"Management and leadership in university education: Approaches and perspectives"

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NUMBER OF REFERENCES	NUMBER OF FIGURES	NUMBER OF TABLES
46	5	4

BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES

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MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION: APPROACHES AND PERSPECTIVES

Abstract

University education has undergone transcendental changes in recent years. The tendencies of adaptation to these advances bring as a consequence that the management models and the leadership exercised by its directors are analyzed looking for a better administration of university entities. The present study reviews the scientific literature on approaches and perspectives on leadership and management in university education. It aims to establish various aspects, characteristics, and leadership and management styles through the review of scientific articles in the Scopus, Scielo, Proquest, Gale Onfile, and Ebsco databases. Relevant aspects were measured through the analysis of 36 articles published in the last 7 years. As a result, models and redesigns of university management were obtained, as well as a trend toward developing competencies and new leadership styles of those who lead institutions. It is concluded that university management is characterized by the search for strategies that allow the achievement of the established objectives based on strategic planning. In addition, it includes its role and interrelation with society and innovative models that easily adapt to changes through leadership that seeks commitment and participation, promoting proactive decision-making and emotional intelligence.

Keywords	leadership, management, university, higher education, crisis
JEL Classification	I21, I23, M54

INTRODUCTION

University education has undergone significant changes in recent years, with greater significance due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Although it has gradually developed in a staggered manner and emphasized the use of technological tools, in recent years, there has been a radical change in the extended use of the virtual or remote modality to ensure the continuity of its operations.

Since the university is an institution that connects with the interests of society, its management must be effective in achieving not only its objectives but also those of the community. Therefore, it is essential for university management to develop actions that guarantee the academic quality, which is a primary goal of university institutions that comply with policies centered on citizen formation (Yovera Yecerra, 2020).

Jiménez (2018) points out that in the strategic educational management carried out by universities, it is essential to reason about demanding aspects, such as the transformation of thinking, adaptation to change, decentralization of decisions, understanding of human action, and flexibility in practices and relationships.

According to Burns (1978), management focuses on the administration of human resources and talent, achievement of efficiency, and attainment of scientific knowledge directed toward the understanding of the university community and the actions to promote its development, articulating the academic environment with the social and cultural ones.

University management consists of a set of strategies used by directors to guarantee institutional sustainability. In this way, each university adopts a particular identity regarding its connection with the environment and demands (Lopera, 2004). The great changes in the economic, technological, scientific, and social spheres have had a great impact on university education. These advances have made university management a more complex process (Díaz et al., 2017).

At the same time, management demands certain particularities in those in charge of managing educational entities; one of these main competencies is leadership. In this regard, Rehbock (2020) points out that leadership has positioned itself as the fundamental skill required by university directors due to the changing phenomena of their contexts.

Finally, leadership refers to the ability to influence, impact, or induce groups or individuals of an organization to achieve a certain action or behavior that drives to meet the institutional objectives or goals (Solajà et al., 2016). Therefore, university management must be developed by those who exercise their actions framed in the fundamental characteristics of a leader. Morever, it is vital to take into account that there are particular characteristics in university institutions that distinguish them from other organizations and make their management more complex (Díaz et al., 2017).

This study reviews certain styles, particularities, and characteristics of university management, as well as the leadership exercised by those who administer them, to establish relevant aspects that universities can take into account to have much more efficient management.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper is a review that identifies the contributions of great importance, in the past and present, to the topic being addressed (Arnaú & Sala, 2020), whose main objective is to identify, evaluate, and analyze the sources of primary information collected, in order to answer a specific research question (Kitchenham, 2004).

In this sense, the research review aims to answer the following question: What are the aspects of management and leadership in university education that have been researched in the scientific literature between 2015 and 2021?

The study inquired about the existence of research on the subject in various databases, such as Ebsco, Gale Online, Proquest, Scielo, and Scopus, by using the advanced search (University Management) OR (University Leadership). The inclusion criteria requested the articles published between 2015 and 2021, scientific articles in English and Spanish, and the words were contained in the title. Thus, Figure 1 presents the articles filtered in each database.

