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Knowledge management and leadership styles in the competitive culture of rural enterprises

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Resumen

El objetivo de la investigación es identificar si existen relaciones estadísticamente significativas con la gestión del conocimiento y el estilo de liderazgo en la cultura competitiva en las empresas rurales del Municipio de Ameca, Jalisco. Para ello, se utilizó una muestra de 29 empresas rurales, aplicando un diseño metodológico correlacional no experimental y transeccional. Los resultados del estudio sugieren que los estilos de liderazgo, principalmente el estilo transformador, tienen un impacto más significativo en la cultura competitiva de las empresas rurales y que la gestión del conocimiento se refleja positivamente en la cultura competitiva específicamente, el compartir y aplicar el conocimiento son las fases que tienen el mayor impacto en ella.

Palabras clave: Estilos de liderazgo; Gestión del conocimiento; Cultura competitiva; empresas rurales

Abstract

The objective of the research is to identify whether there are statistically significant relationships with the management of knowledge and leadership style in the competitive culture in the rural companies of the Municipality of Ameca, Jalisco. For this purpose, a sample of 29 rural companies is worked on, applying a non-experimental and transectional correlate methodological design. The results of the study suggest that: leadership styles primarily the transformation style have a more significant impact on the competitive culture of the rural companies under study and that knowledge management is positively reflected in the culture competitively specifically, sharing and applying knowledge are the phases that impact the growing impact on it.

Keywords: Leadership styles; Knowledge management; competitive culture; rural companies

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Introduction

In today's company are undergoing situations of change generated by a number of internal and external factors, and especially by the need to modernize their competitive strategies. Despite the culture that permutes in organizations, it is one of the challenges that can jeopardize the growth of them, so more and better leaders are required, people with a broad vision and with great self-confidence, without those people there is no way that there is prosperity in companies (Gomez, 2008:160), that is to say insufficient to have a good company, it is necessary to have effective leaders, that increase the potential of people and improve processes and decision-making.

In the field of so-called knowledge economy, knowledge management has become one of the main topics of research and, in the management paradigm par excellence, in the field of the organization and management of business institutions (Rodríguez, 2006:26). Thus, knowledge management can become a tool that allows to accumulate the learnings achieved empirically by each of the members of the company, and also ensure that knowledge is shared and used to improve the performance of the organization.

In this context, leadership, knowledge management and culture represent in recent years, important fields of research, were found in the literature review various studies and highlighted Ogbonna and Harris (2000) who identified that certain types of culture lead to good financial performance. It also highlights the results of Viswanathan *et al.*, (2019) in identifying on the one hand that employees with potential prefer to work with the transformational leadership style, and on the other hand, if the leadership style is transactional, employees will have a sense of belonging to the organization. Therefore, leadership style plays an important role in employee engagement.

This study establishes the need to relate the variables of leadership and knowledge management, around competitive culture. Emphasis is placed on the rural enterprise which is a trigger for the development of the community where it is inserted. The central question was to investigate, How the management of the knowledge and leadership affect the competitive culture of rural companies? and as specific questions to discover What factor of knowledge management directly influences the competitive culture of rural companies? ? and finally, what is the relationship between the management of the knowledge and the leadership in the competitive culture of rural enterprises? Therefore, the objective is to identify whether there are statistically significant relationships with knowledge management and leadership style in competitive culture in rural enterprises in the municipality of Ameca, Jalisco.

The work is organized in three sections, the first related to the revision of literature addresses theoretical approaches to approaches and leadership styles; the models and the process of

knowledge management are exposed; the organizational culture is analyzed and the latter describes the competitive culture and finally, explains the variable of rural enterprise. The second section includes the methodological design and correlation results. The third paragraph is finalized, the deductive inference of the contributions of the authors consulted and contrasts with the implications in rural enterprises, emphasizes the importance of leaders as drivers of transformation and adequate knowledge management for the development of a competitive culture.

Theoretical basis

Transactional and transformational leadership

Leadership has been the subject of study of disciplines and perspectives such as history, psychodynamic theory, psychology, organizational development theory and sociology (Gaynor, 2003). Leadership is defined as the aptitude for Influence in a group towards achieving a vision or setting goals (Robbins and Judge, 2009). It is also conceived as a social and relational phenomenon resulting from the interaction between people (Contreras and Castro, 2013). Being a complex construct, you must identifying describe the different variables that may be linked, such as cognitive, behavioral or personality (Lupano and Castro, 2008).

