

How Leadership Needs to Change After Covid-19?

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This article raises a vital question as to how executives can unleash the power of knowledge and transformational leadership in organizations. We asked our executive colleagues and scholars what the post-pandemic world would look like. This is what they predict: Better-managed desk space, real-estate evaluation, right sizing, a talent age gap as many seasoned executives retire, and restructured workweeks. Based on our interviews, we posit that transformational leadership has a direct impact on an organization's internal resources and may promote a knowledge management process. In particular, transformational leaders strongly manifest themselves as change agents who have a significant impact on the culture, structure, and strategy of a firm. This article suggests that managers should develop a supportive workplace to promote knowledge management processes coupled with transformational leadership. We found that culture, structure, and strategy constitute the foundation of a supportive workplace for both remote and in-organization stationed workers. If an organization's culture, structure, and strategy are not completely in favor of supporting knowledge management processes, then organizations may not effectively implement knowledge management projects and the promoting of knowledge management will be ineffective. Accordingly, this article suggests that transformational leaders that support knowledge management efforts depend on a supportive culture, a flatter structure, and iterative strategic formulation in organizations.

Keywords: Post-Pandemic world, Transformational leadership, Knowledge management, Corporate culture, Corporate structure, and Corporate strategy

Introduction

Transformational leadership, as noted in previous studies, primarily by Jung et al. (2003), Lee and Choi (2003), and Fugate et

al.(2009), suggest that transformational leadership directly influences knowledge management. However, there is a gap in the literature when examining the implications of transformational leadership for knowledge management through the better management of structure, culture, and strategic initiatives. The question remains: How can transformational leaders effectively manage knowledge in organizations? This article aims to establish the relationships among culture, structure, strategy, knowledge management, and transformational leadership. In an attempt to answer the question, it is hoped that we can prepare executives for the post-pandemic world.

Executives possessing the skills of transformational leadership engage in the facilitation of building and sustaining relationships with subordinates (Marturano & Gosling, 2008; Patiar & Mia, 2009). Knowledge management has been also defined as a set of processes aimed at creating value through generating and applying intellectual capital (Marr et al., 2003). A systematic approach toward transformational leadership as a significant indicator of improving knowledge management processes can provide practical guidelines for management executives (Fugate et al., 2009; Jung et al., 2003; Lee & Choi, 2003; Politis, 2001; Politis, 2002; Sosik, 1997). In addition, developing a new and dynamic conception of transformational leadership within the knowledge management paradigm can propel leaders into the post-pandemic world in which they now engage.

When executives take a resource-based view and a knowledge-based view of the organization, they begin to draw upon various organizational factors mediating the relationship between knowledge management and transformational leadership. The resource-based and knowledge-based view of the firm underpin the various organizational factors that link transformational leadership, knowledge management, and organizational fac-

tors together to better perform in a post-pandemic world. This new normal, which is coined today, places transformational leaders in a position to reshape culture, structure, and strategic initiatives, and one way to do this is by aiming at propelling the processes of knowledge management. How do we manage knowledge when everyone is remotely engaged? This question resides in not only the C-Suite but through corporate America and world in which global business endures. This article attempts to advance the post-pandemic approach of transformational leadership and knowledge management.

Methodology

Finding the right formula for the post-pandemic is on the minds of the C-Suite, middle management, down to the front line workers. After interviewing executives, we found five pillars of success that is undeniably important to consider. They are transformational leadership, knowledge management, culture, structure, and strategy. These five key words cannot make or break an organization but we have found that incorporating each of them together can begin to move an organization to COVID-19 recovery.

The literature review is extensive in this area and various search filters, such as scholarly peer-reviewed articles and a selected timeframe of Ph.D. dissertations from 1990 to 2019, were applied a databases (i.e. ScienceDirect, ProQuest, and the Academy of Management website). This initial search resulted in 247 relevant samples. In the second step, we read the titles, abstracts, and introductions of these samples and compared them against the inclusion criteria (i.e. research question, suitable data, key variables, and validated measures). If the titles, the abstracts and the introductions recommended that the work could successfully meet our inclusion criteria, we read the full-text version for identifying criteria. In the next step, we identified our final samples (i.e. 54 articles, 8 books, 2 book chapters, and 6 PhD dissertations). By analyzing these articles, books, book chapters, and Ph.D. dissertations, we found relevant data sufficient to provide arguments on the mediating effects of organizational resources (i.e. culture, structure and strategy) as they relate to transformational leadership and knowledge management. By calling on our executive colleagues across industries in North America and

reviewing the literature, we found kernels that can direct counter-intelligence to enhance the COVID-19 recovery planning.