Figure 2 shows the procedure to discard duplicates and those articles that did not have open access, as well as articles that were related to student leadership or management since the search refers to the leadership exercised by university academic directors.

By reading the abstract, the articles for downloading and reading were selected, extracting the following data: year of publication, authors, journal, link, study objective, main results, and conclusions.

A literature review analyzed various research studies on management and leadership in university education. In the first identification phase, 866 articles were found. Then, applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 36 articles were selected for analysis. Taking into account the years of publication of the articles, the inclusion criterion was that the publications were from the last seven years, i.e., from 2015 to 2021. The distribution by years is shown in Figure 3.
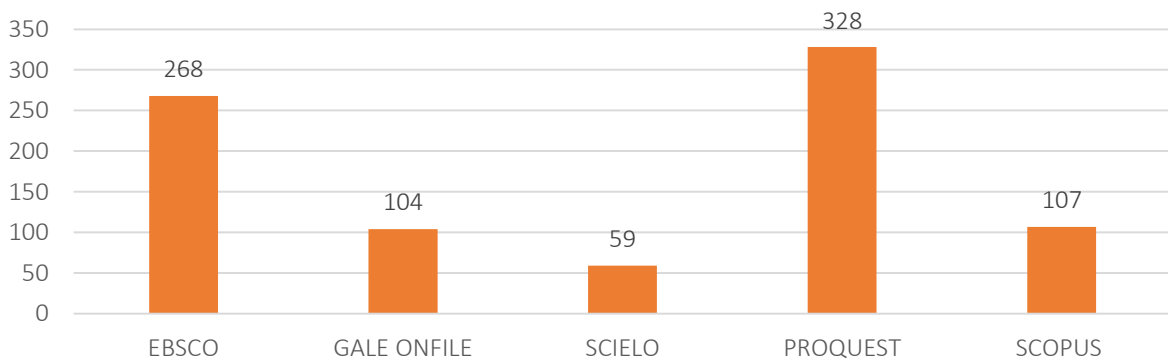
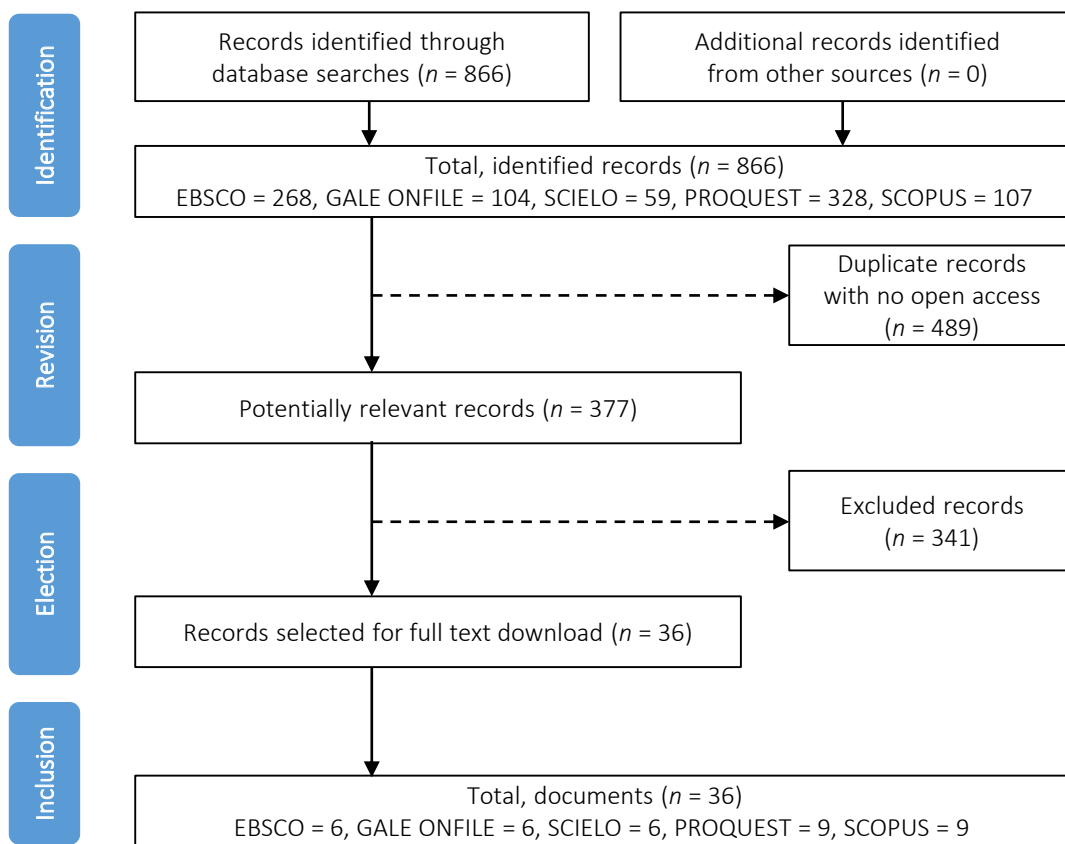**Figure 1.** Articles filtered by advanced search in databases