Matching authors (Vroom and Jago, 2007; Robbins and Coulter, 2005) that most leadership definitions share the idea that it involves influence in a group to guide them to achieving goals. The most complete trust of leadership, includes five key parts emphasized by Relative (2010:180) and are: interpersonal process of influence; relationship between a person (leader) and a group of (followers); delimited cultural environment; particular situation and achievement of a common purpose as a criterion for the effectiveness of the process.

The complexity of defining leadership has led to a diversity of approaches that seek to explain this phenomenon. To identify the leader within the organization and understand how its role is working, approaches have been proposed which can be grouped into four approaches (García, 2015:63): focus on distinguishing characteristics such as social, physical or intellectual traits that differentiate leaders from followers; behavioral approach, it studies the behaviors of individuals who are leaders and those who are not; situational or contingency approach, leadership effectiveness is considered to depend on the situation in which it took place and the emerging approach is facilitated when leaders transform their followers. The latter approach received more research, based on contributions from House (1971) and Burns (1978) on leadership styles.

However, the leadership style establishes the model of behavior distinguished by others, as well as the perception of himself regarding the position and performance of the leader, which mobilizes followers to do what has been requested (Guillen *et al.*, 2015). Through personal influence and

power, the energies, potentialities and activities of a group, to achieve a common goal in order to transform both the company and the people who collaborate in it (Castrillón, 2011). There are several ways to classify leadership styles; however, the dominant perspective distinguishes between transactional leadership, transformational leadership and *laissez faire* (Furtner *et al.*, 2013).

This research focuses on the first two styles, on the one hand, the transactional leadership characterized by a variety of transactions on is or exchanges between the leader and followers, where the leader motivates his followers towards goals focused on achieving his tasks. On the other hand, transformational leadership is a link that arises in a context of crisis or social need that is shared by the members of a group, this is one of the most studied where it was developed in theory by Bass (1985) from the original ideas about the charismatic and transformational leadership of House (1977) and Burns (1978). House (1977) and stood the charismatic leadership, highlighting the importance of the attitudes and perceptions that followers have in relation to their leaders, since they not only trust and respect it, but also magnify it as a guarantor with exceptional characteristics. Burns (1978) stresses that most relationships between leaders and their followers develop as model or transactional; this con base in meeting the needs of follower subjects, and through transactions, establishes a link that links subjects with their leader.

Bass (1985) describes transformational leadership based on the effects the leader produces on his followers. Leaders with transformational characteristics bring about changes in their followers from raising awareness of the importance of performing their tasks. It states that the two types of leadership are not exclusive and that leaders can employ both types according to the different situations presented to them.

In short, it is inferred that transformational leadership is positioned as a trigger for the competitiveness of organizations, taking advantage of the motivation of followers and work teams. In this sense, it is significant that leaders promote respect for followers, to access committed work teams.

Knowledge management

Paredes *et al.*, (2017, p. 478) mention that Zorrilla (1997) defined knowledge as the combination of information, context and experience; information is composed of organized data and facts, knowledge consists of truths and beliefs, perspectives and concepts, judgments, expectations and methodologies. When knowledge is used to solve problems, it is individual knowledge, but when it is shared with others in the organization, it becomes organizational knowledge, therefore it is necessary to seek the flow of knowledge from individual learning to organizational learning to improve organizational performance (Salleh and Choo, 2011).

The term "*knowledge management*" was first used by Karl M. Wiig in 1986 mentioned by Benavides and Pedraza (2018:178), who defined it as a systematic construction, renovation and explicit and deliberate application of knowledge to maximize the effectiveness related to a company's knowledge.

For Bueno (2000), knowledge management is the process that continuously ensures the development and application of knowledge in an organization with the aim of improving problem-solving capacity and thus contributing to the sustainability of its competitive advantages. In addition, Tarí and García (2013) mention that it is a dynamic process of creation, storage and transfer of knowledge, in order to improve the performance of an organization. From these definitions, common elements can be extracted to facilitate and apply knowledge in the actions of organizations.

