

## Research Paper

# Emerging Leaders : Leveraging Networks, Political Skill and Self-Leadership Based on the Atlantic Dialogues Emerging Leaders program

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In collaboration with Taoufik Benkaraache and Hammad Sqalli

With contribution from Lilia Rizk

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This research report is the synthesis of a three-year study of emerging leaders, strategies, practices, and empowerment mechanisms, conducted in partnership with the Policy Center for the New South, Economia HEM Research Center, and the LARGEPA laboratory at the University of Paris II Pantheon Assas.

The study examined attitudes, resources, skills, and abilities of a sample of 100+ emerging leaders from various Policy Center for the New South's flagship Atlantic Dialogues Emerging Leaders (ADEL) program editions, comprising 350 talented and influential young professionals rigorously screened for outstanding leadership abilities, aged 23 to 35, hailing from 4 geographic regions and 68 countries and active in the private and public sectors as well as NGOs and academia.



**Findings uncovered three key drivers of early and accelerated leadership emergence among young professionals: political skill, self-leadership, and networks.**

These three interacting components connect cognitive and behavioral dimensions and are core transformational levers for emerging leaders.

Self-leadership impacts human capital via three strategies: behavioral strategies, positive thinking strategies and intrinsic motivation strategies.

Political skill feeds emerging leaders' social capital (both off and on-line) by developing and harnessing the following four capabilities: social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability and apparent sincerity.

Incorporating these young professionals into local and global networks appears to catalyze the emergence of young leaders through exposure, visibility, personal branding, impression management, and the building of a reputation and an e-reputation that these physical and virtual networks enable.

Cross-cultural research suggests 'cross-vergence' of emerging leaders across South and North in terms of political skill and membership in specific professional networks, but greater use of self-leadership strategies and practices by emerging leaders from Southern countries. No gender differences were noted, and few differences were found with respect to network membership, suggesting greater convergence of leadership practices and capabilities among Gen X and Gen Y genders.

*Our insight into the capabilities of emerging leaders would not have been possible without the theoretical and empirical grounding and groundwork provided by researchers we have cited, both here and in the soon to be published in book form by the Policy Center for the New South.*

# *About the Policy Center for the New South*

The Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) is a Moroccan think tank aiming to contribute to the improvement of economic and social public policies that challenge Morocco and the rest of the Africa as integral parts of the global South.

The PCNS pleads for an open, accountable and enterprising «new South» that defines its own narratives and mental maps around the Mediterranean and South Atlantic basins, as part of a forward-looking relationship with the rest of the world. Through its analytical endeavours, the think tank aims to support the development of public policies in Africa and to give the floor to experts from the South. This stance is focused on dialogue and partnership, and aims to cultivate African expertise and excellence needed for the accurate analysis of African and global challenges and the suggestion of appropriate solutions.

As such, the PCNS brings together researchers, publishes their work and capitalizes on a network of renowned partners, representative of different regions of the world. The PCNS hosts a series of gatherings of different formats and scales throughout the year, the most important being the annual international conferences «The Atlantic Dialogues» and «African Peace and Security Annual Conference» (APSACO).

Finally, the think tank is developing a community of young leaders through the Atlantic Dialogues Emerging Leaders program (ADEL) a space for cooperation and networking between a new generation of decision-makers and entrepreneurs from the government, business and social sectors. Through this initiative, which already counts more than 300 members, the Policy Center for the New South contributes to intergenerational dialogue and the emergence of tomorrow's leaders.

# *About Economia HEM Research Center*

Economia HEM Research Center is a multidisciplinary center (social, economic and managerial) of applied research, that creates content and works closely with organizations, economic and societal actors as well as students. It aims to build solid bridges based on knowledge and research with the business world, connect with a network of national and international researchers and research centers, and create an innovative spirit within the HEM group. All of the work carried out by the HEM Research Center is regularly uploaded on the [www.economia.ma](http://www.economia.ma) platform. Economia HEM Research Center has been structured into five distinct departments since 2016: Organizational Dynamics and Complexity, Corporate Social Innovation, International Management and Society, Marketing and Digital Transformation, and the Fatéma Mernissi Societal Department (Youth, Gender, Media & Culture, Real Economy).

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## RESEARCH PAPER

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## INTRODUCTION

Identifying and developing leadership talent to lead change in a more globalized, networked and connected society is a central concern for organizations, institutions and countries today. Current developments and transformations bring new trends and dynamics, yet at the same time harbor a lack of knowledge, perhaps even a disabling entropy. Are there intelligible and actionable insights into the emerging leaders of generations X and Y? And what action levers are there to foster their development? Our study seeks precisely to convert this knowledge into action through in-depth understanding of emerging leadership phenomena using a rigorous scientific approach.

At the core of the study lie the following questions: What understanding can we offer of young professionals' leadership development and what can organizations learn to manage this prospective leadership resource? What lessons, also, for public institutions, international organizations, and programs putting resources into youth leadership development?

This research therefore consists of identifying the strategies, resources, and practices leveraged by emerging leaders (young professionals with early and accelerated leadership development) and the mechanics, dynamics, and articulations of such strategies, resources, and practices.

More broadly, from both a geographic and socio-economic perspective, this study attempts to answer to the following questions: Are the strategies, resources, and practices leveraged by young professionals idiosyncratic or universal in the face of globalization, the digital revolution, and other changes in society, work, organizations and individuals? Can the dynamic interaction of socio-cultural influences with current management ideas contribute to streamlining young leaders' strategies and practices when plugged into globalized networks? Is there such a thing as global emerging leadership cross-vergence?

In this synthesis of a broader work<sup>1</sup>, pieces of the answers to these questions fall into four main sections:

1. Digital empowerment, intentionality and reflexivity of emerging leaders (observations from an exploratory study of emerging leaders' attitudes and practices in networks).
2. Self-leadership: the cognitive dimension of emerging leadership.
3. Political skill: the strategic and political dimension of emerging leadership.
4. Contributions to the study and recommendations<sup>2</sup>.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

- Hybrid methodology: Qualitative exploratory study along with confirmatory quantitative study.
- The qualitative exploratory study was carried out during the 2018 edition of Atlantic Dialogues in Marrakech, by two Economia researchers (Hammad Sqalli and Yasmina El Kadiri) with support from the Policy Center for the New South.
- The quantitative study was conducted using an online questionnaire from late 2020 to early 2021. It drew on the database of emerging leaders attending various editions of the Policy

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1. The full report of the study will soon be published in book form by the Policy Center For The New South and Economia HEM Research Center.

2. In this fourth section of the report, we present suggestions for the development of emerging leaders in organizational contexts. Recommendations are based on the qualitative and quantitative results of our study, as well as on an in-depth analysis of management literature on leadership emergence and development and, finally, on our own experience carrying out research on emerging leaders.

Center for the New South's Atlantic Dialogues - Emerging Leaders (ADEL) program. It was conducted in close collaboration with ADEL Senior Program Manager Lilia Rizk.

- 135 responses were collected (40% response rate) from 43 countries, including 16 Northern countries and 27 Southern countries, broken-down as follows Europe (n=28), North America (n=20), Africa (n=60), South America (n=26), India (n=1).
- More than half the respondents were aged 29-34 and the average age was 32.
- 47% of respondents were women.
- 1/3 of respondents came from the private sector, 1/3 from international institutions and think tanks. 15% from the public sector and 15% from the non-profit sector.
- 36% of respondents were executives and/or senior managers (upper management), 21% middle management, 16.3% consultants.
- Quantitative data was analyzed on the SPSS software by Economia researchers Taoufik Benkaraache and Yasmina El Kadiri.

## SECTION 1 - BACKGROUND AND OBSERVATIONS FROM THE STUDY OF EMERGING LEADERS' COMMUNICATION (BEHAVIORS IN NETWORKS)

This first section first provides a synthetic analysis of current and future technological, socio-cultural, demographic, and organizational contexts that impact/favor the emergence of young influential professionals in local and global networks. It then provides a synthesis of empirical observations from qualitative data collected in an exploratory study conducted during the 2018 edition of Atlantic Dialogues in Marrakech, using ethnographic notes and interviews. These field observations were complemented and expanded with the study of communication by a sample of ADEL emerging leaders on digital social networks: Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram (public data only).

