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The leader and the cooperation strength

El líder y la fuerza de la cooperación



Editorial

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Cooperation, which is defined in a general way as a behavior that involves a benefit for others, is a phenomenon widespread in nature without being exclusive of humans. Cooperation advantages are unquestionable; this behavior provides strategies that facilitate adaptation and constitute the main aspect of the current organizational dynamics. Although cooperation has its origins in human evolution as a behavior that favored survival, the social roles transformation suggests understanding the cooperation strength beyond the reciprocal altruism.

As it was formulated by Steven Pinker (2010) in his cognitive niche theory, cognitive adaptations evolution in favor of cooperation delineated an advantageous condition of humans. The role of the leader could be important to regulate intra and inter- species competition and to orientate taking decisions because he allows controlling opportunistic behavior and keeping group alliance, which is advantageous for the subsequent adaptive processes to human evolution.

Perhaps from a neuroeconomic point of view, involving taking decisions while keeping some social motivational aspects should be the role of the contemporary leader. A modern view of leader highlights the importance of the reward system in our brain, which implies the participation of the dopaminergic system that irradiates the ventral tegmental area and connects the substantia nigra in the mesencephalon with the dorsal striatum to finally incorporates the lateral areas of the prefrontal cortex in the neuronal connection, which seems to be involved in external cooperation incentives (Declerck, Boone, & Emonds, 2012) that contribute to keep common objectives in work groups.

Additionally, a general view of the cortical architecture of leader indicates the participation of the prefrontal dorsolateral cortex, which could be related to the skills to settle conflicts that arise in the group generated by diverse reasons, and that require taking a decision in an only direction to keep adhesion in the organization.

Although all humans have a sufficient brain mechanism to satisfactory achieve social and organizational processes, individual differences are crucial to take the role of leader: environmental aspects (raising, autonomy development, education access, etc.), temperament, and personality with the differences of cognitive processing between men and women constitute a dimension in the organizational competences that are potentially prosocial. Many of them decipher the executive functioning in our species e.g. auto-regulation and inhibitory control, auto-monitoring and emotional control, planning and programs design, cognitive flexibility and taking of decisions.

We have a complex leader typology in current societies that interprets the relationships with others in contexts of production in a very heterogeneous way. Some of them are unfortunate and damage the cooperation strength weakening the preservation and the growth of the consumption network in favor of others. Other ones promote adhesion in a group with a common objective that allows the development of other social processes and the social network increase.

Finally, there is not an organizational recipe, a "plus" personality, or a checklist of necessary cognitive characteristics to take leadership since an essential leader is that person who assumes the cooperation strength as the key strategy to compete.

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