Currently knowledge is seen as a key component in the competitive advantage of any organization because, as an asset, it has properties to multiply when shared and can be the dynamic source of the other resources (Drucker, 1998). Wenger (2001) cited by Varas (2017:12) shares this conception, emphasizing that knowledge management is the way the organization obtains, shares and generates competitive advantages from its intellectual capital, which represents the value of knowledge and experience of the work force and accumulated memory. There are several models for knowledge management, Rodríguez (2006:26) groups them into three types:

- Storage, access, and knowledge transfer: models that focus on storing, with no differences in information and data knowledge.
- Sociocultural: models focused on the development of an organizational culture suitable for knowledge management processes.
- Technological: outstanding models in developing and using technological systems and tools for knowledge management.

According to this theoretical approach and as a conceptual complement are presented below the three stages that comprises the process of knowledge management within an organization proposed by Predaja et al., (2006:574): 1) Create knowledge: it is done by exploring and combining new knowledge with existing ones or with interactions with others in an organization in an organization , 2) Sharing knowledge: generated by exchanging and transferring knowledge to others and 3) Applying knowledge: it is achieved by transforming knowledge into beneficial products for the organization. It is clear that the incident factors are: people, technologies, internal processes and management models implemented in organizations, in such a way that it allows members to share the tacit knowledge that they may possess (González and Alvarez, 2019). It follows that, in order to

survive and grow in the competitive environment, organizations must be able to facilitate, combine and employ organizational knowledge.

Competitive culture

Organizational culture is the way the company has learned to manage its environment, a complex mix of assumptions, behaviors, stories, myths, metaphors and other ideas that define what it means to work in a particular organization (Schein, 1985). Organizational culture can be seen as a "resource" to achieve goals, and if that resource adds value, is different from the culture of other organizations and is not easily imitated by competitors, it can become a competitive advantage and a "strategic asset" that supports success (Barney, 1986).

For Febles and Oreja (2008:13) there is evidence that there is a relationship between culture and business strategy, as proof of this, in recent years emphasis has been placed on the variable culture as key to the success and development of strategies. It can therefore be said by agreeing with Schein (1985) that culture influences the development of the strategy, being something present in the minds of managers. The measurement of organizational culture was adopted by Ogbonna and Harris (2000) who were based on the works of Cameron and Freedman (1991), Deshpande et al. (1993) and Quinn (1988).

There is no doubting the importance of distinguishing between different types of culture within an organization and in this regard, Ogbonna and Harris (2000) cited by Pedraja et al (2018:731) present the following classification, which has been validated by later works (Xeniouku and Simosi, 2006; Jung and Takeuchi, 2010):

- *Innovative culture*: is characterized by promoting creativity and initiative, within a framework of autonomy to take risks, as well as new challenges to generate innovations.
- *Competitive culture*: is oriented in the fulfillment of tasks and goals, as well as the realization of actions that generate strategic or economic value, in a context of predominance over other companies.
- *Bureaucratic culture*: emphasizes both policy and rules, involves formalization and structuring; as well as a focus on operational efficiency.
- *Community culture*: oriented to achieve cohesion in the organization, in a context of commitment and loyalty, where importance is given to people in the company.

For this study, the study used the model of competitive culture, which it considers as fundamental elements; goals, tasks, predominance in relation to competition and strategic and/or economic value. It is important to value this type of culture because, to succeed in global competition, an open and powerful climate is needed in the organization, a tightly defined competitive culture (Schuler,

2000). In addition, Side *et. al.*, (1997) cited by Jung and Takeuchi (2010:1935) affirm a culture of competitiveness must incorporate and coexist with cooperation, which is created through solidarity leadership and community culture.

Rural companies

According to FIFONAFE (Trust National Ejidal Development Fund, 2010) the *Rural Company* is an entity focused on wealth creation, consisting of one or more production units that are organized and resourced for the production of a good or service with an added value that allows the generation of profits and remuneration for the work carried out.

Starting a company in rural areas involves integrating physical, biological, economic and human resources, which must be combined in a timely manner to achieve its objective. A company must also fulfill the commitment to generate and drive the development of its ejido and/or community so it must bring together characteristics such as: competitiveness, market orientation, value-added generator, appropriation, business sense, capacity for change and technology and financing, among others.

