Self-perceptions in the exercise of student leadership at the university of Granada

Autopercepciones en el ejercicio del liderazgo estudiantil en la universidad de Granada

格拉纳达大学学生领导力实践中的自我认知

Самовосприятие при осуществлении студенческого лидерства в Университете Гранады

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the self-perception of student leadership, which is an essential construct when implementing university policies to promote, train and strengthen student representation. The objective of our research is to learn about the self-perception of leadership exercised by university students studying in the Faculty of Education Sciences at the University of Granada and to verify whether those holding a representative position are true leaders. To analyze the construct, we have carried out a review of studies on leadership and student representation in Higher Education. We have reviewed the instruments that are most effective in characterizing leadership and selected the one which is most appropriate to our objectives, S-LPI by Kouzes and Posner (2008), applying it to the population of student representatives of the Faculty of Education Sciences of the University of Granada . In this regard, our research has a descriptive interest, using a quantitative study of non-experimental design, and a survey to collect information. The main reason why we wish to collect this information is to learn about the self-perception of leadership exercised by university students of the Faculty of Education at the University of Granada in its different dimensions. The results have allowed us to describe the sociodemographic data of student leaders while analyzing the self-perceptions they have in their leadership roles. The best valued dimension is training others, yet this is also the dimension that is least effective when faced with change. We therefore conclude by presenting the shortcomings that we find in our leaders, as it is apparent that they are not prepared to encourage change and innovation in other peoples' work, and to ensure that the agreements reached are fulfilled. Finally, we suggest designing a leadership training program for student representatives, to help them compensate for those deficiencies that they find in the course of their role.

Keywords: Student movement, University student, Student participation, Student organization, Leadership.

Resumen

Este trabajo se centra en la autopercepción del ejercicio del liderazgo estudiantil, ésta es un constructo esencial para realizar políticas universitarias de fomento, capacitación y fortalecimiento de la representación estudiantil. El objetivo de nuestra investigación es conocer las autopercepciones del liderazgo ejercido por los estudiantes universitarios de la Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación de la Universidad de Granada y comprobar así si aquellos que ostentan un cargo de representación son verdaderos líderes. Para analizar el constructo hemos realizado una revisión de estudios sobre liderazgo y sobre representación estudiantil en la Educación Superior. Se han revisado los instrumentos que se muestran más eficaces en la caracterización del liderazgo y seleccionado el más adecuado a nuestros objetivos, S-LPI de Kouzes y Posner (2008), aplicándolo a la población de representantes estudiantiles de la Facultad de Educación de la Universidad de Granada. En este sentido, el trabajo se acoge a un interés descriptivo mediante un estudio cuantitativo de diseño no experimental utilizando una encuesta como instrumento de recogida de información, cuyo principal objetivo es conocer la autopercepción del liderazgo ejercido por los estudiantes universitarios de la Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación de la Universidad de Granada en sus distintas dimensiones. Los resultados han permitido hacer una descripción de datos sociodemográficos de líderes estudiantiles a la vez que analizar las autopercepciones que realizan en el ejercicio del liderazgo, siendo la dimensión mejor valorada capacitar a los demás y la que menos eficacia ante el cambio. Por tanto, concluimos presentando las carencias que encontramos en nuestros líderes, ya que encontramos que no están preparados para hacer

fomentar el cambio y la innovación en el trabajo de los otros, así como asegurarse de que se cumplen los acuerdos a los que se llega. Por último proponemos diseñar un programa de formación en liderazgo, para representantes estudiantiles que les ayude a compensar esas carencias que encuentran en el ejercicio de su cargo.

Palabras claves: movimiento estudiantil, estudiante universitario, participación estudiantil, organización de estudiantes, liderazgo.