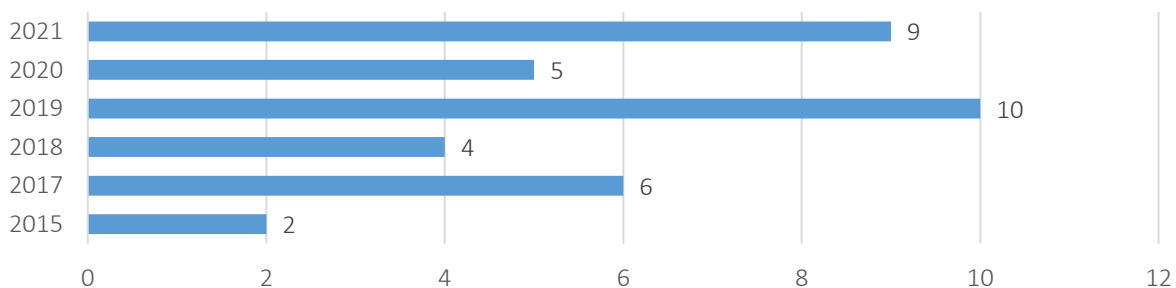**Figure 2.** PRISMA scheme for the selection of articles

Figure 3. Articles by year of publication

The research studies collected were classified into the following dimensions: university management, leadership in higher education, management and leadership in times of crisis, and the relationship between university management and leadership (Figure 4).

Regarding university management, this implies a series of fundamental aspects that involve keeping its development in force. Studies value the university's role as a driving force for the community's social development, hence the importance of efficient management to fulfill this fundamental function (Enríquez et al., 2018; Bosmenier et al., 2020).

The proposals of the articles are oriented to management models based on strategic planning (Huerta-Riveros & Pedraja-Rejas, 2019) with an interaction of vertical and horizontal management (Shaulska et al., 2021; Yáber et al., 2018).

Since university management involves certain complexity as it is related to the training of people and the concept of knowledge management is handled, the elements for its development are analyzed. They include application of administrative processes of diagnosis, evaluation, control, and continuous improvement (Enríquez et al., 2018) through a model that includes the competitive strategy, the organizational system, stimulation, and leadership, thus ensuring the quality of university institutions (Rodríguez López et al., 2019). Moreover, it becomes an example within society, generating value through a type of management that allows the development of competencies of its graduates (Rodríguez López et al., 2019; Pedraza et al., 2017). Within this point, the contribution of Huerta-Riveros and Pedraja-Rejas (2019) is interesting, as they incorporate the concept of a mobile strategic plan, which develops a constant evaluation to apply adjustments and corrective measures.

According to J. Quijije and K. Quijije (2019), the evaluation of university management is complemented by the level of achievement of the institutional mission and project, as well as the main economic and financial indicators obtained.

Coherence between the administrative processes of university entities and the elements that compose education, such as teaching, research, and extension, must be a fundamental point for their development and growth (Yovera Yecerra, 2020; Gamboa, 2017).