According to Gomez (2000:46), there are three types of rural organizations and the criteria for differentiating them are: the purposes they pursue, the scope of action they cover and the formulation of their more generic approaches, and the three types are referred to as follows, as figure No. 1

Figure No.1 Types of rural organizations

Union or representative organizations	Professional or corporate organizations	Economic or instrumental organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The universal and comprehensive nature of the purposes they pursue. •The actions they carry out affect the entire sector and not only the affiliates of the organizations; and •Your messages contain an explicit ideological message, express the interests of your affiliates and can be: •Territorial: they are defined by the geographic space or locality in which they are located and their criteria are territorial. •Functional: they are defined by the specific tasks they address in their actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Its objective is the development of its members according to their condition, such as agricultural producers, wage earners or rural inhabitants; •Within the group of facets of the affiliate, it favors those that are more typical of the group. •They do not have an explicit ideology beyond pursuing the welfare of their members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Carrying out very specific tasks linked to the productive-economic sphere of the individuals who make them up. •Generally, they are linked to the production, transformation and marketing of agricultural products. •The aims they pursue are exclusive and particularistic; •The actions they develop affect only the members of the organizations; and •Their approaches lack an ideological dimension.

Source: Own elaboration from Gomez 2000, p. 46

The identity of each community will be the fundamental pillar, the mobilization of the population essential condition and the adoption of an approach of integral development a central element. On the other hand, Narváez *et al.*, (2008:84-86) identify some elements that they consider essential for the production of business processes, among which are:

- Competition. This is characterized by the existence of disputes between the different companies that try to gain competitive advantages facing different rivals, where products and procedures are created and improved.
- Business culture of cooperation. Cooperation is revealed as a strategy that maximizes economic potential in industrial sectors and in the economy, resulting in increased efficiency and greater overall benefits.
- Teamwork. A system of working relationships and connections between them should be established that is part of a social culture that strengthens over time.

- Purposes, objectives and agreements (shared vision). The local economic development strategy is based on the existence of common economic, social and political purposes and relationships between companies and actors.
- Location-proximity. A local context is required to be set up in an environment capable of fostering the encouragement of the business organizations that are based there.

It is determined that the practice of rural business activities is mainly based on the trade relations they develop with each other, which allows them to generate greater competitiveness and productivity, as a result of the proximity they keep territorially benefiting from the exchange of information and communication more effective, requiring cooperation and perfectly defined teamwork.

This research aims to identify whether there are statistically significant relationships with knowledge management and leadership style in competitive culture in rural companies under study.

Hypothesis

H₁: Knowledge management has a positive impact on the competitive culture of rural enterprises.

H₂: Leadership has a positive impact on the competitive culture of rural enterprises.

Methodology

The municipality of Ameca, the subject of this study, is a city in the state of Jalisco, Mexico; the head of the municipality of the same name and seat of the Valles Region. The municipality of Ameca is located in the western center of the State of Jalisco, bordered to the north by the municipalities of Etzatlán and Ahualulco de Mercado; to the east with the municipalities of Teuchitlán and San Martín Hidalgo; to the south with the municipality of Tecolotlán; to the west with the municipalities of Mixtlán, Guachinango and the State of Nayarit. According to the latest figures from INEGI (2015) the municipality of Ameca has a population of 60,951 inhabitants and an area of 837.81 km². And also, according to the INEGI Population and Housing Census (2010), this municipality is made up of 59 rural towns.

Research design

This study responds to research with non-experimental methodological design of a cross-sectional type, in order to obtain information about the impact of knowledge management and leadership on competitive culture in rural enterprises.

Population and sample

The population is the managers, managers or owners of rural companies, understood as entities focused on wealth creation, consisting of one or more production units that are organized and resourced for the production of a good or service with an added value that allows the generation of profits and remuneration for the work carried out and that are located in a community or ejido of rural type, obtaining a list of these from the database provided by the Director of Rural Development and Agricultural Development of H. Ayuntamiento de Ameca, Jalisco, result of its last census and diagnosis carried out in the Municipality. To obtain the sample the formula proposed by Hernández, *et al.*, (2010:178-179) was applied:

$$n = \frac{pq}{z^2 + \frac{pq}{N}}$$

Where: n s sample size; p - level of acceptance; q - rejection level; Z - confidence level; N - population size; s degree of error. Assigning the following values: acceptance level: 50%; rejection level: 50%; confidence level: 95% equivalent to a z of 1.96; error rating: 5%.