概要

本研究主要分析学生领导力实践中的自我认知, 这是大学推行促进、培养和提升学生代表能力的政策的重要结构。我们研究的目的是了解格拉纳达大学教育科学学院大学生对领导力的自我认知, 从而验证担任代表职位的学生是否是真正的领导者。为了分析这一结构, 我们对关于高等教育中的领导力和学生代表的研究进行了回顾。我们回顾了在表征领导力方面最有效的工具, 并选择了最适合我们目标的量表, Kouzes 和 Posner (2008) 制定的 S-LPI, 并将其应用于格拉纳达大学教育学院的学生代表群体。我们通过使用调查作为收集信息的工具对非实验设计的定量研究进行了描述性分析, 其主要目的是了解格拉纳达大学教育学院大学生对领导力自我认知的不同维度。我们通过研究结果对学生领学的社会人口信息进行了描述, 同时分析了他们在行使领导力时的自我认知, 其中评价最高的维度是提升他人能力, 而最低的维度在面对变化的情况。在学生领袖身上分析到的缺陷让我们得出其没有做好面对与他人工作中发生的变化和创新的准备, 以及确保之前达成的协议得到履行。最后, 我们建议为学生代表设计一个领导力培训计划, 以帮助他们弥补其在行使职权时的缺点。

关键词：学生运动, 大学生, 学生参与, 学生组织, 领导力。

Аннотация

Данная статья посвящена самовосприятию студенческого лидерства, которое является важным понятием для проведения университетской политики по продвижению, обучению и укреплению студенческого представительства. Цель нашего исследования - выяснить самооценку лидерства, осуществляемого студентами факультета педагогических наук Университета Гранады, и таким образом проверить, являются ли те, кто занимает представительскую позицию, настоящими лидерами. Для того чтобы проанализировать эту конструкцию, мы провели обзор исследований, посвященных лидерству и представительству студентов в высшем образовании. Мы рассмотрели инструменты, наиболее эффективно характеризующие лидерство, и выбрали наиболее подходящий для наших целей - S-LPI Кузеса и Познера (2008), применив его к популяции представителей студентов педагогического факультета Университета Гранады. В этом смысле наша работа представляет собой описательный интерес посредством количественного исследования неэкспериментального дизайна с использованием опроса в качестве инструмента для сбора информации, основная цель которого - узнать уровень самовосприятия лидерства, осуществляемого студентами факультета педагогических наук Университета Гранады в его различных измерениях. Результаты позволили нам описать социально-демографические данные студенческих лидеров и в то же время проанализировать их самовосприятие в осуществлении лидерства. Наиболее высоко оцениваемое измерение - расширение возможностей других и наименее - эффективность в условиях перемен. Поэтому в заключение мы представим недостатки, которые мы обнаружили у наших руководителей, так как выяснилось, что

они не готовы поощрять изменения и инновации в работе других, а также следить за тем, чтобы достигнутые договоренности соблюдались. Наконец, мы предлагаем разработать программу обучения лидерству для представителей студентов, чтобы помочь им компенсировать недостатки, с которыми они сталкиваются при исполнении своих обязанностей.

Ключевые слова: студенческое движение, студент университета, участие студентов, студенческая организация, лидерство.

Introduction

"Leadership" is a concept that has gradually permeated the current vocabulary of educational discourse, becoming a complex and polysemic construct.

It was originally conceived and developed in the business field, although it has been extrapolated to other branches of knowledge, such as education. Since then, theories have been built around educational leadership. Today, we believe that leadership is key to educational improvement.

Leadership is a topic of relevant interest in social and educational research. In Pedagogy, it has traditionally been explored when researching management in educational centers. This is how we see it in the investigations carried out by Lorenzo (2005), Leithwood and Jantzi (2008), Gairín et al. (2011), where findings point out that school leaders are interested in improving their communicative skills. In Leithwood and Sun's study (2012), we see that building collaborative structures and offering individualized support are both actions which have significant, direct effects on student performance. Investigations like these act as antecedents in the study of this subject in the pedagogical field, gradually increasing interest in student leadership, considering it a topic of great interest and topicality.

Background

Leadership and, specifically, the leadership of university students, is a topic that has increased in relevance over the last decades. In the different studies that have been carried out, emphasis has been placed on the factors that determine it, thus expanding knowledge of this subject.

In an initial approach to the study of our subject, Posner and Brodsky (1992) carried out an analysis of the use of various instruments to describe the phenomenon of student leadership, using the Student-Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) questionnaire. The initial version of the questionnaire was used, as it will be updated with the results obtained in their different research projects.

