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Additional Information

Supervisor leadership style, employee regulatory focus, and leadership performance: A perspectivism approach

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Abstract

Drawing on regulatory focus theory, this research proposes that transformational leadership performance depends on followers’ circumstances. The analysis of 125 people from two Spanish service firms reveals that, apart from transformational leadership, the

presence of academic education, intrinsic job satisfaction and high customer contact, and the absence of family responsibilities, are core conditions for the presence of high leadership performance. The first contribution of this study is the direct inference of follower's regulatory focus from the observation of individuals' circumstances. The second contribution is that leaders should consider followers' circumstances to adopt a suitable leadership style while they enhance followers' regulatory focus.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership; Regulatory Focus Theory; Regulatory Fit; Tripartite Model of Security; Perspectivism; fsQCA

Highlights

1. Depending on follower's context, leaders should exert a proper leadership style in order to reach regulatory fit.
2. The paper proposes the inference of follower's regulatory focus from the observation of follower's context: personal circumstances, psychological states experienced at that moment, and work nature.
3. When leaders exert a transformational style, followers in a context that promotes promotion focus report the presence of high leadership performance.
4. Prespectivism jointly with fQCA methodology opens a promising line of research in the Organizational Behavior field.

**Supervisor leadership style, employee regulatory focus, and leadership
performance: A perspectivism approach**

Abstract

Drawing on regulatory focus theory, this research proposes that transformational leadership performance depends on followers' circumstances. The analysis of 125 people from two Spanish service firms reveals that, apart from transformational leadership, the presence of academic education, intrinsic job satisfaction and high customer contact, and the absence of family responsibilities, are core conditions for the presence of high leadership performance. The first contribution of this study is the direct inference of follower's regulatory focus from the observation of individuals' circumstances. The second contribution is that leaders should consider followers' circumstances to adopt a suitable leadership style while they enhance followers' regulatory focus.

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1. Introduction

During recent decades, research has increasingly focused on framing leadership within motivation theories to shed some light into the relationship between leader and followers. Specifically, self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), self-concordance theory (Bono & Judge, 2003; Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008), and regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997, 1998) are motivational frameworks that provide a sound rationale for psychological processes and mechanisms through which leaders influence followers.

Among these theoretical frameworks, the regulatory focus theory (RFT) supports a vein of research that sustains that leadership styles have different consequences depending on followers' regulatory focus. The regulatory focus describes the motivational structure according to which individuals pay attention to different facts, interpret others' behavior and perform actions (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007; Moss, Ritossa & Ngu, 2006).

Drawing on RFT, previous research shows that followers' regulatory focus might moderate leadership styles' effectiveness (Moss, Ritossa & Ngu, 2006; Moss, 2009; Whitford & Moss, 2009). Accordingly, different situations may arouse different aspects of the self, and the motivational structure may change through exposure to external stimuli such as leaders' influence and behavior (Kark & Shamir, 2002; Kark & Van Dijk, 2007; Lord & Brown, 2004). This stream of research is based on a contingent approach (Lord & Brown, 2004; Shamir, Pillai, Bligh, & Uhl-Bien, 2007; Stam, Van Knippenberg & Wisse, 2010), which is compatible with other traditional leadership theories such as contingency theory (Fiedler, 1967), path-goal theory (House & Mitchell, 1997), situational-leadership model, (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977), and leader-

member exchange (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009; Graen & Cashman, 1975; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Yulk, 2006).

Studies on the leader-follower relationship according to RFT share some features: First, they explore the causal relationship between leadership styles and followers' outcomes, both attitudinal and behavioral. Second, they measure the regulatory focus by asking followers directly. However, although the regulatory focus is openly manifested through verbal communication, these expressions are probably too subtle for managers' precise recognition (Gun, Higgins, Montes, Estourget, & Valencia, 2005). Third, they consider that the regulatory focus depends on individuals' context, which is both situational (i.e., easily manipulated in the short run), and chronic (i.e., hard and costly to change) (Higgins, 1997, 1998). However, research typically adopts a managerial approach and relies on laboratory tests that enable regulatory fit manipulation. Therefore, although regulatory focus' strength against manipulation in the workplace is commonplace, leaders should adapt their leadership style to the followers' regulatory focus (Moss et al., 2006, Moss, 2009). Thus, research should focus on finding recipes for leaders to mold follower's regulatory focus.

