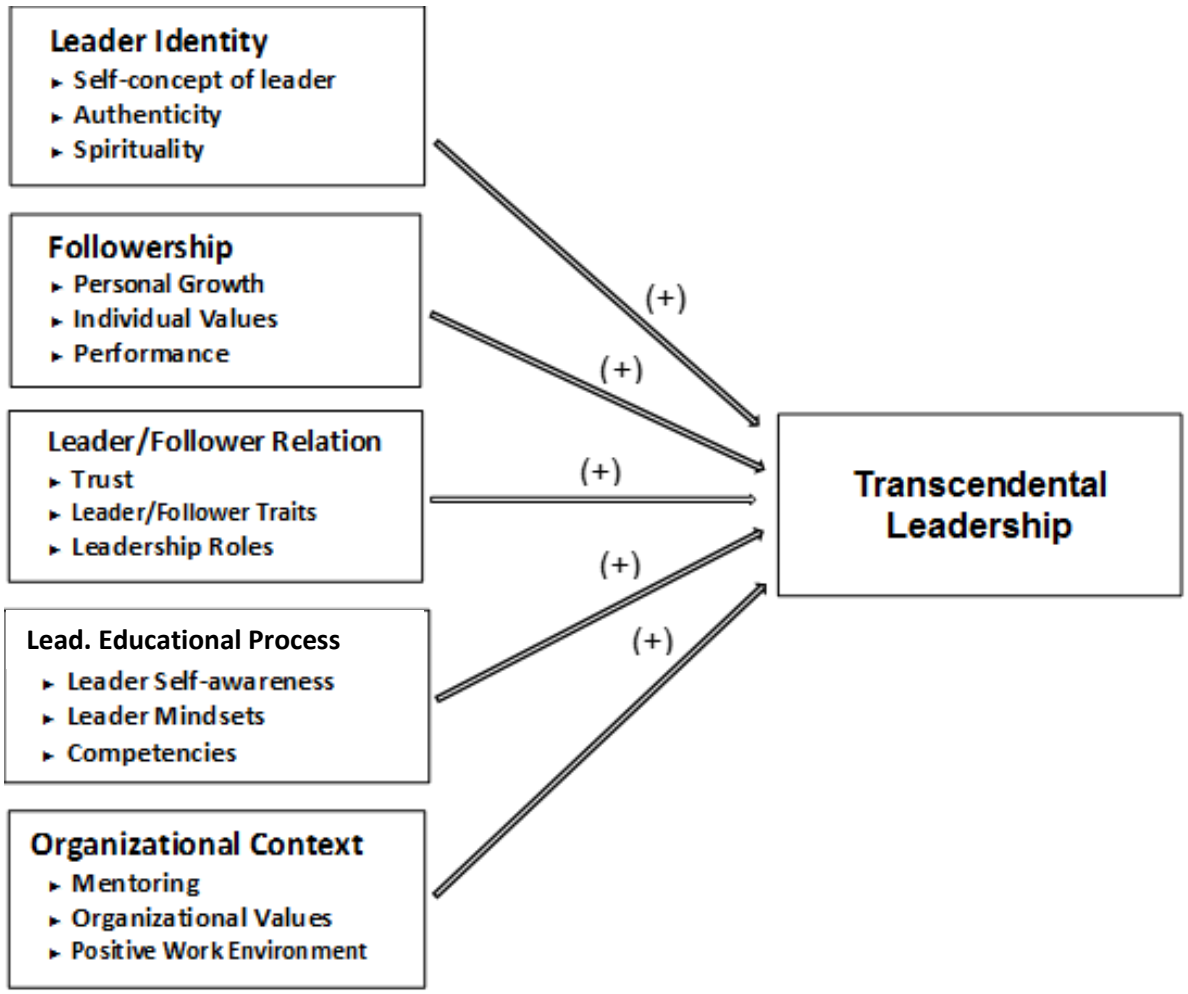
Hypothesis 5: When the organizational context is positive and supportive, it will affect the transcendental leadership process in organizations.

