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UNIVERSITY OF PRESOV
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS



ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS 2023

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES, INSIGHTS AND NEW CHALLENGES

Róbert Štefko - Richard Fedorko - Eva Benková (Eds.)



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Psychological Flexibility in Human Leadership - Facing the Challenges and Needs of the 21st Century Working Social Spaces

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Abstract

Research background: Psychological flexibility, rooted in acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) principles, has gained recognition as a vital trait for leaders. It involves adapting to changing circumstances, managing emotions effectively, and staying aligned with personal and organizational values. Research in this area explores how leaders who cultivate psychological flexibility among themselves, and their teams can foster innovation, resilience, and a culture of continuous learning in the workplace. Human leadership emphasizes the holistic well-being of employees, recognizing them as individuals with unique needs and aspirations. It emphasizes empathy, ethical conduct, and work-life balance as core principles. Studies in this domain explore how human-centered leadership practices contribute to employee satisfaction, retention, and the ethical integrity of organizations, ultimately driving long-term success.

Purpose of the article: This article aims to explore and elucidate the significance of psychological flexibility and human-centered leadership in the context of the 21st-century workplace. It aims to provide insights into how these concepts shape modern leadership practices and their impact on organizational culture, employee well-being, and overall effectiveness.

Method: A quantitative survey was administered to a broader cross-section of professionals across different sectors to investigate the interplay between psychological flexibility, human leadership qualities, and their impact on thriving in the 21st-century social space.

Findings & Value Added: We found that by incorporating psychological flexibility into human leadership, managers can cultivate a work environment characterized by nurturance and growth that embraces change, fosters collaboration, and empowers employees to thrive amidst the dynamic challenges of the contemporary working place social spaces.

Keywords: psychological flexibility, human-centered leadership, organizational culture, employee well-being, innovation

JEL classification: M12, M54, O15

1. Introduction

Psychological flexibility is a fundamental psychological concept that encompasses a person's ability to cope with life's challenges as well as cognitive, emotional, and behavioral events. Rooted in Third Wave Cognitive Behavioral Theory, particularly Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, psychological flexibility plays a critical role in improving the quality of life for individuals and those around them. This literature review examines the components of psychological flexibility and its application in people management, considering the evolving demands of 21st century reality. The review highlights the importance of psychological flexibility in fostering empathy, adaptability, resilience, and other essential skills for effective leadership according to the demands of 21st century reality.

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In the dynamic and unpredictable landscape of the 21st century, leadership requires a new perspective and practice that provides responses to the social needs of global society, rapid change, uncertainty, and technological development. Leaders in this era must develop skills that help them act flexibly and creatively while being a human role model who leads their environment to develop an integrated approach that combines leadership with participation, cooperation, and a quick and creative response to different situations and needs. Psychological flexibility is a key component in developing mental and affective adjustment skills, making it an important component for leaders in the 21st century. This paper explores the concepts and foundations of psychological flexibility from the perspective of acceptance and commitment therapy and its implications for effective and humane leadership in addressing the challenges and needs of our time.

The 21st Century brings new challenges. This period is characterized by accelerated technological developments, leading to the need to deal with increasing complexity, rapid changes, and growing uncertainty, in addition to frequent changes in values, goals, social and personal perceptions, needs, qualifications, and skills. Growing individualization and social diversity, expanding economic and cultural uniformity, and frequent changes in values, goals, social and personal perceptions, needs, qualifications, and skills characterize this period's technological development. This reality requires rapid and multidimensional adaptations.

Current and future citizens face new challenges, such as uncertainty, growing individualization and social diversity, expanding economic and cultural uniformity, and exposure to natural disasters caused by climate changes resulting from ecosystem degradation.

In the 21st Century, therefore, flexibility becomes an important skill. A frequently changing world brings the skills to handle effectively with a high degree of uncertainty. Flexibility drives one to navigate between changing situations, identify needs, act quickly, efficiently and responsibly, and contribute skills. The High levels of flexibility help to adapt to change and build the ability to act efficiently in different environments and situations. Studies mapping skills and competencies that are required to be specified in the 21st Century presented three key areas of skills: literacy skills, social skills, and personal skills (Fuchs, 2022).

Social space is multifaceted in various fields, encompassing the immediate environment where humans exist and interact. Social space is an interdisciplinary research topic studied in various fields like sociology, psychology, urban planning, political science, geography, and architecture, exploring its influence on human behavior and vice versa. In this research, we focus on the workplace's social space in our generation, examining how it shapes behavior and influences individuals and organizations. It recognizes that physical and social surroundings influence human behavior and interactions, shaped by political, economic, cultural, and historical factors. The key aspects of the social space include: 1. The Immediate Surroundings, including physical spaces (homes, workplaces) and social networks, affect behavior and attitudes. 2. Impact of Location (inside the Immediate Surroundings): One's place within a social space can significantly impact behavior due to imposed norms and expectations. 3. Influencing Factors: Political, economic, cultural, the shape of the social space structure, resources, and character. 4. Dynamic Evolution: Rapid transformations due to technology, politics, economics, and culture. 5. Interactive Relationship: Individuals adapt to and influence their Immediate Surroundings, involving physical and mental adaptations (Fuchs, 2003; Petkova & Chukov, 2019).

The Human leadership model, researched and validated by Fishbein (2021), we explore in this article is one of the ideal models for leading employees in our generation, and as we will see here - psychological flexibility can be considered the key to the Human leadership model and the application of the acquired tools.

The challenges and complexities of the modern world are increasingly shaping workplace dynamics. Employees and managers now confront unique circumstances that demand adaptability and a nuanced understanding of the evolving social space within and outside the workplace. In this evolving landscape, effective leadership involves understanding and embracing the complexity of individuals transitioning between different roles and experiences. It requires creating a workplace environment that values diversity, promotes adaptability, and provides the necessary support and guidance for employees to excel in their multifaceted lives.

The world's diverse challenges can bring complexity and uncertainty. The world is becoming more complex and uncertain, requiring individuals to navigate multifaceted issues. They experience individualization from one side but the development of growing gaps of social diversity. People have diverse backgrounds and values, leading to various perspectives and expectations. Furthermore, despite

globalization, there are various economic and cultural norms and growing environmental concerns because of the growing vulnerability to natural and technological hazards.

Workplace as a Unique Social Space. Workplace expectations, laws, rules, and limitations may differ from the broader social space. Employees must adapt to these workplace-specific rules and regulations, which can highly differ from their everyday life experiences. On the other hand, managers are tasked with leading employees with diverse experiences and roles outside of work. Employees can switch roles and experiences rapidly, such as transitioning from gaming to a professional role. Moreover, managers must balance the expectations and behaviors associated with different roles, ensuring employees meet workplace demands.

From the Human Leadership model point of view, effective leadership is based on communication and empathy. Leaders should maintain open communication and demonstrate empathy, acknowledging the varied experiences of their team members. They should have clear expectations for workplace behavior and performance while recognizing that individuality is vital. They should train and support them to help employees bridge the gap between their diverse experiences, which can be beneficial. The manager should embrace the multifaceted employee. Recognizing that employees bring various experiences and skills from various aspects of their lives can lead to innovative solutions. Encouraging employees to balance their diverse roles and responsibilities can enhance well-being and job satisfaction (Fishbein, 2021).