Fourth, specialized literature considers that followers' attitudinal outcomes like job satisfaction or organizational commitment are, in part, consequences of managers' leadership style, and that followers' regulatory focus acts as a causal catalyst or inhibitor of those outcomes (Gorman & Chavez, 2018; Kark & Van Dijk, 2007; Moss, 2009; Moos et al., 2006). However, research shows a weak direct relationship between leadership style and especially positive attitudinal outcomes (Gorman & Chavez, 2018; Moss, 2009; Moos et al., 2006) and opens the possibility to considering these attitudinal outcomes as part of the circumstances that explain the follower's regulatory focus.

Fifth, even though theory demonstrates that regulatory focus depends on context and, therefore, on a set of circumstances, research still relies on regression techniques that look for direct cause-effect relationships (Gorman & Chavez, 2018; Hamstra et al., 2011; Moos et al., 2006; Moss, 2009; Whitford & Moss, 2009).

In order to overcome some limitations and apparent contradictions, and to provide a follower-centered approach, this research relies on perspectivism: A philosophical trend that considers that reality perceptions depend on a point of view that draws from context. “I am my circumstances and me and if I don’t save them I can’t save myself” (Ortega, 1914).

Therefore, this study relies on the following assumptions: First, the regulatory focus mainly depends on a systematic set of personal circumstances. Second, to understand better followers’ regulatory focus, observation and inquiry are preferable to questions. To direct verbal communication, leaders should infer followers’ regulatory focus from the observation of their personal and organizational context while preserving direct verbal communication. Third, regulatory focus depends on a set of conditions that are the result of objective facts and psychological states. Accordingly, attitudinal constructs like job satisfaction and organizational commitment are part of this set of circumstances. Fourth, due to its nature, changing followers’ context depends in part on the will of the followers themselves. In the short and middle run, managers should understand each follower’s circumstances and adopt a suitable leadership style in order to achieve regulatory fit (Higgins, 2000), without conditioning future managerial decisions aimed at modifying the regulatory focus of the follower.

Drawing on these assumptions, this research identifies the combination of followers’ circumstances that is present when followers report the presence of high leadership performance, which consists of followers’ perceptions of leader

effectiveness, achievement of extra effort from followers, and followers' satisfaction with the leader. The study assumes three premises: first, regulatory focus is the result of observed followers' context as well as their psychological state; second, when leadership is constant, different individual circumstances lead to different leadership performance; third, leadership performance depends on the presence of regulatory fit.

This study considers the following relevant circumstances to infer followers' regulatory focus: elements of the personal and familial context (academic level and responsibility for relatives at your expense); work features (work nature) and psychological states (job satisfaction and organizational commitment profile). In order to provide a sound rationale for the relationship between observed circumstances and regulatory focus, this research relies on the Tripartite Model of Security (Hart et al., 2005). To consider leadership styles and performance, this research adopts Bass and Avolio's (1994) Full-Range Leadership Model.

This investigation analyzes a sample of 125 workers of two companies that sell telephone, internet, and other data services. FsQCA allows to identify the combination of circumstances and leadership styles that are present when followers report leadership effectiveness, followers' extra-effort, and satisfaction with the leader.

The rest of the study is as follows: Section two reviews the relevant literature and the full-range leadership model and its components as well as the regulatory fit concept. In section three, the Tripartite Security Model attaches different circumstances to different regulatory focus, thus providing a rationale to enunciate the propositions. Finally, the survey and the application of fsQCA to data provide the results that lead to the conclusions paragraph.

2. Transformational leadership

The full range leadership model draws from Burns' (1978) two types of leadership along a continuum: transactional leadership and transformational leadership (Bass, 1999). This model also incorporates input from the charismatic leadership concept (House, 1977), which focuses on leaders' traits and behavior. However, in Bass and Avolio's model (1990), charisma is only one dimension of transformational leadership, thus presenting a much more complete and integrative approach than that of charismatic leadership.

Bass and Avolio (1997) distinguish three leadership styles along a continuum: laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational. Laissez-faire represents the absence of leadership and is one-dimensional, whereas both transactional and transformational leadership are multidimensional concepts that incorporate three and four dimensions, respectively (Antonakis et al., 2003).

Transactional leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1997) refers to an exchange dynamic between leaders and their subordinates in which the leader establishes specific goals, monitors progress, and identifies rewards that followers can expect upon goal achievement. On the other hand, transformational leadership (Bass, 1985, 1997) involves motivating followers to develop and perform beyond standard expectations. Transformational leaders inspire others presenting an optimistic future, projecting an idealized vision, and communicating that the vision is desirable and achievable.