III. The Model Matters

We assumed from those theoretical and empirical studies on the topic, that it is a great opportunity to advance in transcendental leadership research, due to the scarcity of empirical studies and the possibility of contributing to theory building for leadership effectiveness in organizations, as proposed by Sanders, Hopkins, and Geroy (2003): transcendental leadership goes beyond a simple transaction of incentives for work performance because the main purpose is to inspire individuals' development of their internal locus of control and a more focused spiritual orientation. So, we consider that in leadership improvement and effectiveness, the choice of model concerning the kind of leadership is critical for leadership process development. This is because leadership development needs to be contextualized. There are conditions, knowledge, values, abilities, and individual and organizational traits which promote effective leadership in specific organizational and cultural contexts in which followers and leaders engage. In addition, we suggest that, depending on the maturity of an organization, certain kinds of leadership approaches may be more suitable than others. We propose a theoretical foundation of leadership based on the existentialist philosophy of Heidegger (1962). Our idea of leadership is based on a context where leaders and followers are in a partnership, and the leader concept is: "The being that helps and lets others fulfill their potential of being."

Taking into consideration that the model is based on the phenomenological perspective of the being, we ponder it is a newer way of approaching leadership in organizations. This is because it is not conceptualized as a style but rather as a philosophy of life and social relations in organizations. This theorization rests on two main ideas of leadership: (a) the leadership philosophy requires focusing on leader identity, followership, and the leader/follower relationship; and (b) the leadership strategy needs to build on the leadership educational process and organizational context. In our proposed model, we hypothesize that the mentioned constructs are positively related to transcendental leadership (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Transcendental Leadership 5D Model.



IV. The Method

As we mentioned, the focus of this research is to study the constructs of leadership identity, followership, leader/follower relationship, leadership educational process, and organizational context in relation to transcendental leadership.

Scale Methodology

In the first phase of the study, we validated the dimensions of the constructs of the research cause-effect model with qualified experts in the field of leadership. Using their feedback, we adjusted the measurement instruments and survey perspective. We also developed two questionnaires for transcendental leadership in the workplace using a 7-point Likert scale – which we could use later in a comparative sample between top executives/directors and managers since we are only including individuals at the managerial level in the present study.

Pilot Group

A pilot test was run to verify preliminary construct validity and reliability of the dependent and independent variables (Cronbach alphas) in a sample of Mexican industries in the private sector located in the state of Nuevo Leon, Mexico (including managers of diverse industrial and business sectors). Ordinary least squares (OLS) estimations were used to calculate independent and dependent variables in relation to the pilot group (42 participants).

Construct's reliability

The pilot test showed a satisfactory reliability of the constructs (Table 1). Leader Identity (Xli) scored an $\alpha = .89$; Organizational Context (Xoc) got an $\alpha = .91$; Followership (Xf) rated an $\alpha = .74$; Leader/Follower Relation (Xlfr) scored an $\alpha = .64$; Leadership Educational Process (Xlep) rated an $\alpha = .70$; and Transcendental Leadership (Ytl) got an $\alpha = .93$.

Table 1. Reliability of Constructs for the Transcendental Leadership Model.

Variable	**α**
Ylt (dependent)	.93
Xli (independent)	.89
Xf (independent)	.74
Xlfr (independent)	.64
Xlep (independent)	.70
Xoc (independent)	.91

Note: According to Garson (2013), it is acceptable for the preliminary purpose of a study that Cronbach alpha coefficient be .60 or above, and .70 for final confirmatory calculations.

V. Preliminary Results

The first preliminary results using SPSS to calculate the OLS estimation of the model showed no conclusive results for the constructs of Followership (Xf), Leader/Follower Relation (Xlfr), and Leadership Educational Process (Xlep), so we will enlarge the sample to find better measurements of the cause-effect dynamics in the transcendental leadership model.

Initial data analysis reflects a strong positive relation between Leader Identity (Xli) and Organizational Context (Xoc) with Transcendental Leadership (Ytl) development (Table 2).