There is an evident need for management models adaptable to a permanent redesign, with an approach focused on innovation and the exchange of experiences (Hale et al., 2020). Likewise, Bosmenier et al. (2020) incorporate internal articulation and external collaboration, as well as coherence with the objectives of sustainable development. Therefore, it is proposed to share reflective management experiences through productive dialogue internally and externally, rescuing good practices through university management benchmarking (Bosmenier et al., 2020; Shaulska et al., 2021).
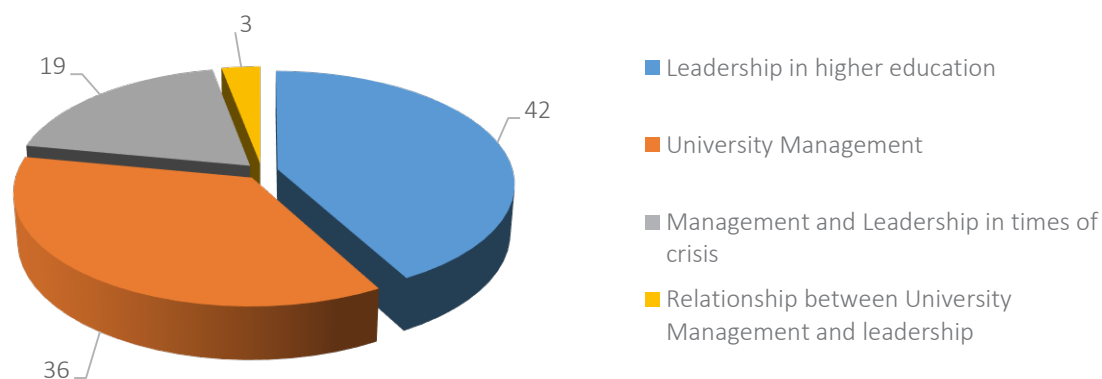

Figure 4. Distribution of research studies by thematic dimensions

Concerning the approaches, Soto et al. (2020) point out that, in university administrative management, the structuralist approach predominates, which is characterized by managing according to the organization's internal structure and its interaction with other institutions. On the contrary, in academic management, the functional approach predominates, which is applied vertically.

Education is changing, and virtuality is a critical factor in its development, hence the need to lead management efficiently by professionals with high-level management skills (Yong-Castillo et al., 2017).

Along with management, those who exercise it must have leadership characteristics to guide the organization toward achieving its objectives. In this sense, Udin et al. (2019) analyze leadership and its relationship with job satisfaction and the development of communicative relationships. In addition, Argento and van Heblen (2021) focus on the balance between sense (rational competencies) and sensitivity (intangible aspects).

Leadership should lead to what Stolze and Klaus (2021) call the third mission, which corresponds to the fact that higher education institutions should involve socioeconomic needs and market demands. At the same time, the connection with the economic sector, as well as the development of innovative activities, so university institutions have a more decentralized structure is vital (Badillo et al., 2015). Managers who exercise leadership are formed by the system itself through the execution of tasks related to their position (González et al., 2019b), where it is required to exercise meritocratic leadership (San Juan & Bueno, 2018; Ganga et al., 2018).

The analysis of the characteristics detected in university leaders shows leadership with an emphasis on innovation and the use of technology for problem-solving (Tintoré et al., 2019). At the same time, Jaya Escobar and Guerra Bretaña (2017) recommend strengthening a low level of leadership through commitment and participation.

Instead of the application of transactional leadership based on rewards and punishments, transfor-