Already in the 21st century, Kezar and Moriarty (2000), carried out an exploratory study on the influence of gender and ethnicity in leadership development. This examined the factors that influence the development of leadership among the diverse university students, specifically focusing on the possible differences between women and Afro-American men, compared to Caucasian men. Specific extracurricular and curricular programs were recommended to promote it and meet its needs.

As time went by, Kouzes and Posner continued to expand their understanding of student leadership, and they published a book in 2008 on exemplary practices of student leaders. Based on these publications, they conducted various investigations (Posner, 2004; Posner, 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 2012) related to leadership training and development. After obtaining the results, they published a manual in 2014 about the challenges of student leadership, giving guidelines and strategies on how to become an exemplary leader. They also included an access code to allow student leaders to take the Student - LPI questionnaire, to help them explore their own leadership behaviors and skills.

Along these lines, Komives et al. (2011), published an important review handbook on the phenomenon of student leadership. For this, Dugan and Komives (2007), began in this line of work years before, analyzing and comparing the capacity of student leadership in various universities, through the adaptation of the Student - LPI questionnaire created by Kouzes and Posner in 2003.

In the 2010-2020 decade, research on this topic took on another increasingly fashionable aspect among new studies - the emotional intelligence of their leaders, as we can see in the research carried out by Del Pino and Aguilar (2013). The objective is to identify the differences that exist in the perception of emotions, the management of one's own emotions, the management of other peoples' emotions and the use of students' emotions in different educational programs. In addition, these authors launched an emotional intelligence program, aimed at improving students' leadership skills, therefore helping them in their future work.

Continuing with the last decade, the works of Luescher-Mamashela, 2013; Luescher-Mamashela, 2014 focus on student governments, by reviewing studies. They described the reasons for and against student representation using the most relevant justifications. They also describe how these complementary and contradictory stances serve to analyze and justify student leadership in decision-making in university governing bodies.

On the one hand, the investigations carried out by (Razak & Hamidon; Saari & Ghani, 2015), focus on examining the capacities and patterns of students and the effects of leadership among them. On the other hand, studies carried out by Soria, Roberts and Reinhard (2015) point out that the awareness of the strength of the students is associated with perceived leadership. The result is significant compared to the rest of the study variables (Cetín & Kinik, 2016) whose objective is to quantify the relationship between the organizational identification built on the theory of social identity and the perception of alienation in Higher Education. For this, the selected study group included people with a leadership role within the University, finding significant differences in the gender of the participants and level of studies.

However, already in the 21st century, the classic study of gender continues to be fundamental, seeing as it remains after the end of the investigations carried out by (Shim, 2013; Rosch et al., 2015; Longman & Anderson, 2016), which aimed to analyze gender differences in the development of the position of student representatives.

In addition, the latest research on student leadership emphasizes the importance of listening to students' voices, and specifically to student leaders representing their peers in the different representative bodies, Welton et al. (2017) and Lips and Allan (2017).

On the other hand, in the most recent literature, we have the research of Coffey and Lavery (2018), which is related to how middle schools develop their students' leadership skills. Regarding gender, Iverson et al. (2019) suggests adopting the principles of feminism to prepare students to be committed and change-oriented leaders.

In this regard, Haber's (2019) work focuses on co-curricular participation and student leadership as applied learning experiences. Finally, Skalicky et al. (2020) study whether student leadership programs developed by Universities offer the skills expected of students in the world of work.

Also in this last year, Rodríguez and Rodríguez (2020) made a proposal to strengthen the leadership of university students, from improving conflict resolution, decision-making, time management, public speaking techniques, etc, in their research. On the other hand, Bravo's (2020) research aims to determine the reasons why student participation is decreasing within university governance.

Research problem and objectives

The background review carried out suggests that beyond the sociodemographic characterizations that are usually carried out in studies on leadership in general, and student leadership in particular, research should go further by carrying out an in-depth analysis of the dimensions that make up the leadership construct. Greater knowledge of the construct, its dimensions and the particular integration among them, will offer us guidelines for the formative intervention that could be carried out by the institutions in question where student representation is as effective as possible. Although in the field of Higher Education there are some experiences of training programs for leaders in the teaching sector (Cebrián & Fernández-Cruz, 2012), there is still not enough information to make similar proposals aimed at the student sector.