In summary, preliminary results of the pilot group have established a positive validation for the constructs of the transcendental leadership perspective as a philosophy of leadership development to create individual and organizational prosperity, quality of life, and sustainability in the long term, even though we only confirmed the positive relation of leader identity and organizational context with transcendental leadership in the pilot test.

As this research on transcendental leadership is still in progress, we are expecting to undertake a more robust data analysis in the following phase of the investigation. This will allow us to discover new insights on transcendental leadership knowledge and relevant areas for future work.

Table 2. OLS Estimation for the Transcendental Leadership Model.

Variable	β	ρ
Xli (independent)	.521	.002
Xf (independent)	-	-
Xlfr (independent)	-	-
Xlep (independent)	-	-
Xoc (independent)	.613	.000

VI. Discussion

Our 5D model has integrated five dimensions that have not previously been studied as we propose. We aim to explain that creating a positive work environment in organizations, recognizing an employee's potential, and prizing good behaviors and performance are essential to develop future leaders at all levels.

We assumed from the preliminary results of our study that there is a great opportunity to advance in transcendental leadership research, due to the scarcity of empirical studies. Also, with this research, it will be possible to contribute to theory building for leadership effectiveness in organizations. As mentioned by Boverie and Kroth (2001), in their model of occupational intimacy, when an organization provides a nurturing environment and meaningful work, conditions are set to develop a place where individuals love their job and may feel their work is meaningful. Consequently, this creates opportunities to improve employees' engagement and performance. Additionally, Vardiman, Houghton, and Jinkerson (2006) suggest that organizational leaders will be better prepared to generate the environment for future leaders to grow when they really understand the contextual factors necessary to develop effective leaders.

We consider that it is relevant to study this topic in the Mexican context because it contributes a different way to approach leadership and develop more positive work environments in organizations, where people can engage in high performance processes. More supportive and democratic environments create the right kind of ambiance for nurturing leader-follower interactions instead of authoritarian type relationships.

Therefore, as transcendental leadership is cultivated in organizations, it is expected that individual and organizational prosperity may increase as well as improve the quality life at work and organizational sustainability in the long term.

Another major strength of this research is its methodological rigor. Special attention has been placed to different perspectives of leadership and leadership development, so the conceptualization and operational definition of transcendental leadership has explicit theoretical grounding. Also, the items for the scale were developed based on existing literature attributed to dimensions of leadership and validated with experts in the field of leadership.

VII. Concluding Remarks

After a broad review of the literature on leadership development and effectiveness in organizations, we observe great opportunities for advancement in the topic of effective leadership and transcendental leadership. This study presents the development of transcendental leadership theory and a pilot group test, validation of the scale with experts and a literature review, and a confirmation of the positive relation of leader identity and organizational context with transcendental leadership at this point of the research. The limitations of the size of the sample allowed only partial results of the research, but we are expecting to undertake a more robust data analysis in the following phase of the investigation, which will allow us to discover new insights on transcendental leadership knowledge and relevant areas for future work. As pointed out by Sanders, Hopkins, and Geroy (2003): transcendental leadership goes beyond a simple exchange of performance and economics because its purpose is to inspire individuals to develop an internal locus of control and a more focused spiritual orientation.

References

Amagoh, F. 2009. "Leadership development and leadership effectiveness." *Management Decision* 47 (6): 989-999.

Asgari, A., Silong, A. D., Ahmad, A., and Samah, B. A. 2008. "The relationship between transformational leadership behaviors, organizational justice, leader-member exchange, perceived organizational support, trust in management and organizational citizenship behaviors." *European Journal of Scientific Research* 23 (2): 227-242.

Avolio, B. J., and Hannah, S. T. 2009. "Leader Developmental Readiness." *Industrial and Organizational Psychology* 2 (3): 284-287.

Avolio, B. J., Gardner, W. L., Walumbwa, F. O., Luthans, F., and May, D. R. 2004. "Unlocking the mask: A look at the process by which authentic leaders impact follower attitudes and behaviors." *The Leadership Quarterly* 15 (6): 801-823.

Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, F. O., and Weber, T. J. 2009. "Leadership: Current Theories, Research, and Future Directions." *The Annual Review of Psychology* 60 (1): 421-449.