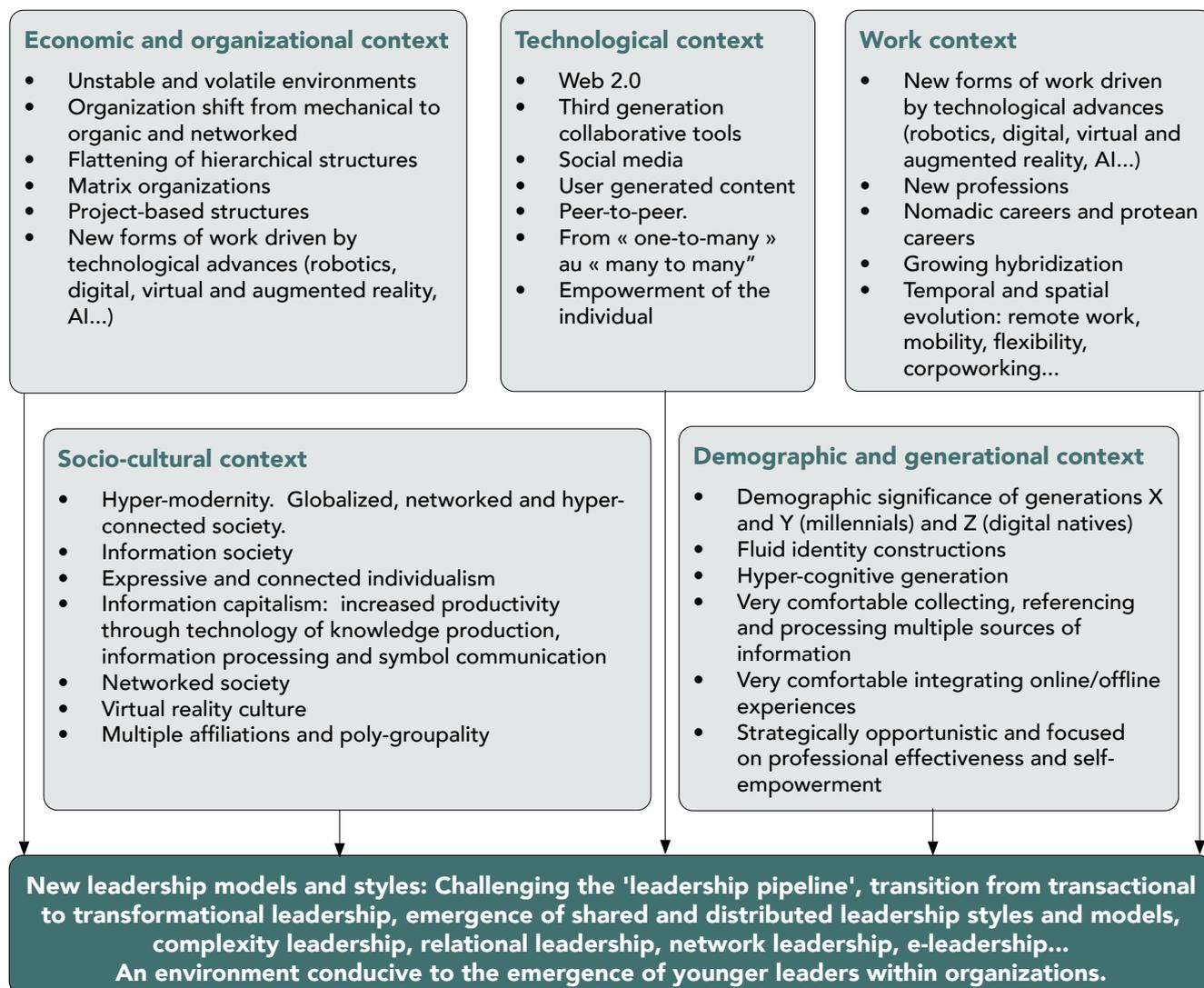
### I. Analysis of the current context and prospective analysis of new grounds conducive to the emergence of young leaders

#### *1. Fertile ground for the emergence of younger leaders: Organizational, technological, socio-cultural, demographic and generational context*

The organizational, technological, demographic, socio-cultural and scientific contexts and how they relate to emerging leadership are discussed in detail in the full report and book, and presented here in abridged format in the diagram below (Fig 1):

**Figure 1:**

**The influence of context on emerging leadership**



**2. From prevalence of transactional/transformational leadership to new forms of leadership, conducive to the emergence of younger leaders**

Traditional leadership models of the past 50 years are the product of bureaucratic, top-down organizational paradigms. Although highly effective in industrial economies, these models are inadequate or unsuitable for knowledge-based economies.

Starting in the 2000's, new leadership models emerged and developed, incorporating systemics, complexity and a greater emphasis on relational dynamics. Research that traditionally focused on formal leadership behavior (appointed or elected) shifted to so-called emergent approaches.

This renewed context for leadership models and styles, favoring emergent leaders, is described in detail in the full report and book, and presented here in abridged diagram format (see figure 2).

**Figure 2:**  
The rise of emerging leadership models that foster young leaders



Source: author

## II. Exploratory study: strategies and practices of emerging leaders at networking events and on digital social networks

### 1. *Intentionality, reflexivity and sensemaking*

- a. The attitudes and behaviors of emerging leaders in networking and interview situations reflect **self-confidence, charisma, and strong social and interpersonal skills**.
- b. Their attitudes and actions reflect intellectual curiosity and a growth mindset, a need for accomplishment, strong intrinsic motivation and **motivation to lead**<sup>3</sup> and strong interest in emerging trends and innovation.
- c. They show a lot of self-control (self-regulation), **intentionality**<sup>4</sup> (directionality, aiming and sense-making) and **reflexivity**<sup>5</sup> (cognitive capacity and ability combining reflection in the sense of thinking and in the sense of reflection and allowing for a continuous process of questioning/deconstruction by the individual of his or her actions and discourses)<sup>6</sup> allows for the production of sensemaking<sup>7</sup> processes (a capacity that has been demonstrated and is recognized as central for leaders). Reflexivity in emerging leaders (thought and action constantly interact with each other) is oriented towards personal growth, self-efficacy, performance and leadership development. It also informs self-presentation, impression management and reputation building strategies and tactics.

### 2. *Digital empowerment and technological capital*

- d. Emerging leaders exhibit strong intentionality in the visibility strategies and “digital choices” they make. They are engaged in a digital empowerment process by means of generating “digital capital” based on **identity recognition, reputation**<sup>8</sup> and **influence**.
- e. Emerging leaders possess and constantly strive to build digital skills, to constitute a **technological capital**<sup>9</sup>, as part of one’s human capital (knowledge, skills, competencies) and to serve relational strategies designed to build social capital (strategic offline networks as well as online networks on digital social networks or DSNs) This confirms research results suggesting that social capital<sup>10</sup> both in its bridging and bonding dimensions<sup>11</sup> is enhanced by DSNs (mainly Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn). These online relationships and contacts, along with DSN thematic groups membership and participation by emerging leaders unleash

3. MTL - Motivation to lead (Chan & Drasgow, 2001) is defined as individuals’ willingness to engage in leadership training activities and assume leadership roles.

4. Ricoeur (1985), Husserl (1994; 2010), Heidegger (1990).

5. Merleau-Ponty (1945)

6. See Giddens (1991): reflexive modernization.

7. Karl Weick (1996).

8. Reputation is a key construct in the organizational sciences (Ferris, Blass, Douglas, Kolodinsky, & Treadway, 2003) and refers to “a perceptual identity reflective of the complex combination of salient personal characteristics and accomplishments, demonstrated behavior, and intended images presented over some period of time as observed directly and/or as reported from secondary sources” (p. 215).

9. Ollier-Malaterre (2017).

10. We retain the definition of social capital proposed by Thomas Sanders: “the social value embodied in all social networks, as well as the inclination within these networks to reciprocate (social norms and reciprocity)”. It produces “specific benefits that arise from the trust, reciprocity, information and cooperation attached to social networks”.

11. Putnam (2000): bridging and bonding.

intentionality and political skill in incorporating networks designated as 'association attribute networks' where the drive to network lies in the desire to establish and consolidate 'shared attributes'<sup>12</sup>, in this case those related to entrepreneurship, leadership and conveying 'leader' attributes as perceived by employers, the general public, the media...

We agree with scientific research on the specificity of social capital developed online, the speed of its constitution resulting from the speed of digital interactions, the compression of space and time variables and the increasing accessibility of relationships and contacts. We therefore suggest that using and leveraging resources (information, connections, etc.) from networks formed on DSNs partially accounts for the precocious and accelerated leadership development of young professionals who skillfully tap into affordances (characteristics of an object or environment that an individual can use to perform an action) unique to DSNs, notably, those enabling increased capacities for online observation of others as well as analysis and examination/ choice of affiliation and reference networks.

Indeed, emerging leaders make the most of the potential of these three digital networks' affordances:

- **Digital search affordances:** searchability (efficiently searching all kinds of content), retrievability (scanning large networks to capture specific information), a-synchronicity (overcoming temporal boundaries and extracting content from relationships), persistence (consulting archived information), reviewability (assessing regularity and consistency of publications over time).<sup>13</sup>
- **Digital relations functionality affordances:** social interactivity, scalability (ability to send and receive information on a large scale), interoperability (ability to easily share content across multiple distinct platforms).<sup>14</sup>
- **Network transparency affordances:** visibility (the ability to make all network connections publicly visible), association (the ability to know that a connection/relationship exists), transversability (the ability to navigate through one's own and others').<sup>15</sup>

Among these three main functionalities<sup>16</sup>, we noted that emerging leaders, in terms of bridging social capital and mechanisms for expanding online networks, give priority to homophily and social judgment assessments, which indicates strong social acumen.

Emerging leaders also use "Digital Competence" and "Technological Capital" for the elaborate management of relational capital and personal branding, once again with strong intentionality and reflexivity, and indeed political skill, as seen in emerging leaders' online relational competence and impression management tactics<sup>17</sup>: a conscious or unconscious process by which individuals attempt to influence others' perceptions of themselves by regulating and controlling the content of social interactions. Political skill in its online self-presentation dimension is enhanced by DSN 'digital profile' functionalities, and particularly the five 'affordances' of shareability, editability, viewability (ability to access restricted profile content), replicability (ability to easily duplicate and modify profile content so as to make it original) and signaling (ability to convey intentional or unintentional

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12. Fombrun (1982).

13. See in this order: Boyd (2010), Baym (2010), Baym (2010), Boyd (2010), Faraj et al. (2011).

14. See in this order Baym (2010), Boyd (2010), Kayne et al. (2014).

15. See in this order Leonardi (2014), Treem and Lenonardi (2012), Boyd and Ellison (2007).

16. From a typology developed by Kane et al. (2014).

17. Impression management (IM) in the sense of Erving Goffman (1959, 1967) consists of a set of tactics aimed at influencing the impression an individual makes on an audience. IM was first conceptualized in 1959 by Sociologist Erving Goffman in the book 'The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life'.

messages through user profiles)<sup>18</sup>. We have noted that in the category of affordances, emerging leaders favor 'self-presentation curating' in expanding online networks.