Table 1. Research studies on university management

Year	Authors	Research title
		Proposals on management models, key aspects for the promotion of quality, and the redesign of university management towards a modern approach
2017	Pedraza et al.	Medición de la Gestión de la calidad universitaria: Revisión bibliográfica [Measurement of university quality management: Bibliographic review]
2018	Yáber et al.	Modelo de gobernanza, liderazgo y gestión en instituciones de educación superior aplicado a la innovación curricular [Governance, Leadership and Management Model in Higher Education Institutions Applied to the Curricular Innovation]
2018	Enríquez et al.	La Administración y su contribución en las Instituciones de educación superior en el Ecuador [The administration and its contribution to the educational management in the higher Education institutions in Ecuador]
2019	Huerta-Riveros and Pedraja-Rejas	Mobile Planning: New Approaches to Strategic Management in Higher Education Institutions
2019	Rodríguez López et al.	Modelo teórico de Gestión universitaria [University management theory model]
2020	Bosmenier et al.	Gobernanza universitaria en Cuba: agenda 2030 [University governance in Cuba: agenda 2030]
2020	Yovera Yecerra	La Gestión educativa universitaria venezolana: Un planteamiento desde la acción trasncompleja [Venezuelan university educational management: an approach from transcomplex action]
2020	Hale et al.	Lessons from Within: Redesigning Higher Education
		Description of characteristics, gaps, and relevant aspects of university management in different scenarios
2017	Gamboa	Gestión Universitaria: brechas entre los discursos institucionales y las realidades escolares [University management: gaps between institutional discourse and school realities]
2017	Yong-Castillo et al.	Evolución de la Educación Superior a Distancia: desafíos y oportunidades para su Gestión[Evolution of higher distance education. Challenges and opportunities for its management]
2019	J. Quijije and K. Quijije	Caracterización de la Gestión universitaria dentro de la Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabí (ULEAM), Ecuador [Characterization of university management within the Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro De Manabi (ULEAM), Ecuador]
2020	Soto et al.	El perfil de gestión del directivo docente de Antioquia y los enfoques de gestión administrativa[Managerial profile of teacher-directors in Antioquia and administrative management approaches]
2021	Shaulska et al.	Performance management at Ukrainian university: A case of the KPIs use

mational leadership is recommended with a style that encourages and motivates people, seeking a positive development of followers, promoting change and creativity. In applying transformational leadership, leaders and followers obtain benefits, knowing that their effort will be valued and rewarded (Valles Ruiz, 2019; Orjuela & Goyeneche, 2015; Fong et al., 2019).

San Juan and Bueno (2017) add other essential aspects of university management, such as ideological, charismatic, emotional, and visionary leadership. Based on gender, Tomás-Folch (2017) has also been found analyzing traits in motivation when managing, with notable differences according to the gender of the leaders. The study reveals a strong perception that leadership positions in universities are mostly assigned to the male gender.

The crisis produced by the pandemic has considerably affected education at all levels. Universities were forced to undergo a process of adaptation to get back on their feet and remain operational, particularly considering the leading role they play, which allows them to make a meaningful contribution in terms of knowledge, human capital, technology, science, and infrastructure (Bedoya et al., 2021).

Concerning the dynamic capacities in management, Gonzáles et al. (2019a) point out the creation of competitive advantages through constant feedback that serves as a support to remain at the forefront. Furthermore, it is an adaptation process that should serve as support for the effective progress towards the fourth industrial revolution, given the imbalances presented as a result of the health crisis (Coetzee et al., 2021).