Our research assumptions are:

1. Workplaces today differ from those in the past. Workplaces are now considered social spaces with rules, laws, and limitations that may not align with individuals' experiences outside of work. This disconnect can create challenges for both employees and managers.

2. Psychological flexibility is a crucial quality for employees in adapting to the demands and constraints of the modern workplace. It implies the ability to effectively adjust one's mindset and behavior to navigate different aspects of life, including the workplace.

3. Managers face the challenge of leading employees who may have diverse backgrounds, experiences, and expectations. Traditional authoritarian leadership styles may not be effective in this context, as employees bring various experiences and skills from their outside lives, which may only sometimes align with their work roles.

4. The "Human leadership" model is based on the encounter of psychological flexibility.

5. A psychologically flexible manager who uses the human leadership model and encourages his employees to apply the tools and principles of psychological flexibility strengthens his ability to understand and relate to the diverse experiences and skills that employees bring to the workplace and the efficiency and output he will receive from his employees.

1.1. Psychological flexibility

Psychological Flexibility is the ability to experience the present consciously and non-judgmentally and to act according to one's chosen values (Marom et al., 2011). Psychological Flexibility forms the basis for processes of appropriate choices and attentive and conscious behavior. These processes give rise to a wide array of physical and cognitive strategies and help an individual change the role of his inner experience through flexible conduct in the face of thoughts and events (Rolffs et al., 2018). In general, the elements of psychological flexibility include awareness of the present, adapting to situations and events, having a flexible perspective, and balancing conflicting needs and behavior consistent with values (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010). According to Hayes, Strosahl and Wilson (2012), six parallel and interrelated processes serve as the foundations of psychological Flexibility: Acceptance – the state of being ready, willing, and able to experience private events without trying to change their frequency, content, or form. Cognitive Diffusion – the ability to differentiate between thoughts, feelings, physiological sensations, and impulses in evaluating real events while fully aware of the present and choosing effective and relevant behaviors. Mindfulness of the present – an active, attentive, full, non-judgmental awareness of the present moment. "Myself as an observer" is a multi-dimensional perception of oneself as more than the sum of one's experience. Values - Selected principles that shape personality, which are freely chosen by the individual, which define processes and are linked to patterns of action, directing and organizing the individual's behavior (ibid), providing him with a sense of meaning. Committed Action - Strengthening effective behavior patterns that help individuals reach value-based goals (Yuval, 2011). The scales of processes that constitute the foundations of psychological flexibility are dynamic and are responsible for shaping the patterns of interaction of the individual with his environment (ibid.).

There is a parallel between the processes that make up psychological flexibility and similar processes that are defined as self-control, emotional regulation, and self-regulation (Fuchs, 2021). Kashdan and Rottenberg (2010) refer to executive functions, default mental states, and personality configurations as three significant factors that form the basis for psychological flexibility. Executive functions generate significant neuropsychological support for self-regulation, which reflects brain activity primarily in the frontal lobe and enables behavioral choices based on integrating cognitive abilities and goals. Executive functions are a system of high-level cognitive control processes and have a significant role in the navigation and success of all day-to-day activities. They are responsible for choices, decisions, risk assessment, planning, awareness processes and breaking habits, setting priorities, behavioral sequence, coping with changing situations, etc. (Miyake & Friedman, 2012). Executive functions are related to important aspects of health and function both at the physical level and at the mental level (Snyder, 2013). Deficient performance in these areas will impair the individual's ability to develop psychological flexibility (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010). Executive control is an example of a skill derived from executive functions. Executive control includes awareness of a situation combined with the ability to focus on the fundamental aspects of the situation. Executive control enables correlation between a situation and behavior, emphasizing the context and an authentic response based on awareness and not the result of an automatic pattern. Executive functions also include dealing with distressing situations and openly accepting thoughts, emotions, and sensations of any kind (ibid.). Challenges and tensions are an integral part of life and are significant factors in an individual's development and maturation. The ability to experience, cope with, and organize different thoughts and feelings affects emotional well-being (Robinson et al., 2004). Executive functions also include working memory, information processing speed, and the ability to regulate behavior (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010).

These factors are important for psychological flexibility because when utilized properly they help the individual to see complex situations via several vantage points and representations and to select the appropriate responses and actions for each situation (ibid.). In summary, executive functions are a significant factor in the ability to regulate responses, adapt responses to reality, set goals and achieve them. The ability to be attentive, to accept and tolerate stressful situations, and to use memory skills helps the individual identify contextual clues and select appropriate responses in individual and social situations. Default mental states - Psychological flexibility depends on the individual's ability to make efficient and balanced use of the mental energy he invests in current events in his immediate environment, and the energy he will have to invest in significant future situations (ibid.). Automatic processes such as heuristics, stereotypes, and habits help us to make a balanced effort in interpreting and responding to the environment. However, processes of this kind make the individual draw conclusions about themselves, others, and the world around them based on limited knowledge and misconceptions (Dunning, Heath & Sols, 2004).

Heuristics are simple mental procedures that help to find quick but incomplete answers and solutions to difficult questions (Kahneman et al., 1982). Heuristics help us navigate social environments and deal with the myriad of verbal and nonverbal information that exists in social interactions (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010). Heuristics and stereotypes enable us to draw conclusions and to establish responses to conclusions daily (ibid.). Heuristics and stereotypes are very resistant to reconsideration and change. Often, the information they provide is neither accurate nor relevant, makes it difficult to identify other relevant information or to gain new insights, and prevents one from experiencing and taking part in varying personal situations (Kahneman et al., 1982). Psychological flexibility helps shape our automated processes in more efficient and better ways. To do so, one must recognize the tendency to automatically put into play social judgment and preferences based on habits, limitations of biased social judgment, habits and preferences, and the fact that automatic, habit-based activity ultimately reduces actions resulting from freedom and flexibility (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010). Personality configuration also has a significant impact on psychological flexibility. Neuroticism, self-control, Positive affect and openness to experience are personality dimensions that can be tested for psychological flexibility. Positive affect enables flexible thinking and flexible behavior. It expands the range of possible thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and modes of action in any given situation. Positive affect expands attention, enhances work memory, increases creativity, and enables openness to new knowledge and a variety of perspectives (Johnson & Fredrickson, 2005). These traits contribute to effective, thorough and qualitative decisions. Openness and curiosity and readiness for new knowledge and new experiences leads to a willingness to tolerate all sorts of experiences and emotions that may naturally arise because of coping with new stimuli (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010).

When an individual acts out of openness and willingness, he sees in unfamiliar situations an opportunity to find meaning in his actions, to expand the self. Openness allows for multiple perspectives and creative thinking and is related to tolerance and compassion. Balanced self-control or the ability to modify cognitive and behavioral tendencies is another major factor in psychological flexibility (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010). People with balanced self-control have more flexibility and perseverance, their psychological well-being is higher, and they experience more satisfaction in life and fewer instances of psychopathology (Fuchs, 2021).

Self-control helps to inhibit gratification, resist impulses, and control thoughts and emotions to achieve behavioral flexibility (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010). At the same time, the individual's natural ability to control himself may limit psychological flexibility. Psychological flexibility refers to an attentive orientation that forms the basis for the individual's awareness of his thoughts and feelings while understanding them as thoughts and feelings that do not necessarily indicate reality itself. This awareness allows a person to continue to act according to his or her values even when he experiences emotions and thoughts that may interfere with his actions (Biglan, 2009). Studies have shown a positive relationship between psychological flexibility and empathy and caring, as well as an inverse relationship between psychological flexibility and bias and prejudice (ibid.).