The problem faced by this research is the lack of sufficient information on the dimensions that make up student leadership to make effective training proposals that improve student representation in Higher Education. Our research aims to shed some light on this problem.

For this, the general objective established in the research is to learn about the self-perception of leadership exercised by university students of the Faculty of Education Sciences of the University of Granada in its different dimensions.

The specific objectives are to:

- Characterize the population of student representatives of the Faculty of Education Sciences of the University of Granada.
- Analyze the self-perception of leadership exercised in five dimensions: (a) leadership style, (b) shared vision, (c) effectiveness in the face of change, (d) training others, (e) deep intervention.

Importance of student leadership

The participation of students in the student representative bodies is the main way of expressing the student's voice within the University, in addition to being the main link between students and the Dean, as Carvalho's research (2012) points out.

In this sense, student leadership acquires its importance. It is considered, as Rodríguez and Rodríguez (2020) point out, as the transversal axis through which the needs and interests of students are articulated. The participation of university students within the representative bodies made available to them is therefore essential to resolve any problems they may have, which is why the voice of the students becomes a fundamental element.

On the other hand, student participation aims to empower students, especially those who hold a leadership position within university governance. Bravo (2020) points out that the low participation of students in representation is due to the lack of empowerment, so the University itself must make a great efforts to make changes and improve the scarce collaboration.

According to El-Homrani (2014), the University as a field of social interaction deserves to have the opinions and voices of the students represented in the representative bodies available to them. Therefore, and following the democratic line that has been governing our Higher Education system since the LRU University Reform Act in 1983, all parts of this community have to be represented, with the voice of students being a fundamental way of finding out what problems they are facing in the university environment. For this, the election and participation of the most suitable leaders will contribute to the work of these representatives being fruitful, as pointed out by Elexpuru et al. (2013).

Following Cuevas and Díaz (2015), although efforts have been made to train school leaders at other educational levels, in the university context, access to positions is governed by democratic procedures and no experience or specific training is required. As Rodríguez and Aguiar (2015) point out, this is because the predisposition to occupy the position, the potential candidate's skills, abilities and / or attitudes, their spirit, communication skills and charisma are valued more greatly. Despite this, in the case of Higher Education institutions, leadership appears as one of the topics that currently acquires greatest relevance when linked to quality. It is here where University students' voices gain strength, as recognizing and involving students implies thinking together with them, consulting them and making them participate in reflection and practical questioning. This leads us to the construction of new ways of teaching and learning (Rodríguez et al., 2009).

For Lorenzo (2007), students are the lubricant of the university machinery for an obvious reason. In the context of personal confrontations, intrigue and power struggle, the student who is a leader and usually works in a team is the one who usually brings a degree of reason to the confrontations that occur in the governing bodies between the different sectors of the teaching staff. In summary, he believes that the correct functioning of the University, despite its poor structure, is due to the intellectual leadership of some professors, the ethics of some of those who are there, and the lubrication that, with common sense, the students contribute in negotiation processes.

Review of instruments that study student leadership

Regarding the choice of data collection instruments, we conducted a review analyzing different questionnaires that have been conceived more generally or which have even been constructed to analyze leadership in other contexts but which have also been used to describe student leadership, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Instrument review