Nowadays, Bass and Avolio's model enjoys great acceptance although not without controversy (Bono & Judge, 2003; Heinitz, Liepmann, & Felfe, 2005). The *contingent reward* dimension theoretically aligns with transactional leadership and is a trait of leaders who offer incentives to employees who realize specific goals. However, this behavior often correlates highly with transformational leadership and shares similar

antecedents and consequences (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Lowe, Kroeck & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

In order to overcome this drawback, this research considers the three leadership styles as part of the same continuum and holds the view that transactional and transformational styles are complementary and nonexclusive styles (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995).

Since Bass' (1985) description of transformational leadership, several studies have shown the advantages of this charismatic, visionary, and innovative leadership style (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Transformational leaders influence followers' task outcomes like creativity, eagerness, risk taking, and attitudinal outcomes like organizational citizen behavior (OCB) (Gorman & Chavez, 2018), organizational commitment (Leach, 2005), and job satisfaction (Martin & Epitropaki, 2001).

Proposition 1a. The presence of transformational leadership leads to the presence of high leadership performance assessment.

Proposition 1b. The absence of transformational leadership leads to the absence of high leadership performance assessment.

Despite these tangible benefits, some research contributions state that the positive consequences of transformational leadership depend on contextual factors like organizational climate and followers' personality (Ehrhart & Klein, 2001). Moss and Ngu (2006), for instance, reveal that introverted and unconscientious employees are less likely to prefer transformational leaders than their extroverted and conscientious colleagues.

Regulatory focus theory argues that many of the factors that influence the effectiveness and efficacy of transformational leadership relate to the concept of regulatory focus—the extent to which individuals focus on aspirations or obligations

(Higgins, 1997, 1998). That is, followers' regulatory focus might affect the causal relation between transformational leadership and work outcomes (Gorman & Chavez, 2018; Hamstra et al., 2011; Kark & Van Dijk, 2007; Moss, 2009; Moss, Ritossa & Ngu, 2006; Whitford & Moss, 2009).

3. Regulatory focus theory

RFT is one of the most comprehensive motivation theories because its constructs comprise a primary element of human motivation (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007). This theoretical framework posits that the process of self-regulation unfolds through two self-regulatory motivational systems: promotion focus and prevention focus (Higgins, 1997, 1998). Likewise, each regulatory focus has different consequences for perception, decision-making, and emotions, as well as for individuals' behavior and performance (Higgins, 1997, 1998).

Individuals who experience a promotion focus are especially sensitive to personal growth needs regarding wishes, hopes, and aspirations. Therefore, the promotion focus is a motivational condition that depends on the presence and absence of positive outcomes. Promotion focus orients people toward advancement, personal growth, and accomplishment, and sensitizes people to experiencing emotions that range from joyfulness to gloominess. A promotion focus leads people to self-regulate by approaching challenges to desired end-states and influences their decision-making and behavior. Among others, promotion focus relates to eager conducts that promote speed and optimum performance levels (Förster, Higgins, & Bianco, 2003).

Alternatively, individuals who adopt a prevention focus prioritize goals related to protection, safety, and responsibility. This motivational condition is sensitive to the presence or absence of negative outcomes (Higgins, 1998). This approach highlights

security needs and ‘must’ goals (i.e., responsibilities and duties). This regulatory focus sensitizes people to experiencing emotions that range from latency to anxiety. A prevention focus motivates people to avoid mismatches with desired end-states, leading them to adopt an alertness attitude centered on accuracy and meeting critical standards of performance (Förster, Higgins, & Idson, 1998; Higgins, 1998).

There is some controversy around the relationship between both focuses. Moss (2009) states that the promotion and prevention focuses represent opposite poles of a single dimension. However, in other spheres, promotion and prevention focuses represent different dimensions because both can be salient at any time. On the other hand, some studies state that promotion and prevention focuses are independent rather than opposite ends of a single continuum (Förster et al., 2003; Lanaj, Chang & Johnson, 2012; Scholer & Higgins, 2008), which means that a person may have a predisposition toward having high levels on both focuses, just one focus, or neither. In this way, the RFT assumes that different pathways lead to different desired end-states (Higgins, 1997).

With regard to the leader’s capability to modify followers’ regulatory focus, the literature supports two positions. On the one hand, leaning on self-concept theory, authors like Shamir et al. (1993; 1998), Kark and Shamir (2002), van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003), Lord and Brown (2004), propose that leaders’ role is to exert their influence to change different aspects of self-concept to manipulate followers’ regulatory focus. Likewise, leaders manipulate followers’ regulatory focus through instructions or reward structures (Freitas, Liberman, & Higgins, 2002). For instance, they cultivate people’s eagerness by envisioning the activities they will undertake in the future to fulfill a goal (Spiegel, Grant-Pillow, & Higgins, 2003). Alternatively, inducing people

to imagine the problems they will face in the future to achieve this goal is a way to foster vigilance (Spiegel et al., 2003).