Social problems such as wars, terrorism, prejudices, interpersonal conflicts and conflicts between groups created based on lack of care, erroneous assessments, hostility and environmental pressures. Thus, raising the level of caring among people by raising psychological flexibility may be a solution to many social problems (ibid.). On the other hand, labeling, prejudice, and false beliefs may lead to problematic, maladaptive and avoidance behaviors (ibid.).

1.2. Social Space - The Mobile Human

The social space has been dramatically changed under the influence of globalization. The latter creates the conditions and gives a chance to the unknown mobility human so far. But alongside this, on an equally unknown scale, it produces random occupations that are the source of alienation among people. Globalization ruins many of the boundaries typical of traditional societies. But it also ruins the limits of the risks, forcing the modern human to live in a society that is labeled with global risks. From the point of view of its anthropological implications, globalization cannot be judged by the terms of comfort or apocalypse.

The world in which we live is a world of movement, a world in which everything is dynamic and often leaves in our minds the image of chaotic and disorder in our happenings. The world today is mobile, highly mobile. This peculiar definition of reality carries at least two meanings:

On the one hand, "this" world is a world of continuous, rapid change. Perhaps the hallmark of this movement is the words of A. Toffler (Toffler, 1970), who defined the life of modern man as a life in a permanent "shock of the future" (Toffler, 1970, p. 7), which brings renewal that makes it difficult human adaptation.

On the other hand, Anthony Giddens (Giddens, Duneier, & Appelbaum. 2011) illustrates the mobility of the modern world with the definition "If we imagine the whole history of mankind as one day, agriculture is invented at 23.56 hours, and civilizations - at 23.57. The development of modern societies begins only in 23 hours, 59 minutes and 30 seconds! Still, over the last thirty seconds of this "human day" perhaps more changes have occurred than all the time before them." (ibid., p. 123). The dynamics of change in our times are so great that we can find two "neighboring" generations live so differently as if they were living in different centuries.

Nevertheless, when our time is characterized as a time of mobility, this designation is not only in a metaphorical sense. The modern world is mobile in both the transportation and the direct meaning of the word - today, people are as if they are continuously on wheels, in airports, on high-speed roads, on electronic highways, and so on. Bauman (1999) argues that the life ambitions of today's man "Most often are expressed in terms of mobility, freedom in choosing the place, traveling, exploring the world." (ibid., p. 145). However, tourism and occupational mobility are only two dimensions of modern mobility. Meanwhile, millions of people migrate from native places and countries to bring their lives to other parts of the world. Each of these mobility trends produces dual effects - on the one hand, it leads to the mutual opening of the world, to the dropping of many of the traditional borders between states and people, but on the other, it produces new frontiers and conflicts.

Bauman (1999) provides a good example of the human dimension of globalization, outlining the emerging new sociality among some modern people. He cites Agnes Heller (in Bauman, 1999), who in

turn tells of a businesswoman who speaks five languages and has three apartments in three different places. "The type of culture in which it participates is not a culture of a certain place, it is the culture of time. This is the culture of the absolute present. Let's accompany her on her constant journeys from Singapore to Hong Kong, London, New Hampshire, Tokyo, Prague, etc. She stays at the same Hilton hotel, eats the same lunch sandwiches, or if she eats Chinese food in Paris and French - in Hong Kong. It uses faxes, phones, computers, looks at the same movies and discusses the same problems with the same people." (ibid., pp. 114-115).

The contemporary man, though still not at the scale of Bauman's character, is relieved of locality and of his "statehood", gradually acquiring a cosmopolitan consciousness. In other words, a state of consciousness that challenges any territorial, national, state, or geographical confinement. Cosmopolitanism denotes the feeling of belonging to the world and the commitment to universal values. It is a sign of the moral maturity of mankind, overcoming the limitations and intolerance of such antipodes as racism, irrational patriotism and nationalism. The cosmopolitan personality is or, at least, is making ever more serious attempts to engage in human causes, while also enjoying deep respect and recognition for existing cultural practices. But it is also necessary to say that cosmopolitanism is eclectic in its own way: its forms of expression are constantly changing, as if without its own center, the cosmos of the cosmopolitan consciousness is a center which is in constant motion. At the same time, the cosmopolitan consciousness of man does not release him from calling them non-cosmopolitan attachments. Even cosmopolitan in spirit, individual human subjectivity will always be a carrier of specific characteristics derived from origin, from bio-anthropological affiliation, from value and moral specifics. But they are not leading. These specifics are rather the individual nuances in the richness of the cosmopolitan personality. The criticism of the global cosmopolitan community is that it is not enough to simply be imagined and propagated by the various calves, info and mass media. And it is necessary for mankind to put the strong foundations of wider political unions, to embrace more and more diverse types of cultural communities. This criticism is reasonable.

Indeed, the process of cosmopolitanism is in its beginnings, but in general it is irreversible in its idea. This process is and will be accompanied by inevitable contradictions and difficulties coming from different directions. There are many problems that will be encountered, and which must be overcome. Some of them are the following: the post-nationalist movements and the confrontation in the social communities implanted by them; ethnic xenophobia; historical prejudices that are remnants of distant ages in the consciousness of people living in the 21st century (Petkova & Chukov, 2019).

Along with all the challenges (positive and negative) arising from globalization, which change people's way of life, with a history that is unknown in history so far, this dynamism first reflects on the human soul. It turns out that globalization, mobility, the dynamics of time, as they are subjected to sociological or philosophical analysis, are so much the subject of psychology. Today we talk about mental disorders such as anxiety, panic, depression, etc., which show how uncertain the modern man is from this dynamically changing setting around him. A person now lives in a compressed time, often having to perform several operations - for example, by talking on the mobile phone to search for information on the Internet and at the same time often reading in a foreign language by considering the information he reads. All of this is extremely heavy on our minds. Such accumulated over-fatigue and over-stress have led to the creation of a concept like burnout (Petkova, 2021).

The Mobile person becomes more and more important as a topic of modern social research. In connection with its study, specialized academic centers are created, scientific journals are published, congresses are held. At the same time, mobility is beginning to impose a new paradigm in the social sciences. One of its first authors is the well-known British sociologist John Urry (1999). Urry considers it necessary to formulate such a paradigm because, in his view, the mobile person with his continuous spatial mobility modeled and modified modern societies so that they became difficult to reason in the framework of the present paradigm. Urry believes that any attempt to analyze or study globalization and global change is the same as analyzing and exploring "mobilities" and "mobility" (ibid., p. 49), which "are the basis of social life and should be the basis of sociological analysis" (ibid.). He believes that previous sociology has neglected people's "mobility", such as compactness or mass, as well as autonomy or "self-mobility" (ibid.). This lack of interest in the prior sociology of an autonomous personality could be explained by the lack of unregistered, important social personal interactions. Still, this new mobile person lives in some societies that are less likely to "reshape", so Urry (1999) allows himself to continue to use traditional concepts and ideas for civil society. But the image of this society through his gaze is more refined. The difference, he says, is that: on the one hand, this society allows for a greater and more easily

achievable opportunity for political change as well as for more active participation of the autonomous mobile individual and his influence on real politics; and to release from the sphere of state control and to create a kind of mobile technological social control from or through "mobilities" or through all those new boundaries and dependencies that originate from them. The latter are new forms of habiting man and the space around him from: a light car that radically changes the social spatial human being, through the media (mobile or virtual) to ideas, possessions and information, as well as the resources needed for their production, and then for their exploitation. These nobilities form the need for the already mentioned new paradigm for social research.