Literature Review

Conner (1991) highlights the fundamental underpinnings of the resource-based view by which the critical role of organization's internal resource is considered to achieve a higher degree of competitive advantage. Barney (2002, p.155) describes these internal resources as "all assets, capabilities, competencies, organizational processes, and firm attributes" which improve firm competitiveness when controlled effectively. These internal resources should be rare and difficult to imitate in order to create sustainable competitive advantage (Bakar & Ahmad, 2010; Barney, 1991; Cardinal et al., 2001; Clulow et al., 2007; Darcy et al., 2014). However, in the post-pandemic environment, modern and innovative approaches will help an organization survive while those organizations struggling with inertia will forfeit the recovery effort to some extent. Only high performing organizations will survive.

Accordingly, the resource-based view elucidates two capabilities of causal ambiguity and social complexity aiming at decreasing the risk of organizational capabilities being imitated by competitors. While causal ambiguity has been defined as multiple interpretations (Powell et al., 2006; Reus, 2004), Reus (2004, p.27) refers to social complexity as "the extent to which resources are embedded in multiple organizational members and the relationships among them." The post-pandemic formula for survival is human resources as talent will be fleeting and newcomers will be flooding the resume surge.

Secondly, the knowledge-based view emerges and highlights that the firm's capabilities to utilize and create knowledge are most crucial for sustainable competitive advantage (Zheng et al., 2010). The new knowledge created from pandemic concurrent remote work has eluded that functionality is existential to performance. In fact, a firm's capabilities allow it to leverage knowledge in a more efficient manner using technological platforms that once existed as a past time as opposed to a necessary medium for success.

Executives and colleagues agree that by enhancing these two paradigms of causal ambiguity and social complexity, the knowledge-based view focuses on embedding knowledge in organizational members, and accordingly, uncovers tacit knowledge embedded within employees as a more important source of competitive advantage than explicit knowledge (Darroch, 2005; Reus, 2004; Wu & Chen, 2014). Sitting behind a computer has now become the norm and technology has enhanced the platform of survival. Thus, while causal ambiguity and social complexity are all features that are relevant to organizational culture, organizational structure, and organizational strategy must embrace all available resources to survive the pandemic. Therefore, these three organizational factors affecting competitive advantage through enabling knowledge within companies present themselves as internal resources, working remotely, that can be controlled by organizations effectively. However, we have found that both effectiveness and efficiency are tantamount and organizations cannot survive the post-pandemic without both being operative concurrently.

Early research indicates that patterns exist and change efforts must constantly be tweaked in real time as organizations plow through the pandemic to recovery. For example, Schein (1984, p.37) defines organizational culture as a “pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.” The new and modern technology has to be embraced in both onboarding and for seasoned executives for survival to be imminent. We have found that technology is not easily adaptable for some but with the chance for survival in a concurrent pandemic world, we found that only the people that became familiar with technology survive. Behavior has become an elusive target as many people are not sitting by the computer all day and yet the perception is that human resources are available 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Corporate culture has shifted from face-time to real-time. In 1996, O’Reilly and Chatman (p.160) defined organizational culture as a “system of shared values defining what is important, and norms, defining appropriate attitudes and behaviors, that guide members’ attitudes and behaviors.” One can only suggest that based on these above conclusions that

organizational culture is highly reflected in shared assumptions, symbols, beliefs, values, and norms, which specifies how employees perceive problems and appropriately react to them. In a post pandemic world, problems are dealt with in a remote setting leaving a time-lapse for both evaluation and application. Culture has to adapt accordingly, for example, Balogun and Jenkins (2003) demonstrate that there is a considerable alignment between the knowledge-based view of the firm and organizational culture and this will improve communication among remote workers if used adequately. More specifically, remote worker knowledge acquired through learning from others, subsequently posit that organizational culture is equal to tacit knowledge and the strategic factor of competitive advantage. Thus, giving people platform space and presentation time is an effective use of time and resources because organizational culture when used as an internal resource can positively influence competitive advantage through developing shared assumptions and values, which manifest as tacit knowledge embedded in remote workers.