Resulting in a sample of 38, but only 29 rural companies could be interviewed, as the others were still insistently refusing to participate in the survey. The instrument used for obtaining the information was the structured Likert-like questionnaire on a scale of 1 to 7, integrated with a total of 30 reagents and divided into four parts, the first part consists of 5 questions to obtain the characterization of rural companies and interviewees such as seniority, number of employees, as well as age, gender and schooling of the respondent (for the latter element, it was determined to assign 1 if he had undergraduate studies onwards and 0 in the rest of the cases); the second part structured for the collection of information regarding the variable knowledge management, adapted the instrument used by Pedraja *et al.*, (2008), which divides the variable into three dimensions: creation of knowledge, sharing knowledge and application of knowledge, giving a total of 12 reagents for this variable; the third part was composed of 9 reagents with respect to the variable leadership, adapting the questionnaire used by Rodríguez (2010), divided into two dimensions, transformational leadership and transactional leadership and finally the fourth part was formed for the variable competitive culture also using the instrument of Rodríguez *et. al.*, formed by 4 reagents. The data collection technique was the personal interview conducted in January and February 2020. To determine the reliability of the measuring instrument in each variable and dimensions, Cronbach's Alpha was used, the results of which are shown in Table 1, along with the dimensions and items of each variable. In addition to verifying the validity of the instrument, a factorial analysis

was performed in which the factorial loads, the KMO coefficient and the Bartlett sphericity test project sufficient results to validate the instrument.

Table 1. Variables and instrument dimensions

Variable	Dimension	Items	Reliability
Knowledge management	Knowledge creation	<p>The company has an efficient internal and external information exploration system</p> <p>The information obtained by various sources is efficiently processed and integrated within the organization</p> <p>The company has a system that allows it to identify important findings for its work from both internal and external sources</p> <p>Company executives create new insights by considering the system of exploration, discovery of findings and information integration</p> <p>The organization's managers interact with each other by favoring knowledge creation</p>	<p>Cronbach s 0.768</p> <p>Factorial: 1 factor</p> <p>Explained variance: 68.9%</p> <p>Gis. Bartlett: 0.000</p> <p>KMO: 0.687</p>
	Sharing knowledge	<p>The organization's executives exchange knowledge with each other</p> <p>The organization's executives transfer knowledge to each other</p> <p>Company executives share knowledge with each other</p> <p>The organization's managers apply the knowledge generated and shared</p> <p>Managers make decisions based on the application of previously generated knowledge</p>	<p>Cronbach s 0.756</p> <p>Factorial: 1 factor</p> <p>Explained variance: 67.3%</p> <p>Gis. Bartlett: 0.000</p> <p>KMO: 0.692</p>

	Application of knowledge	Company executives apply the knowledge generated and shared Managers make decisions based on the application of previously generated knowledge	Cronbach s 0.732 Factorial: 1 factor Explained variance: 68.1% Gis. Bartlett: 0.000 KMO: 0.672
Leadership Styles	Transformational leadership	The leader shares the mission and vision with his followers Followers enthusiastically share and follow the leader's goals Followers enthusiastically share and follow the leader's long-term vision Followers enthusiastically share and follow with enthusiasm the professional challenges posed by the leader Followers enthusiastically share and accept their role in the organization	Cronbach s 0.803 Factorial: 1 factor Explained variance: 71.9% Gis. Bartlett: 0.000 KMO: 0.687
	Transactional leadership	The follower understands and agrees with the reward system in the organization Followers understand and share the system of power in the organization The leader promotes individual and collective negotiating processes with his team Terms of exchange are determining for relationships and long-term and short-term work development	Cronbach s 0.664 Factorial: 1 factor Explained variance: 61.4% Gis. Bartlett: 0.000 KMO: 0.597
Competitive culture		The fulfillment of the tasks entrusted is a central focus of the actions of the members of the organization	Cronbach s 0.732 Factorial: 1 factor Explained variance:

Members of the organization make their best efforts to meet the goals assigned	67.9%
The creation of strategic and economic value gives an essential sense to the work of the company	Gis. Bartlett: 0.000
The company and its members bet to be successful and better than competition in the market	KMO: 0.629

Source: own elaboration

Results

Among the findings found, in the characterization part, it was identified that of the total managers surveyed 26 were men (89.65%) and 3 women (10.35%), showing that the participation of men in this type of business is very high and almost zero the participation of women; in addition, it could be seen (Table 2) that the average age of companies is 16 years since their constitution, indicating that they are practically young in general these companies without forgetting that because of their characteristics they are very vulnerable and that it is very likely that many of them have not managed to survive; in terms of the number of employees the results reveal that on average they have 4 workers, a significant amount by the type of company and by the means in which they are developed; the age of respondents fluctuates on average in 42 years and it is noted that almost 50% of them have university training, which shows that they are managers in constant preparation and updating professional and business.