This, so to speak, a new "sociology beyond the enduring societies" (ibid., p. 10) through the "mobilities" (ibid., p. 49) broadens the latest debates on globalization and theorizing for and on the modern way of life. By providing analysis, it is revealed how mobilities rebuild social life in terms of inequalities in it - inequalities that arose from the difference in time, space, space, objects, etc., in terms of travel, changes in their ideas, images, messages, waste products and money across international borders, as well as the consequences of these mobilities, which we will have to break through our experience gained over time, space, our way of living, or ignorance us. The changes that globalization has brought about in our societies have led to "Dismissing the roles of the traditional definitions of the notion society - it is increasingly difficult to give some static definition of it" (Urry, 1999, p. 15).

Society increasingly needs to be characterized by flexible expressions such as: organic, functional, integrating and reproducing entities. And what imposes these flexible terms is the dramatic increase in the flow of trans-and over-national forms of associations, so the traditional notion of society becomes even less plausible. What then happens about the function of sociology, since it is science that can best answer the question of what is happening to human sociality? For Urry (1999) this is the challenge to the new sociology. It offers a peculiar manifesto to create a scientific social paradigm for the study of what is emerging as "post-society" (ibid., p. 7). The mechanism, and perhaps the language in which we can read the coordinates of this "post-society," are the so-called "metaphors" (ibid., p. 10). Urry argues that some metaphors are "scientific" (ibid., p. 29) more useful than others. He intends to overcome the static and centered concept of "society" (ibid.) more useful than others. He intends to overcome the static and centered concept of "society" (ibid.) with the help of metaphors indicating different forms of mobility. The metaphors developed in the theory of Urry reflect the movement not only of humans but also of "non-human hybrids" (ibid., p. 29): for example: "information, commodities, even the crises" (ibid., p. 30). The most important of these mobile metaphors in Urry's project are "networks, streams and periphery" (ibid., p. 32). It can be said that Urry is the first since Castells (2004) a social thinker who shows that thinking through concepts like "network". Urry provides several advantages over large structure ideas that are more centralized and less flexible than networks themselves. These networks "produce" and are derived from complicated and long-lasting connections that pass-through space and time between peoples and things " (Urry, 1999, p. 34).

The flow of people, money, information, commodities, crises, etc. are "moving", "entering" and "coming in" (Kingsley, & Urry, 2009, p. 64) in the social landscape, "travel" (Kingsley, & Urry, 2009, p. 64) inside and outside the societies.

In "Sociology Beyond Societies: Mobilities for the Twenty" Urry (1999) uses these (and other) mobile metaphors to address various issues related to travel, senses, time, housing, citizenship, etc. The common thing here is that there is a constantly changing worldview. Urry gives considerable room to explore the means for human mobility, highlighting the extremely important "role of the vehicle" (ibid., p. 98). Unlike all other times, in the modern age man can rely on fast-moving vehicles - trains, planes, cars, etc. As if they allow a person to live a little longer, saving him from time to carry your own body from point A to point B at a faster speed. It would not have happened to the same degree of security, speed, possibility of carrying additional luggage if the man relied solely on his own strength. Vehicles are at the root of modern human mobility by reducing the lost in ineffective times that man can carry himself "here" and "there" into space. At the same time, they expand and divide social spaces, making them more accessible and unlimited. Moving through social space, labor, or any other kind of human activity is about 'staying' or living in a place. The idea of Urry and Kingsley (2009) for "housing" (ibid., p. 67) is somewhat close to that of Martin Heidegger (Heidegger, 2010). As far as the dwelling is a place in which "the man remains, he finds himself and manifests himself freely, without any worries, his own intimacy" (ibid., p. 20) or expresses and feels comfortable - "the dwelling is a kind of human continuation" (ibid.).

Urry and Kingsley (2009) point to the following problematic processes that will disturb the future of our mobile societies: global warming and the global consequences of it; oil supply problems, as well as the

distribution of spheres of influence over it in the future; enhancing digitization in many different aspects of economic and social life as well as problems surrounding the recycling of unnecessary electrical products; massive population growth in the world, etc.

The theory by Urry (1999) has been a serious criticism lately. A debate in his theory provokes the theses related to the idea of "forming a new paradigm" (Urry, 1999, p. 5) with which to explore the social space in the conditions of accelerated and mass mobility. According to McKinnon and Trzebiatowska (2014, p. 67), Urry has not sufficiently clarified what these post-societies will be beyond the static. They are analyzing Urry (1999), "Sociology Beyond Societies: Mobilities for the Twenty", wrote: "In discussing travelers, John Urry (Kingsley, & Urry, 2009) makes a significant analysis of tourists, travelers and tourists, but without valid reason refuses to theorize the various types of "forced migration that causes at least 150 million migrants worldwide." (McKinnon, & Trzebiatowska, 2014, p. 69).

On the other hand, part of the comparisons that Urry (1999) makes purely social, using examples of mobiles such as "marching soldiers", "fighter jets" (Urry, 1999) should not be used as the key moves themselves, "They would sooner rather than be" launching a missile "(Urry, 1999, p. 79) are social activities or activities "(McKinnon, & Trzebiatowska, 2014, p. 75).

In other words, it could be said that Urry (1999) presents a peculiar manifesto of sociology adapted to the 21st century, using as an example the mobilities that the 20th century people used. McKinnon and Trzebiatowska (2014) also criticize the lack of a clear statement, which is only implied by Urry (1999) regarding the movement of cash flows in the global financial system. And the latter is certainly one of the most dramatic and important spheres in the post-social space of global societies. Irrespective of the critique of Urry's theoretical platform (Urry, 1999), it is a good incentive for activating search in modern social theory. The mobility of man in the age of globalization becomes a factor that will increasingly change the characteristics of social space and, with it, the structure of society. The scientific toolkit, which has worked well in a relatively sustainable society, will become increasingly inefficient in view of the ongoing and deepening changes due to the increasing mobility of modern human. (Petkova & Chukov, 2019)

1.3. Leadership in a changing world

The 21st century demands that we move from the perspective of solving puzzles to solving mysteries. Constant change brings new ideas and behaviors. Leadership in a changing world requires a transition from an approach that focuses on planning to one that focuses on creating and becoming. This situation requires an understanding that change is situational, flexible, and adaptive, and the ability to respond and act in changing situations. The dynamic reality of the 21st century requires a willingness to learn and evolve from situations of internal and external uncertainty, to let go of control, to experience coping, and to learn together. It is a necessity that entails a transition from a hierarchical model of leadership to an open and collaborative model of leadership that operates within the framework of interpersonal leadership and human development (Dumas & Beinecke, 2018).

Leadership in a global society requires critical thinking and the development of problem-solving skills, technology orientation, adaptability, and pragmatic and practical skills. Good communication skills, the ability to build interpersonal relationships, form teams, and collaborate with internal and external parties (Goleman et al., 2007).