### Qualitative Exploratory Study Conclusion

Emerging leaders engage in innovative practices of cooperation and exchange that suggest social and political empowerment and emancipation, along with self-creation of social and digital capital based on recognition<sup>19</sup>, reputation<sup>20</sup> and the development of influence. Emerging leaders' activity and contributions on the internet and digital social networks illustrate the strength of 'soft ties'<sup>21</sup> (soft ties are said to be 'strong' insofar as, if diversified, they allow for penetration of social networks other than those built by strong ties). This weak-strength cooperation mechanism is sometimes referred to as the "cooperative individualism"<sup>22</sup>.

Note: Analysis of our empirical observations from data collected during the exploratory study drew on three sources: recent findings from scientific research on social capital, networks and networking; findings from Computer-Mediated-Communication (CMC) research on social capital and digital social networks (DSNs); and interviews with emerging leaders focused on their networking activities at social events and on DSNs.

Introducing sections 2 and 3, this diagram summarizes (Figure 2) the resources emerging leaders use to develop leadership skills and competencies. This finding is derived from the exploratory study and confirmed in the confirmatory study. We discuss the definitions and mechanisms summarized in this diagram in sections 2 and 3.

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18. See in this order Papacharissi (2010), Treem and Leonardi (2012), Mansour et al (2013), Boyd (2010), Donath, 2007).

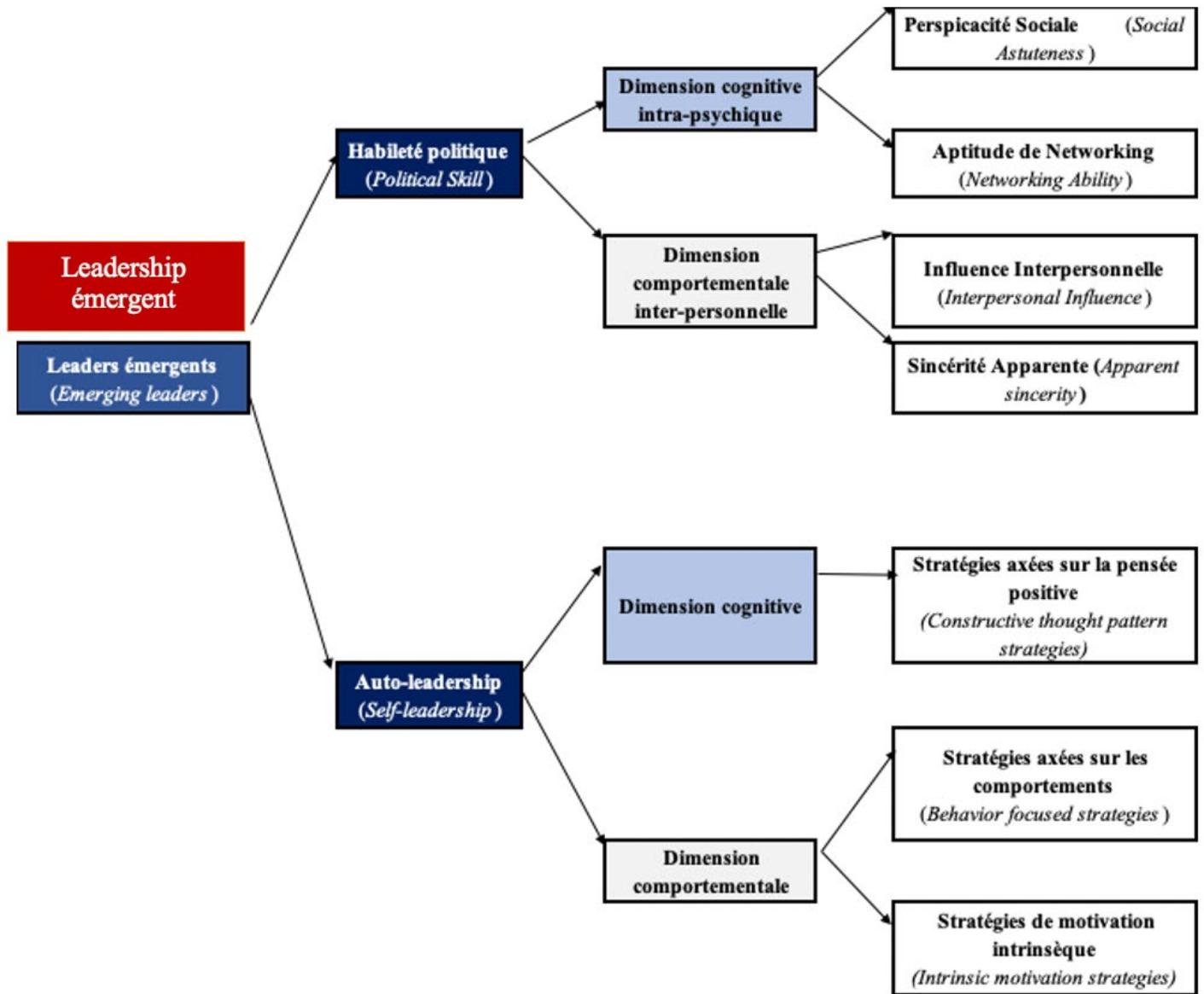
19. Cardon (2008): "The making of identity therefore appears as a dynamic, public and relational process that combines expression with recognition. Now, this process closely matches the potentialities of digital technology whose plasticity and interactivity favor production and recording of self-sign transformations that participants exchange on relational platforms."

20. Chauvin (2013): shared, tentative, and localized social representation associated with a name and derived from more or less powerful and formalized social evaluations. For Ferris, Blass, Douglas, Kolodinsky, & Treadway (2003): "a perceptual identity reflective of the complex combination of salient personal characteristics and accomplishments, demonstrated behavior, and intended images presented over some period of time as observed directly and/or as reported from secondary sources" (p. 215).

21. Granovetter (1973).

22. Flichy (2004) and Aguiton & Cardon (2007).

**Figure 3:**  
Modeling two components of emergent leadership



Source: By the author using data from the study and work on self-leadership (Manz, Neck & Houghton) and political skill (Ferris et al. 2005; 2007).

## SECTION 2: SELF-LEADERSHIP, THE COGNITIVE DIMENSION OF EMERGING LEADERSHIP

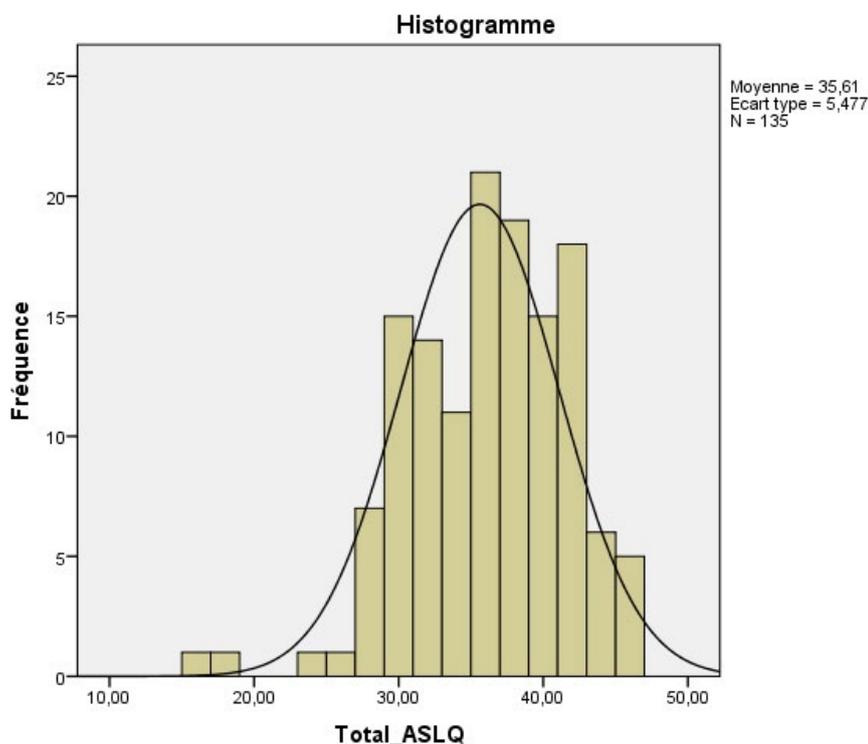
I. Emerging leaders' characteristics: high scores on self-leadership, intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy to support strong intentionality and reflexivity in strategies and practices of emerging leaders.

### 1. Main findings of quantitative study

Emerging leaders strongly use cognitive strategies and practices of self-leadership, a self-influence process by which individuals attain self-motivation and self-direction required for performance. In fact, study results indicate that ADEL emerging leaders score high on all three dimensions of the self-leadership construct<sup>23</sup>:

- **Constructive thought pattern strategies:** re-evaluation of beliefs, visualization of successful actions, constructive self-talk.
- **Natural reward strategies:** focusing thought on gratifying aspects of tasks and activities themselves.
- **Behavior-focused strategies:** self-observation, self-goal setting, self-cueing, self-reward, self-correcting feedback.

Self-leadership/ ASLQ Total scores of emerging leaders.



