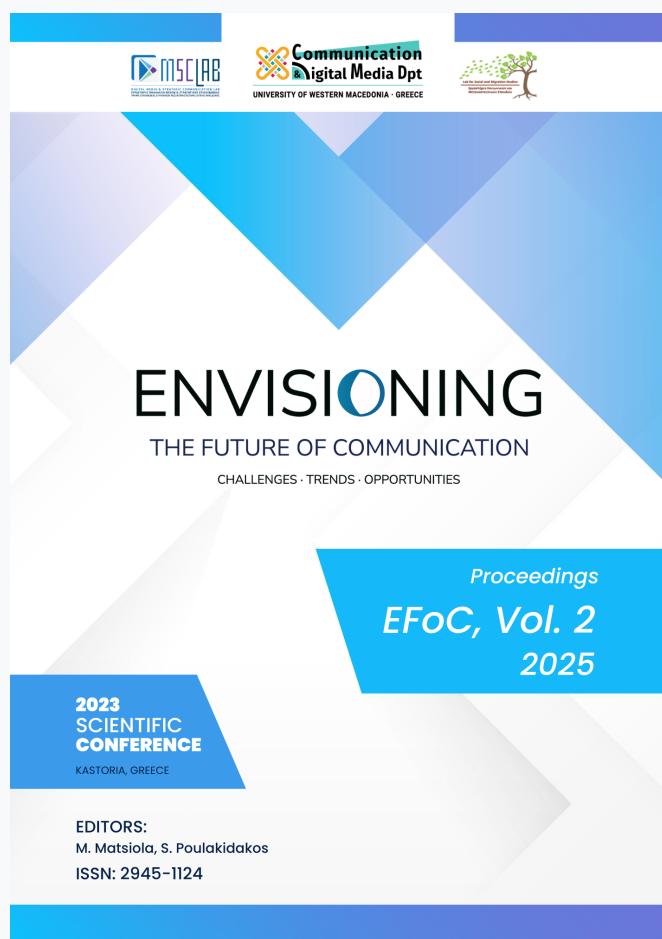


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**Leadership, rhetoric, crisis management and mediation**

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# **Leadership, rhetoric, crisis management and mediation: The communicative dimension of the leader in the context of searching for the profile of the modern leader and the leader of the future**

Efstratios Sarris\*

## **Abstract**

The concept of leadership has been explored to a great extent but not sufficiently in all its dimensions. One of these dimensions, which emerges and stands out during the search for the profile of the modern leader and the leader of the future, is the dimension of communication. Knowledge and excellent handling of not just basic communication principles but of communication in a complex form (at all levels and in all circumstances) are necessary criteria for shaping the profile of an ideal leader. The purpose of this study is to highlight the communicative dimension of the leader. At the same time, the study analyzes different aspects of leadership, composes the profile of the modern leader and the leader of the future, defines and describes concepts equally important to leadership, such as rhetoric, crisis management and mediation and interconnects and relates these concepts to leadership. Regarding the methodology followed, the analysis is based on the literature review. The material included is from reputable English and Greek print and online sources. The findings of this study are useful and applicable in any communication context. In conclusion, the communicative dimension of the complex leader is undoubtedly of utmost importance for a correct, effective and successful leadership.

**Keywords:** Leadership, rhetoric, crisis management, mediation, communication.

## **Introduction**

Leadership has been studied by various scientific disciplines (Avery, 2004: 8) and is a prominent scientific field with a large scientific output (Ammeter et al., 2002: 752). It is an issue that has concerned humanity for a long time. However, despite the abundance of corresponding definitions, the concept has not been fully clarified (Triantari, 2020a: 133).

In the modern era, the success of organizations is based on three parameters: Leadership, communication and work motivation (Saputra, 2021: 66). The process of exercising leadership is primarily communicative. The greater the leader's position, the more necessary communication is. People in such positions can be politicians, heads of organizations, religious leaders, teachers, etc..

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Leaders do three things as they communicate: First, they utilize symbolism, shaping reality. Second, they communicate about the past, present, and future, and third, they deliberately choose specific symbols to achieve their goals (Johnson & Hackman, 2018: 6-21). As can be seen, communication isn't an easy task especially for a leader who may have the ability to speak from a position of authority, but speaking is different from communicating, as communication is also based on listening comprehension. It's not just about conveying a message, but it's a whole process, which requires a range of skills. Leaders who take the impact of communication seriously, taking the time to better understand it, will become skilled communicators (Baldoni, 2004: 20).