On the other hand, Higgins, Shah, and Friedman (1997) conceptualize the regulatory focus of individuals as a stable orientation. Most of the instructions or provisions that managers could apply to manipulate eagerness and vigilance are not feasible in a workplace environment.

Given the dependence of regulatory focus permanence on situational and chronic factors (Higgins, 1997, 1998), an intermediate and eclectic position states that the self is dynamic in nature, and that changes in context modify the self-concept, which changes situational regulatory focus without destabilizing the chronic part (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007).

Moss (2009) confirms the impossibility of applying these measures in a workplace setting. However, leaders can cultivate tendencies in followers to foster their promotion focus. Following Moos (2009), this research assumes that individuals' regulatory focus is somewhere in the continuum between promotion focus and prevention focus. In addition, because of the cross-sectional nature of this survey, this study follows Moos' (2009, p. 243) statement: "in a work place setting [...] leaders cannot [...] shape the regulatory focus of their followers" so the context that shapes regulatory focus is considered as given, and managers should look for regulatory fit and adopt a leadership style compatible with followers' regulatory focus.

3.1. Regulatory fit

As Higgins (2000) proposes, when leaders expose individuals who report a promotion focus to the prospect of gains, those individuals experience a subjective state, called regulatory fit. They perceive activities that induce this state as valuable because

they align with their needs. That is, if individuals' activities are congruent with an individuals' regulatory focus they will experience regulatory fit (Avnet & Higgins, 2006; Cesario, Grant & Higgins, 2004).

This sense of value and alignment fosters persistence (Keller & Bless, 2008), which manifests as work engagement (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). Likewise, the fit between leadership style and self-regulatory focus enhances followers' motivation and elicits more positive leader evaluations (Keller & Bless, 2008).

People who experience greater regulatory fit, and therefore derive greater value from fit, are more prone to pursuing goals. That is, as fit increases so does people's motivation to put extra effort to achieving their goals and to focus their attention on goal achievement. In the same vein, their assessment of goal pursuit is more positive (Benjamin & Flynn, 2006).

In the context of leadership, the concept of regulatory fit suggests that people may respond differently to a leader depending on the fit between the leader's style and the follower's regulatory focus. Leaders can determine the strategic means by which followers pursue their goals, and followers are likely to experience fit when leaders encourage them to pursue their goals in a way that sustains their regulatory orientation (Benjamin & Flynn, 2006). Thus, Stam, Van Knippenberg, and Wisse (2010) find that vision content is contingent on follower regulatory focus, thus contributing to the growing evidence on RFT's high relevance for leadership processes (Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Kark & Van Dijk, 2007).

Regarding the influence of followers' self-regulatory focus on the leader-follower interaction, research on charismatic and transformational leadership shows significant individual differences in subordinates' reactions to the same leader (Ehrhart

& Klein, 2001). Drawing on the regulatory fit concept, Moss, Ritossa, and Ngu, (2006) and Moss (2009) propose that the effectiveness of transformational and visionary leadership styles depends on follower's regulatory focus. Specifically, they state that transformational leadership achieves better results when followers report a promotion focus.

Therefore, this study analyzes the determinants of followers' perceptions of transformational or transactional leadership performance. This study proposes that leadership effectiveness changes depending on the existence of circumstances that foster a promotion focus or prevention focus. Thus, depending on the scenario and circumstances surrounding the follower, the effectiveness of different leadership styles may vary.

Previous academic literature measures followers' regulatory focus through scales (see Gorman et al., 2012), however, this study proposes inducing followers' regulatory focus from people's circumstances. Therefore, a theoretical model provides a sound rationale to this inference exercise and supports the propositions.

3.2. Tripartite model of security as a sound logic to attach context elements to regulatory focus

The Tripartite Model of Security (Hart, 2005) proposes three systems or defensive mechanisms that provide individuals with a sense of security. Self-esteem represents an individual's personal resources (e.g., knowledge, skills, and strengths) to face life challenges. The attachment system refers to the social network of which the individual feels responsible (i.e., close relatives) and from which he or she expects help in case of personal need. Finally, the terror management system refers to a set of beliefs and values related to a transcendental view of life. The individual becomes prone to

perceiving a sense of order and purpose in every event, a purpose that transcends the self.