Instrument	
Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)	Designed by Bass and Avolio (1989), it initially had 70 items that evaluated transformational leadership, transactional leadership and the absence of leadership (Molero et al., 2012). After a few years of execution, the questionnaire was modified by its authors in 1995, following criticisms made of the previous version and the appearance of new theoretical contributions. Its latest version, called MLQ-5X, consists of 45 items, and is classified into 9 factors (Franco & Ríos, 2015).
Liderato-31	This questionnaire was developed to discover the characteristics that university students believe a leader should have. It is composed of a 5-level Likert-type scale. The items were prepared based on the analysis of the literature and content validation carried out by an expert and five students with a profile similar to the study sample. The dimensions studied by this instrument are the leader's self-concept and its importance. The validity of this questionnaire is quite significant, since it has a Cronbach's alpha of .89.
Characterization of student leadership.	This questionnaire was created by Franco and Ríos (2015), consisting of 26 items, prepared by reviewing other questionnaires such as the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI). It is an inventory of opinions that are valued from a Likert scale of 5 degrees. The dimensions studied by this instrument revolve around: character, relationships with others and relationships with tasks.
Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI)	This questionnaire was created by Kouzes and Posner to study leadership practices in the business environment. Furthermore, this questionnaire has been adapted to other contexts such as that of university students. The leadership practices studied revolve around: challenging processes, inspiring a shared vision, empowering others to act, modeling the path and encouraging the heart. Each dimension consists of six items, evaluated using a 5-degree Likert-type scale. The validity of this instrument was verified using two expert judgements and its standardization and use in numerous investigations. Furthermore, it consists of a Cronbach's alpha that ranges between .77 and .85.
Perceptions of students leadership	This data collection instrument was created by Lorenzo (2007) and consists of 24 items, assessed on a Likert-type scale of 4 degrees. Dimensions revolve around attributions, expectations, reflection on practice and satisfaction. The validity of this questionnaire's content was evaluated using expert judgement, and it reached a reliability of .877 in Cronbach's alpha, making correlations between forms, the Spearman-Brown coefficient and the two-half Guttman technique.
Organizational leadership assessment	This questionnaire, created by Laub (1999), consists of 66 items that are rated on a 5-degree Likert-type scale. The objective of this study is to learn about the leadership of management teams. The dimensions studied using this instrument revolve around: building community, showing authenticity, availability of leadership and shared leadership. The validity of this questionnaire was evaluated using the judgement of 3 experts and reached a Cronbach's alpha of .98, which shows its high reliability.

Instrument	
Student Leadership Practice Inventory	The S-LPI was designed to identify the behaviors and actions that the students claim to have used (Kouzes & Posner, 2008). It is an adaptation of the LPI instrument, where the leadership practices studied remain the same as in the original questionnaire.
	This instrument was subjected to two expert judgements and was standardized and used in numerous investigations. It consists of 30 items evaluated on a 5-degree Likert-type scale.
	Studies using the S-LPI have shown strong internal reliability across a variety of student populations, with Cronbach's alpha scores ranging from .55 to .83 (Posner, 2004).

Designing the investigation

Regarding our methodological approach, searching for information and the approach to the problem has a descriptive interest through a quantitative study of non-experimental design, using a survey as an instrument for collecting information.

Contextualization

Our context is made up of the student representatives sitting on governing bodies and the class delegates of the Faculty of Education Sciences of the University of Granada, Cartuja Campus, where degrees related to the branch of study are taught.

The Faculty of Educational Sciences of the University of Granada, on the Cartuja Campus, has 5445 students, more than a hundred professors and about twenty administration and services professionals.

The Cartuja campus is the headquarters of the degree programs that are the focus of our study. It is located just outside the city of Granada, in front of the Granada Charterhouse.

Although it is a relatively young Faculty, dating from the first half of the 90s, like the Melilla campus, it has had to adapt to current needs and build a classroom and carry out different reforms to meet its new needs.

The academic offer of this faculty coincides with the same degrees of the educational branch that are offered in the North African campuses, with the exception of Bilingual Teaching, Pedagogy and the double degrees of Primary and English and French studies in the Cartuja campus and the degree of primary Education and Physical Education and Sports Science at the Melilla campus.

Population and sample

Due to interest in our study, we will work with the entire population of student representatives of the Faculty of Education Sciences, University of Granada, amounting to 96 positions. The questionnaire has been sent to the entire population, obtaining a result of 70 valid responses. The productive sample of the research therefore amounts to 72.91% of the population.

Instrument

From the reviewed instruments, we have selected the Inventory of Student Leadership Practices S-LPI by Kouzes and Posner (2008) for our research work, as this is the one that best suits our research needs.

As we have already mentioned, this questionnaire is made up of a total of 30 items grouped by the authors into five dimensions: leadership style, shared vision, effectiveness in the face of change, training of others, and profound intervention.