It's true that over time there have been studies that focus on leadership and communication. But each research paper is unique as it focuses on different issues and highlights various other aspects of a topic. Moreover, the multidimensional nature and continuous evolution of both leadership and communication, taking place in the context of a rapidly developing globalized environment, necessitate the production of more scientific research.

The purpose of this study is to highlight the communicative dimension of the leader. At the same time, the study analyzes different aspects of leadership, composes the profile of the modern leader and the leader of the future, defines and describes concepts equally important to leadership, such as rhetoric, crisis management and mediation and interconnects and relates these concepts to leadership. The research questions that ultimately arise are:

*RQ1* What is the most common feature of leadership, rhetoric, crisis management and mediation?

*RQ2* Is there a gradation in the types of modern and future leaders?

*RQ3* Which type of leader would be considered the most skilled communicator in the present and in the future?

Regarding the methodology followed, it should be mentioned that the analysis is based on the literature review. The literature was searched through Google Scholar and the physical and electronic libraries of the University of Western Macedonia. The search was made in both Greek and English. The keywords used (separately and in combination) are: "leadership", "leader", "types, styles, characteristics and abilities", "rhetoric", "crisis management", "mediation", "communication", "strategic communication", "public relations" etc.. The material that would be included in the analysis would come mainly from books, collective volumes and scientific articles (from scientific journals related to leadership, communication, management, business, organizational psychology etc.). Each source was selected, after a qualitative assessment carried out in terms of its content, which had to meet the purpose, objectives and orientation of this research. From the research that was carried out, mainly foreign-language but also some Greek-language sources emerged. The sources were categorized based on their topic and then analyzed based on their content.

## **Literature review**

### *Rhetoric and leadership*

The concept of leadership is primarily related to rhetoric. According to Triantari (2013: 516) rhetoric, related to semiotics, is "the art of speech and persuasion". The orator-politician, using verbal forms or his body, projects either his good or bad self, creating various emotions in the audience.

In general, Aristotle's ethics is the cornerstone of ethical leadership in the entire spectrum of human life, in organizations, businesses and politics (Triantari, 2019: 245). It could be argued that the work of Stagerite philosopher is particularly important for the definition of leadership. In his *Rhetoric*, which is considered the first model of communication, the elements of leadership are recorded in the light of the person's rhetorical ability (Triantari, 2020a: 134).

According to Aristotle, the leader is necessary to have specific characteristics, such as objectivity, reconciliation, friendliness, moral rhetoric and consequently neutrality and mediation to find middle solutions and face contemporary issues and challenges (Triantari, 2019: 240-245). Analyzing these characteristics in the light of the leader-orator, the leader must: 1) have wisdom to have vision and self-recognition, 2) be virtuous, concerned with values, 3) be good-natured to persuade and influence, 4) seek the golden mean to be sure of himself/herself and courageous, 5) have temperance to be disciplined, balanced and focused. These characteristics are followed by the leader's abilities, which make him/her special and enable him/her to command and influence others. According to these abilities, the leader is able to communicate, persuade, demonstrate emotional intelligence and empathy, make decisions, manage any issue and has systemic-associative thinking, self-awareness and self-management. Additionally, there are other meta-abilities or secondary abilities, which stem from these abilities. Broadly speaking, the leader's characteristics and abilities lead to his/her roles, which extend to results, people and projects, bringing to the fore communication, strategy in management and co-leadership (Triantari, 2020a: 84-101). The golden mean, choice and prudence constitute the three Aristotelian virtues placed at the center of intellectual and moral virtues (Triantari, 2021: 104-110).

### *Crisis management and leadership*

A crisis is "an uncertain situation possessing latent risks and opportunities that must be resolved within a given timeframe" (Canyon, 2020: 6). As a dramatic situation it is chaotic and requires immediate and decisive measures (Prewitt et al., 2011: 61). A crisis is characterized by complexity. "Unexpectedness, time pressure and imminent threat" are also considered important factors in defining a crisis. There are specific organizational crises, such as a scandal, security breach, labor disputes etc. (Riggio & Newstead, 2023: 205), but there are also crises in general, which the modern world faces as it is unbalanced, such as terrorism, natural disasters, economic/financial

crises, unemployment, moral decay and other negative phenomena (Daft, 2009: 9). In modern times, several crises have erupted that have attracted public interest, such as various environmental disasters (e.g. Hurricane Katrina). Although sudden, the problems they caused to local human societies and the environment were enormous. The persons called upon to undertake the management of these crises clearly faced many difficulties. However, crisis management isn't only about specific persons. As crises evolve and become more frequent and complex, all those in leadership positions will be called upon to address them. A typical example of such a crisis is the COVID-19 pandemic, which greatly changed crisis management (Riggio & Newstead, 2023: 202).