Table 2. Characterization of rural enterprises surveyed

Characterization elements	Average	Typical deviation
Antique	16.6	10.5
Average number of employees	4.1	17.2
Average age of managers	42.0	9.6
The manager's university training	48.9	5.8

Source: own elaboration

In consideration of the assumptions raised in this study, the following regression equation was implemented:

Competitive Culture - A + B1 Knowledge Creation + B2 Knowledge Sharing + B3 Knowledge Application + B4 Transformational Leadership + B5 Transactional Leadership + Ei.

Where, A is the constant of the model, B1, B2, B3, B4 and B5, is the weighting factor of the types of knowledge management and leadership styles and Ei, residual error of the model. (Lind *et al.*, 2012))

By applying this equation, information was obtained to show that the competitive culture of rural enterprises is mostly influenced by the first transformational leadership styles, followed by the transactional employed by the managers of the sample. Now from knowledge management, it has been shown that the variables of sharing and applying knowledge also have a significant impact on competitive culture and the variable creation of knowledge is not statistically relevant to influence competitive culture, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Regression result

Dependent variable	Independent variables	Beta	R2	F's significance
Competitive culture	Knowledge creation	0.211	0.666	0.000
	Sharing knowledge	0.544	0.410	0.000
	Application of knowledge	0.503	0.400	0.000
	Transformational leadership	0.792	0.690	0.000
	Transactional leadership	0.679	0.616	0.000

Source: own elaboration

Hence, in this study the competitive culture is explained by the direct impact of the two leadership styles and by the indirect impact of sharing and applying knowledge.

To confirm the findings, the canonical correlation technique which is a nonparametric correlation was chosen to determine the incidence of independent variables on the dependent variable, (Lind *et al.*, 2012):

$$Y_1 = X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5$$

Where:

And_1 represents competitive culture

X_1 represents knowledge creation

X_2 represents sharing knowledge

X_3 represents application of knowledge

X₄ represents transformational leadership style

X₅ represents transactional leadership style

The results obtained are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of ordered structural correlations

Creating Knowledge (.301)
Knowledge Sharing (.602)
Application of knowledge (.583)
Transformational Leadership Style (.781)
Transactional Leadership Style (.690)

Source: own elaboration

It is to be noted with regard to the findings obtained in Table 4, that there is total overlap with the results of this technique with respect to those obtained in Table 3 where again the variable that reflects greater direct relationship with the competitive culture of rural companies is the transformational leadership style with a coefficient of .781 and the variable that least direct relationship has with the competitive culture of rural companies was that of knowledge creation.

The results obtained in Table 3 and 4, make it possible to determine that the H₁ and H₂ scenarios were proven by showing that leadership has a positive impact on the competitive culture of rural enterprises, and even though the impact of knowledge management on competitive culture was partial, it can be inferred that it was regularly positive.

Conclusions

The results obtained allow to infer that the transformational leadership style first and the transactional style followed, are the ones that mostly affect the competitive culture of rural companies, in accordance with what Burns stresses (1978) on the effect that the leader produces on his followers from awareness of the importance of the performance of his activities or tasks and through transactions strengthens the link between the two parties, becoming clear that the leadership exercised is fundamental to building and developing a competitive culture (Ogbonna and Harris, 2000; Schein, 1985; Pedraja *et al.*, 2018) in rural enterprises.

On the other hand, in the findings and in relation to knowledge management, specifically the sharing and application of knowledge, they resulted with a greater impact on the competitive culture of rural enterprises and the creation of knowledge with a very low incidence. This implies a regular ability of leaders to share and apply knowledge and a minimal ability to create it.

Rural enterprises represent a development trigger in their environment, so it is a priority for managers to strengthen their efforts around knowledge management, it is necessary to generate a

broad and dynamic of obtaining information from different external and internal sources, processing it and integrating their work, sharing it and applying it , which would allow them to grow and survive in the competitive environment.

Finally, the competitive culture of rural companies has allowed them from the leadership styles exercised, not only to survive but to open up possibilities in the face of a very competitive environment to generate strategic and economic value by deploying a great effort on the part of the whole organization betting on being recognized and better than competition in the market.

From this research new lines or approaches for later studies such as the impact of knowledge management in Higher Education Institutions are opened. Another could be the competitive culture and its impact on women-run SMEs. And finally one last proposal would be focused leadership and knowledge management styles and their effect on social responsibility companies.

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