Efficient Spiritual Leadership Related to an Appreciative Inquiry-Style of Leadership in a Sample of Mexican Family Firms Owners

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ABSTRACT

In the current exploratory research paper, a questionnaire was developed to measure an Appreciative Inquiry Model. In the second part, an appreciative inquiry test was correlated to an efficient-spiritual questionnaire. In the sample taken from Latin American CEOs, we could observe in the results, a significant correlation between an appreciative inquiry style of leadership with efficient-spiritual leadership. All the dimensions of appreciative inquiry were also correlated to efficient-spiritual. Further research is recommended.

Keywords: Appreciative Inquiry, Efficient Spiritual Leadership, Leadership.

INTRODUCTION:

Efficient-Spiritual Leadership:

The highest degree of human consciousness is represented by the best qualities of the spirit manifested in some human beings. The presence and influence of these individuals has changed the history of humanity. They were and are "special" people oriented to serve others, to allow others to grow, to commiserate the world's suffering and help people to live with dignity and health. When leaders arrive to positions of command, they will usually apply their consciousness degree of development to their comprehension, analysis and solutions of their management challenges. In the oldest traditions in the world, it has been found that there are two elements that have been named: energy and matter. Matter is the clay from which things are made, energy (consciousness) is what allows that matter to move or vibrate.

When consciousness influences matter, it reacts with movement. Then, matter in the universe (forms) exists with movement (energy). Matter is the recipient of this energy with consciousness. Among the higher illuminated beings and the rocks, there is a whole evolutionary path of material forms ranging from less to more
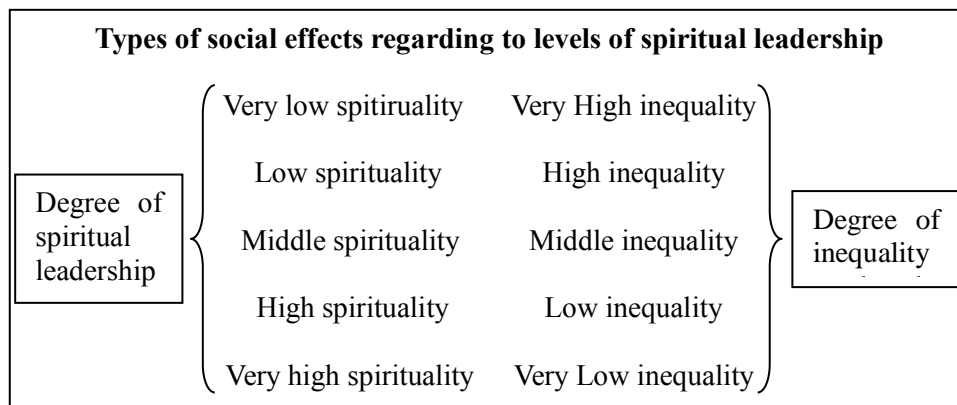
developed. Each of these forms has a peculiar trait that is learned on each stage, and allows to advance to the next level. Each of these stages correspond to different levels of evolution in consciousness.

Self-consciousness:

In the classical antiquity of the Western world, in Delphi, Greece, there was a great interest in understanding the universe and man as a part of it. In the entrance of this venerated Temple (Delphi), there was an inscription that every mature researcher took very seriously: "Man, know yourself and you will know the universe." The phrase is directed to human beings that are ready to seek answers by wondering "Who am I, where did I come from, and where are we going?". A phrase that has been instructed by giving an invaluable guide to investigate these questions and try to answer them from the inside. The phrase indicates that below (the man) is above (the universe) in other words, man is, on a smaller scale, as well as the cosmos, on a larger scale.

If it only works for knowledge and not for the self-consciousness, individuals will be guided for selfish motives and will tend to subdue and organize things in their personal advantage. If that is the case, some men will be separated from each other and from the harmony of the laws of the universe. Who develops self-consciousness understands that he must profess a devotion to the laws of the universe because those laws are the same laws that live inside him. Understanding this, the person could certainly decide to serve all life forms instead of being selfish. When self-consciousness has expanded, the man finds his place within and not outside himself, he feels committed to support and educate other consciousness' that are attached in their selfish motives without arousing the profound meaning of his existence which is to serve.