Crisis management is “the measures and methodologies used to recognize, control and limit the damage of a crisis, and its ripple effects” (Canyon, 2020: 8). There will always be crises at the individual or collective level, even if some are avoided or some are mitigated. But in some cases the management of a crisis can bring about greater negative effects compared to the crisis itself. If a crisis specifically affects an organization, the effects can be many, such as financial and legal problems, a drop in productivity and even the dissolution of the organization (James & Wooten, 2011: 60-61). For these reasons leaders must be constantly alert in order to deal with unpreventable, unpredictable and unexampled situations (Prewitt et al.: 2011: 61). Furthermore, leaders must be constantly ready to respond and adapt to every potential changes and crises (Daft, 2009: 9).

That is why crisis leadership is vital. According to Canyon (2020: 7) it is defined as:

The capacity of an individual to recognize uncertain situations that possess latent risks and opportunities to ensure systematic preparedness, to discern necessary direction, to make critical decisions, to influence followers and to successfully eliminate or reduce the negative impact while taking full advantage of positive aspects within a given timeframe.

Crisis leadership is necessary, as it's not easy to design protocols and procedures for every potential crisis. An exceptional leader is characterized by flexibility and adaptability, knows what to do immediately and properly manages resources in the face of any crisis. There are several theories related to crisis leadership (crisis management theory, cognitive resource theory, charismatic leadership theory, complexity leadership theory). Moreover, there are specific characteristics that crisis leadership requires, such as communication, sensemaking, decision-making, team coordination and promoting learning (Riggio & Newstead, 2023). A research that was carried out in a nursing environment highlighted specific important elements of crisis leadership, such as a high degree of collaboration, sharing of information, decision-making, fair prioritization and building trust and competency (Kim 2021). “Open, clear, sincere, frequent, emotionally appropriate and multidirectional communication” is very important for the successful outcome of a crisis. All parties involved need to know everything about the crisis situation and what they need to do, while at the same time they need to have a voice and be encouraged that everything is going

to be okay (Riggio & Newstead, 2023). However, in crisis leadership, communication tactics and public relations alone aren't enough. Rhetoric can make a positive contribution, but it won't lead to a comprehensive response to a crisis (James & Wooten, 2011: 61).

Finally, the leader must follow specific crisis leadership strategies. Not all of these strategies are always a panacea for all crisis situations, but they are a tool for the leader to use during crises. According to these, the leader must:

- 1) come to the fore by being visible, paying attention to his/her image, being brave, showing commitment and maintaining perspective.
- 2) focus on its main goal by being fully aware of that goal, maintaining value and harmonizing it with reality, providing visions and embodying values and constantly evaluating and revising the goal.
- 3) form a team with the appropriate people who have the appropriate skills.
- 4) have the plan in mind. SWOT analysis could be very helpful.
- 5) minimize the risk by acting, closely monitoring and consulting with the team and experts.
- 6) tell the story. It is important that he/she does it himself/herself as a spokesperson, be honest and timely and shape the message.
- 7) take advantage of the crisis. He/she must continue his/her activities, learning from the crisis experiences and increasing the flexibility of the organization (Prewitt et al.: 2011: 64-73).

### *Mediation and leadership*

Mediation is a fairly important model of communication with a great impact on human relations. Its application is deemed imperative both in society in general and in the workplace in particular, where various issues of behavior and conflicts arise (Triantari, 2020b: 105).

It is a method of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), which is distinguished by its confidentiality, and is highly recommended, especially in cases where the emotional state of the parties involved is quite charged. It can resolve any disputes without quarrels and stress, does not create further disputes, does not alienate the parties involved, is a faster and lower cost method of dispute resolution and is suitable and effective in certain types of disputes (civil, family, commercial, labor or medical) in which, although there is a difference of opinion, interests or needs, the continuation of communication is nevertheless required. The mediator shouldn't push for a decision or outcome or apply existing law, but should listen to the parties involved, prioritize each person's problems and present realistic solutions and possible options that could be mutually acceptable (Plevri, 2018).

Mediation together with arbitration and the combined arbitration-mediation model are keyways of resolving disputes. All three can be applied by leaders in organizational settings. All have advantages and disadvantages depending on the situation and the goals of the leader. If the leader seeks to make a process fairer or a solution more effective, then mediation or its combination

model are a better choice. The leader resorts to mediation to resolve a dispute, when he/she is unable to formally or informally resolve it himself/herself directly (Bowles, 2005).