Leadership in the 21st century requires a high degree of adaptability as well as a variety of behaviors that meet needs. It is based on values, motivations, and needs and manifests itself in the leader being a personal, flexible, and visionary model who acts transparently and has confidence in leading group processes, practices, and social processes (Dumas & Beinecke, 2018). It leads and develops skills and abilities from the trust of its people and through training and education. and is focused on creative, transformative, ethical, and spiritual integrative processes (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

In the 21st century, managers face a rapidly evolving and competitive global economy. To achieve their goals, they must adopt new approaches to leadership, recognizing that many traditional skills from the 19th and 20th centuries are no longer effective in today's work environment. The 21st-century leadership landscape demands a departure from traditional approaches and a shift towards adaptability, continuous learning, and a deep understanding of both technological and human aspects. Leaders who embrace these principles are better equipped to guide their organizations through the challenges and opportunities of the modern era.

Key points to consider: Today managers must motivate and empower their followers by equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in their roles. This not only fosters individual

growth but also propels the organization forward. Effective leadership in the 21st century demands adaptability and flexible thinking. Managers should be prepared to embrace change and implement strategies that are responsive to evolving circumstances. The "growth mindset," as proposed by Dweck (2007), is crucial for managers. This mindset encourages continuous learning, resilience in the face of challenges, and a belief that abilities can be developed over time. Managers need to possess information skills, digital literacy, and a commitment to environmentally and socially responsible behavior. These competencies are essential for navigating the modern global economy. Emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1998) and social intelligence (Goleman et al., 2007) are invaluable attributes for managers. They enable managers to connect with their teams on a deeper level, understand and manage emotions effectively, and navigate complex social dynamics.

1.4. The Afik Model of Human Leadership and How It Serves in the 21st century

The differences between the various leadership approaches and models lie primarily in how leaders move others to action. The Afik model of human leadership (Fishbein, 2019) was originally developed and empirically validated to understand human leadership's effects on motivation in the workplace. The theory of humane leadership states that the components of humane leadership are the most important characteristics that are essential for successful leadership. The change in organizational and social models according to the changing reality, challenges, and needs of the 21st century also leads to changes in key leadership characteristics, perceptions, and goals. In this literature review, we will examine the characteristics of Afik's human leadership model to determine the effectiveness and relevance of human characteristics to the 21st-century leadership model and the importance of psychological flexibility in developing these skills and qualities.

Habel (2002) found that leaders with strong relationship management skills treat others with kindness, sensitivity, and compassion. Relationship management centers on connecting with other people and building strong relationships. However, it also focuses on developing people through inspirational leadership, building teamwork through collaboration, and resolving interpersonal conflicts. Leaders who excel in relationship management have good communication skills and are adept at using their influence to ensure positive results. Relationship management skills are particularly important for public health leaders, given the field's highly collaborative nature. Over the years, adaptations and changes in leadership perceptions and models can be seen following social, cultural, and environmental changes. We see a shift from one-dimensional, goal-oriented models to multidimensional models that speak of a combination of professional and personal characteristics and factors in the leader's image (Fishbein, 2019).

Humane Leadership goes beyond building positive relationships with one's followers. Humane leaders are driven by kindness and deep concern for their followers. They see themselves as servants responsible for their subordinates' well-being and as nurturers who help others discover their voices and inner potential and guide their personal and professional development accordingly so that they, too, can become leaders. Humane leaders are attentive listeners who express sincere appreciation and offer constructive feedback through ongoing dialogue (Cornett, 2017).

Within the Afik model of human leadership, some qualities, characteristics, and models were defined, analyzed, and tested to create a new model that defines and expands the understanding of human leadership and the need for any form of a practical tool to improve human leadership. Leadership is about influencing others to act to lead people, raise their motivation, and achieve the goals of the organization. Hence, as the researcher found, operational skills – the ability to turn a vision into reality – are at its core. The difference between different leadership approaches and models lies not so much in the what or even the why of leadership but rather in how leaders influence others to act. To show the scientific value of the Humane Leadership model, this model was validated through garnering empirical support. The Humane leadership theory holds that an executive manager who does everything to meet the task without considering the personal treatment of each employee sends a message to his subordinates that they are less important to him than the work itself. Such a manager needs to improve in human relations and can benefit from improving his leadership skills. The literature describes several traits essential for successful leadership, and many of the ideas presented were integrated into the Afik model of Humane leadership (Fishbein, 2019).

Visionary - "Vision has long been a quality and characteristic defining leadership" (Coers, 2018, p. 1). He has a vision; he perceives what will happen in the future, can think a few steps ahead, and bases his actions on that knowledge. He understands processes and what their potential outcomes might be. He is

skillful at analyzing situations and constantly considers and assesses processes and outcomes to plan and prepare follow-up plans (ibid.).

Action Taker - takes calculated risks. He is flexible and adapts to changing situations, prepares for crises, and is very decisive. This kind of a leader is a change-maker who takes initiative and seeks creative solutions (Wanasika, 2009, p. 7); call the action Taking leader a Strategic Leader: "strategic leadership as a person's ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, think strategically, and work with others to initiate changes that will create a viable future for the organization. This second definition captures several characteristics: future orientation, cognitive ability, ability to focus on the big picture, interpersonal relations, propensity to act, and risk-taking" (Wanasika, 2009, p. 7).

Sets Clear Goals - focuses on what is relevant. The leader can differentiate between what is significant to the process and what is extraneous and sets clear operational goals, and he "is cognitively complex enough to hold both short-term and long-term goals simultaneously" (Wanasika, 2009, 7).

Realistic – "A realistic leader is characterized by untenable and selfish morality, which is neither lasting nor certain" (Brzezińska, 2020, p. 180). He does not live in a fairy-tale world. His "goals arise about what is desirable, possible, and necessary out of necessities, not desires and dreams" (Wanasika, 2009, p. 7). He operates rationally, makes logical choices, and explains his decisions and actions. He never uses the excuse, "Because I want to...". He justifies everything he does.

Provides Clear Instructions - The leader has good communication skills. He is assertive, very available, and gives clear and precise instructions. Hoch (2014) calls the leader who provides clear instructions the Pragmatic Leader. The "pragmatic leader provides clear instructions about the team procedures and ways of working; may lead to uncertainty about the correct direction the team may take" (Crespo-Gonzalez & Quintero, 2020, p. 33).

Perseverance - very focused and disciplined, is "better at overcoming obstacles and can work with distant objects in view". He adheres to the mission and is passionate about seeing projects through to the end (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991, p. 51).

Persuasive Negotiator - has powerful coaxing skills. He seeks out-of-the-box solutions and knows how to bring people around to his viewpoint. He believes in fair play. "This leader understands the other side's story, is open to persuasion, uses reciprocity to build trust, matches appeals to the other side's circumstances, seeks agreements that feel fair to both sides, recognizes how people process information through stories as well as analysis" (Foster, Mansbridge & Martin, 2015, p. 74).

Role Model - A Positive Motivator. He is inspiring and very professional and treats his subordinates with respect. A leader who "uses role modeling to influence others", "with a socialized power motive, uses power to achieve desired goals or a vision. Its use is expressed as the ability to develop networks and coalitions, gain cooperation from others, and resolve conflicts in a constructive manner" (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991, p. 53).