Avolio, B., Bass, B., and Jung, D. 1999. "Re-examining the components of transformational and transactional leadership using the Multifactor Leadership." *Journal of Occupational and Orgnanizational Psychology* 72 (4): 441-462.

Banaji, M. R., and Prentice, D. A. 1994. "The self in social contexts." *Annual Review of Psychology* 45 (1): 297-332.

Baron, L., and Parent, E. 2015. "Developing Authentic Leadership within a Training Context: Three Phenomena Supporting the Individual Development Process." *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 22 (1): 37-53.

Bass, B. M. 1999. "Two decades of research and development of transformational leadership." *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 8 (1): 9-32.

Benefiel, M. 2003. "Mapping the terrain of spirituality in organizations research." *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 16 (4): 367-377.

Benson, A. J., Hardy, J., and Eys, M. 2016. "Contextualizing leader's interpretations of proactive followership." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 37 (7): 949-966.

Beugré, C. D., Acar, W., and Braun, W. 2006. "Transformational leadership in organizations: An environment-induced model." *International Journal of Manpower* 27 (1): 52-62.

Boverie, P., and Kroth, M. 2001. *Transforming work: The five keys to achieving trust, commitment, and passion in the workplace.* Cambridge: Perseus Publishing.

Boverie, P., Grassberger, R., and Law, V. 2013. "Leading Individual Development and Organizational Change Around Learning, Meaning, and Nurturing Environment." *Advances in Developing Human Resources* 15 (4): 382-400.

Brungardt, C., and Crawford, C. B. 1996. "A comprehensive approach to assessing leadership students and programs: Preliminary findings." *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 3 (1): 37-48.

Cacioppe, R. 1998. "An integrated model and approach for the design of effective leadership development programs." *Leadership & Organizational Development Journal* 19 (1): 44-53.

Cardona, P. 2000. "Transcendental Leadership." *Leadership and Organization Development Journal* 21 (4): 201-207.

Chreim, S. 2015. "The (non) distribution of leadership roles: Considering leadership practices and configurations." *Human Relations* 68 (4): 517-543.

Collins, D. B. 2001. "Organizational Performance: The Future Focus of Leadership Development Programs." *The Journal of Leadership Studies* 7 (4): 43-54.

Conger, J. A., and Kanungo, R. N. 1994. "Charismatic leadership in organizations: Perceived behavioral attributes and their measurement." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 15 (5): 439-452.

Crossman, B., and Crossman, J. 2011. "Conceptualising followership–a review of the literature." *Leadership* 7 (4): 481-497.

Cropanzano, R., James, K., amd Citera, M. 1993. "A goal hierarchy model of personality, motivation, and leadership." In *Research in Organizational Behavior. An Annual Series of Analytical Essays and Critical Reviews,* Vol. 15 edited by L. L. Cummings and B. M. Staw, 267-322. Greenwich: Jay Press Inc.

Cumberland, D. M., Herd, A., Alagaraja, M., and Kerrick, S. A. 2016. "Assessment and Development of Global Leadership Competencies in the Workplace: A Review of Literature." *Advances in Developing Human Resources* 18 (3): 301-317. DOI: 10.1177/1523422316645883.

Cunha, M. P. e, Rego, A., Clegg, S., and Neves, P. 2013. "The case for transcendent followership." *Leadership* 9 (1): 87-106.

Day, D. V. 2001. "Leadership Development: A Review in Context." *The Leadership Quarterly 11* (4): 581-613.

Dent, E. B., Higgins, M. E., and Wharff, D. M. 2005. "Spirituality and Leadership: An empirical review of definitions, distinctions, and embedded assumptions." *The Leadership Quarterly* 16 (5): 625-653.

Freshman, B. 1999. "An exploratory analysis of definitions and applications of spirituality in the workplace." *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 12 (4): 318-329.

Friedman, T. L. 2000. *The lexus and the olive tree: Understanding globalization.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Garson, D. 2013. *Factor analysis.* Asheboro, NC: Statistical Associates Publishing.