### *Strategic communication, public relations and leadership*

Strategic communication is a prominent scientific field of communication and management, drawing on relevant scientific theories (Thomas & Stephens, 2015: 3-5). Classical communication, which concerns human interactions, is differentiated from strategic communication, which involves purposefulness and highlights the vision and the social dimension of organizations through the actions of leaders and human resources. These two types of communication aren't completely separated, as they can be connected to each other (Hallahan et al., 2007: 7).

There are strategic communication tools that a leader can use, such as framing, sensemaking, storytelling and dialogue. Each of these enables the leader to persuade others to achieve a goal of mutual interest (Johansson, 2018: 12). Research is very useful for strategic communication as it provides various data, which can be leveraged in strategic planning to address an issue. Then, some strategies are formulated, the implementation of which will be achieved through measurable tactics. As a broader concept, strategic communication includes public relations (Botan, 1997: 188-189).

Public relations is concerned with information flowing to the public, persuading the public to change its attitudes and actions, and connecting an organization with its public (Bernays, 2013: 3). It is argued that strategic communication can explain more fully than public relations the communication practiced by organizations (Falkheimer & Heide, 2014: 124).

Public relations leaders break away from the traditional model of leader-follower interactions, i.e. the traditional communication manager. Especially in the modern era, such a leader should be able to analyze a large and constantly renewed amount of information and data of interest to the organization and through strategic assessment will discern opportunities for engagement and interaction. They are characterized as “communication leaders”, who utilize the entire process above in their interactions and negotiations with the leaders and human resources of organizations (Berger & Meng, 2014: 8).

### *Types and styles of leadership and communication styles*

To date, many analyses, classifications/categorizations and theories of leadership have been recorded, highlighting leader's multidimensional nature and researching leadership styles and behaviors (Khan et al., 2016: 1). The conceptual search for the leader had begun since ancient times. The focus has always been on the characteristics that make up the outstanding personality. The ancient Greeks laid the foundation for the modern theoretical framework in relation to the leader in family, society, politics, work, organizations and business. Thucydides focused on the

rational and flexible leader, who knows how to manage crises and therefore coordinate and manage actions to achieve group goals. Plato spoke of the leader-weaver, who is multifactorial and balanced. Aristotle, greatly influencing later thinking and scientific production around leadership as its pioneer theorist, described the orator-leader, who guides the audience or the group by protecting its coherence and surrounding it with logical and psychological convince. The types of leadership, as inherited from antiquity, include the authoritarian, the organizational, the Aristotelian rhetorical leader etc. (Triantari, 2020a: 74-83).

Since leadership is about influence and power, leaders must form different kinds of relationships with their groups, depending on the type of group. Thus, depending on the group, the corresponding type of leader is also adopted, in order to achieve the acquisition of influence and power. In some groups gaining influence and power isn't as difficult as in others. The leader could be considered one of the participants in the group, who is typically appointed or elected, responsible for guiding and coordinating it. Where no one is formally appointed or elected to the leadership position, there is an informal leader, who is the one with the most influence or the one who enjoys the most respect in the group. The informal leader can be identified through questions asked of group members (Fiedler, 2006: 371).

There is also the classical leader and the organic leader. The former puts himself/herself in the center and doesn't pay much attention to the expertise of the people around him/her, nor does he/she allow them to gain much power. He/she draws strength from praise, expertise and other related factors. Decision making on various matters is done exclusively by him/her. This type of leader could be perceived as more of a manager than a leader. He/she exercises control, largely keeps his/her distance from others, viewing them as inferior, and exhibits strongly masculine behavior. The latter may be an individual or even a whole group. Special importance is given to the know-how of the people related to this type of leadership. The organic leader derives his/her power from the expertise, cooperation, power sharing and contribution of team members. In this type of leader's group all people have power while decisions are made jointly in a distributive way (Avery, 2004).

There are many leadership styles, which can be found anywhere (e.g. in the context of an organization, at work, in politics, etc.), such as the visionary, the supportive, the cooperative and the democratic, and then the directive leader, who is prudent and unrestrained, and the oppressive leader, who is reckless and unrestrained. Other leadership styles are the autocratic, the bureaucratic, the expert, the individualistic, the efficient, the strategic, the alchemist, and the diplomatic leader. Some of these leaders are distinguished by their flexibility compared to others. There are also leaders with negative characteristics, such as the destructive, the opportunist, the follower and the bystander leader. In an even more negative and shadowy form, the leader becomes

dark, including the Machiavellian, the psychopath, the narcissist and the authoritarian leader (Triantari, 2020a: 185-196).