Scholars have found that organizational structure refers to the bureaucratic division of labor accompanied by control and coordination between different tasks, in order to develop communications within organizations (Scott, 2003). This brings to light the knowledge-based view, for example, Grant (1996) states that knowledge is merely created by people and argues that knowledge application and integration are the most important roles of firms. During the pandemic, knowledge is shared via Zoom, WebEx, and internal communication systems. With some limitations, knowledge is vibrant and in some cases real-time. The limitations are security and hackers coupled with individually sponsored internet connections. Those organizations that managed to capitalize on technology survived and continue to thrive today. Thus, the capability of companies to integrate the employee’s specialized knowledge into products and services can largely generate competitive advantage for them. This competitive advantage has prospered for some and has eliminated some of the players from the marketplace. Some organizations thrived based on a thin, highly diversified and decentralized structure. Eisenhardt and Santos (2006, p. 10) refer to a company’s structure as an “efficient mechanism for coordinating a complex system comprising multiple specialized units,” and highlight that organizational capabilities should be “structured hierarchically

according to the scope of knowledge that they integrate.” Scholars have coined this as electronic leadership (Provitera, 2020). A term with less credence before the pandemic that has now reached fruition. Hence, survivors found that the organizational structure that reflects an internal resource that is used to integrate intellectual capital and creates competitive advantage would thrive in the post-pandemic world.

The post-pandemic recovery requires a strategic initiative that is developed to monitor and sustain competitive advantage concurrently. Decades ago, Hofer and Schendel (1978, p. 25) found that strategy is a “fundamental pattern of present and planned resource deployments and environmental interactions that indicates how the organization will achieve its objectives.” During the pandemic, executives are striving to meet the customer needs while maintaining employee satisfaction levels and stockholder equity. Objectives are key to success if they counteract the demise of supplier support and vendor relationships as the world manages the pandemic. Andrew (1971) describes strategy as a pattern of decisions and plans that are directed at interacting with the corporate environment and efficiently allocating capabilities to achieve organizational objectives. Thus, the primary function of strategy is to develop goals and plans to restructure unclear and vague situations into a set of organizationally resolvable problems. The pandemic evolves around the most hypercompetitive pressure from both internal and external sources as a result, organizational strategies are formed to efficiently deploy the capabilities and interact with environments (Rumelt, 1979).

To best describe the actions necessary to handle the tumultuous post-pandemic, we emphasize the importance of the knowledge-based view. Our reasoning is that more so today than pre-pandemic times, organizations exist as social communities designed to enhance competitive advantage by utilizing and creating new ideas and knowledge. Similarly, Grant (1996) focuses on knowledge application, and explains the need for firms to apply knowledge in order to enhance competitive advantage. Accordingly, knowledge creation and application manifest themselves as constructs of the knowledge-based view (Zheng et al., 2010). From the earlier discussions it is evident that organizational strategy is a sum of objectives, plans and procedures designed to efficiently upgrade capabilities and interact with the environment,

which can assist both paradigms of knowledge utilization and creation as constructs of knowledge based view. In particular, strategy defines a pattern to deploy organizational capabilities and interact with the external environment. Strategy actually determines how companies should utilize and manage their knowledge assets to create new ideas and knowledge in achieving organizational objectives (Sveiby, 2001). As a consequence, organizational strategy is an internal resource affecting knowledge as the most strategic factor for competitive advantage. The next section will focus on the significant role of transformational leadership in leading changes to better manage organizational knowledge. Organizations such as but not limited to Zoom, WebEx, and Microsoft Teams led the way for the remote worker.

The key for this section of the article is to advance the current literature on transformational leadership by offering novel insights into how executives can have a direct impact on organization’s internal resources now as they prepare for the post-pandemic. Particularly, we feel that during the pandemic, executives have to enable culture, create new structures, and create innovative strategic initiatives. Without a grasp on these three tenets, executives are bound to fail in the post-pandemic.