Gerstner, C. R., and Day, D. V. 1997. "Meta-Analytic review of leader-member exchange theory: Correlates and construct issues." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 82 (6): 827-844.

Giacalone, R. A., and Jurkiewicz, C. L. 2003. "Toward a science of workplace spirituality." In *Handbook of workplace spirituality and organizational performance*, edited by R. A. Giacaloneand and C. L. Jurkiewicz, Chapter 1, 3-28. New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.

Groves, K. S. 2007. "Integrating leadership development and succession planning best practices." *Journal of Management Development* 26 (3): 239-260.

Hannah, S. T., Sumanth, J. J., Lester, P., and Cavarretta, F. 2014. "Debunking the false dichotomy of leadership idealism and pragmatism: Critical evaluation and support of newer genre leadership theories." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 35 (5): 598-621.

Harmer, R. 2010. "What are we really talking about when we say the word 'spirituality'?" *Journal of Spirituality, Leadership and Management* 4 (1): 105-114.

Heidegger, M. 1962. *Being and time* (First English ed.), translated by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson. New York: Harper and Row.

Hendel, T., and Kagan, I. 2014. "Organisational values and organisational commitment: do nurses' ethno-cultural differences matter?" *Journal of Nursing Management* 22 (4): 499-505.

Hind, P., Wilson, A., and Lenssen, G. 2009. "Developing leaders for sustainable business." *Corporate Governance* 9 (1): 7-20.

Kellerman, B. 2008. *Followership: How followers are creating change and changing leaders.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Liu, H.-O. 2008. *Transcendental Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The mediating effect of spirituality in the workplace.* PhD Dissertation. Los Angeles: University of Southern California.

Lord, R. G., and Hall, R. J. 2005. "Identity, deep structure and the development of leadership skill." *The Leadership Quarterly* 16 (4): 591-615.

Lord, R. G., and Brown, D. J. 2004. *Leadership processes and follower self-identity.* Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Lucia, A. D., and Lepsinger, R. 1999. *The art and science of competency models.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass / Pfeiffer.

Lührmann, T., and Eberl, P. 2007. "Leadership and identity construction: Reframing the leader-follower interaction from an identity theory perspective." *Leadership* 3 (1): 115-127.

Kelley, R. E. 1988. "In praise of followers." Harvard Business Review, 142-148. Brighton, MA, USA: Harvard Business Review Case Services.

McKnigth, D. H., Cummings, L. L., and Chervany, N. L. 1998. "Initial trust formation in new organizational relationships." *Academy of Management Review* 23 (3): 473-490.

Meindl, J. R., Ehrlich, S. B., and Dukerich, J. M. 1985. "The romance of leadership." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 30 (1): 78-102.

Mitroff, I. I., and Denton, E. A. 1999. "A Study of Spirituality in the Workplace." *Sloan Management Review* 40 (4): 83-92.

Muir, D. 2014. "Mentoring and Leader Identity Development: A Case Study." *Human Resource Development Quarterly* 25 (3): 349-379.

Mullen, E. J. 1994. "Framing the mentoring relationship as an information exchange." *Human Resource Management Review* 4 (3): 257-281.

Nicholson, H., and Carroll, B. 2013. "Identity undoing and power relations in leadership development." *Human Relations* 66 (9): 1225-1248.

Rego, A., E Cunha, M. P., and Oliveira, M. 2008. "Eupsychia Revisited: The role of spiritual leaders." *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 48 (2): 165-195.

Rhinesmith, S. H. 1992. "Global mindsets for global managers." *Training & Development* 46 (10): 63-69.

Rogers, C. R. 1961. *On becoming a person.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Ryle, G. 1949. *The concept of mind.* New York: Barnes and Noble.

Sanders III, J. E., Hopkins, W. E., and Geroy, G. D. 2003. "From Transactional to Transcendental: Toward an Integrated Theory of Leadership." *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 9 (4): 21-31.

Shamir, B. 2007. "From passive recipients to active co-producers: Follower's roles in the leadership process." In *Follower-centered perspectives on leadership: A tribute to the memory of James R. Meindl*, Vol. A, edited by B. Shamir, R. Pillai, M. C. Bligh, and M. Uhl-Bien, 9-39. Greenwich: Information Age Publishing.