Style is about a leader's focus on performance and people but also about his/her characteristics, attitudes, mannerisms and personality. Style differs from skills, as the latter refer to a series of techniques (planning, organizing, communicating, controlling, evaluating project, solving problem situations, dealing with conflicting issues and meeting a schedule) that are used to meet goals. Each leadership style tends to apply the aforementioned skills differently while a leader's skills are related to the leadership style (Warrick, 1981: 170).

Not only the specific circumstances but also the personalities of the leaders themselves will determine the leadership style chosen. Leaders adjust their leadership styles accordingly. Leadership styles do not naturally exist in people, but are cultivated (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014: 171). In terms of the workplace, it could be argued that leadership style, organizational commitment and competence through work are interrelated. As a matter of fact, leadership style has an impact on an individual's quality of life at work (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014: 58). An effective leader is considered one who has the required characteristics, skills, behaviors, various styles and ways of demonstrating these behaviors in relation to his/her personal style (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2005: 114). Generally, followers (people who give meaning to leadership), means (ways of exercising leadership), effects (orientation to leadership) and goals (point of reference) allow a better understanding of leadership styles (Kesting et al., 2015: 23-24).

Each leadership style can also adopt a communication style, which could then even have an impact on the course of an organization. A survey conducted in the South African construction industry showed that leadership styles (e.g. transformational) influence communication styles among human resource (Crews et al., 2019). Communication style could be defined as a person's unique way of using verbal, paraverbal and verbal cues during interactions with other people. These cues provide information about the person's personality, the way he/she interacts with others and how one should interpret the cue. There are seven dimensions of communication style, which could be summarized by the acronym "PRESENT (Preciseness, Reflectiveness, Expressiveness, Supportiveness, Emotionality, Niceness, and Threateningness)" (De Vries et al., 2009).

In intercultural relationships, differences in communication styles can create a negative communication climate, even causing conflict. This is why a deeper understanding of the different communication styles and the communication context in which they take place is primarily required (Liu, 2016). The fact that people differ in communication styles is due to social and educational reasons. Furthermore, men and women can have different communication styles. Despite gender biases, which are specific to women and include, among others, the softness of their communication styles and the effectiveness of their leadership, the reality shows that women,

especially in the field of public relations, because of their own communication styles can better understand certain forms of communication, such as online communication (Tench et al., 2017).

*The modern leader and the leader of the future: Towards a true leader of communication*

As the orientation to the true meaning of leadership is lost, so is the attempt to define it. Disorientation results from focusing on other elements, which, although possibly related to leadership (e.g. power, wisdom, etc.), create a different frame of analysis (Prentice, 1961: 102). Additionally, leadership is confused with other concepts (e.g. management), while dividing it into individual elements for practical reasons (e.g. research) results in its oversimplification. Moreover, the emphasis on specific aspects of it leaves other important aspects of it unexplored. Whatever the truth, leadership tends to evolve conceptually and practically (Avery, 2004: 4).

Most definitions are neither clear nor comprehensive. None of them has been widely accepted to date. In fact it is difficult for the majority to form a clear view of leadership (Avery, 2004: 4, Fairholm & Fairholm, 2009: 1, Vroom & Jago, 2007: 17). Empirical data on leadership highlight its complexity and paradox, the interest it creates in those who approach it and how problematic its understanding can become (Mendenhall, 2017: 3).

Over time, definitions of leader have been inspired by:

the superiority of the intellect for right thought and action,  
wisdom, based on judgment, which in turn precedes discretion and imposes on desires,  
morality, which distinguishes temperament, education and the person's origin  
and the persuasiveness of speech, which is based on the rhetorical skill of the individual (Triantari, 2020a: 75).

It seems that all definitions of leadership focus on the influence the leader has on the thoughts and actions of the group. Leadership, using influence and persuasion, aims to create a climate that will direct individuals to undertake and complete tasks and achieve goals of their own volition (Triantari, 2020a: 134-136). Therefore, leadership could be defined as the process of influence, which aims to achieve a goal by guiding individuals and the organization coherently (Prentice, 1961: 102, Sharma & Jain, 2013: 310).

Leadership in today's "Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Uncertain (VUCA)" environment is a major topic of discussion. Globally, leaders are sought to take the reins of organizations to respond to contemporary challenges, change things for the better, manage crises and solve problems, making a difference not only within their area of operation but also beyond that. Nevertheless, reality itself shows that the leadership hasn't yet stood up to the circumstances and the demands

of the modern era (Iordanoglou, 2018:118). Modern organizations need leaders who are distinguished for their effectiveness, as they understand the complexity of the global landscape, which is changing rapidly and continuously (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014: 57).

Therefore, it would be useful to define global leadership as well. Leadership of this kind is defined as "the processes and actions through which an individual influences a range of internal and external constituents from multiple national cultures and jurisdictions in a context characterized by significant levels of task and relationship complexity" (Reiche et al., 2017: 11).

