

- **16681 | Exploring Leaders and Followers' Perspectives on The Role of Technology in Leadership**

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Technological growth and the inherent widespread use of internet-mediated technologies has been a constant throughout the years. Thus, in organizational settings, work changed in accordance, evolving to virtual forms. Furthermore, leadership remains central in these settings and even more when presential coexistence is not a constant. The e-leader virtually links the workers and the organization, nurturing a social influence process that guides them, constructively, through development opportunities and to common goals (e-leadership).

This study focuses CEiiAs' leaders and followers' perspectives on e-leadership and its dynamics. Through qualitative interviews with five e-leaders and two e-followers, we unveiled perceived advantages and disadvantages of e-leadership (context-specific, that impact on communication, coordination, planning and formalization), self-perceived roles regarding the process (as caregivers, communicators, conciliators, honest and direct, present, instigators and / or solvers), insights on the aspects associated with its operationalization (internet connection, nationality and culture, time zone, language, experience and relational aspects) and perceived e-leaders' characteristics linked to positive results (instrumental competencies, social skills and specific strategies). Moreover, it was possible to set a clear image of this ever-growing phenomenon and set ground for overall improvement of e-leadership practices. Finally, research gaps were identified for future investments.

Key words: Technology, E-leadership, Virtual teams.