Discussion

In the post-pandemic, organizational culture is projected to include three dimensions of collaboration, trust, and learning (Lee & Choi, 2003). Collaboration is highly facilitated by diminishing isolation and providing opportunities for further dialogue (Darling, 1990). Transformational leadership enhances interactions and dialogue by aligning the follower’s individual interests with collective interests (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). In this way, leaders, now and during the post-pandemic, can positively enhance collaboration through idealized influence that develops relationships with subordinates. Podsakoff et al. (1990) state that transformational leadership engenders trust by showing concern for both the organization’s needs and the follower’s interests at the same time. This is particularly important as remote workers learn how to swim while sea legs are still growing. Thus, transformational leaders show concern through individualized consideration by focusing on identifying follower’s individ-

ual needs within organizations (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). These leaders instill trust in subordinates to enhance commitment and support towards achieving their vision. This is a moving target as people manage household interests with the workflow daily commitment. More importantly, as the pandemic unfolds, transformational leaders provide the freedom for followers to investigate new ideas and knowledge (Dix, 2013). With new and reborn technology, it is apparent that transformational leadership can be applied to develop learning climates. Thus, leading to the fourth tenet of transformational leadership. Propelling a learning culture through intellectual stimulation that facilitates knowledge sharing and new idea generation. This reality has many specific prongs such as managing working systems while discarding others and finding the right technology that works for industry effectiveness and efficiency. Trusting a system that is both secure with modern technology will help executives lead now and in the future.

Executives that employ the transformational leadership style can build the necessary trust to thrive. For example, an empirical study by Podsakoff et al. (1990) posed a research question: How does transformational leadership impact the cultural aspect of trust? Podsakoff et al. (1990) found a way to improve followers' trust in organizations a few decades ago yet still applies today. Data from this study supports the fact that there is continuous support for the positive impacts of transformational leadership on the cultural aspect of building, maintaining, and sustaining trusting relationships.

During our pandemic, collaboration is a critical factor to develop the range of knowledge access (Grant & Baden-Fuller, 1995; Grant, 1997; Grant & Baden-Fuller, 2004). Various scholars, such as Sveiby and Simons (2002), highlight the vital importance of collaboration in supporting knowledge management processes. In fact, this cultural aspect enhances a shared understanding of the problems among employees, which is a necessary precursor to create new ideas and knowledge (Choi, 2002; Fahey & Prusak, 1998; Leonard 1995; Leonard & Sensiper 1998.). These scholars set the precedent for what we experience on a day-to-day basis in our remote work environment.

When asking executives how transformational leadership works best for them. The undeniable reason, they expressed, is being an enable of

extenuating trust-based relationships. They argued that this was the only way to help followers build relationships and share tacit knowledge. Until recently, Lines et al. (2005) work that agrees that a leader's ability to create knowledge and develop a more innovative climate is a product of building the follower's trust in their leader's decisions has a more prominent application. This is not a novel issue and has surfaced as a scholarly idea for decades. It simply has more application today as we survive the pandemic and prepare for the post-pandemic. For example, several authors, such as Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998), Goh (2002), Rowley (2002) and Wagner (2003), also support that high trust environments could positively impact the tendencies of human assets to share their knowledge with others.

Undoubtedly, the knowledge-based view, embedding knowledge in organizational members is an important paradigm to support knowledge as the most strategic asset of organizations now and in the future (Darroch, 2005; Wu & Chen, 2014).

After our discussion with executives, we posit that sharing best practices and experiences (i.e. learning, technology, and presentation equipment) could play a crucial role in embedding organizational knowledge in members and supporting this strategic asset of a company for the post COVID-19 recovery. One kernel that came out of our discussions are based on the newly surfaced but ever reaching concept of resilience. Resilience is added to the discipline of operational risk management as firms realize risk is uncertain and needs to be carefully reviewed and managed. Thus, during the pandemic, learning has been also highlighted as a precursor for knowledge creation, and as Choi (2002, p. 52) stated, "The amount of time spent learning is positively related with the amount of knowledge." Our research indicated that time is of the essence and technology superseded our expectations leaving the human element as a vital resource in the remote working world. Similarly, decades earlier, Huber (1991) and Garvin (1993) posited that firms emphasizing the cultural aspect of learning are stronger in creating new knowledge, and transferring knowledge within the organization. Executives have proclaimed this fact as they transmit information simultaneously as they disseminate customer, shareholder, and employee information. We asked executives how they felt about collaboration today and the result was of resounding importance. Meetings have to

be quick, exact, and important, or they are unnecessary. Time on the computer has to be weighed with communication and face-to-face responsiveness. For example, the empirical study by Sveiby and Simons (2002) explored the relationship between the cultural aspect of collaboration and knowledge management. An online questionnaire was developed and distributed to employees, inviting them to participate in the survey. The sampling design for this research was probability sampling which resulted in 8277 responses. The findings revealed that collaboration could positively contribute to knowledge management in organizations. This study was the focal point of our discussion and it reiterates the importance of both technological and human resources working in tandem.