The questionnaire has been translated from English to Spanish and adapted in its items to the cultural characteristics of the students of the University of Granada. The adaptation has been reviewed by expert judges.

Results

With the help of the SPPS-20 program, where the obtained data was processed, a basic statistical analysis of the obtained data was carried out. Cronbach's alpha was obtained with a result of .877 to analyze the reliability of the instrument. Frequency and percentage of sociodemographic data was obtained to characterize the population, and the mean and standard deviation of each item was obtained to analyze self-perception of the leadership exercised.

Characterization of student representatives

In an initial approach to the characterization of these leaders, we can highlight that the average age of the student´s representatives is 22.68 years old, with the minimum value being 18 years old and the maximum value being 50 years old.

Regarding gender, the data has shown a female prevalence in student representation, with 62.9%, compared to 37.1% male.

The degree that has the most representatives is the degree of Primary Education, with 38.6%, followed by the degree of Social Education, with 22.9%, the degree of Bilingual Primary Education being the variable with the fewest representatives, with 10%, due to its low population. The remaining degrees in the field of Education show a rate of 12.9% for the degree of Pedagogy and 15.6% for the degree of Early Years Studies.

On one hand, most of the leaders were in their second or third year of study with 37.1% and 25.7%, respectively. On the other hand, surprisingly, the grades with the least representation is fourth year, with 14.3%, and 22.9% of student representatives in their first year.

Regarding the time spend in representation positions, most of these leaders carry on being representatives for one or two years on average, in 84.3% of cases. Students mainly start representation positions after the first year of their degree, true for 55.7% of cases.

Referring to the positions they represent, it should be noted that the highest participation rate originated at classroom level, as group delegates and subdelegates, with 78.6%, followed by representation on the Faculty Boards, true for 18,6% of cases. The least occupied positions are those representing students in the Governing Council and Departmental Board of Directors, with 1.4% for both cases.

Self-perception of leadership exercised

Self-perception in leadership style is quite high, as shown in Table 2. The indicators that make up this dimension range from an average of 3.77 to 4.41, with values higher than the theoretical average of 3. The indicator where self-perception appears greatest is the variable "keeping the promises and commitments that I make". This question leads us to think that, in general, these representatives are leaders who are committed to their group and who have strong values. On the contrary, the lowest valued item in this dimension is "I spend time and effort making sure that the people in our organization adhere to the principles and norms that are agreed", that is, that they do not spend time checking whether the rest are working in compliance with the agreed standards.

Table 2

Basic descriptions

Dimension	Items	Half	Typical deviation
Modelling the way	1. I set a personal example of what I expect from other people.	3.91	.91
	6. I spend time and energy making sure that people in our organization adhere to the principles and standards we have agreed upon.	3.77	.85
	11. I follow through on the promises and commitments I make in this organization.	4.41	.64
	16. I find ways to get feedback about how my actions affect other people's performance.	4.00	.88
	21. I build consensus on an agreed-upon set of values for our organization.	3.84	.86
	26. I talk about the values and principles that guide my actions.	3.83	.95
Inspiring a shared vision	2. I look ahead and communicate about what I believe will affect us in the future.	4.24	.69
	7. I describe what we should be capable of accomplishing to others in our organization.	3.91	.88
	12. I talk with others about sharing a vision of how much better the organization could be in the future.	4.09	.83
	17. I talk with others about how their own interests can be met by working towards a common goal.	3.90	.97
	22. I am upbeat and positive when talking about what our organization aspires to accomplish.	4.37	.80
	27. I speak with conviction about the higher purpose and meaning of what we are doing.	4.00	.82