According to this model, when individuals feel a certain level of security, they can experience promotion focus; otherwise, they adopt a prevention focus. Therefore, Moos (2009) reports that self-esteem relates positively to promotion focus; the attachment system relates negatively to a promotion focus; and personal belief in a just world relates positively to a promotion focus.

Therefore, the Tripartite Model of Security provides a solid foundation to infer an individual's regulatory focus from that follower's personal circumstances. From this rationale is possible to assume that high academic qualifications enhance self-esteem, which in turn encourages individual's promotion focus.

Proposition 2a. Followers' high academic qualification fosters promotion focus, which leads to high transformational leadership performance assessment.

Proposition 2b. The absence of academic qualification fosters prevention focus, which leads to low transformational leadership performance assessment.

Similarly, when followers are in charge of dependent relatives, they experience an attachment feeling that promotes a prevention focus.

Proposition 3a. The absence of dependent relatives in followers' charge fosters promotion focus, which leads to high transformational leadership performance assessment.

Proposition 3b. The presence of dependent relatives in followers' charge fosters prevention focus, which leads to low transformational leadership performance assessment.

Followers' regulatory focus also depends on an organizational context that promotes the salience of followers' prevention or promotion focus (Kark & Van Dijk,

2007). Thus, the different regulatory focuses, which are the consequence of the organizational context, can partially determine followers' perceptions of leadership performance.

Organizational settings that are dynamic, change oriented, organic, and have a clan mode of governance form a promotion-oriented context; therefore, they may promote followers' promotion focus (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007). Conversely, organizational environments and structures that have a mechanistic and bureaucratic structure that stresses the importance of rules, regulations, stability, and standardization form a prevention-oriented context that could foster followers' prevention focus (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007).

Given that the organizational elements listed by Kark and Van Dijk (2007) are mainly situational (changeable by management) and given that this research focuses on chronic components (permanent), this study proposes work nature as an organizational context element that fosters different regulatory focus.

Regarding the nature of work and given that the sample comprises the staff of two service companies, this research considers customer contact (Chase, 1978, 1981) as a suitable proxy of work nature. Scholars consider customer contact as the key characteristic to define service and the most influential single feature that deeply conditions service delivery design (Lovelock & Gummerson, 2004; Pride & Ferrell, 2003; Skaggs & Snow, 2004). High customer contact services promote intrinsic motivation as well as true responsibility for the influence of the service on customer wellbeing and satisfaction (Ethiraj et al., 2005), which is a kind of transitive motivation (Guillén, Ferrero, & Hoffman, 2015). Therefore, according to the Tripartite Model of Security, a transcendent approach to life leads to a promotion focus.

Proposition 4a. The presence of high customer contact fosters promotion focus, which leads to the presence of transformational leadership performance assessment.

Proposition 4b. The absence of high customer contact fosters prevention focus, which leads to the absence of transformational leadership performance assessment.

As to psychological states, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment are the two main job attitudes that explain a wide range of results from pure task performance to OCB (Harrison et al., 2006). Some contributions consider job attitudes a consequence of individuals' regulatory focus. Therefore, promotion focus has a positive relationship with job satisfaction, affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Lanaj, Chang, & Johnson, 2012). These studies also find a negative relationship between prevention focus and job satisfaction and a positive relationship between prevention focus and continuance and normative commitment (Lanaj, Chang & Johnson, 2012).

Most studies suggest that regulatory focus is an antecedent of work attitudes like organizational commitment and job satisfaction. However, Whitford and Moss (2009) find a different pattern when leaders and followers are on the same page, and the positive relationship between visionary leadership and job satisfaction is less significant and less contingent on the promotion focus of followers. Therefore, although dependent on leadership style, work attitudes like job satisfaction and organizational commitment depend on a wide range of organizational and individual factors such as personality traits or life experience and should be part of the circumstances that leaders have to face and manage. Thus, this work proposes that job attitudes, as mental states, are part of the personal particularities that delineate followers' regulatory focus.

Proposition 5a. The presence of job satisfaction, which contributes to enhance follower's promotion focus, leads to high transformational leadership performance assessment.

Proposition 5b. The absence of job satisfaction, which contributes to enhance followers' prevention focus, leads to low transformational leadership performance assessment.

Proposition 6a. The presence of a high organizational commitment profile, which contributes to enhance follower's promotion focus, leads to high transformational leadership performance assessment.

Proposition 6b. The absence of a high organizational commitment profile, which contributes to enhance followers' prevention focus, leads to low transformational leadership performance assessment.