23. Scores as measured by the ASLQ - Abbreviated Self-leadership Questionnaire (Houghton & Neck, 2012).

Emerging leaders score high on ASLQ's Behavioral Awareness & Volition factor, which includes items pertaining to behavioral strategy elements of the self-leadership construct including self-observation and self-goal setting. Emerging leaders apply self-observation practices to identify context for certain behaviors and understand why those behaviors occur. This "augmented" self-awareness provides insight into behaviors that should be reinforced, eliminated or modified. Self-awareness, reflexivity and intentionality are prerequisites to self-observation, have emerged in our exploratory study and are confirmed here. They imply specific and intentional inward-looking actions by young leaders to selectively process the information leading to greater self-awareness. This heightened behavioral awareness among emerging leaders, by means of self-analysis and self-diagnosis, feeds into other self-leadership practices, most notably goal-setting. As part of volitional strategies, the self-setting of goals routinely performed by emerging leaders goes beyond simple goal-setting processes to encompass intention shaping for goal implementation. The latter specifies when, where, and how goal achievement is to be initiated and accomplished. Furthermore, and as noted in our literature review, self-leadership, by means of these behavioral awareness practices and mechanisms, enables young professionals to become aware of their own leadership skills (Jooste & Cairns, 2014). Its self-empowering and self-capacitating reflexive effects foster the autonomous development of young professionals as leaders, not dependent on supervisory feedback or trainings that may be offered by organizations (feedback and training that may never occur or may occur poorly in many organizations, especially those in the Global South marred as they are by bureaucratic cultures and traditionally weak HRM).

## ***1.1. Insights and analysis: the why of emerging leaders' self-leadership***

### **1.1.1 What is self-leadership?**

Defined as a process of self-influence through which individuals bring together the self-motivation and self-direction required for performance<sup>24</sup>, self-leadership consists of a set of cognitive and behavioral strategies designed to positively influence individual effectiveness. These self-leadership strategies are typically structured into three primary categories: behavior-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought patterns (Neck et al. 2019; Neck and Houghton 2006).

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24. Neck et al. (2019), Neck and Houghton (2006).

## The three dimensions of the self-leadership construct



Source: by the author from Manz & Neck (2004); Manz & Sims (2001)

### 1.1.2 "Self-leadership": A dynamic, multidimensional construct

First theorized in the late 1980s by University of Massachusetts leadership researcher Charles C. Manz<sup>25</sup>, the concept of self-leadership is dynamic and multidimensional from inception. Indeed, Manz in his seminal article defines self-leadership as a process of self-influence and a set of strategies to address what needs to be done (standards and goals), why it needs to be done (strategic analysis), and how it needs to be done, anchoring self-leadership in a broader theoretical framework. This framework consists of an approach according to which actions are ultimately more controlled by internal forces than by external ones (Manz, 1986); the construct thus incorporates intrinsic motivation and emphasizes cognitive processes.

Self-leadership is also rooted in:

- Carver & Scheier's (1982) control theory and self-control theory<sup>26</sup> identifying mechanisms like self-observation enabling individuals to pinpoint the context of occurrence of specific behaviors and

25. Charles C. Manz is the Nirenberg Professor of Leadership at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He has served as a consultant, researcher, and director of management training programs for multinational corporations such as General Motors, Motorola, American Express, Prudential, Procter & Gamble, institutions such as the American Medical Hospital Association, and the U.S. government. His seminal article Self-leadership: Toward an expanded theory of self-influence processes in organizations was published in 1986 in The Academy Of Management Journal and he is the author of over 10 books including Superleadership: Leading others to lead themselves (1989) and The new silver bullets of leadership: The importance of self-and shared leadership in knowledge work (2005).

26. Thoresen and Mahoney (1974); Gottfredson et Hirschi (1990).

reasons for their occurrence. This “augmented” self-awareness provides information as to which behaviors need to be reinforced, eliminated or modified (Mahoney & Arnkoff, 1979). These theories also inform the mechanism by which self-awareness guides other self-leadership behaviors such as self-directed goal setting (Manz, 1986; Manz & Sims, 1980; Neck & Manz, 2010).

- Deci and Ryan’s (2000) theory of self-determination and the concept of “intrinsic motivation”
- Alberto Bandura’s social cognitive theory (SCT) contributed to conceptualizing the Personal Efficacy Sense (Bandura, 1986, 1997) or self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to “the judgments that people make about their ability to organize and carry out sets of actions required to achieve expected types of performance” (Bandura, 1986), but also to beliefs about their ability to muster the motivation, cognitive resources, and behaviors necessary to exercise control over situations and events. These beliefs are the central and most general mechanism of self-management (personal agency).
- David McClelland’s theory of achievement and specifically the concept of “Need for achievement”.
- Self-regulation theory (SRT) and specifically the theory of Self-influence<sup>27</sup>. Self-influence strategies include:
  - self-observation
  - self-management of cues
  - self-goal setting
  - self-reward/criticism
  - behavioral rehearsal.

### 1.1.3 Self-leadership outcomes

Self-leadership strategies have been examined across a variety of fields, including organizational change, entrepreneurship, performance assessment, job satisfaction, creativity and innovation, diversity management, team performance, organizational succession planning, and ethics<sup>28</sup>. Conceptualized as a cognitive resource for entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs<sup>29</sup>, self-leadership has also been analyzed in organizational leadership as enabling individuals to gain awareness of their own leadership skills<sup>30</sup>.

Empirical evidence from four decades of research on self-leadership has shown that at the individual level, high levels of self-leadership correlate with better emotional responses and increased work performance<sup>31</sup>. Indeed, the use of self-leadership strategies facilitates the perception of control and empowerment, which in turn has a positive effect on performance.

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27. Developed in organizational science literature by Andrasik & Heimberg (1982); Cohen, Chang, & Ledford (1997); Luthans & Davis (1979); Manz (1986); Manz & Sims (1980).

28. As noted in the review by Houghton, Dawley, and DiLiello (2012, p. 220).

29. Neck et al. (2013).

30. Jooste and Cairns (2014): ‘self-leadership assists individuals to have knowledge and awareness of their own leadership skills’.

31. Manz, Courtright and Stewart (2011); Goldsby et al., (2021).

**Table 1:**

Main self-leadership outcomes as identified in management literature and leadership studies

| <b>SELF-LEADERSHIP OUTCOMES</b>   | <b>AUTHORS &amp; DATES</b>  |
|---|---|
| Predictor of academic achievement and success in higher education                         | Napiersky & Woods (2018)  |
| Greater career success  | Murphy & Ensher (2001) ; Raabe, Frese & Beehr (2007)  |
| Better emotional responses.   | Manz et al., (2010)   |
| Better performance and contribution to the organization, positive impact on self-efficacy | Sahin (2015)  |
| Improved job performance  | Stewart, Courtright, & Manz (2011)Manz et al (2010)   |
| Increased productivity  | Frayne & Geringer (2000); Frayne & Latham (1987); Godat & Brigham (1999); Latham & Frayne, (1989); Neck & Manz (1996) |
| Development of entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurial success                         | D'Intino et al. (2007) ; Goldsby et al. (2006); Neck et al. 1999)   |
| Awareness of one's leadership abilities   | Jooste & Cairns (2014)  |
| Greater self-efficacy   | Latham & Frayne (1989) Prussia et al. (1998)  |
| Better alignment and self-confidence, hence better odds of success                        | Stajkovic & Luthans (1998)  |
| Increased job satisfaction  | Neck & Manz (1996), Uhl-Bien & Graen (1998)   |
| Lower absenteeism   | Frayne & Latham (1987) ; Latham & Frayne, (1989)  |
| Decreased stress and anxiety  | Saks & Ashforth (1996)  |
| Energy and physical vitality  | Muller, Georgianna & Roux (2010)  |

Source: Author

## ***2. Similar self-leadership strategies for female and male emerging leaders***

No statistically relevant difference between average total self-leadership scores for female and male emerging leaders.

## **II. HIGHER SELF-LEADERSHIP SCORES AMONG EMERGING LEADERS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH**

Quantitative empirical study findings and global self-leadership score measurement using ASLQ<sup>32</sup> indicate that emerging leaders from Southern countries (Africa and Latin America) show significantly higher self-leadership scores than leaders from Northern developed countries (Europe and North America).

At 95% confidence level, an ANOVA analysis indicates that deviations in mean self-leadership total scores between emerging leaders from Northern countries and those from Southern countries are statistically significantly different.

32. Abbreviated Self-Leadership Questionnaire (Houghton et al., 2012)

This finding is reflected in both the Task Motivation (self-reward, positive visualization and mental imagery...) and Constructive Cognition (positive 'self-talk', reflexivity and re-evaluation of beliefs...) dimensions of the self-leadership construct.

Behavioral Awareness & Volition (self-observation, self-setting of goals, etc.) is the only dimension that does not show any significant statistical difference between emerging leaders from North and South.

This result may stem from the failure and low quality of educational systems in developing countries of the South, requiring ambitious individuals to take charge of their own intellectual and personal development and therefore resort to self-leadership strategies and practices. Conversely to political skill, self-leadership of emerging leaders shows variations according to geographical and cultural background.

By incorporating cultural considerations, the study of ADEL's emerging leaders provides significant contributions to research gaps highlighted by Stewart et al (2011): "Self-leadership in relation to national cultures has received virtually no attention from researchers"<sup>33</sup>. In fact, they note a majority of studies on self-leadership have been conducted in the highly individualistic culture of the United States. As a result, they argued that "additional research is needed to determine the extent to which results already obtained (within an individualistic culture) are generalizable to collectivist cultures"<sup>34</sup>. Others<sup>35</sup> also noted US dominance as a field of study for self-leadership and the inadequacy and relevance gap of research on self-leadership across different cultures.