Table 2. Research studies on leadership in higher education

| Year	Authors	Research title
Leadership competencies, styles, and experiences of directors of higher education institutions		
2015	Orjuela and Goyeneche	Estilos de liderazgo en cargos universitarios, estudio descriptivo con mujeres directivas [Leadership Styles in University Positions: Descriptive Study with Female Managers]
2015	Badillo et al.	Liderazgo de los rectores frente a la "tercera misión" de la universidad [The Leadership of Rectors in Universities' "Third Mission"]
2017	San Juan Fernández and Bueno Villaverde	Estilos de liderazgo en la gestión académica universitaria española [Leadership styles in the university academic management]
2018	San Juan Fernández and Bueno Villaverde	El liderazgo en las universidades como elemento de cambio en la sociedad [Leadership in universities as an element of change in society]
2019b	González et al.	Experiencias de gestión y liderazgo universitario en el siglo XXI: el caso de la Umaza desde las voces de sus actores [Experiences of university management and leadership in the 21st century: the case of Umaza from the voices of its actors]
2019	Valles Ruiz	¿Liderazgo transaccional o transformacional? El discurso de cinco rectoras de universidades mexicanas: una aproximación [Transactional or transformational leadership? The speech of five rectors of Mexican universities: An approximation]
2019	Udin et al.	Leadership Styles and Communication Skills At Indonesian Higher Education: Patterns, Influences, And Applications For Organization
2020	Bedoya et al.	Competencias directivas en la gestión universitaria en Colombia [Managerial Skills for University Management in Colombia]
Factors of importance towards a new leadership approach for quality management in higher education		
2017	Jaya Escobar and Guerra Bretañal	El liderazgo y la participación como factores clave para la gestión de la calidad. Caso de la Universidad Estatal de Bolívar [Leadership and Participation as Main Factors for Quality Management. Case of the Universidad Estatal de Bolívar (Bolivar's Estate University)]
2017	Tomás-Folch	El liderazgo en la universidad: el papel que tienen ellas [Leadership in University: the role that women have]
2018	Ganga et al.	Relevancia del Liderazgo en el Gobierno de las universidades iberoamericanas [The importance of leadership in Ibero-American Universities government]
2019	Fong et al.	Nuevo Liderazgo organizacional para fortalecer instituciones universitarias débilmente acopladas según Weick [New Organizational Leadership to strengthen weakly coupled college institutions according to Weick]
2019	Tintoré et al.	Liderazgo y e-liderazgo en las historias de vida de líderes educativos a través del mundo [Leadership and e-leadership in the life histories of educational leaders throughout the world]
2021	Argento and van Helden	New development: University managers balancing between sense and sensibility
2021	Stolze and Sailer	Advancing HEIs' third-mission through dynamic capabilities: the role of leadership and agreement on vision and goals
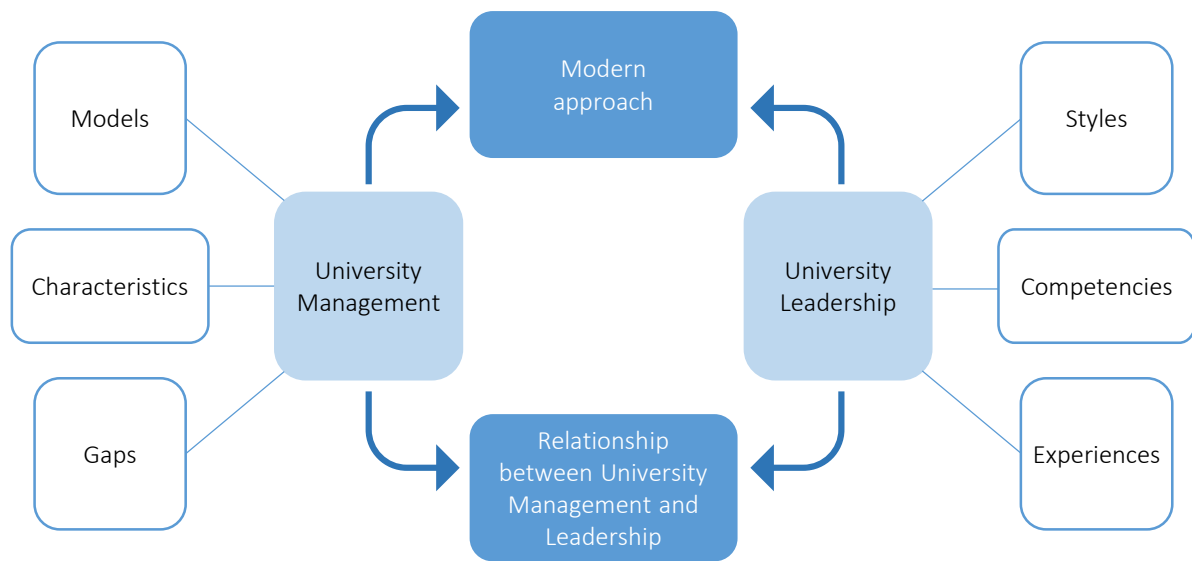
Figure 5. Aspects analyzed in the literature review

The shift of leadership in times of crisis must be from the inside out, to promote proactive decision-making, social skills, teamwork, and emotional intelligence (Véliz et al., 2021). The use of technological tools, focusing objectives and policies on the new context, and greater organizational fluidity will be necessary (Pekkola et al., 2021; Pandit & Agrawal, 2021).