3. Method

3.1. Sample

The sample comprises 125 individuals, the entire staff of two Spanish SMEs devoted to selling and delivering communication services—mainly telephone and data services. The survey reached 100% of the people working in both companies thanks to the support of the respective human resource managers. The Lime Survey platform is the tool used to deliver the questionnaire and gather data between September and December 2017. The statistical software for data analysis is SPSS 22 and fsQCA 3.0.

The basic sample features are the following: Gender: 57.6% are woman; Age: 91.6% are under 40 years old, and employees between 25 to 34 years old are 66.1%. The age of the remaining employees ranges between 50 and 54 years old.

Regarding academic qualification, 32.2% holds a university degree or higher, 67.8% holds undergraduate qualification, 47.5% holds a high school degree and 18.6% finished primary education. Only 1.7% does not hold any kind of academic degree.

As to relatives in charge: 55.9% of the respondents have no dependent relatives in charge, 35.6% is in charge of children under 15 years old, 3.4% is responsible of descendants older than 14 years old, and 5.1% has ascendants in charge.

Even when both are young companies, founded in 2004 and 2006, respectively, 15.3% of employees report an industry tenure above 10 years, and 40.8% report five to 10 years in the industry. Given firms and peoples' age, this means that a large proportion of the sample has worked exclusively in this industry.

With regard to the department, 28.8% work for the B2B division, 54.2% for the B2C division, and 16.9% in headquarter services. Finally, 64.9% have a permanent contract, whereas 35.1% hold a temporary one.

3.2. *Measures and calibration*

In order to measure leadership styles and leadership performance, this research relies on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X) (Bass & Avolio, 1997). This questionnaire comprises 45 items, 20 to measure transformational leadership, grouped in four dimensions; 12 to measure transactional leadership, grouped in three dimensions; and 4 to measure the Laissez-Faire style, that is, the absence of leadership. The last 9 items refer to the measurement of leadership results in terms of effectiveness (4 items), satisfaction (2 items), and extra effort (3 items).

To measure job satisfaction the survey employs the Overall Job Satisfaction Scale (Warr, Cook, & Wall, 1979). This scale comprises 15 items, 8 to measure extrinsic job satisfaction and 7 to gauge intrinsic job satisfaction.

The measure of organizational commitment uses Lee et al.'s (2001) scale, which comprises 15 items, 5 to measure each commitment dimension: continuance, affective, and normative. Due to the size of the sample, considering the three dimensions separately is unfeasible. The survey runs a cluster analysis that results in three groups: High Organizational Commitment: individuals who score high in all three dimensions; Medium-Low Organizational Commitment: individuals who present intermediate scores in continuance and normative commitment and medium to low scores for affective commitment; Low Organizational Commitment: individuals who score low in all three dimensions.

Finally, for Customer Contact this study uses a six-item scale based on Soteriou and Chase (1998). Table 1 reports the correlation matrix from the raw data.

Table 1 here.

4. Results

The matrix shows a high correlation between transactional leadership and transformational leadership, supporting the idea that leadership styles are part of the same continuum, and that transactional and transformational styles are complementary and nonexclusive (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995). Similarly, extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction present a high correlation.

Regarding the scales' main properties and calibration criteria, Table 2 succinctly reports the basic descriptive statistics, reliability indexes, and calibration anchors.

Table 2 here.

4.1 Necessary conditions

Necessary conditions are especially important because the outcome (leadership performance) cannot occur without their presence (Dul, 2016). In other words, a necessary condition must always be present for the outcome to take place (Fiss 2007; Schneider & Eggert, 2014). Thus, Table 3 presents an analysis of necessary conditions using the fsQCA 3.0 software (Ragin & Sean, 2016).

Table 3 here.

In order to deem a condition necessary, the consistency must exceed 0.9 (Schneider et al., 2010). Table 3 shows that only the presence of transformational leadership is a necessary condition for the presence of high leadership performance. On the other hand, the absence of transformational leadership is the only necessary condition for the absence of leadership performance. In this case, the absence of other conditions like extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction present a consistency near 0.9 but do not exceed this value, so they are not necessary conditions.

4.2. *Analysis of sufficient conditions*

Sufficiency implies that a condition or combination of conditions can cause the outcome by itself. Conversely, a necessary condition must always be present for the outcome to take place (Fiss 2007; Schneider & Eggert, 2014).

This study analyzes two models. The first one comprises the causal configurations that are sufficient to reach the outcome (model 1); that is, patterns leading followers to report a high leadership performance. On the other hand, model 2 examines the configurations that lead followers to report low leadership performance.