## SECTION 3: POLITICAL SKILL, THE RELATIONAL DIMENSION OF EMERGING LEADERSHIP

### I. Social capital of emerging leaders: Political and network strategies and behavioral practices

*a. Our primary quantitative finding is that emerging leaders have high political skill scores<sup>36</sup> on all four dimensions of this construct: networking ability, interpersonal influence, social astuteness, and apparent sincerity.*

**Emerging leaders' high levels of political skill, regardless of geography or industry, explains early and accelerated leadership development.**

High political skill scores (a broad composite of social skills incorporating cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions<sup>37</sup>) of emerging leaders reflect exceptional abilities, style, and social effectiveness in successfully implementing influence mechanisms to gain power<sup>38</sup> and make an impact. They support the importance of Henry Mintzberg's concept of 'political skill': "the ability to use the bases of power effectively - to convince those to whom one has access, to use one's resources, information, and technical

33. « Self-leadership has received almost no attention in relation to national culture » (Stewart et al., 2011, p. 206).

34. Stewart et al., (2011): "additional work is needed to determine the extent to which findings generalize to more collectivist cultures" (p. 211).

35. Alves et al., (2006), Neck & Houghton (2006), Stewart, Courtright & Manz (2011).

36. This study measured the political skill score of emerging leaders in the Policy Center for the New South's ADEL program using the Political Skill Inventory (PSI) (Ferris, Treadway et al., 2005).

37. Ferris et al., (2007, p. 299).

38. In accordance with Pfeffer's (1981) original definition of political skill: 'the style and social effectiveness of successfully implementing mechanisms of influence to gain power'.

skills to their fullest in bargaining, to exercise formal power with a sensitivity to the feelings of others, to know where to concentrate one's energies, to sense what is possible, to organize the necessary alliances."<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, emerging leaders' high political skill scores translate into all four dimensions of the 'political skill' construct as applied in the now universally accepted approach developed by US researcher Ferris:

- a. Social astuteness: perceptive observation of others and situations, self-awareness;
- b. Interpersonal influence: having power and influence;
- c. Networking ability: ability to create and maintain network ties (adeptness at building friendships, support, and alliances, negotiating, managing conflict);
- d. Apparent sincerity: authenticity, genuineness, honesty and trustworthiness. It allows the individual to appear authentic and honest, which modifies the way others will perceive his or her intentions and behaviors.

*Note: These 4 dimensions are outlined in Figure 4 below.*

This core finding from our study of emerging leaders echoes those of other international scientific studies in identifying the contribution of political skill to both the emergence and development of leadership capabilities and leadership effectiveness and its impact on organizational performance, follower attitudes, and job performance<sup>40</sup>.

Furthermore, the substantial contribution of political skill to the emergence and early leadership development of young ADEL professionals validates studies that indicate a positive effect on transformational leadership behaviors<sup>41</sup> and entrepreneurial intention<sup>42</sup>.

A closer look at emerging leader career paths clearly shows both entrepreneurial and/or 'intrapreneurial' achievement and a desire to pass on know-how and interpersonal skills and to engage in empowerment of others (teams, members of their communities, groups of individuals, etc.)

### ***b. Political skill: Additional results from the quantitative study***

- Political skill is not significantly correlated with age.
- Political skill is not significantly correlated with gender: there is no difference between female and male emerging leaders.
- Political skill is positively correlated with leader's hierarchical level: the higher the position of the young leader in the hierarchy, the higher the political skill score.
  - In particular, the 'networking ability' dimension of the 'political skill' construct is positively correlated with the hierarchical level of the leader: the higher the hierarchical position of the young leader, the higher his networking ability.
- Political skill is lower among researchers, academics and consultants than among emerging leaders in managerial or entrepreneurial positions.
- Emerging leaders in the public sector are on average more politically savvy than emerging leaders in the private sector.

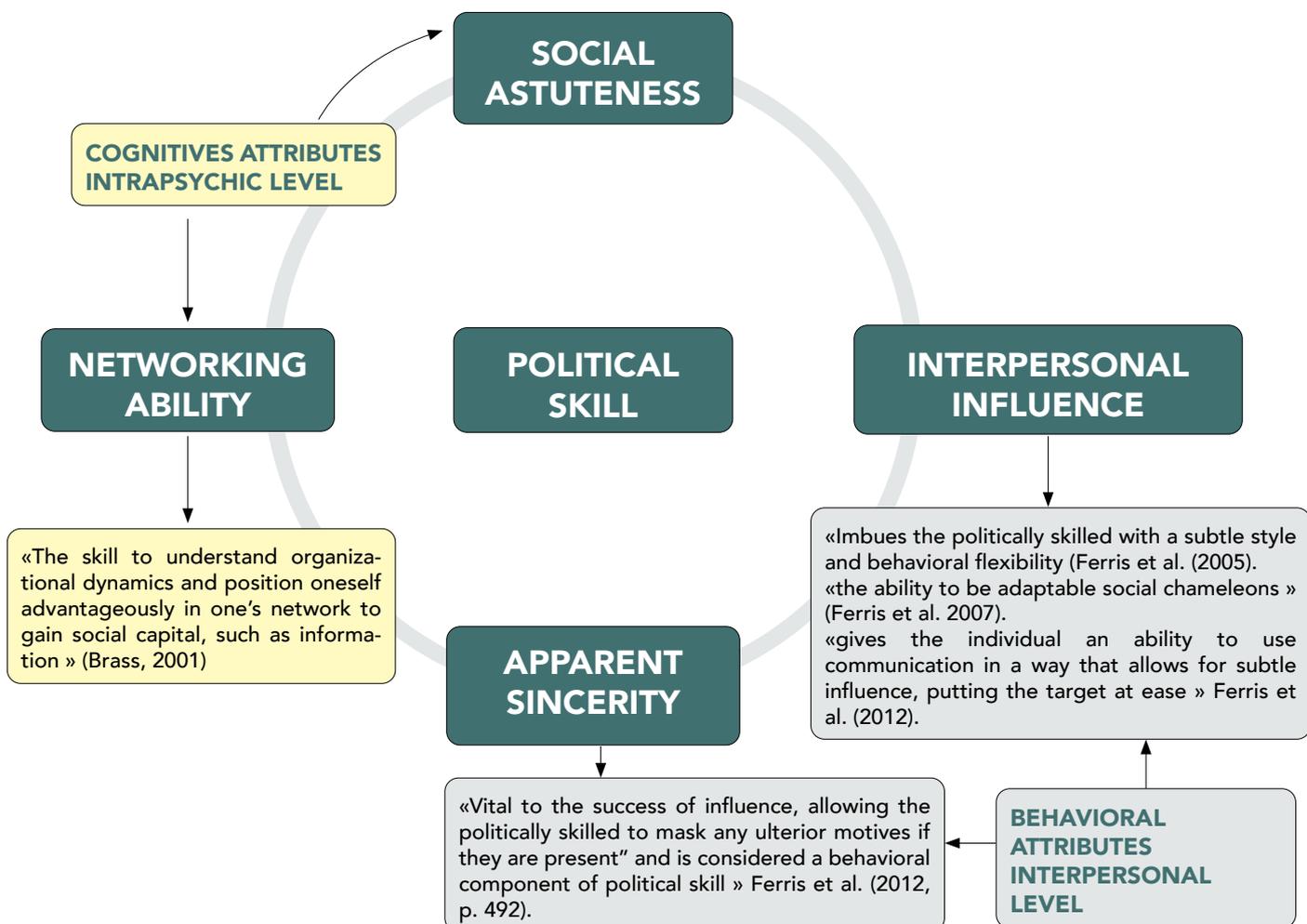
39. Mintzberg (1983, p. 26): "The ability to use power bases effectively to - convince those to whom one has access to fully mobilize resources, information, and technical skills, exercise formal power with sensitivity to the emotions of others, know where to focus one's energy, evaluate possibilities, and organize the necessary alliances."

40. DeRue et al., 2011; Ewen et al., 2013; Tocher et al., 2012.

41. Sunindijo (2012).

42. Phipps (2012).

**Figure 4:**  
Dimensions and features of the 'political skill' construct



Source: By the author based on models by Ferris et al (2005), Manz (1986), Neck & Houghton (2006)

The 'political skill' construct hence acts on two different levels: (1) at the intrapsychic cognitive level and (2) at the interpersonal behavioral level.

All four dimensions are related but remain distinct. Social astuteness and networking ability are considered cognitive attributes, while interpersonal influence and apparent sincerity are understood as behavioral attributes (Brouer et al., 2014).

### c. Insight and Analysis: the Why of Emerging Leaders' Political Skill

#### Introducing the concept of political skill and its relevance to leadership emergence and development

The concept of 'political skill', largely developed in the US, is defined in a number of ways, some of which are summarized in Table 2 below, for the additional insight they provide.