We asked executives so what? And they responded with the fact that transformational leadership has been regarded as an appropriate leadership theory for providing a better environment for subordinates to explore new ideas and create more knowledge. Which, is in line with the work of Dix, in 2013. The executives that emphasized the different aspects of transformational leadership and how they apply to the pandemic supported this.

We now demonstrate our findings. Intellectual stimulation aspect of transformational leadership concentrates on developing knowledge sharing and inspiring followers to generate new solutions and a better environment (Birasnav, 2014; Nemanich & Keller, 2007). In order to support the intellectual stimulation aspect, transformational leaders develop decentralized structures with the aim of improving knowledge sharing and creating a more innovative climate. How this decentralized structure exists in a cloud format was truly interesting. For instance, hierarchy, while still maintained and respected, gave way to a more general response system by subordinates. Followers felt as if they gained wings, learned to fly, and became much more gregarious during meetings. This argument can be justified by accounting for the crucial role of decentralized structures in facilitating the exchange of ideas and the implementation of more innovative solutions based on stipulating the power of decision-making in and around the organization (Mahmoudsalehi & Moradkhannejad, 2012; Serrat, 2017; Zheng et al., 2010). Decentralized structures preceded the pandemic but we found it became a norm and we do not see it changing in the post-pandemic. Moreover, transformational leaders inspire and transform aggregate human

capital into social capital in order to implement the required changes in the status and create a better situation. We found ourselves barely surviving and at first meetings in remote settings were vibrant and vocal. However, as the pandemic settled in, meetings became more status quo and only needed when necessary. Thus, the more highly formalized structures that remained more bureaucratic, and, in fact, was noted by executives themselves as being somewhat negatively, contributes to the effectiveness of transformational leadership in changing existing situations and in creating a better environment (Jung et al., 2008). Did they? We cannot say that the environment is better based on our inquiry but we can say that it is working and is sustainable. Thus, as we appear to remain in remote settings, as Tafvelin (2013) once found, transformational leaders achieve a higher degree of effectiveness in decentralized structures. This was confirmed in our conversations with executives in the pandemic world we live in.

Thus, the post-pandemic decentralized structures may improve interactions, create more knowledge, and facilitate knowledge management processes in organizations as once posited by scholars (Bennett & Grbriel 1999; Choi, 2002; Claver-Cortes et al., 2007; Gold et al., 2001; Hellstrom et al., 2000).

One of our main concerns was how executives delegate during the pandemic. Knowing that delegation of decision-making power could create a climate that in turn develops inter-departmental communication within organizations (Cardinal, 2001; Damanpour, 1991; Sivadas & Dwyer, 2000; Woodman et al., 1993), we found just the opposite. Executives turned over responsibility to their subordinates and watched them not only survive, but also thrive. Executives mentioned that decentralization encourages organizational communications, and consequently develops a climate of openness for employees to exchange their new ideas. In the remote setting, this was done via email communication, instant messenger, and text. Pre-meeting and post meeting communication was enhanced with this technology. Thereafter, once the information and clarification is disseminated, then the employees can implement ideas through the delegated authority of decision-making to their departments to the lowest levels possible and still keep successful execution. Executives agreed that pushing decision making down to a through is vital for post-pandemic recovery.

We found that executives agreed with the notion emphasized by Choi (2002) and Zheng et al. (2010), who pressed the point of structural aspects on various knowledge management processes such as knowledge acquiring, creating, sharing, and utilizing are prominent today as we navigate through a challenging working environment.