Model 1 $fs_Leader\ Perf = f(fs_TrnasF\ L, fs_Trnas\ L, fs_ES, fs_IS, \sim fs_RAYE, fs_HOCP, fs_Educ\ Level, fs_CusCont,)$

Model 2 $\sim fs_Leader\ Perf = f(\sim fs_TransF\ L, \sim fs_Trnas\ L, \sim fs_ES, \sim fs_IS, fs_RAYE, \sim fs_HOCP, \sim fs_Educ\ Level, \sim fs_CusCont)$

One of the main characteristics of comparative qualitative analysis is that the result or outcome happens through different paths or causal configurations (Ragin, 2000). In this line, Table 4 shows 10 configurations that determine the presence and absence of high leadership performance.

This survey presents the results following the notation from Ragin and Fiss (2008) and Fiss (2011), whereby large circles indicate core conditions and small circles indicate peripheral conditions. On the other hand, black circles indicate the presence and white circles the absence of a condition. As Fiss (2011, p. 403) indicates:

“core conditions are those that are part of both parsimonious and intermediate solutions, and peripheral conditions are those that are eliminated in the parsimonious solution and thus only appear in the intermediate solution. Accordingly, this approach defines causal coreness in terms of the strength of the evidence relative to the outcome, not connectedness to other configurational elements.”

Results for model 1 (presence of high leadership performance) are both adequate and suitable as the overall solution consistency is greater than 0.75 (Fiss, 2011). More specifically, the model reveals the presence of five core conditions —transformational leadership, intrinsic job satisfaction, academic qualification, customer contact— and the absence of relatives at person’s expense.

Model 2 (absence of leadership performance) is also both adequate and suitable as the overall solution consistency is greater than 0.75 (Fiss, 2011). This model reveals the absence of four core conditions: transformational leadership, transactional leadership, extrinsic job satisfaction, and customer contact.

Table 4 here.

The results are in line with propositions 1a to 6b and no results contradict them. Followers' circumstances such as academic qualification, the absence of family responsibilities, a work that enables customer contact and the presence of intrinsic job satisfaction, are present when high leadership performance assessment is present. Conversely, not only the absence of leadership, transformational or transactional, but also the absence of extrinsic job satisfaction and customer contact coincide with the absence of high leadership performance assessment.

5. Conclusions

This study considers RFT as a useful theory for understanding the leadership process and its results. In line with this theoretical framework, this survey considers followers' circumstances as an antecedent of their regulatory focus. Instead of directly measuring followers' regulatory focus, this study analyzes which combination of personal and organizational circumstances, which explain individuals' regulatory focus, is present when followers report high leadership performance.

The results show the validity of the follower-centered approach of leadership (Lord & Brown, 2004; Shamir, Pillai, Bligh, & Uhl-Bien, 2007). That is, followers' circumstances and their implications on their regulatory focus moderate leadership performance; therefore, leaders should pay attention to followers' circumstances to deploy a suitable leadership style.

Circumstances like academic qualification, familial responsibilities or work nature determine the leader-follower relationship. On the other hand, leaders should carefully consider basic work circumstances and attitudes like customer contact and job satisfaction and reflect about the conditions should change to remove barriers in the

leader-follower exchange. That is, they should consider which actions are suitable to change the circumstances that impede followers' promotion focus.

Finally, this research is not without limitations. First, given the sample size and fsQCA requirements, the number of circumstances is low. Future research should consider a wide range of personal and organizational elements. Second, this study assumes the risk of mixing antecedent and consequent elements. This research considers attitudinal outcomes as conditions because they depend on a wide array of circumstances besides leadership style. Third, due to its design, the survey focuses on leadership performance regarding transformational leadership and circumstances that enhance followers' promotion focus. Additional research is necessary to gain better understanding about the regulatory fit between transactional leadership and followers' circumstances. Finally, the analysis of the results opens the door to considering whether followers' circumstances affect not only leader's performance assessment, but also followers' perceptions of the manager's leadership style. That is, followers with different circumstances might perceive different leadership styles from the same individual.

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Table 1. Correlation Matrix from the raw data

		CusCont	TransF L	Trans L	HOCP	Educ Level	IS	ES	Leader Perf	RAYE
Customer Contact	Pearson Correlation	1								
	Sig. (2-tailed)									
Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.359**	1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000								
Transactional Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.294**	.731**	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000							
High Organizational Commitment Profile	Pearson Correlation	-.045	.155	.087	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.612	.077	.323						
Educational Level	Pearson Correlation	-.238**	-.069	-.087	-.093	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.433	.324	.293					
Intrinsic Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.218*	.493**	.323**	.224*	-.019	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013	.000	.000	.010	.827				
Extrinsic Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.335**	.512**	.335**	.169	-.011	.841**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.054	.905	.000			
Leader Performance	Pearson Correlation	.372**	.893**	.661**	.049	-.074	.512**	.573**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.577	.398	.000	.000		
Relatives At Your Expense	Pearson Correlation	-.014	.133	.136	.132	.127	.071	.128	.023	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.873	.129	.121	.133	.147	.422	.144	.798	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2. Statistical Descriptive and Calibration