Dimension	Items	Half	Typical deviation
Challenging the process	3. I look for ways to develop and challenge my skills and abilities.	3.91	.83
	8. I look for ways that others can try out new ideas and methods.	3.86	.79
	13. I keep up-to-date on events and activities that might effect our organization.	4.14	.71
	18. When things do not go as we expected, I ask, "What can we learn from this experience?"	4.15	.94
	23. I make sure that we set goals and make specific plans for the projects we undertake.	3.87	.88
	28. I take initiative in experimenting with the way we can do things in our organization.	3.97	.90
Enabling others to act	4. I foster cooperative rather than competitive relationships with people I work with.	4.37	.71
	9. I actively listen to diverse points of view.	4.56	.58
	14. I treat others with dignity and respect.	4.79	.61
	19. I support the decisions that other people in our organization make on their own.	4.30	.67
	24. I give others a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.	4.33	.74
	29. I provide opportunities for others to take on leadership responsibilities.	4.07	.82
Encouraging the heart	5. I praise people for a job well done.	4.49	.65
	10. I encourage others as they work on activities and programs in our organization.	4.16	.81
	15. I give people in our organization support and express appreciation for their contributions.	4.66	.51
	20. I make a point of publicly recognizing people who show commitment to our values.	4.14	.87
	25. I find ways for us to celebrate accomplishments.	3.93	.98
	30. I make sure that people in our organization are recognized for their contributions.	4.36	.59

Self-perception of shared vision is equally high. In this second dimension, the indicators fluctuate between an average of 3.90 to 4.37, reaching the highest value in item 22, "I am positive when we talk about what we can achieve". This leads us to deduce that these leaders are generally optimistic, depending on the goals they want to achieve, and seek communication among group members. On the contrary, these representatives' lowest-valued item is the notion of speaking with others about how their own interests can be reflected working towards a common objective. In other

words, they do not speak to the rest about how their interests can be reflected working towards a common objective, which leads us to think that they are leaders with little ability to persuade or communicate.

Regarding self-perception of effectiveness in the face of change, we found quite high values again. In this third dimension, the averages range from 3.87 to 4.15, with the best valued item being item 18, "when things do not go as expected, I ask, what can we learn from this experience?" We think that this fact could refer to the ability and traits of these leaders to learn from their mistakes, looking for ways to innovate and improve what they do. On the contrary, item 8, is the one that received the lowest score, "I look for ways that others can try new ideas and methods", showing that these representatives as leaders are not particularly involved in the development of work carried out by their colleagues. They are therefore left to act without seeking to try other avenues or methods to achieve their goals.

Regarding training other people, we find high self-perception. In the fourth dimension, the results show fairly high averages ranging from 4.07 to 4.78. The best valued item is, *I treat others with dignity and respect,* meaning that they have a close relationship with their group, following the line of distributed leadership, trying to empower their group so that they can act on their own. On the contrary, the item with the lowest score, yet exceeding the average of other dimensions is it provides opportunities for others to exercise leadership responsibilities, which would lead us to think that they should improve in granting opportunities for the rest to exercise leadership responsibilities and end up empowering them.

The self-perception that we have called deep intervention (encouraging the heart, in its original English) is equally positive. In the fifth dimension, the results show fairly high mean scores, although lower than the fourth dimension, which fluctuate between 3.92 and 4.65. Their best valued item is 15, "I express appreciation for the contributions that others make", which leads us to believe that they are sensitive leaders who seek to achieve their goals through a good work climate. On the contrary, the lowest item valued by these representatives is "finding ways to celebrate the achievements of their peers". In this regard, this question becomes important, as not only would we be reinforcing what was obtained, but we would also be continuously socializing with the rest of the group's components.

Discussion and conclusions

Discussion

After analyzing the data and seeing the results, we are ready for further discussion with the research that the authors of the questionnaire have carried out on our subject of study.

Regarding age, our results show an average of about 22.7 years old, with the average for Posner's (2010) research being around 20. Along the same line as Posner (2010), Schuemann (2014) find an average of 20.8 years old, also in an American context. On the contrary, Franco and Ríos (2013), show an average between 21 and 24 years in their research, data that is closer to our findings. This may be because in North America, it is not common to start university after the age of twenty. However, in Spain, this is different, with more and more adults returning to university with the need to

continue training, or they start a course to aspire to a better job, or simply in the hope of finding a job.

Regarding the gender of the population, Posner's study (2010) noticd a female prevalence. Our research on this factor also shows a high female participation in representative positions, similar, on the other hand, to the rate of women studying at the Faculty of Education Sciences, finding the same situation in the Kyei research and Kwadwo (2015). Continuing with this variable, we can highlight the studies by Schuemann (2014), where he finds a balance in gender, and Franco and Ríos (2013), noted greater participation in males.