**Table 2:**

Summary of major definitions of political skill from a review of the literature

| AUTHOR(S)   | DEFINITION OF POLITICAL SKILL  |
|---|--|
| Pfeffer (1981)  | «Power is about getting what you want, influence tactics are the mechanisms or behaviors by which you get what you want (power gain), and political skill is the social effectiveness of successfully carrying out influence mechanisms to gain power.»  |
| Mintzberg (1983)                                      | «The competence or ability to successfully exercise those political behaviors required to survive and thrive in 'political arenas'»<br>For Mintzberg, political skill is an interpersonal construct that can include attributes such as charm and charisma that contribute to better negotiation, manipulation and persuasion skills and abilities.  |
| Hayes (1984)  | Politically competent managers are individuals «who expect to experience resistance to their attempts to get things done (tasks assignments), but nevertheless keep on taking initiatives, carefully selected initiatives, in ways that eventually tend to produce the results they desire.»   |
| Baddeley et James (1987)                              | " Political skill is the elusive and increasingly demanded ingredient of success and survival in organizational life «.  |
| Ahearn, Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, & Ammeter (2004) | "The ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal or organizational objectives.» p. 311  |
| Ferris et al. (2005)                                  | "An interpersonal style... that combines social astuteness with the capacity to adjust to different and changing situational demands in a manner that inspires trust and confidence, conveys sincerity, and influences others to respond favorably."   |
| Ferris et al. (2007)                                  | A comprehensive pattern of «social competencies, with cognitive, affective, and behavioral manifestations which have both direct effects on outcomes, as well as moderating effects on predictor–outcome relationships.» (p. 291)  |
| McAllister et al. (2018)                              | Policy skill reflects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opportunity identification/ recognition (the process by which individuals become aware of opportunities and engage in social influence behaviors and practices;</li> <li>• opportunity assessment (assessing whether and how to act);</li> <li>• opportunity leveraging (successfully executing social influence behaviors)</li> </ul> |

Source: Author

While similar on the surface, 'political skill' is distinct from 'social skill' or interpersonal skills. Social skills generally refer to communication skills and include an ease, facility, and comfort in relating to others, while 'political skill' goes beyond the simple ease and facility in communicating to interrelate with others.

Political skill is the ability to manage one's interactions in such a way as to exert influence to achieve individual and/or organizational goals in rapidly changing contexts (Luthans, Hodgetts, & Rosenkrantz, 1988; Peled, 2000; Perrewé et al., 2002). The concept of 'political skill' is also to be distinguished from closely related notions such as emotional intelligence defined as "the capacity and ability to conduct accurate and sound reasoning about emotions and the ability to use one's emotions and this emotional literacy to enhance thinking."<sup>43</sup> (Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008, p. 511).

### **Political Skill Outcomes**

The theoretical development and practical application of the concept of political skill has been driven since the 2000s by the work of US management researcher Gerald R. Ferris of the University of Florida and his colleagues. His studies and publications<sup>44</sup> led to functionalizing political skill and the testing and validation of its' effects on a range of variables (results of this work are outlined in Table 3 below).

In contrast to conventional normative perspectives on political behavior and political games in organizations (companies, institutions), perceived by Mintzberg (1983) as "illegitimate" modes of influence with "negative" consequences for both individuals and organizations<sup>45</sup>, scientific research conducted over the last two decades consistently supports the beneficial effects of leaders' and managers' political skill on performance, productivity, organizational commitment, trust in the leader, empowerment of subordinates and career success<sup>46</sup>.

Far from being a source of division and conflict, empirical studies have shown political skill to have positive impact on:

- Personal reputation (Ferris et al., 2003; Zinko et al., 2007);
- Persuasive effectiveness (Treadway et al., 2005);
- Effective impression management (Baron & Markman, 2000);
- Productivity through improved networking, increased ability to secure necessary resources, and influence others to accomplish tasks and assignments (Ferris, Davidson et al., 2005; Munyon et al.; 2013);
- Personal internal security, the perception of oneself as master of one's work environment and the interactions that occur within it (Ferris et al., 2011; Perrewe et al., 2004) and a sense of self-efficacy (Ferris et al., 2007).

Specifically in terms of leadership, political skill produces a range of positive effects and impacts that clearly benefit emerging leaders, accelerates the development of leadership skills and abilities, positively impacts career success and influence (these positive effects sourced from the literature are summarized in Table 3 below).

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43. Mayer, Roberts & Barsade (2008, p. 511): "ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought".

44. Key works and studies on the concept of "political skill" by Ferris and his colleagues are published in Human Relations, Journal of Management, Journal of Organizational Behavior, The Leadership Quarterly...

45. Mintzberg (1983) in contrast considers that the other three modes of influence - authority, expertise, ideology - are legitimate and beneficial to both individuals and organizations.

46. (Ferris et al., 2005 ; Munyon et al., 2015 ; Smith et al., 2009).

**Table 3:****Impacts of political skill in a professional context**

| <b>EFFECTS OF POLITICAL SKILL ON LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS</b>  |   |
|--|---|
| Increased effectiveness of leader, collaborators and followers.  | Ferris et al. (2007)<br>Treadway et al. (2014b)                                       |
| Leader's reputation  | Ammetter et al., 2002 ; Blass et al., 2007 ; Blass & Ferris, 2007 ; Hall et al., 2004 |
| Political skill enhances influence tactic effectiveness by enabling selection of the most appropriate influence tactic for a given situation.  | Ferris et al. (2007)  |
| Political skill is correlated with leadership effectiveness in both qualitative and quantitative empirical research at individual, dyadic and group scales of analysis. Empirical findings demonstrate that politically adept leaders possess the behavioral flexibility and social insight required to perform well and meet the expectations and needs of employees and supervisors. | Ahearn et al., 2004;<br>Semadar et al., 2006;<br>Smith et al., 2009                   |
| Politically adept managers are effective as they build trust with employees, hold them accountable and set goals (challenges).   | Smith et al., 2009  |
| Teams led by politically empowered leaders perform better.   | Ahearn et al. 2004  |
| A study of multiple social effectiveness constructs, including political skill, leader self-efficacy, self-monitoring, and emotional intelligence, found that political skill predicted variance in annual performance appraisals by supervisors to a greater extent than other constructs.  | Semadar et al., 2006  |
| <b>POLITICAL SKILL AS PREDICTOR OF EMERGING LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS</b>   |   |
| The proximal characteristic <sup>47</sup> of political skill connects to decisiveness, a specific competency of leadership effectiveness as assessed by collaborators (subordinates) and peers. Political ability is a better proximal predictor of leaders than personality scales. As such, it should be preferred over personality analysis for emergent leadership effectiveness.  | Gentry et al. (2013)  |
| <b>POLITICAL SKILL ON ATTITUDINAL OUTCOMES</b>   |   |
| Predictor of employee organizational commitment, based on multiple mechanisms of perceived organizational support, trust in leadership and job satisfaction.   | Treadway et al. (2004)  |
| <b>EFFECTS OF POLITICAL SKILL ON TEAM PERFORMANCE</b>  |   |
| Teams led by politically competent leaders perform better  | Ahearn et al., (2004)<br>Peled (2000), Solace (2005)                                  |

Source: author

47. A leader attribute can be classified as distal (i.e. personality, cognitive abilities, motivations and values) or proximal (i.e. expertise and tacit knowledge, problem solving ability..).

## II. Extensive use of networks by emerging leaders. Networks as a source of leadership emergence, development of influence, reputation and e-reputation building.

### 1. Networks: Key Findings from the Confirmatory Quantitative Study

Study findings indicate that emerging leaders create, use, and harness multiple networks, both professional and mainstream, spanning both the physical and virtual spheres (digital social networks)

- Emerging leaders belong to 8 broad networks (groups on social networks, communities of practice on the internet...) on average. Nearly a third of emerging leaders surveyed are members of 9 to 12 broad networks;
- Emerging leaders are members of 3 to 5 specific networks;<sup>48</sup>
- The Anova statistical analysis indicates there is no significant difference between emerging leaders of the South and those of the North in membership of specific networks: universality of professional networking practices among young leaders as a source of development of social capital and leadership capacities.

The study of ADEL emerging leaders reveals a strong connection between political skill and network membership, confirming that politically competent individuals know how to identify and harness networks to gain exposure and visibility (for the purpose of building a reputation), identify/ create and take advantage of opportunities, collect critical resources (information, etc.), build alliances, develop relational ties and social capital, and develop influence.

### 2. Networks: Additional results

#### Hierarchy Level Variable

- Like political ability, network membership increases as a function of hierarchical level: emerging leaders who hold executive, partner or entrepreneurial positions belong to more broad and specific networks than middle managers and junior managers. The gap is most noticeable between junior managers and researchers (lowest number of networks) on the one hand, and upper management, partners and entrepreneurs on the other.

#### Age Variable

- Membership and involvement in broad networks decrease in function of emerging leader age: the older the leader, the fewer the number of broad networks. Those in the 26-28 age group belong to more broad networks (11 on average) than those in older age groups.
- On the other hand, there is no significant correlation between age and the number of specific network membership (young leaders' networks and/or young professionals' communities): regardless of age, emerging leaders all use specific networks of young professionals.

#### Gender Variable

- Male emerging leaders belong to more broad and specific networks than female emerging leaders, but this difference is small (1 to 2 networks difference on average). This result supports evidence from a large number of international studies of female leadership focusing less on professional network mobilization.

48. In the quantitative study per specific network, we specified 'young leaders/young professionals networks'.

- However, the size of the gap seems to indicate a 'catch-up effect' for the population of young women leaders (under 35) compared to senior women leaders (over 35).
- The study therefore highlights a trend towards convergence and increasing standardization of strategies and practices among emerging leaders, regardless of gender.

#### Industry Variable

- Differences in network membership arise according to employer sector: on average, emerging leaders in the public and not-for-profit sectors belong to more broad and specific networks than do emerging leaders in the private sector or in academia. These differences are however small.

### 3. Similarity of Political Skill Strategies and Practices of Emerging Leaders from South and North

#### 3.1 Universality of emerging leaders' political skills

Both qualitative exploratory and quantitative confirmatory studies on a sample of over 100 emerging leaders from four geographic regions (North America, Europe, Latin America, and Africa) found that political skill is a "universal" contributor to the emergence and accelerated development of leadership capabilities.