Kindness – "The relationship between kindness and leadership is a topic of fundamental importance for the organization's well-being" (Haskins, Thomas & Johri, 2018). Baker & O'Malley (2008) "Have advocated that leading with kindness is effective in both optimizing organization performance and building high commitment workplace cultures and is a moral duty" (Caldwell, 2017, 2). This leader loves and cares for his staff. He develops relationships with his employees' families, loves his subordinates, and helps them solve their problems. He believes caring for others inspires them to follow him as a leader, and he stands up for the people he leads.

Honesty and Integrity – "are virtues in all individuals but have special significance for leaders. Without these qualities, leadership is undermined. Integrity is the correspondence between word and deed; honesty refers to being truthful or non-deceitful. The two form the foundation of a trusting relationship between leader and followers" (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991), "Empowerment of workers in social sphere - challenges and opportunities". He is loyal to superiors and subordinates alike. He is loyal to the organization, adhering to the organization's policies, nurturing the organization's culture, and does not abuse his position of authority or power. He does not use force or fear tactics or practice cheap populism to achieve his goals. He is honest, reliable, accountable, and stable, maintains a calm demeanor, and never plays the blame game (Smith & Harrison, 1986).

The Wandering Around Listener - listens patiently. He listens to both sides when there is a disagreement or conflict and puts his ego aside when contemplating a solution. Listeners "are effective information gatherers because they are good listeners and encourage subordinates to express their opinions. In Peters' terms, they stay in contact with the rest of the organization by "wandering around". Leaders actively seek information from outside the organization. Good leaders also disseminate

information widely so that followers will understand why decisions are made and how their work fits into the organization's goals." (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991, p. 57).

Interpersonal Skills and Emotional Stability - belief in teamwork. He collaborates to improve achievements, consults with others before making important decisions, is not afraid of strong colleagues, and is open to others' opinions. He says what he means and means what he says. He "remains even-tempered ... generally do not become angry or enraged ... emotional stability is especially important when resolving interpersonal conflicts and when representing the organization ... he retains emotional control and fosters trust and teamwork" (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991, p. 55).

Delegates - delegates responsibilities. He trusts subordinates to help reach goals and shares the credit and responsibility for results. "Delegating leadership style gives confidence as the manager recognizes and celebrates employee achievement and inspires challenge and innovative ways to reach the goal" (Lynch, 2015 in Alčauskienė, Vitkienė & Grigaliūnienė, 2019). "It is stated that this style supports and allows a high degree of staff autonomy as employees are allowed to engage in planning and administration. In this case, the manager delegates responsibilities to employees to see how the job progresses. This style is most appropriate when employees are competent in performing tasks and willing and confident in their abilities and knowledge" (Alčauskienė, Vitkienė & Grigaliūnienė, 2019).

Lifelong Learner Professionalism – "puts the knowledge base into practice" (Garman et al., 2006, p. 219). seeks to grow and learn. He deliberately surrounds himself with more knowledgeable people than he is and constantly strives for improved professionalism. "Professionalism involves cultivating and managing working relationships with others. Effectiveness in delivering and receiving constructive feedback is a hallmark of professionalism. Maintaining networks with colleagues and participating in a professional association are also highly important activities" (Garman et al., 2006, p. 220).

Nurturer - challenges and nurtures staff. He is supportive, offers positive feedback, shows others how to improve, and gives people a second chance, all to improve achievements. "Rewarding professional development, and valuing members of the organization" (Leonard & Jones, 2009, p. 26).

Accepts his Humaneness - acknowledges mistakes and balances work and leisure time. "Participants addressed the important role that acceptance played in relation to their capacity to counsel with self-compassion—accepting their humanness in all of its strengths and limitations, as well as accepting others" (Patsiopoulos & Buchanan, 2011, p. 303).

Positive Attitude - does not "lose it". He is not moody, often smiles, and has a positive attitude, even when facing difficulties. He is optimistic and trustful, instilling hope in his co-workers (Hurduzeu, 2015). The list in the AFIK Model traits contains both tasks and relationship oriented. According to the AFIK Model, a

2. Methodology

A quantitative survey was administered to a broader cross-section of professionals across different sectors to investigate the interplay between psychological flexibility, human leadership qualities, and their impact on thriving in the 21st-century social space, aiming to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics between psychological flexibility, human leadership, and success in the contemporary social space. The research commenced with a comprehensive literature review encompassing studies, scholarly articles, and theoretical frameworks related to psychological flexibility, human leadership, and the 21st-century socio-professional space. This initial phase allowed for the establishment of a theoretical foundation.

3. Results

Psychological flexibility:

The fundamental components of psychological flexibility encompass acceptance, active listening, presence, contextual awareness, cognitive separation, alignment with values, effective action, diverse thinking, focused attention, broad perspective, multi-dimensional awareness, and reflective abilities. These components play a pivotal role in delineating the skills identified by the research, which encompass critical thinking involving cognitive analysis and examination of underlying assumptions from various perspectives and with an open mindset.

Psychological flexibility mechanisms include acceptance, focused attention, cognitive separation, broad perspective, context comprehension, and analytical prowess.

Creativity and innovation are characterized by generating creative, original, and contextually relevant solutions that cater to specific needs and situations. Psychological flexibility mechanisms contributing to

creativity encompass acceptance, focused attention, cognitive separation, broad perspective, contextual awareness, adaptability across situations, idea expression, execution capability, and efficiency.

Entrepreneurship involves manifesting creativity by adapting responses to meet evolving needs, experimenting in uncertain conditions, learning from failures, and demonstrating the courage to take calculated risks. Psychological flexibility mechanisms relevant to entrepreneurship encompass acceptance, focused attention, cognitive separation, broad perspective, context comprehension, heightened awareness, need identification, diverse thinking, and adaptive capability.

Cooperation and communication skills hinge on effective verbal communication, self-assured expression, broad perspective, cooperation, leadership acumen, acute social situational awareness, and holistic group-oriented action. These abilities are fortified by psychological flexibility mechanisms such as maintaining a broad perspective, adeptly transitioning between situations, acceptance, presence, openness, need identification, and effective, situation-responsive action.

Self-direction, lifelong learning, and adaptability signify the capacity to thrive amidst uncertainty, adapt to evolving environments, acquire diverse skills and knowledge, exhibit mental flexibility, and proactively respond to changing circumstances and needs. These attributes are closely intertwined with psychological flexibility elements like adaptability, presence, active listening, cognitive separation, broad perspective, situation-specific adaptation, and need-aligned action.

Ethical, social, and legal awareness encompasses understanding the power and risks associated with technology and databases. Addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by reality necessitates autonomous identification of ethical dilemmas, discerning and regulating ethically, socially, and legally contentious behaviors, and upholding ethical and legal standards. These facets of awareness align with psychological flexibility mechanisms like heightened awareness, values, value-based action, and contextual comprehension.

Cultural awareness entails recognizing and comprehending diverse cultures' distinct characteristics and needs, coupled with effective cross-cultural communication informed by cultural, historical, geographical, and general knowledge. Balancing global trends while preserving uniqueness demands flexibility mechanisms that facilitate adaptability and diversity appreciation.

Skills associated with human leadership include:

Effective leadership in the 21st century emphasizes qualities such as empathy, compassion, authenticity, and a growth mindset. Human leadership emphasizes the importance of treating employees as valuable individuals with unique needs and motivations. This style of leadership fosters trust, collaboration, and a positive work culture.