Leaders must have experience, as well as the members of the management team. The creation of formal ethics committees composed of diverse stakeholders is also critical. By infusing values into future crisis plans, higher education leaders can be confident that their responses will be based on the shared values of their communities (Liu et al., 2021).

The relationship between the variables of leadership and management has been researched by Pérez-Ortega and Moreno-Freites (2019). They take into consideration transformational leadership and its direct relationship with university management. This type of leadership is characterized by the fact that it inspires admiration from followers, building strong motivational relationships as it generates commitment and empowerment.

Finally, through the review developed, it is clear that the complexity of today's management of institutions as necessary as universities is an incentive for an exhaustive analysis of the issues related to their management and the leadership they demand. Not only from their development

Table 3. Research studies on management and leadership in times of crisis

Year	Authors	Research title
Challenges and opportunities for effective management		
2019a	González et al.	Capacidades dinámicas frente a la incertidumbre: una mirada desde la gestión universitaria [Dynamic capabilities in the face of uncertainty: a look from university management]
2021	Pandi and Agrawal	Exploring Challenges of Online Education in COVID Times
2021	Coetzee et al.	South African universities in a time of increasing disruption
2021	Liu et al.	When crises hit home: How U.S. higher education leaders navigate values during uncertain times
Analysis of management in the current context		
2021	Bedoya et al.	Gestión universitaria en tiempos de pandemia por COVID-19: análisis del sector de la educación superior en Colombia [University management in times of the COVID-19 pandemic: Analysis of the higher education sector in Colombia]
2021	Véliz et al.	Gobernanza universitaria en tiempos de crisis sociosanitaria: experiencias de directivos chilenos [University governance in times of social and sanitary crisis: experiences of Chilean directors]
Impact of Covid-19 on leadership		
2021	Pekkola et al.	An assessment of COVID-19's impact on Finnish University Leadership

as a business entity, but also because of their growing relationship with the state and society through the role they have to perform.

2. GENERALIZATION OF THE MAIN STATEMENTS

The study on management and leadership in university education reveals important characteristics that are common to this type of institution, taking into account that all university entities have objectives that go beyond the lucrative aspect and are potentially related to the fundamental role in the development of society as an agent of change.

The studies focus on the importance of planning as the basis for efficient management in university entities, with a structural model that is compatible with the institutional mission and project, and that is tailored to the needs of the entity. Studies that point out the adaptability of management to redesign through the valuable exchange of experiences are increasingly important.

Several researchers agree that management allows measuring the institution's capacity to achieve its mission, so the planning of its activities, functions, links, and objectives must be based on strategic planning consistent with this mission. Therefore, Schmal Simón and Cabrales Gómez (2017) establish that for adequate management it is considered fundamental "autonomy, economic-financial organization and management, academic structures in which functions and responsibilities are distributed, the organization of academic work, institutional and international relations and its promotion abroad, among others" (p. 255).

Therefore, it is clear that effective management ensures that what is planned is executed and continuously improved (Enríquez et al., 2018), assuming the responsibility of guiding the institution to fulfill its mission.

In the articles referred to this point, the emphasis on planning as a tool to support the evaluation of management through a process of continuous improvement is highlighted.

Leadership, as a set of skills of those who manage the organization, is a determining factor in the management of an organization. According to Ospina (2013), at present, flexible leadership is required, which allows a positive influence on the group.

Research on leadership establishes the importance of a versatile, modern manager with knowledge of technological tools who is creative and innovative in the face of the diverse situations that arise.

Flexibility implies not being afraid of change and, in the face of alarming crises, such as what happened in the university environment due to the pandemic, focusing management on commitment and teamwork, which involves having to deal with the new and transmitting tranquility to the organization for the changes that have to be assumed.

3. DISCUSSION

University management and leadership of managers in university education have been analyzed in recent years through various research studies that explore the tendencies of their main aspects.