If you have developed sufficient self-awareness, you will feel the natural temptation to share it. If you agree with the option to share it, you will be motivated with your family and work, and if you are motivated in work you will be productive. Dent, E. Higgins, A., and Wharff, D. (2005) concluded that most researchers combine spirituality and religion and also many of those authors have found a correlation between spirituality and productivity. Efficiency, on the other hand, means the ability to use the resources you have in order to achieve the proposed goals. If we combine efficiency with spiritual we will obtain prosperity as a main goal. A prosper environment with low levels of inequality.

Types of social effects regarding to levels of spiritual leadership

Degree of spiritual leadership		
	Very low spitiruality	Very High inequality
	Low spirituality	High inequality
	Middle spirituality	Middle inequality
	High spirituality	Low inequality
	Very high spirituality	Very Low inequality

Degree of inequality

Choosing spiritual growth implies to start taking steps. The first one is related to efficient-spirituality with an ethical perspective, as well as social responsibility concerns applied in the workplace.

Graphical examples of inequality produced by leadership on stakeholders

Question: Who leads here? Who commands? Which is the leader's goal? And, What model is going to produce that kind of leadership?
For example, there is an agreement between the owners and regulators about prices, then:

Degree of Benefits in participants		Employees	Providers	Customers	Regulators	Directives	Owners
	Very High						▢
	High				▢		
	Middle					▪	
	Low						
	Very Low	▪	▪	▪			

If there is no balance of powers, one or two stakeholders will be in command and if they use this power for self-benefit, it will produce inequality and its consequences: a) in the more affected groups: low productivity, high rotation of personnel, stress, depression, and so on, and b) in the benefited group: cynicism, abuse, insensitivity, and so on. Obviously, the correct combination of stakeholders will require a balance of power and an ethical perspective of command. This implies a correct design of social-firm-social-environment, but if this is not available, then the degree of self-development in a leader will be crucial to command with wisdom, becoming a collaborator of the unity of life and nature, like a forest in which all trees have a minimum and controlled inequality.

Social responsibility is a kind of ethical perspective which promotes the moral duty to take care of society. There are some rules related to this definition: Act in the way you would want others to act towards you, and the utilitarian principle: Act in a way that results in the greatest good for the greatest number. The goals of social responsibility are related to social care. However, other motives can be involved in those programs. Seitanidi, M. Ryan, A, (2007) mentioned different forms of corporate community involvement such as: corporate philanthropy, benefaction, patronage, sponsorship and cause related marketing and partnership. All of those forms have the purpose to support society but also permit leaders to explore new scenarios. Donna, G. (2008) commented that the creation of philanthropic organizations and policy institutes allowed social conservatives to go from being the political elite with aspirations to become the governing elite.

Several groups interested in society wellness exist and many of those groups are involved in social needs. Lohman. R. (2007) mentioned that the non-profit sector has challenges related to the mission, management, and resources, also add that this is a critical sector of society. In those challenges, the dilemma to support or to teach people in order to allow them to care for themselves is included. Eikenberry, A. (2007) stated the tensions of philanthropic voluntary associations when they try to balance their internal democratic effects of enhancing civic education and participation of members, on the one hand, with meeting needs and solving problems in the community. Choi, J. Wang, H. (2007) proposed an alternative rationality for corporate philanthropy based on managerial values of benevolence and integrity. Reig, Fernandez and Jauli (2003) mentioned how the supportive actions should include a balance between moral obligation and financial viability. Also, Reig (2004) mentioned the importance of ethical perspective in leadership in order to apply social responsibility actions. We can identify the following dimensions of social responsibility: Necessity, responsibility, relevancy, moral obligation and financial viability.

Appreciative Inquiry

The focus in positive things is not usual in the scientific contemporaneous world. Good things don't come along easily. The man has to make an effort to achieve. Cooperrider (2003) defined Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as: one way to think, see and act in order to realize pro-active and high impact changes in organizations.

Appreciative Inquiry implies interviews and narration of stories in order to extract the best part of the past and also prepare the scene of an effective visualization (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2003). It is common for many people to perceive the past as a problem and it is also common to believe that working with those problems in order to solve them, will make them better. However, the search of negative facts in the past generally produces more problems and affects the enthusiasm and motivation negatively. AI is essentially a process based on positive questioning helping people to imagine possibilities, to see the rank of alternatives and apply them to fundamental aspects of each organization. For example, to increase the force of sales. Skinner, S. and Kelley, S. (2006) have mixed the technique of appreciative investigation with the sales.