In 2004, scholars found that organizational strategy is theorized to encompass four dimensions, including analysis, defensiveness, futurity, and pro-activeness (Bergeron et al., 2004). In applying Bergeron et al. (2004) approach to strategy (using the four aspects), analysis strategy aims to create knowledge and find the best solution by evaluating various options. Correspondingly, this strategy stimulates organizations to apply information systems in their decision-making processes in order to investigate various alternatives and options (Cohen & Sproull 1996; Talke 2007; Zheng et al., 2010). Based on the above tenets, executives agreed that transformational leaders apply analysis strategy to meet the goals of intellectual stimulation, which seeks to provide new and innovative solutions for organizational problems. The point was emphasized with the newly structured use of resilience and the focal point moving tandem with operational risk management. Financial risk management illuminated but the operational risk superseded as organizations struggled for survival. Focusing on the post-pandemic, these leaders realize the need to develop a futurity strategy to develop a more comprehensive vision for future and incorporate upcoming trends in the business environment (Akman & Yilmaz, 2008). We found that mission and vision statements were altered for con-current pandemic concerns. An operative and breathing movement that first surfaced as safety measures for all were implemented. Current literature provides evidence that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and both strategic aspects of analysis and futurity. Moreover, transformational leadership also supports the development of relationships and interactions to provide valuable resources for the organization as a whole (Braga, 2002). Based on this, a transformational leader applies a defensive strategy to implement the required modifications in order to efficiently use organizational resources, decrease costs and control the resources. Furthermore, a pro-activeness strategy takes a proactive approach to search for better positions in the business environment (Venkatraman, 1989). These four tenets of strategic initiatives were predomi-

nant today.

Thus, we posit that transformational leadership is an appropriate leadership theory for inspiring followers to find better opportunities and solutions. Therefore, transformational leaders positively contribute to a pro-activeness strategy by employing inspirational motivation, setting high expectations and providing a suitable situation for followers to identify new opportunities.

One can now justify that the social media network has expanded to include remote workers. These workers may not realize it but they are now showcased online. Either they adapt and open up to be more vocal in meetings or they find themselves reclusive. Some employees have left industries due to the pandemic and executives are mindful of this. At the same time, they are cognizant of retaining talent from afar as they navigate through the pandemic to the post-pandemic. A few decades ago, Kogut and Zander (1993, p.625) defined organizations as “social communities that specialize in the creation and internal transfer of knowledge.” Well organizations now have a new stigma. They are virtual for the time being.

Thus, executives are stuck in a vacuum and they are using what scholars call “Analysis Strategy.” The C-Suite regards strategy as an ongoing process, iterative, and with no end in sight as they search for problems and their root causes, and directly or indirectly, generate better alternatives to solve them (Venkatraman, 1989). Scholars have influenced the C-Suite in several ways. For instance, Cohen and Sproull (1996) and Talke (2007), agree that analysis strategy is highly related to a firm’s capacity to generate new ideas and knowledge. Zheng (2005, p. 41) highlights the crucial role of this strategic aspect in acquiring knowledge. She also posits that knowledge acquisition “requires going deeper to the roots of problems, and that a higher degree of analysis could contribute to knowledge management.” With knowledge management being more important as the virtual mindset has a vast approach with both depth and breadth, the analysis strategy could play a critical role in accumulating organizational knowledge, including both processes of knowledge creation and acquisition using new technology. Executives noted, they never taped or recorded a session before but now it is a moot point to capture the meeting minutes and provide venue for those that could not make the meeting.

Remaining ever so proactive, executives using a pro-activeness strategy refers to finding new opportunities and proactively responding to current challenges in external environments. At first, this was somewhat easy because workers thought they would lose their jobs due to the pandemic. Over time, employees felt comfortable with technology and realized that they still have a career that is just going to be a little different now and in the future. Executives today agreed that hosting, capturing and securing knowledge actually emerges in interactions (Polanyi, 1966). Thus, executives all agreed that a pro-active strategy could provide a higher degree of knowledge through developing interactions with external environments (Venkatraman, 1989). With the pandemic in its highest stage of completion, executives realize that effective implementation of knowledge management projects requires a continuous investigation from external business environments. Hence, pro-activeness strategy is critical to improve the performance of knowledge management projects in organizations. To demonstrate the importance of knowledge utilization as another construct of the knowledge-based view, Grant (1996) concentrates

on knowledge utilization, and posits that companies are entities that apply knowledge to create competitive advantage. It is believed that a defensiveness approach enhances efficiency through cutting costs, which in turn enhances the process of knowledge reuse in organizations (Al Ammary & Fung, 2008; Wee & Chua, 2013). Executives mentioned that they worked together with Human Resources to save as many jobs as they can in such a turbulent environment and that one of the parameters that helped was that many people selected early retirement leaving a gap in attrition levels. In the post-pandemic, executives agreed that a futurity strategy could also promote the knowledge utilization process by providing a series of clear guidelines for companies to track future trends in the business environment, and accordingly conduct “what-if” analysis and allocate organizational resources. We searched for more recent research in this area and we found the empirical study by Zheng et al. (2010) which confirms these theoretical relationships within organizations. These theoretical linkages and relevant empirical studies are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: *Theoretical Linkages and Relevant Empirical Studies*