It is important to point out that management in higher education institutions has components and characteristics that differ from those of other types of organizations. On the one hand, the administrative aspect, as pointed out by Soto et al. (2020), and, on the other hand, the academic aspect is related to the curriculum and training, as well as the relationship with the community.

It should be considered that the latest events arising from the health crisis have allowed the implementation of planning strategies by adapting to critical situations in companies, especially in edu-

Table 4. Leadership in university management

Leadership objectives	Job satisfaction; Development of communication
Perspectivas del liderazgo (University → Society)	Leadership perspectives; Extension and social responsibility actions
Predominant leadership style: Transformational	Generates motivation; Promotes change; Develops creativity

cational institutions, according to Huerta-Riveros and Pedraja-Rejas (2019), through management models that have quick and flexible responses.

Some studies analyzed show serious weaknesses in university management, such as a lack of knowledge of institutional purposes (J. Quijije & K. Quijije, 2019) and the lack of policies and strategies to achieve these purposes in real terms (Gamboa, 2017). This analysis requires a change and redesign in management roles, often evaluated through performance indicators related to goals and the application of standards when they should be qualified through more sensible control mechanisms (Argento & van Helden, 2021).

The current situation has forced universities to have an expectant and innovative look toward the use of technology through the management of the virtual modality in higher education, being a challenge to manage and develop new additional competencies apart from those applied in traditional education (Yong-Castillo et al., 2017). This has implied a remarkable transformation in university management encompassing academic, research, administrative, and welfare issues (Bedoya et al., 2021).

While it is true that directors must have various competencies to exercise management, leadership is the most valued, so studies focus on its analysis and perspectives, emphasizing its importance in university management (Bedoya et al., 2020). Some studies explore leadership tendencies, such as the one conducted by San Juan and Bueno (2018). They analyze the way directors face complex situations, which proves that it relies on personal and professional competencies, regardless of gender, age, or type of institution.

Leadership, as a crucial element of quality management, must be exercised by those who manage universities within transparent processes, where meritocracy is applied, so that management positions are assumed by those who have all the experience, knowledge, and aptitude required for them (Ganga et al., 2018).

Transformational leadership is one of the most outstanding ones in the research analyzed since it allows the development of integration skills for teamwork, as well as listening to the members, which results in a greater connection (Pérez-Ortega & Moreno-Freites, 2019). In addition, this type of leadership is more adaptable to changes and less rigid in terms of strictly following rules that do not allow decisions to be made in unexpected situations (Jiménez, 2018).

CONCLUSION

The objective of the systematic literature review was to analyze approaches and perspectives on leadership and management in university education to determine trends in terms of characteristics, styles, and relevant particularities in reference to the subject. The results show that university management has its own characteristics that differentiate it from the management of other types of entities. Therefore, several studies on the subject are carried out to establish essential aspects that allow effective management to achieve objectives, not only for the benefit of the institution but also in terms of the role it performs in society.

As a fundamental aspect of the development of management, strategic planning is considered important for achieving the institutional mission. A constant review, evaluation, and analysis allow the application of continuous improvement processes within the university entities.

The adaptation of management models to complex situations such as the health crisis caused by Covid-19 requires an innovative model and the exchange of experiences that lead to reflection on the use of good practices by directors working in university management. To this end, it is essential to develop a type of leadership that adjusts to the changes in the environment to motivate collaborators, promoting commitment and participation towards the achievement of objectives.

The need for future research is determined to address issues of great importance today for the management of educational institutions, such as the development of management models for virtual education, a modality whose use has expanded considerably due to the current situation. In addition, it is necessary to investigate comparative research studies on the management of private and public entities, to establish similarities and differences in the management of their organization.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Carola Salazar-Rebaza, Monica Zegarra-Alva.
Data curation: Carola Salazar-Rebaza, Monica Zegarra-Alva, Franklin Cordova-Buiza.
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Software: Carola Salazar-Rebaza.
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Validation: Carola Salazar-Rebaza, Monica Zegarra-Alva.
Writing – original draft: Franklin Cordova-Buiza.
Writing – review & editing: Carola Salazar-Rebaza, Monica Zegarra-Alva, Franklin Cordova-Buiza.

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