The AI in practice: The first task of the investigator is to discover, describe and explain what is working, as well as the factors that do it possible, and for motivating and for jeopardizing the individuals or the members of the organization in its perception of value of this positive nucleus. Search finding the positive attitudes, acts, behaviors, etc. Johnson & Leavitt (2001) mentioned that when using the AI, the organizations can discover, understand and learn about the success, while new images for the future are created. It provides an opportunity to celebrate what is well done. The organization rests on moving near future visions.

An aspect that differentiates the AI from other methodologies of planning or visualizing is that the image of the future emerges from positive examples based on the organization's past (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2003). Jane Magruder Watkins and Bernard J. Mohr, authors of the book called "Appreciative Inquiry" stated the Change at the Speed of Imagination which suggest the following to start up an AI process: To adopt a positive attitude, to foment anecdotes and positive stories, to identify the subjects that arise from stories and anecdotes narrated by the employees. Create shared images of the future and detect innovating ways to build the future. The more focus is placed on the problems, there will be less advance. The more one strives to discover that it works and

the more one creates desirable images about the wished state, the better the chances to get into a rhythm of change. Watkins & Mohr (2001)

Cooperrider & Srivastava, in Bushe, G.R. (2011) establish that to implement the model of appreciative investigation in an organization or a person, it's necessary the 4'Ds cycle (Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny). This model raises 4 steps for the search of positive experiences in the organization, and this way, visualize and build the future.

Discovery: The idea here is to understand that each person perceives the story in a different way. Therefore, one will not have one reality but many realities. The person is questioned about the positive memories in the organization. The first stage is the selection of a positive subject based on the AI design. The selection of a positive subject is based on the objectives of the organization and their goals. "The organizations construct and promulgate their own way to realize the things" Whitney & Bloom, 2003. P.133.

In order to discover the option of a positive subject, the interview is lead to ask what happens to the company when he is at his best moment. The strongpoints of an organization depend on the value that people give to it, if they are what they were hoping for and if they wish to be recognized in the social scope, as well as the economic and the organizational atmosphere. Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999. P.11.

Dream: In this stage, the people take their past experiences to visualize a wished future. At the beginning of these experiences, people can visualize what can be done in the organization. The phase of the dream is to promote positive discoveries. The discovery is an exceptional service to the client. The dream does an excellent work in all of the parts of the organization. The discovery of the positive aspects that induces the individuals and the organization to the individual and departmental purchase, transforms an organization into its optimal level and improves the operation everywhere in the organization. (Cheney & Jarret, 1998, Belsie, 2001)

Design: It tries to be provocative, to develop through consensus short and long term goals that reached the dream. These goals must be attainable since they are based on the experience of real situations of the past.

The element of design of the cycle of 4Ds in a phase in which the participants join themselves to construct to new systems within the organization creates forces that are discovered in the phase of the dream. The design of the organization is positively framed within the AI process to generate the best system of the organization.

To Implement: Here, the members of the group act on a dynamic form over the provocative proposals. This is where rolls and responsibilities settle down. In this stage, people are able to make decisions because they have learned the AI methodology.

The implementation promotes the discovery, the dream, and the design that the organization anticipates. The cycle of 4-Ds continues to determine the future during this phase by accentuating the right practices within the organization. The implementation promotes the rediscovery of what the organization is and where it wants to go. (Lewis & Van Tiem, 2004)

Lewis & Van Tiem (2004). Before beginning, it is necessary to make a study to determine if some requirements are fulfilled so that the AI methodology can work. It is necessary that the members of the group are conscious about the following points: 1- To avoid a slanted distribution of the power. 2- To diminish the imposition of ideologies. 3- To increase the level of commitment with the process. And 4- To adopt a form of self-critical evaluation.

The method of appreciative investigation in the organizations tries to optimize the best use of human resources, that is to say, works on the basis of past experiences of the employees of an organization to form a positive vision. The appreciative investigation, as the name describes it, tries to investigate the mind and memories of the subordinates or the perception they have of their leaders. The Appreciative Investigation is a form of active investigation that tries to help groups, organizations and where the communities create new images, generative for them based on an affirmative understanding of its past. Working with a social-rationalist theory of change, (Barrett, Thomas, & Hocevar, 1995, Bushe, 1995, Cooperrider, 1990, Gergen, 1990) they hope that these new images lead to change the development of the systems in which they are created.