Empathy and Compassion: Leaders need to understand and relate to their team members' diverse emotions and experiences. They should also show compassion and support when needed; **Authenticity:** Being genuine to oneself fosters trust and connection with team members; **Growth Mindset:** Leaders should embrace challenges and view failures as opportunities for growth and learning; **Empathy:** Understanding and acknowledging the feelings and perspectives of others; **Active listening:** Giving full attention to others when they speak, without interrupting or judging; **Coaching and mentoring:** Helping employees grow and develop their skills and potential; **Emotional intelligence:** Recognizing and managing emotions in oneself and others; **Inclusivity:** Creating an environment where all employees feel respected and valued.

Demands of Social Space:

Social space refers to the interconnected and ever-changing social, cultural, and technological context in which individuals and organizations operate in the 21st century. It demands adaptability and the ability to navigate diverse cultural contexts, work with remote teams, and leverage technology for communication and collaboration.

21st-Century Leadership Skills:

In the 21st century, the skills required have shifted from traditional, task-specific skills to more holistic and adaptable ones. These skills include critical thinking, creativity, adaptability, communication, collaboration, and emotional intelligence.

In addition to psychological flexibility and human leadership skills, the rapidly changing world also requires leaders to possess a diverse set of skills to effectively lead their teams and organizations: **Adaptability and flexibility:** Being able to adjust to new circumstances and technologies. **Digital literacy:**

Understanding and utilizing digital tools and technology. **Data-driven decision-making:** Using data and analytics to make informed choices. **Creativity and innovation:** Encouraging new ideas and thinking outside the box. **Cultural intelligence:** Working effectively across diverse cultural contexts. **Collaboration and teamwork:** Building and leading teams with diverse skills and backgrounds. **Visionary thinking:** Setting clear and inspiring long-term goals. **Conflict resolution:** Addressing and resolving conflicts constructively. **Ethical leadership:** Demonstrating integrity and making ethical decisions. **Strategic thinking:** Planning for the future and aligning actions with long-term objectives.

4. Discussion

Psychological flexibility, particularly elements like acceptance and present-moment awareness, is crucial for coping with the demands of the social space. It helps individuals and leaders navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing social and work environment. The skills required in the 21st century, such as emotional intelligence and adaptability, align closely with the qualities of human leadership. Effective leaders need these skills to lead diverse and adaptable teams successfully.

Psychological flexibility can enhance leadership qualities. Leaders are better equipped to manage their own emotions and understand the emotions of their team members, fostering a more empathetic and compassionate leadership style.

In order to thrive in the 21st century, individuals need to possess skills like adaptability, critical thinking, and creativity. These skills require a certain level of psychological flexibility, which includes elements like acceptance, mindfulness, and values-driven action. Regarding leadership, qualities like empathy, communication, and collaboration are crucial in creating a welcoming and inclusive social space. By fostering these qualities in leaders and individuals, social spaces can meet the demands of a diverse and rapidly changing society.

Psychological Flexibility and the 21st century

The basic components of psychological flexibility include qualities of acceptance, listening, presence, seeing out of context, cognitive separation, values, binding action, diverse thinking, focused attention, a broad perspective, and the ability for a variety of points of view, awareness, and reflective abilities, analyzing situations, identifying and defining needs and goals, regulating and planning thoughts and behavior, thinking outside the box and the ability to act effectively and adaptively.

In an in-depth examination of the skills presented, the components of flexibility, in different compositions and dosages, are fundamental in the research:

Thus, **critical thinking** is the cognitive and analytical ability to examine claims, approaches, and basic assumptions underlying various processes. This, while deepening analysis, research, and precision, a variety of perspectives and openness.

The mechanisms of flexibility include qualities of acceptance, attention, cognitive separation, a broad perspective, an understanding of the context, and analytical abilities.

Creativity and innovation are characterized by creativity, originality, and relevance to developing answers that match the need and the situation.

The mechanisms of flexibility include acceptance, attention, cognitive separation, a broad perspective, understanding the context, the ability to move between different situations, the ability to bring ideas into expression and execution, and efficiency.

Entrepreneurship is defined as expressing creativity through development, adapting a response to a need, experimenting under conditions of uncertainty, learning from failures, and having the courage to try.

And the mechanism of flexibility includes components of acceptance, attention, cognitive separation, a broad perspective, understanding the context, awareness, identifying needs, focusing attention, diverse thinking, and the ability to cope.

Cooperation and communication are defined as social and communicative abilities which are based on verbal abilities, self-confidence, self-expression, a broad perspective, cooperation, leadership ability, a high understanding of social situations, seeing others and the broad group picture which are reflected in effective actions in the fields of knowledge, initiative, Task management and utilization of group resources. Flexibility mechanisms such as a broad perspective, the ability to move between situations, acceptance, presence, openness, identification of needs, and effective and need-compatible action.

Self-direction, life-long learning, and flexibility indicate the ability to cope and adapt in conditions of uncertainty, adapt to changing environments, acquire various skills and knowledge, self-direction, mental flexibility, and take the initiative while being aware of changes in the environment and needs. And

bring to light elements of flexibility such as adaptability, presence, listening, cognitive separation, a broad perspective, adaptation to the situation, and adaptation of action to the need.

Ethical, social, and legal awareness includes awareness of the power and dangers of accessing technology and databases. Meeting the many challenges posed by reality requires awareness and the ability to independently identify ethical issues and distinguish and regulate ethically, socially, and legally problematic behaviors. Admit social and legal ethics. Refers to flexibility mechanisms such as awareness, values, value-based action, and context understanding.

Cultural awareness refers to the distinction and understanding between different characteristics and needs of different and diverse cultures alongside optimal communication based on cultural, historical, geographical, and general knowledge. Combined with the ability to adapt to the global trend while creating a balance between maintaining uniqueness and adopting global characteristics, flexibility mechanisms that belong to the possibility of diversity and adaptation.

Psychological flexibility are essential components of many fundamental skills necessary for success in the 21st century in a rapidly changing world. Research has shown that individuals with higher psychological flexibility levels are likelier to possess important 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and social and emotional intelligence.

Psychological flexibility is adapting to changing emotional, cognitive, and behavioral situations. It is regarded as a key component of social and emotional intelligence. Effectively navigating complex environmental and inner situations requires self-regulation skills, acceptance, empathy, and openness to different perspectives and ideas.

Hence, psychological flexibility is an essential component of many fundamental skills necessary for success in the 21st century in a rapidly changing world. It is considered a key component of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It is expressed in the ability to adapt to changing situations and think about problems in new and creative ways. Effective complex problem-solving and adapting to changing circumstances need wide, multiple perspectives and flexible thinking to conclude potential solutions (Fuchs, 2021).

These skills are not exhaustive, but they highlight the increasing complexity and interconnectedness required of leaders in the 21st century. Successful leaders in this era need to blend psychological flexibility, human leadership, and a diverse skill set to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by the rapidly changing landscape.

Adaptability to Change: The 21st century is marked by constant change and uncertainty. Leaders need to be adaptable and open to new ideas and approaches. Psychological flexibility enables leaders to embrace change, be willing to experiment, and adjust their leadership style to suit the evolving needs of their team and organization.