Someone isn't considered a leader because he/she has climbed the hierarchy, inherited this right or comes from high socio-economic strata. A leader is a person who intellectually and morally stands out, having virtues, knowledge and experience, elements that are reflected in his/her oral and written speech. His/her ability to convince others logically and psychologically allows him/her to influence them through the interaction of communication, so that they trust and accept him/her while meeting their needs. A leader exercises persuasion in others, inspiring, motivating, recognizing, negotiating, developing initiatives, reasoning and skills, demonstrating broad-mindedness, innovating and making good use of resources with visible results (Triantari, 2020a: 136-137).

A leader must be, know and do. Nature won't have prepared him/her for these, on the contrary, whatever he/she builds will be due to hard personal work and study. A good leader is tireless. He/she never stops either working or studying to constantly improve. When he/she is worthy of trust he/she is also worthy of respect. Trust is built with his/her professionalism, which is highlighted through his/her personality. The leader is distinguished for his/her in-depth knowledge of: a) follower, leadership, communication and situation, b) himself/herself (e.g. strengths and weaknesses of his/her character, knowledge and skills), c) human nature (e.g. needs, emotions response to stress), d) the nature of the work (self-competence and training of others) and e) the organization itself (e.g. climate and culture). The leader has the ability to lead (e.g., goal setting, problem solving, decision making, planning), implement (e.g., communication, coordination, supervision, evaluation), and motivate (e.g., demonstration of ethics, training, consulting, coaching) (Sharma & Jain, 2013: 309-313).

A leader is seen mostly in difficult situations. He/she doesn't dwell only on his/her vision of the future, which he/she sees differently than other people. Most importantly, he/she finds ways to turn these visions into goals by making them clear and communicate them to others. The leader mustn't only communicate these goals but also find people who will commit to making them happen. At the same time, the leader must reiterate, reinforce and affirm these visions and goals. In fact, a leader is retained in the position of leadership as long as the above conditions exist, especially in organizations that rely on voluntary action. In order to be productive in terms of results, the real leader must also deal with human resources, providing motivation, encouraging, being a source of

inspiration, pushing each person to develop and mature, forming a climate of trust, progress and development and finally changing people's lives. Therefore, human relationships, which are formed on the one hand between the leader and the people and on the other hand among the people, are considered of major importance. Both of these types of interpersonal relationships are of interest to the leader, matter, need focus, and interact each other. The leader must give great importance to the quality of these relationships, thus reflecting the ethical levels of the organization (Fairholm & Fairholm, 2009: 2, Marshall, 1991).

The moral and intellectual virtues of the leader are related to happiness and well-being in the workplace (Triantari, 2020a: 78). However, a leader's behavior isn't only related to human relations, but often focuses exclusively on task completion (Avery, 2004: 72). The leader shouldn't consider himself privileged, but be ready to take responsibility. He/she doesn't need to be smart to be effective, he/she just needs to be consistent in words and actions (Kumar et al., 2014: 82-83). He/she could be considered more of a servant than a master. It has been observed that many leaders often define themselves as bosses, creating problematic situations, oppressing and pressuring their subordinates, instead of helping them in their work (Fairholm & Fairholm, 2009: 2). However, this doesn't mean that the leader should serve the employees themselves but the vision of the organization (Khan et al., 2016: 3).

The modern leader doesn't need to act individually, but to cooperate with other people within the workplace. The leader acts and thinks ethically, adopting a framework of values and promoting social and corporate responsibility. It is important to have an inquiring mind, seeking innovation, and to be constructive and interactive, always taking into account the complexity of modern environments (Triantari, 2020a: 249). It can be concluded that the modern leader doesn't embody the standards of leadership, as they were expressed in antiquity, because he/she is primarily interested in power even in an organization (Triantari, 2019: 234).

Finally, in today's complex world of constant transitions, successive multiple crises and inequalities, which over the years intensify, the leader-orator and at a further level the combined form of leader-orator-negotiator/mediator has the whole package of a modern leader (Koliopoulos et al., 2021: 87, Triantari, 2020a), combining theory-practice, ethics-reality and project-person. This leader is valued through the effectiveness of changing conditions and communication crises in the workplace, remaining democratic, negotiating, transformational, cool and active in every situation. He/she seeks to be efficient, achieving the goals that have been set, but he/she is also humane, focusing on his/her human potential and shaping an ideal working environment. He/she knows how to persuade others, is communicative, fair, reliable and honest, inspires confidence and has emotional intelligence. He/she knows how to motivate by encouraging, promoting, rewarding and increasing efficiency. Today in organizations this leader needs to be a manager as well, utilizing specific tools and performing specific functions, having persuasion and ethos, knowledge