Sheep, M. L. 2004. "Nailing down gossamer: A valid measure of the person-organization fit of workplace spirituality." In *Academy of Management Proceedings*, Vol. 2004, No. 1, B1-B6. Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management.

Singh, A. K., and Pethe, S. 2003. "Subordinate development: The Third Strand of Leadership." *Management and Labour Studies* 28 (3): 209-222.

Soane, E., Butler, C., and Stanton, E. 2015. "Follower's personality, transformational leadership and performance." *Sport, Business and Management* 5 (1): 65-78.

Tajfel, H., and Turner, J. C. 1986. "The social identity theory of intergroup behavior." In *Psychology of Intergroup Relations* edited by S. Worchel and W. G. Austin, 7-24. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Uhl-Bien, M. 2006. "Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing." *The Leadership Quarterly* 17 (6): 654-676.

Uhl-Bien, M., Riggio, R. E., Lowe, K. B., and Carsten, M. K. 2014. "Followership theory: A review and research agenda." *The Leadership Quarterly* 25 (1): 83-104.

Vardiman, P. D., Houghton, J. D., and Jinkerson, D. L. 2006. "Environmental leadership development: Toward a contextual model of leader selection and effectiveness." *Leadership & Organization Development Journal 27* (2): 93-105.

Waldman, D. A., Galvin, B. M., and Walumbwa, F. O. 2012. "The development of motivation to lead and leader role identity." *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 20 (2): 156-168.

Wilber, K. 1979. "A developmental view of consciousness." *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* 11 (1): 1-21.

Woolley, L., Caza, A., and Levy, L. 2011. "Authentic Leadership and Follower Development: Psychological Capital, Positive Work Climate, and Gender." *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 18 (4): 438-448.

Zhu, W., Avolio, B. J., and Walumbwa, F. O. 2009. "Moderating Role of Follower Characteristics with Transformational Leadership and Follower Work Engagement." *Group & Organizaiton Management* 34 (5): 590-619.

About the Authors

Dr. Raul Lopez-Palomino is a Management and OD consultant who has worked with more than 180 different companies in the private and public sectors during the last 35 years. His areas of expertise are systemic thinking, strategic planning, organizational design, change management, executive coaching, and leadership development. His academic development includes degrees in industrial engineering, law, MBA, MOD, certification in applying the Gestalt approach to organizations, and a Ph.D. with a specialization in management from the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León. His professional experience includes international assignments as the OD Corporate Director for Latin America for Kellogg's and in The Coca Cola Company. He published two books on systemic intelligence, and he is writing his third on leadership development. He has published articles on transcendental leadership in different journals. He teaches HR Strategic Management in the MBA program at UANL, and Leadership & Human Capital Management at the EGADE Business School.

Dr. Joel Mendoza-Gómez is a faculty member in the doctoral program of the business school at the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León (UANL), and a certified researcher by the Instituto Nacional de Investigadores of Conacyt in Mexico. He also serves as an academic coordinator for the MBA program at UANL. His current research areas are team empowerment and effectiveness, work team competencies, and team-based learning. He has published many articles and books on team effectiveness and high performance. Dr. Mendoza-Gómez received his professional degree in economics and an MBA at the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, and a Ph.D. in management at the Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey (ITESM).

Dr. Adriana Segovia-Romo is a faculty member in the doctoral program of the business school at the Universidad Autónoma de nuevo León (UANL), and a certified researcher by the Instituto Nacional de Investigadores (SNI) of Conacyt in Mexico. She also participates as a Secretary for the MBA program committee and as a member for the PhD in Administration program committee at UANL. Her current research areas are human capital, organizational behavior, and remunerations. She has published more than 12 articles, six book chapters, and one book. Dr. Segovia-Romo earned her professional degree in certified public accountant, an MBA, and a Ph.D. in management at the UANL. In addition, she is a human capital and efficient management consultant who has been working with different companies during the last 25 years.