The Appreciative Investigation applied to the organizations and the work place, facilitates the collaboration and the understanding in great groups, when applying this strategy of work in the organizations and in an excellent way, it's able to see it reflected in the productivity of the company in addition to the atmosphere of work, as well as the vision that you have of the subordinates, the vision that they have of their immediate leader and how it changed to a positive vision, similar to the fulfillment of the objectives and the goals of a positive future which will be easier to obtain this way.

Dent, E. Higgins, A. and Wharff, D. (2005) talk about spirituality distinction in the workplace. Spiritual literature: 1.) definition, 2.) connected to religion, 3.) marked by epiphany, 4.) teachable, 5.) individual development, 6.) measurable, 7.) profitable/productive, and 8.) nature of the phenomenon. Eighty-seven scholarly articles were

coded for each one of these areas. Findings conclude that most researchers connect with spirituality and religion and that most of them have either found, or hypothesized a correlation between spirituality and productivity. The emergent categories offer provocative new avenues for the development of the leadership theory.

METHOD:

We applied 3 exploratory studies:

Study No. 1:

The purpose of this study was to develop a questionnaire about spiritual leadership based on the experts' interviews. We selected 4 experts from Argentina, Spain, Nepal and India. Two of them are members of the theosophical society while the third one is a Buddhist monk in India and the last one is a devoted person form Nepal.

We asked them about the main characteristics of a spiritualized person. The question was: What are the characteristics that distinguish people with high spiritual development from the rest of people?

With the answers, we selected the following characteristics:

Characteristics of a spiritualized person:

Transcendence of duality, integration, intuition, almost total compassion, love almost to all, abnegation to higher values, understanding, good intentions, positive thinking, sacrifice and service for others.

The final instrument in the spiritual part was the following:

Questionnaire 1 (Annexure 1)

Now the questionnaire about the efficiency[1] without effectiveness[2] instructions: Please answer the following questions and think about your personal situation in your working place. How are you? What are you usually doing at work?

When I work…

Questionnaire 2 (Annexure 2)

This questionnaire has reliability and the validity was realized correlating a questionnaire of efficient-spiritual leadership.

Study No. 2:

Purpose: A questionnaire was determined to measure appreciative inquiry.

This questionnaire was designed before leadership decisions:

More than 120 questions were elaborated. Communalities were applied to see the variance of each item. Questions were selected through variance factorial analysis:

Final questionnaire:

Part 1: Factor: Explore And Discover

RESULTS:

Table 1: Reliability of the instruments

Instruments	Alpha of Cronbach
Appreciative Inquiry	$\alpha = .972$
Leadership with Virtues	$\alpha = .949$

Table 2: Correlations between dimensions of appreciative inquiry with efficient spiritual leadership

Sr No	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Prejudices	-	.58**	.63**	.56**	.54**	.56**	.64**	.72**	.27
2	Listen	-	-	.71**	.52**	.57**	.67**	.62**	.75**	.19
3	Implement	-	-	-	.76**	.71**	.65**	.79**	.92**	.39*
4	Design	-	-	-	-	.77**	.53**	.85**	.89**	.37*
5	Dream	-	-	-	-	-	.70**	.78**	.87**	.46**
6	Inquiry	-	-	-	-	-	-	.64**	.75**	.46**
7	Cap. Posit.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.92**	.33
8	Total A.I.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.42**
9	Efficient-spiritual	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

* p 0.05; ** p 0.01

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[1] Efficiency is it is the ability to do things well, successfully, and without waste.
Also is considered as the ability to avoid wasting materials, energy, efforts, money, and time in doing something or in producing a desired result.
[2] Effectiveness is the simpler concept of being able to achieve a desired result

CONCLUSION:

The purpose of this exploratory research was, on one hand, to measure a singular combination of the following factors: spiritual approach and efficiency; and on the other hand, relate the combination of factors with an appreciative inquiry style of leadership in a non-appreciative inquiry technique trained sample of CEOs.

There was a significant correlation between the appreciative inquiry questionnaire and efficient-spiritual leadership. It is interesting that in the sample, the correlations between some dimensions with efficient-spiritual leadership were not significant, prejudiced and the ability to detect the positive. This was possibly due to the age of the sample and the reason that the sample was not being trained in an appreciative inquiry style of command. After the training, it will be possible that people observe the positive effects on the followers´ performance regarding the practice of listening, prejudice control and focusing on the positive.

We recommend future research trying to measure the efficient-spiritual combination in leaders with the purpose to have better performance for employees-followers and also, a better performance for the environment as well

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