and experience, directing, inspiring, planning, creating vision, scheduling, organizing and controlling. Undoubtedly, this leader could also be characterized as a superleader, who combines intellect and emotion by having creativity. From this leader emerges the so-called multifaceted leader, who is the excellent manager-leader and has, in addition to the aforementioned characteristics, ingenuity, cooperation, affability, discipline, control and self-knowledge, humor, adaptability, flexibility, insight, maturity, erudition, open-mindedness, intelligence, talkativeness, curiosity and restlessness. Especially in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, a leader was needed, who, in addition to emotional intelligence, will also have mindfulness (Triantari, 2020a).

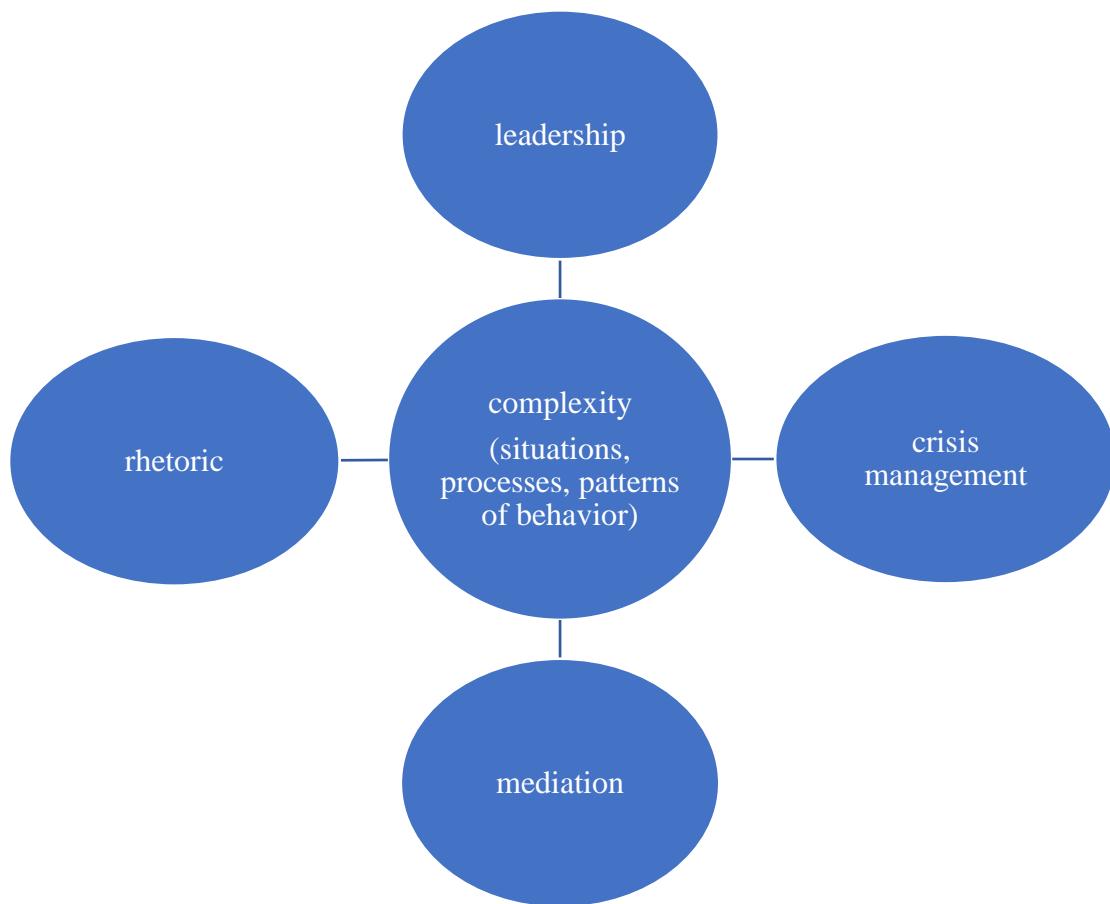
More broadly, global leaders need to be curious, adventurous and open-minded in order to stay ahead of developments (Avery, 2004: 72). Taking all the above into consideration, it seems that leadership is moving from individuality to collectivity. The role of the complex leader is to create adaptive organizational systems according to the complex environment, revising the position, structure and competitive advantage of these systems. The complex leader must be distinguished by complexity in sighting, thinking, feeling, knowing, doing, trusting and being (Olmedo, 2012: 88).