	Descriptive statistics			Reliability	Calibration Anchors		
	Max	Min	Mean (S.D)	Cronbach's Alpha	Fully-in	Crossover point	Fully-out
CusCont	7	1	6.07 (1.04)	0.92	7	6	4
TransF L	5	1	3.65 (0.79)	0.91	4.5	3	2
Trans L	5	1	3.32 (0.54)	0.94	4.5	3	2
Relatives At Your Expense	2	0	0.55 (0.56)	-	Without any RAYE = 0 = Fully out (0) ; 1 kind of RAYE = 1 = Cross over point (0.5); 2 or more kind of RAYE = Fully In (1)		
HOCP	3	1	1.53 (0.79)	-	Low OCP = Fully out (0); Medium OCP = Cross over point (0.5); HOCP = Fully In (1)		
Educ Level	6	0	3.11 (1.05)	-	Primary school or less = Fully out (0); Secondary school = Predominant out (0.25); University degree or above = Fully In (1)		
IS	7	1	4.88 (1.20)	0.91	6.5	5	3
ES	7	1	5.00 (1.03)	0.89	6.5	5	3
Leader Performance	5	1	3.89 (0.92)	0.89	4.5	3	2

NOTE: As in Crilly et al. (2012), values of 0.49, 2.99, 5.99, 4.99 have been computed as 0.5, 3, 5 and 6 in the fsQCA software.

Table 3. Necessity Analysis

	Presence of Leader Perf		Absence of Leader Perf	
	Consistency	Coverage	Consistency	Coverage
fs_CusCont	0.752780	0.897502	0.732900	0.235244
~fs_CusCont	0.358561	0.832953	0.680668	0.425695
fs_TrasFL	0.911480	0.974775	0.604063	0.173918
~fs_TrasFL	0.227558	0.681002	0.912386	0.735090
fs_TransL	0.780368	0.947153	0.666324	0.217727
~fs_TransL	0.355478	0.798271	0.838268	0.506788
fs_HOCP	0.587265	0.923280	0.591313	0.250278
~fs_HOCP	0.523130	0.826226	0.818740	0.348130
fs_EducLevel	0.426234	0.822297	0.550523	0.285932
~fs_EducLevel	0.629866	0.838844	0.657858	0.235869
fs_IS	0.646682	0.949673	0.564124	0.223031
~fs_IS	0.470922	0.800523	0.872706	0.399392
fs_ES	0.683157	0.955579	0.582677	0.219422
~fs_ES	0.441955	0.797311	0.882041	0.428396
fs_RAYE ¹	0.308078	0.899256	0.423009	0.332413
~fs_RAYE	0.771290	0.832363	0.871800	0.253290

NOTE: (~) means absence of the condition. Bold values mean a necessary condition

¹ Relatives At Your Expense

Table 4. Sufficiency Analysis

	Presence of Leader Performance						Absence of Leader Performance				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	
IS		●	●	●				○	○	○	
ES			●	●		●	○	○	○	○	
EducLevel			●		●		○		○		
HOCP							○	○	○	○	
RAYE	○	○	○	○	○					●	
CusCont				●	●	●	○	○			
TransF L	●					●	○	○	○	○	
Trans L		●			●	●			○	○	
Consistency	0.976923	0.975489	0.981246	0.969754	0.965929	0.988172	0.841495	0.832862	0.801651	0.813177	
Raw Coverage	0.717449	0.480483	0.261049	0.427926	0.256325	0.513468	0.341979	0.517730	0.433102	0.300179	
Unique Coverage	0.152678	0.000860	0.004374	0.002824	0.002093	0.063364	0.009699	0.092995	0.110971	0.025360	
Overall Solution Consistency		0.953754						0.804615			
Overall Solution Coverage		0.796168						0.676269			

NOTE: As in Fiss (2011) ● means presence of core condition. ● means presence of peripheral condition. ○ means absence of core condition. ○ means absence of peripheral condition. Consistency cutoff: 0.916047 (presence) and 0.780470 (absence). Frequency cutoff: 1.00 (Presence and Absence). Assumptions Presence: (1.1.1.1.0.1.1.1). Assumptions Absence: (0.0.0.0.1.0.0.0).