Regarding the means of the dimensions of the questionnaire, our research shows greater positive self-perceptions in the dimensions 'training others' and 'deep intervention', with averages of 4.40 and 4.29 respectively, finding similar means in the investigations of Kyei and Kwadwo (2015). On the contrary, this result varies in the work of Posner (2010), in this case, the dimension with a high valuation from the respondents, is a deep intervention with a 3.68, followed by the shared vision dimension, with an average of 3.62.

The dimension with the least assessment is the initial leadership model, with an average of 3.96. On the contrary, the smallest dimensions valued for this author are: training others, with an average of 2.53, followed by the initial leadership model, with 3.24, following the data provided by Posner (2010). For Kyei and Kwadwo (2015), the lowest valued dimension is shared vision, with an average of 2.19. Considering the results, the means obtained in our study are therefore higher than those of Posner (2010) and Kyei and Kwadwo (2015).

Another point of disagreement with respect to Posner (2010), is the fact that he used a population of representatives based on the leaders of the University Fraternities, a characteristic which is fairly specific to the North American context. Our participants have instead been students who have a leadership role within the institution. On the other hand, the leaders studied in the investigations of Schuemann (2014) and Franco and Ríos (2013), also used students belonging to the governing bodies of their faculties.

Finally, the results obtained after the analysis show a high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of .877 in total for all items. This data is similar to that obtained in Posner's (2010) work, in which his Cronbach alpha gave a total result of .85.

Conclusions

Having completed the data analysis, we are ready to develop the conclusions of our research based on the aforementioned objectives. Regarding the general objective, we can conclude that the 5 dimensions that the questionnaire is made up of are present in the leadership practices of university students in our study. However, the best rated dimensions were the fourth and fifth, "Training of others and deep intervention". This fact makes us conclude that these leaders are greatly interested in promoting change and empowering the rest of the team members who they lead.

With regard to the specific objectives, the conclusions we draw are that after the review of instruments and their subsequent validation, the adapted instrument obtained a Cronbach alpha of .877, which is the reason why we can say that it is highly reliable.

Continuing with the specific objectives, regarding the first specific objective, which is characterizing student leadership, we can conclude that they are students who are mainly in their second year of study, with a female predominance and an average age of 22.7 years old. Most of these leaders are class representatives, and the largest group of representatives is made up students studying Primary Education.

Regarding the second and last specific objective, the statements made by the representatives in each dimension, it was identified that the behaviors least practiced by these university student leaders are those referring to: i) I dedicate time and effort ensuring that the people who work are adheres to the agreed norms, ii) I look for ways for others to try new ideas and methods, iii) I make sure that people support the values that we have agreed to, iv) I make sure that we set goals and make specific plans for the projects we carry out, v) I talk about my values and the principle that will guide my actions. These findings reveal, to a large extent, that university student leaders are not prepared to encourage change and innovation in the work of others, as well as to ensure that the agreements reached are followed.

These needs therefore lead us to point out the need to design a leadership training program for student representatives to help them compensate for those deficiencies that they find when carrying out their role.

In this regard, we conclude that, based on the specific needs of our representatives (in this case the specific needs of the leaders studied), the universities themselves should seek and develop different plans to compensate for these deficiencies and thus contribute to the correct development of their functions, essential for the continuity and improvement of student leadership.

On the other hand, the limitations of this study could be reduced to the non-generalization of the results, due to the small number of participants. Furthermore, the lack of triangulation of the data: a Delphi technique or a focus group with some student leaders would have allowed us to make more contrasts of the results. Finally, we need to expand the sample, since we have obtained a low level of participation due to lack of time. We also need to expand the study to the rest of the students to learn about their perceptions of their representatives.

Future lines of research would be: the extrapolation of this study to Ceuta and Melilla campuses in order to make an inter-campus comparison and expand the population to the rest of the students of the University of Granada, to characterize student leadership at the UGR and to create a training program to fill the gaps found by student leaders.

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