## **Results**

Based on the literature review, this paper distinguishes and categorizes the following findings, answering the research questions that have been raised:

*RQ1* What is the most common feature of leadership, rhetoric, crisis management and mediation?

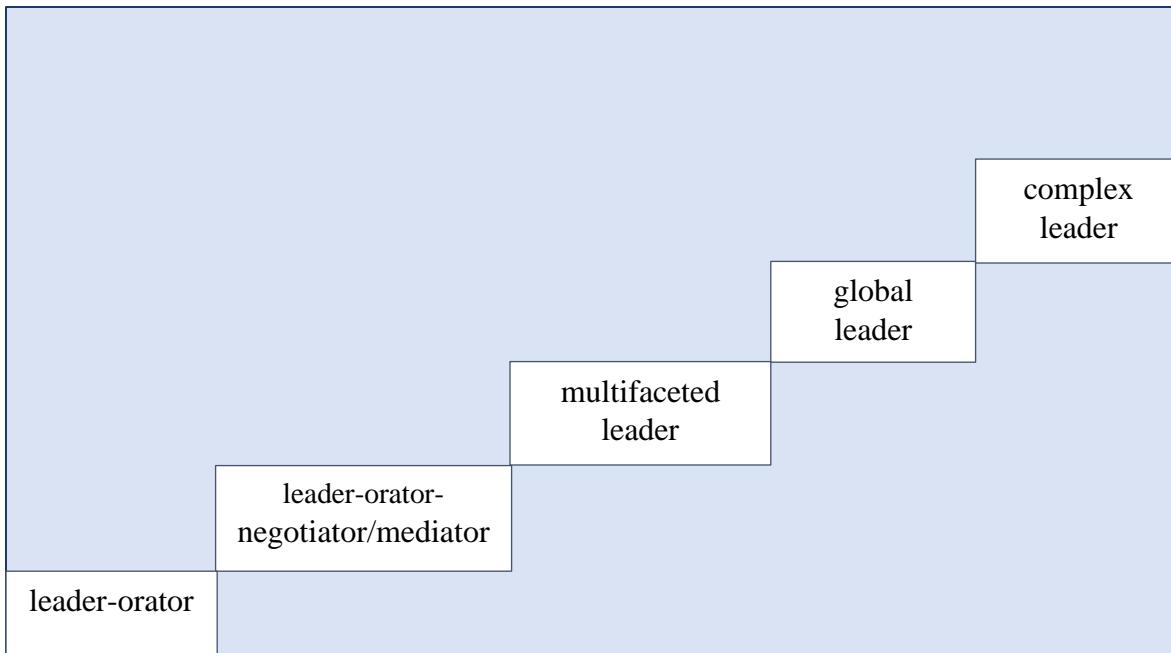
This seems to be complexity. Each of these concepts, based on communication, interactions and human relationships, is about complex situations, processes and patterns of behavior. Figure 1. illustrates the relationship among these concepts:



**Figure 1.** The model of complexity

*RQ2* Is there a gradation in the types of modern and future leaders?

There is a certain gradation of modern and future leaders that could be depicted in the form of a ladder. The order is as follows (bottom to top): leader-orator, leader-orator-negotiator/mediator, multifaceted leader, global leader and complex leader. Figure 2. depicts “this ladder of communicative leadership” in which the leader at the top tends to bring together all those elements of a leader of communication. This ladder could also be considered as the development process of the leader of communication.



**Figure 2.** “The ladder of communicative leadership”

*RQ3* Which type of leader would be considered the most skilled communicator in the present and in the future?

As the most common feature of leadership, rhetoric, crisis management and mediation is complexity, the complex leader is the leader best suited to practice communication in all present and future environments. This leader could also be described as a leader of communication, as he/she has all the package required (e.g. attributes, abilities, skills etc.).

## Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to highlight the communicative dimension of the leader. This dimension is vital for the modern leader and the leader of the future. As a skilled communicator a leader is able to share his/her vision, interact properly with people, build relationships, negotiate, prevent, face or manage a crisis, conduct the mediation process and generally achieve any goal under any circumstance. As leadership, rhetoric, crisis management and mediation are distinguished by complexity, the modern and the future leader must be complex to lead correctly, effectively and successfully. In the era of globalization, this leader transcends national borders to have an international impact. Although he/she is strategic in communication, well versed in the subject of public relations and has specific personal or organizational purposes to serve, he/she still puts people at the center and has a social impact in the context of corporate social responsibility. As artificial intelligence develops more and more the model of the complex leader

is the one that can lead global human society to progress and prosperity. However, like all other types of leadership, this leader will be tested by present and future challenges and dangers.

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