Emerging leaders, regardless of origin and culture, share high scores on all four dimensions of the political skill construct: Social Astuteness, Networking Ability, Interpersonal Influence, and Apparent Sincerity. Emerging leaders, both North and South, when it comes to harnessing political skill as a core competency, contradict conventional notions that cultural values strongly influence leadership (styles, patterns, etc.) as argued by Hofstede (1980) and Hofstede & Minkov (2010) and developed in the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) project.

This study suggests that cultural differences - individualism in the North and collectivism (institutional and endo-group) in the South, low hierarchical distances in the North and high distances in the South (power distance), uncertainty avoidance and long-term/short-term orientation do not impact the political skill score of emerging leaders, which confirms the universality of the "political skill" construct in the emergence of leadership among young professionals under 35 and contradicts previous work conducted on other sample types.<sup>49</sup>

#### 3.2 Confirmation of the cross-vergence thesis

Findings from this study support the thesis of cross-vergence<sup>50</sup>, i.e., a process whereby a unique yet different integrative value system emerges in contexts and situations where individuals adopt both values that reflect national specificities and elements of the imported growing ideology. Indeed, similarities in political skill scores of emerging leaders from South and North provide empirical robustness to work on cross-vergence and also to research exploring the relationship between technology (internet effect) and generation.<sup>51</sup>

**The dynamic interaction of socio-cultural influences with managerial ideologies contributes to the standardization of young leaders' strategies and practices in global networks. This process seems accelerated by the recent significant increase in the number of developing countries (countries undergoing political transformation and countries in economic emergence) leading to a strong acceleration of globalization.**

49. Lvini, Ferris et al., (2012).

50. Ralston et al. (1997) ; Witt (2008).

51. Egri and Ralston (2004).

## CONCLUSION

The study of strategies and practices from a sample of over 100 emerging leaders from the Policy Center for the New South's ADEL program, from four geographic regions and representing 46 countries, reveals the effective contribution of political skill and self-leadership to the emergence and accelerated development of young professionals' leadership capacities.

Each of these components has a cognitive and a behavioral dimension (see Figure 2 below) and promotes/accelerates the development of human capital and that of social capital<sup>52</sup> of young professionals (in its two dimensions: "bridging" and "bonding"<sup>53</sup>):

- Human capital: by harnessing strategies, practices and attitudes of self-leadership, emerging leaders develop intentionality, reflexivity and intrinsic motivation, enabling them to take charge of their own training and personal growth, to use professional experiences to acquire and develop leadership skills and abilities in an accelerated way.
- Social capital: through the dimensions of networking ability and social astuteness, political skill enables emerging leaders to develop social capital in relationships and connections within and across organizational boundaries and facilitates the exchange of knowledge and information. Some authors position social capital as a component of the broader concept of relational wealth.

### **1. The study also showed that emerging leaders create, maintain and develop a significant number of networks (both broad and specific), both physical and virtual, that enable them to build human and social capital.**

Physical and virtual networks help emerging leaders develop human capital through experiential learning and access to content and resources (knowledge, training, acquisition of new skills, etc.).

Networks also allow emerging leaders to develop social capital by building networks of relevant contacts (strategic networks, networks leveraging the power of soft ties) that they use to access privileged information, acquire tacit knowledge, obtain resources, and become more effective in achieving their (individual and organizational) goals.

Finally, networks allow for leadership to emerge through the visibility and exposure they provide by way of self-presentation tactics, personal branding and impression management. These tactics enable the generation and construction of a 'reputation' as a young leader and accelerate the development/consolidation of the 'young leader' or 'emerging leader' image.

## SECTION 4: STUDY CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Emerging Leadership Knowledge in Action

Findings from this study contribute to a deeper understanding of the strategies, practices and resources used by emerging leaders and lead to the following recommendations:

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52. Adler and Kwon (2002): « Social capital is the goodwill available to individuals or groups. Its source lies in the structure and content of the actor's social relations. Its effects flow from the information, influence, and solidarity it makes available to the actor" (p. 23).

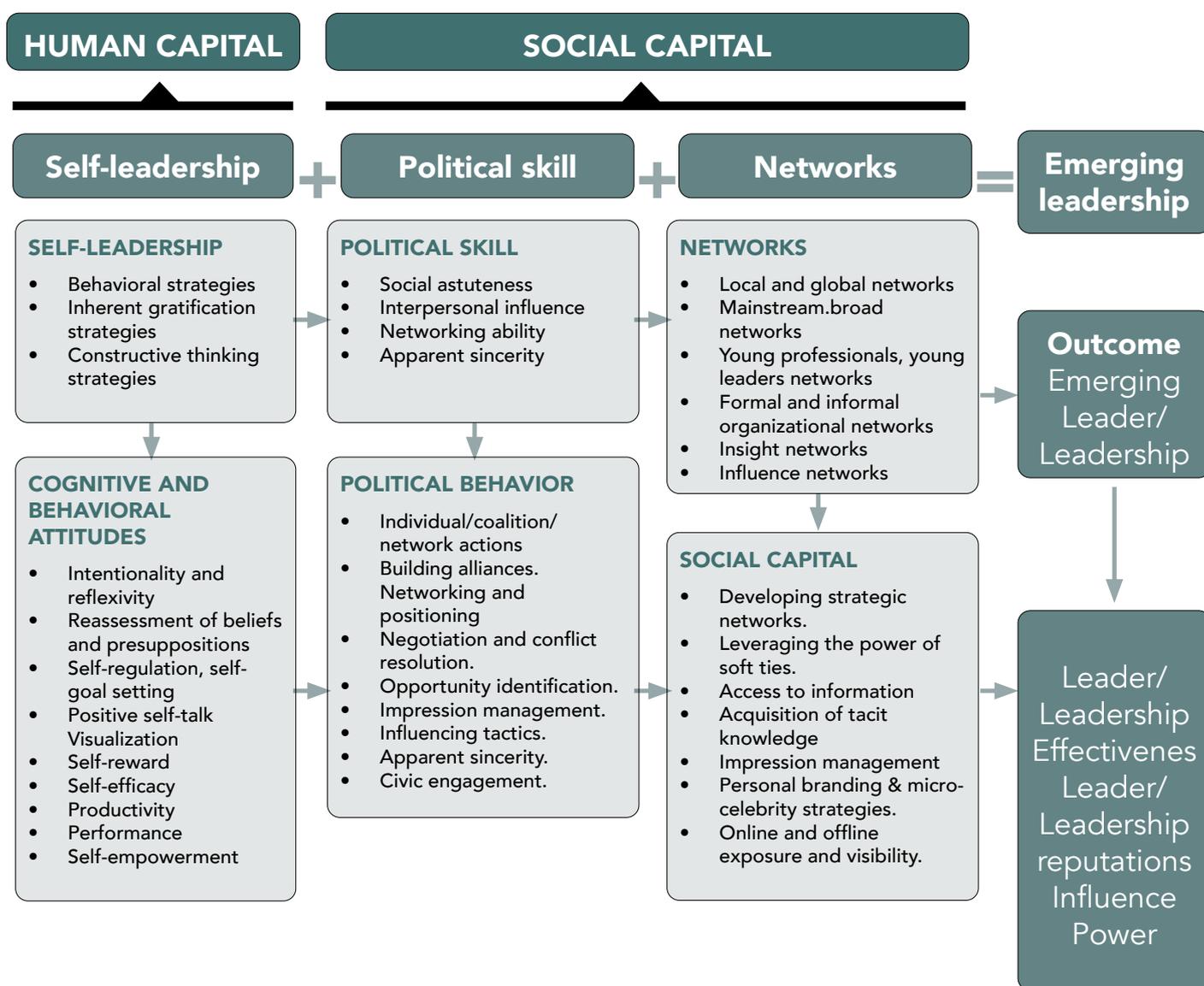
53. Putnam (2000).

## Broad recommendations for organizations and institutions

- a. Improve techniques for identifying, detecting, and selecting/recruiting young professionals with leadership potential by assessing political skill and self-leadership using the Political Skill Inventory (PSI) and Abbreviated Self-leadership Questionnaire (ASLQ).
- b. Create and implement leadership development programs for young professionals based on the conceptual design developed in this study (see Figure 5).

Figure 4: Diagram of Emerging Leadership Components and Dynamics from Study Data: Towards a Conceptual Model

Self-leadership, political skill and networking in combination/interaction foster the emergence and accelerate the development of early career leadership.



Source: by the author based on study results and on Ferris et al.'s (2003) models of political skill and political/social influence in organizations, Manz's (1986) and Neck & Houghton's (2006) models of self-leadership as well as recent research on leadership development and networks and Ammeter et al.'s (2002) political model of leadership

### ***1.1. Human capital recommendations: Fostering leadership development through self-leadership training.***

- a. Develop training that focuses on acquiring skills and techniques pertaining to self-leadership strategies and practices that enable greater self-efficacy, reflexivity, and intentionality and lead to greater individual productivity and performance.
- b. Train young professionals, talents and high potentials in e-leadership, a specific type of leadership that is gaining prominence with the rise of telecommuting and virtual organizations. Specifically, educate young professionals in e-communication skills, e-social skills, e-team-building skills and e-change management skills.
- c. Give preference to participative and/or empowering leadership styles as the most effective way to develop individual self-leadership.