Empathy and Understanding: Human leadership require a deep understanding of employees' emotions, motivations, and perspectives. Psychological flexibility fosters empathy, allowing leaders to connect with their team members at a personal level, understand their concerns, and provide the necessary support.

Resilience in the Face of Challenges: Psychological flexibility helps leaders, and their teams bounce back from setbacks and challenges. In the rapidly changing business landscape, resilience is vital for maintaining a positive and productive work environment, even during difficult times.

Emotional Intelligence: Effective human leadership involves recognizing and managing emotions, both in oneself and others. Leaders with high emotional intelligence can navigate interpersonal dynamics, provide constructive feedback, and inspire their team to perform at their best.

Mindful Decision-Making: Psychological flexibility incorporates mindfulness, which allows leaders to make thoughtful and well-informed decisions. Mindful leaders can take a step back, assess the situation objectively, and consider the potential consequences of their actions before making critical choices.

Employee Growth and Development: Human leadership emphasizes supporting employees' growth and development. Psychological flexibility enables leaders to identify everyone's strengths and areas for improvement, tailor coaching and mentoring approaches, and create personalized development plans.

Conflict Resolution and Collaboration: In diverse and fast-paced workplaces, conflicts may arise. Psychological flexibility helps leaders approach conflicts with an open mind, seeking to understand different perspectives and collaboratively find solutions that benefit the team.

Inclusivity and Diversity: Leaders need to create an inclusive and diverse work environment. Psychological flexibility encourages leaders to appreciate and value individual differences, fostering a sense of belonging and equality within the organization.

Visionary Thinking: Leaders must envision the future and set clear goals. Psychological flexibility allows leaders to balance a visionary approach with practical adaptability, enabling them to steer the organization in the right direction while remaining responsive to changing circumstances.

Ethical Decision-Making: Human leadership requires ethical behavior and decision-making. Psychological flexibility helps leaders examine their values and principles, ensuring that their choices align with the organization's mission and the well-being of their team.

Conclusions

In the 21st century, the synergy between essential skills, psychological flexibility, human leadership qualities, and social landscape demands has become increasingly evident. Developing psychological flexibility enhances leadership attributes and proves indispensable for navigating the intricate social space while aligning with the skills requisite for modern success. By seamlessly incorporating psychological flexibility into human leadership, leaders can cultivate a work environment characterized by nurturance and growth that embraces change, fosters collaboration, and empowers employees to thrive amidst the dynamic challenges of the contemporary era. This amalgamation of psychological flexibility and human leadership, in turn, can yield higher employee engagement, stimulate creativity and innovation, and fortify organizations for sustainable success.

In the milieu of the 21st-century social space, marked by diversity, rapid change, and interconnectedness, leaders adept at practicing psychological flexibility and embracing human leadership qualities are better equipped to address challenges effectively. They possess the ability to nurture inclusive and collaborative environments, adeptly navigate cultural nuances, and lead with empathy, all of which are pivotal for thriving in the dynamic social landscape of the modern age. Prioritizing psychological flexibility and human leadership proves indispensable as it enables adaptability in the face of change and fosters a work environment where employees feel supported and valued. Leaders who prioritize empathy, transparency, and inclusivity cultivate a profound sense of belonging among their teams, which, in turn, fuels effective collaboration and encourages individuals to contribute their best efforts. Integrating these vital components into our leadership style enables the creation of a positive social space that nurtures growth and development for all team members, ultimately culminating in a thriving and empowered workplace. As leaders in the 21st century, understanding the concept of psychological flexibility and its profound influence on forging a positive social space for our teams is paramount. Psychological flexibility equips leaders to adapt to evolving situations and effectively manage stress, fostering an environment where employees feel valued boosting productivity and job satisfaction.

Human leadership emerges as another pivotal dimension in shaping a positive social space. Leaders who prioritize empathy, transparency, and inclusivity succeed in cultivating a profound sense of belonging among their employees. When team members feel genuinely heard and valued, they are more inclined to collaborate effectively and contribute their utmost. Integrating these fundamental principles into our leadership style enables the creation of a social space that encourages growth and development for all team members. Through the concerted prioritization of psychological flexibility and human leadership, we can craft a workplace where employees thrive and feel empowered to excel.

Psychological flexibility and human leadership can significantly benefit leaders in navigating the challenges of the social space in the 21st century.

Here are how these concepts can assist leaders:

Adaptability to Change:

Psychological Flexibility: Leaders with high psychological flexibility are better equipped to adapt to the rapid changes and uncertainties in the social space. They can accept and work with the inevitable disruptions and challenges that arise.

Human Leadership: A key aspect of human leadership is adaptability. Leaders who embody qualities like a growth mindset and willingness to learn and change can effectively lead their teams through evolving social and cultural landscapes.

Emotional Resilience:

Psychological Flexibility: Leaders who practice psychological flexibility can manage their emotions more effectively, reducing stress and burnout. This resilience allows them to stay composed and make sound decisions, even in high-pressure social situations.

Human Leadership: Human leaders prioritize the well-being of their team members, fostering an environment where emotional support is readily available. This, in turn, promotes emotional resilience among team members and enhances overall team performance.

Empathy and Relationship Building:

Psychological Flexibility: Acceptance and present moment awareness, components of psychological flexibility, contribute to empathetic understanding. Leaders who are attuned to their own thoughts and emotions are often more empathetic toward the experiences of others.

Human Leadership: Empathy is a core quality of human leadership. Leaders who exhibit empathy can build strong, trust-based relationships in the social space, essential for collaboration and effective communication.

Effective Communication:

Psychological Flexibility: Cognitive diffusion, a part of psychological flexibility, helps leaders detach from unhelpful thought patterns. This enables clearer and more effective communication, as leaders can express themselves without being entangled in their own biases or emotional reactions.

Human Leadership: Human leaders prioritize open and honest communication. They create an environment where team members feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and concerns, which is vital for effective teamwork in the social space.

Values-Driven Leadership:

Psychological Flexibility: Values clarification is a component of psychological flexibility. Leaders who understand their core values can align their actions with their principles, making decisions consistent with their ethical compass.

Human Leadership: Human leaders often emphasize values-based leadership, making decisions that prioritize organizational success and ethical and moral considerations. This approach is crucial in the social space, where ethical issues and social responsibility are prominent.

Research Assumptions

The research assumptions presented align with the literature research we conducted. Here is an evaluation of each assumption:

1. Workplace as Social Spaces: This assumption reflects the growing recognition of workplaces as complex social environments with their own rules and dynamics. It is a widely accepted concept, and existing research often supports this idea.

2. Psychological Flexibility: Psychological flexibility is crucial in the modern workplace. Research in psychology and organizational behavior often emphasizes the importance of adaptability and emotional resilience.

3. Challenges for Managers: Managing diverse teams and adapting leadership styles is well-documented in contemporary workplace literature. Traditional authoritarian leadership is often seen as less effective in today's diverse and dynamic work environments.

4. Human Leadership Model: The concept of "human leadership," or leadership based on empathy, compassion, and adaptability, is gaining traction. This is a relatively recent trend, and the effectiveness of such leadership models may still require empirical research to establish.

5. Psychologically Flexible Managers: The idea that psychologically flexible managers who embrace human leadership principles can enhance employee understanding and productivity aligns with the concept of transformational leadership. Leaders who exhibit such qualities can indeed have a positive impact on employee engagement and performance.

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