Findings	Sources
Transformational leadership is positively associated with organizational culture.	Podsakoff et al. (1990)
Organizational culture is positively associated with knowledge management.	Sveiby & Simons (2002)
Transformational leadership is negatively associated with organizational structure.	Tafvelin (2013)
Organizational structure is negatively associated with knowledge management.	Choi (2002); Zheng, Yang & McLean (2010)
Transformational leadership is positively associated with organizational strategy.	Our finding based on qualitative data
Organizational strategy is positively associated with knowledge management.	Zheng, Yang & McLean (2010)

These theoretical linkages can be illustrated in **Figure 1**.

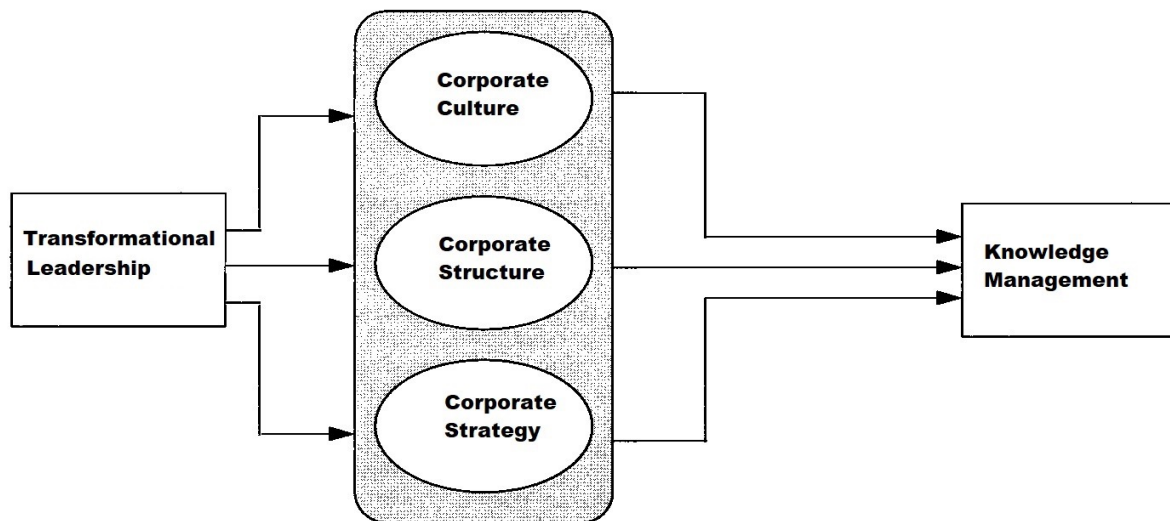


Figure 1: Propositional Relationship between Transformational Leadership, Organization's Internal Resources coupled with Knowledge Management

Conclusions

This article offers several management implications for practice. We found that executives are coming together to incorporate resilience into the operational risk management areas of the business. This effort, not fully securing the financial future but helping them sustain the impact of the pandemic and survive. In this article, we theorized, based on qualitative data gathered by executives coupled a review of prior research, that transformational leadership cultivates an effective culture, structure, and strategy, which enables knowledge management processes within organizations. We highlight the vital importance of the transformational form of leadership employed by organizational leaders in affecting knowledge management. In addition, this article reveals that transformational leadership has significant effects on an

organization's internal resources. Most executives interviewed agreed with our assumptions found in the literature that cultivating an effective culture, structure, and strategy requires the development of transformational leadership within organizations not only during the pandemic but also as they prepare for the post-pandemic. This article highlights the vital importance of transformational leadership to stimulate a culture of learning, collaboration and trust, flattened organizational structures, and improves strategies within organizations as executive address the need for a post-pandemic strategic initiative.

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