### ***1.2. Social capital recommendations: training and fostering the political and networking skills of young professionals***

Based on our study results and those of recent scientific research on emergence of leadership and networks, we recommend that organizations and institutions prioritize implementation of the following programs and actions (summarized in Table 5 below):

- a. Promote the emergence and early development of leaders through the development of relational organizational mechanisms including mentoring, affinity networks, communities of practice, etc.;
- b. Design and develop “network-enhancing leadership development” programs based on models designed by American researchers Cullen-Lester et al (2016)<sup>54</sup> aimed to influence individual perception/awareness and understand network connections as well as abilities to activate and/or modify such networks by transforming interaction modes and procedures. Changing interaction patterns for individuals and groups or communities enables, given time and organizational support, development of stable social network patterns (networks of advice, trust, friendship, reciprocity, communication) and influence networks (leadership networks);
- c. Encourage and train young professionals to develop social networks and influence networks concurrently, as research shows they co-evolve<sup>55</sup> and generate bi-directional relationships and feedback loops between different contacts and relationships that create positive impact for individuals and organizations;
- d. Scientific research shows that of the three types of networks (personal, operational and strategic), strategic networks are the least used and the most useful for both individuals and organizations:<sup>56</sup> train and encourage young professionals to focus on building ‘strategic networks’ that cross organizational and functional boundaries, and then connect these networks to each other in new and innovative ways (Ibarra et Hunter, 2007) thus facilitating cross-hierarchical, cross-sectoral and cross-geographic communication;
- e. Create and promote development of spaces for interaction (so-called corpo-working spaces) where soft ties are created and maintained and where members develop social capital (extension of the actors’ professional network);
- f. Create spaces within and between organizations for socialization to build ‘strong ties’, including mentoring relationships;
- g. Educate young professionals to understand and appreciate the importance of informal organizational

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54. Cullen-Lester, K.L., et al., Incorporating social networks into leadership development: a conceptual model and evaluation of research and practice, *The Leadership Quarterly* (2016).

55. Carter, DeChurch, et al., (2015), DeRue (2011).

56. Ibarra and Hunter (2007).

- networks (many problems are actually created by leaders who fail to accurately perceive networks outside of formal hierarchies). Network mapping based on social network analysis techniques can be used to help young professionals make better decisions by first identifying network structures that do not fit the organization's objectives (absence of interaction between groups indicating a lack of cohesion), and second learning the types of changes that might improve alignment between these networks and organizational objectives<sup>57</sup>;
- h. Prioritize action learning and mobility (job rotation) as the most effective leadership development techniques as they build on the complementarity of networking events to meet new contacts<sup>58</sup> and build/ consolidate relationships;
  - i. Develop Network Leadership capacities of young professionals in informal leadership roles, based either on embedded or network positioning so as to influence communication flows between other agents (betweenness centrality), on their role as communication hub (information centrality), or on their proximity and close relationships with a large number of agents, enabling access to efficient information flows (closeness centrality);
  - j. Leverage emerging leaders' high degree of political skill, particularly in terms of social astuteness, networking skills and interpersonal influence, to train them in the increasingly relevant in a globalized and connected world, Boundary Spanning Leadership. More specifically, design training programs focused on learning the practices of "buffering, reflecting, connecting, mobilizing, weaving, transforming";
  - k. Clarify necessary educational changes to foster leadership development for young executives and intrapreneurs in organizations operating in globalized environments: train young professionals in Global Leadership as "the process of influencing individuals, groups, and organizations (inside and outside the boundaries of the global organization) representing diverse cultural/political/institutional systems to contribute towards the achievement of the global organization's goals." (Beechler & Javidan, 2007).
  - l. In fact, the study of emerging leaders' strategies, practices, attitudes, and accomplishments highlights their strong abilities to exercise the role of 'global leaders', as defined by Mendenhall et al, (2008): "Global leaders are individuals who effect significant positive change in organizations by building communities through the development of trust and the arrangement of organizational structures and processes in a context involving multiple cross-boundary stakeholders, multiple sources of external cross-boundary authority, and multiple cultures under conditions of temporal, geographical and cultural complexity" (Mendenhall et al., (2008)
  - m. Encourage the progressive transformation of high potentials into "human resource brokers" capable of drawing on their social relationships and those of others to identify and coordinate the talents of those they lead or will lead. Specifically, create training and programs based on Stei and Corella's<sup>59</sup> workshops to help leaders identify and develop plans to lead whatever change they need to lead. Focusing on leaders' relationship networks (broad definition), this workshop provides a process by which individuals (or groups, teams, etc.):
    - Identify all stakeholders involved in a change initiative;
    - Classify these stakeholders according to a matrix grid based on two criteria: influence and interest;
    - Create a stakeholder engagement plan in which they (the leaders participating in the workshop) shape and customize an approach to managing stakeholders according to where the stakeholder is positioned in the matrix grid: for example, a stakeholder with high influence but low interest in the given change will require brief but tailored communication.

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57. Krackhardt and Hanson (1993).

58. Galli and Müller-Stewens (2012).

59. Strei & Colella (2010). Developing leaders' networks through a stakeholder mapping and engagement workshop. In R. L. Cross, J. Singer, S. Colella, R. J. Thomas, & Y. Silverstone (Eds.) *The organizational network fieldbook: Best practices, techniques and exercises to drive organizational innovation and performance* (pp. 282–290).

Table 5:

## Summary of recommendations for organizations and institutions

| PROGRAM/<br>ACTIONS   | CONTENT  | COMPETENCIES   | TOOLS &<br>METHODS   |
|---|--|--|--|
| Fostering network understanding                                 | Develop young professionals' knowledge of various network categories (formal and informal organizational networks, advisory networks, influence networks, reciprocity networks, personal, operational and strategic networks...) | Social astuteness<br>Observation<br>Reflexivity  | Social Network Analysis (SNA) tools<br>Network mapping   |
| Network-enhancing leadership development programs <sup>60</sup> | Modify individual interaction patterns to foster strategic networks that span organizational and functional boundaries.<br>Promote bridging social capital development.  | Relational skills and e-presentation.<br>Digital social skills<br>The 4 dimensions of political skill: social insight, networking skills, interpersonal influence, and apparent sincerity.<br>Reflexivity Intentionality | Building communities of practice and affinity networks.<br>Mentoring<br>Corpworking spaces<br>Job rotation<br>Impression management tactics. |
| Global leadership Training <sup>61</sup>                        | Training in decision making and change management in complex environments.<br>Promote 'far-reaching boundary crossing' activities.   | Cognitive complexity<br>Behavioral flexibility<br>Interpersonal influence<br>Apparent sincerity<br>Community-building skills   | The complexity/flow/presence model by Mendenhall et al, (2012)   |
| Boundary spanning leadership Training <sup>62</sup>             | Learning the practices of «buffering, reflecting, connecting, mobilizing, weaving, transforming”   | The 4 dimensions of the political skill construct  |  |

60. Cullen-Lester et al. (2016).

61. Mendenhall et al., (2008), Mendenhall et al., (2012), Pless et al. (2011).

62. Ernst &amp; Chrobot-Mason (2011).

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| Network leadership development programs <sup>63</sup> | Develop Network Leadership skills and the embedded or networked positioning of young professionals.   | Ability to identify and occupy positions of 'betweenness centrality', 'information centrality' and 'closeness centrality'. | Social Network Analysis tools (SNA)                              |
|   | Foster the gradual transformation of emerging leaders into «human resource brokers» capable of leveraging their social relationships and those of others to identify and coordinate the talents of those they lead or will lead in the future |  | Stei & Corella workshops. <sup>64</sup><br>Stakeholders mapping. |
| E-leadership training <sup>65</sup>                   |   | Skills: digital and e-social.<br>E-team-building.<br>E-change management   |  |

Source: by the author based on study results and recent scientific research on leadership development

### Recommendations for young professionals

Based on our study results and recent scientific research on leadership development, we recommend that young professionals implement the training and personal development activities summarized in Table 6 below as a priority.

Table 6:

### Overview of recommendations for young professionals

| PROGRAMS/ ACTIONS              | CONTENT   | COMPETENCIES  |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Personal Branding Coaching     | Learning strategies and practices for building one's reputation and e-reputation<br>Understanding the importance of digital social networks and virtual interactions in the dynamics of status. | Personal branding skills<br>Micro-celebrity' strategies and tactics |
| Impression Management Coaching | Learning impression management and self-presentation strategies and practices.  | Online and offline impression management skills.                    |

Source: by the author based on study results and research cited.

63. Marion et al., (2016).

64. Strei, K., & Colella, S. (2010). Developing leaders' networks through a stakeholder mapping and engagement workshop. In R. L. Cross, J. Singer, S. Colella, R. J. Thomas, & Y. Silverstone (Eds.), *The organizational network fieldbook: Best practices, techniques and exercises to drive organizational innovation and performance* (pp. 282–290). John Wiley & Sons.

65. Avolio et al., (2000). Van Wart et al., (2019).

### **Study's methodological contribution**

This study contributes to improving the reliability of two measurement instruments: the PSI (Political Skill Inventory) and the ASLQ (Abbreviated Self-Leadership Questionnaire), by means of an analysis based on Cronbach's Alpha, and this on a population little studied to date, that of young leaders under the age of 35.

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Yasmina El Kadiri graduated from ESCP Europe in 2003 and has worked in multinational and Moroccan companies in the airline, consumer and media sectors for the past 15 years. Since 2018, she has been a professor at HEM Group and a researcher at Economia HEM Research Center, more specifically in the Dynamics of Organizations and Complexity department. Yasmina is completing a PhD thesis in Management Science at the University of Paris II Panthéon Assas on the emergence and development of leadership capabilities of young professionals. She is a member of LARGEPA, the Panthéon Assas Management Science Research Laboratory. Her work is in the field of leadership studies in the private and public sectors, with a focus on African countries and the MENA region. She published the article 'Jeunes leaders : processus transformels et leviers d'empowerment' in the collective work "Les jeunes au Maroc : Comprendre les dynamiques pour un nouveau contrat social" (2021).

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