MANAGER'S ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS UNDER PERSUASIVE AND/OR BINDING COMMUNICATION: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Given the importance of analyzing the manager's attitude and behavior in decision-making process, several researchers have examined the effect of the persuasive communication on manager's actions. The majority of these researchers are concentrated on studying the impact of the governance monitoring system as a predictor of manager's behavior. The aim of this review is to analyze the existing theoretical literature with a deep concentration on the new behavior change paradigm enhanced by the theory of binding communication. Particularly, we aim in this paper to remedy the explained breakage between managers' cognitions and their actions, and aims to predict the managers behaviors.

Keys words: *Manager attitude; Manager behavior; decision-making process; persuasion; commitment; governance.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary psychological researches reveal that people are frequently both unconscious about their biases and, mainly, how their biases influence their behavior. These researches discuss features that compile decision making process. Three principal features are cited which are: attitude, behavioral intention and behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, Ajzen 2012). What we decide (behavior), generally, depend greatly on what we want to decide (behavioral intention); dependently, what information we hunt and how we evaluate it, are all affected by our initial cognitions and motivations (attitude). Consequently, decision making process is primarily attached to attitude which is affected by cognitive biases. Thus, an "illusion of objectivity" prevents deciders from making efficient decision and considering the real impact of their cognitions. Ex ante they think they are able to decide ethically, and ex post they think they have decided ethically.

Simon (1957) offered an early substitute to the severely rational model with his concept of bounded rationality which demonstrated that in decision-making, rationality is restricted by information, cognitive capacity, and the limited amount of time in which to decide. Results from cognitive psychology and behavioral research show that choice and decision-making could not wholly be based on rational and utility maximizing analysis. Other causes can influence decisions such as pressures towards conformity (Asch, 1952; Janis, 1972), deviation from utility maximization over time (Strotz, 1955, Thaler, 1981; Laibson, 1997), visceral features (Schelling, 1984; Loewenstein et al., 2001), and emotion (Slovic et al., 2002). These biases can produce systematic violations of the hypothesis of rationality fundamental to the normative model of decision-making.

Such analysis importantly rely on the thoughts that rational and competent deciders will make objective analysis and exploit all accessible information to guarantee the best outcome for the firm and themselves (Marnet, 2008). However, behavioral studies on decision-making show that bias certainly affects the choice of individuals. Consequently, managers are affected by their own preferences, social and financial ties, and pecuniary self-interest. These likely subjective limitations are considered as sources of bias which lead to

share a widespread presumption that managers are enable to make rational choice without being influenced by such biases.

The impact of bias on managerial decision-making reveals the importance of the stakeholders interests' protection and how can better align manager's interests with those of stakeholders. Resolution of the agency problems necessitate to invest more effort to converge interests of whose is given a key responsibility in the improvement of agency relation.

Widespread reactions to corporate scandals, such as sophisticated monitoring systems, increasing motivation and higher supervision and directives, habitually fail to limit managerial discretion and avoid large destruction of shareholders value. Related research is advanced by Marnet (2007, 2008) who observes the failure of the exclusive use of the rational choice model in explaining manager decision-making process and suggests the use of psychological more reasonable assumptions. For this reason, agency theory needs a major rethink in how good governance can be encouraged.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Manager attitude and behavior in decision-making process under persuasive communication theory.

According to Shapero and Sokol (1982) the term of persuasion is used only to define the presentation of messages advocating a different position, or even opposite to that individuals may have in private.

From the beginning of the forties, three generations of research on persuasion have succeeded. The first generation was represented by the learning models (Hovland, et al., 1953) whose objective is to define the variables that may facilitate or thwart persuasion. The second generation begins with the cognitive responses model (Greenwald, 1968). This model focuses on identifying the nature of beliefs or cognitive responses, occurs for subjects when they anticipate or read a persuasive message. If the subject has favorable cognitive responses, he will tend to adopt the expected behavior. If these responses are, however, unfavorable, he will tend to resist facing to persuasion.

Based on the model of cognitive responses the third generation of research is started with the development of two persuasion models: the probability of elaboration model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986) and the heuristic systematic processing model (Chen and Chaiken, 1999).

According to these models there are two main ways of processing the persuasion: first a central or systematic path which consists to evaluate carefully the arguments presented in the message, the second is a peripheral or heuristic path which consist to treat superficially the argument. The adoption of a path rather than another is determined by the degree of involvement of individuals with regard to the defended attitudinal object and available cognitive resources.

The literature on persuasion informs us about the effects of the main variables of persuasive communication which are: the characteristics of the source (message effectiveness is affected by the credibility of the source), construction of the message (message effectiveness depends on the choice of the place of arguments, the choice of the type of argument, the type of conclusion ...), the context in which the message is sent (agreeable/ disagreeable context, ...). This literature is very important as it informs us about the main factors affecting the effectiveness of the persuasive message.

Beyond the importance of the literature on persuasion, many researches have been conducted on the use of persuasive communication in the social change work. These studies show the limitations of information and awareness campaigns based on persuasion. As an example, we can cite the longitudinal study advanced by Peterson, et al., (2000) which shows that the probability of being a smoker for 17 years with 65 students

who attended awareness sessions between 8 and 17 years is nearer to the probability that among students who have not completed these sessions. Therefore, Albarracin, et al., (2006) show by means of a meta-analysis in an interval of eight years on 350 prevention campaigns in the field of AIDS prevention campaigns that persuasive communication has an important role in improving knowledge about AIDS and how to protect themselves and not changing the actual behavior of protection from AIDS.

These studies show that if these campaigns can lead to disseminate new knowledge or attitudes, they are rarely efficient in changing actual behavior. Their effort in information and argumentation helps over time to change cognitions, concepts, attitudes, and, absolutely, to awaken consciousness. However, awareness of the harmful effects of tobacco certainly does not mean reducing or stopping cigarette smoking. Similarly, knowledge of the importance and the necessity of the sport do not cause the individual engagement in physical activity. This finding improves several studies showing the gap that can exist between ideas and actions (Sheeran, 2002; Webb and Sheeran, 2006).

Managerial decision-making process under the Upper Echelon Theory (UET):

Upper echelons theory is founded by Hambrick and Mason in 1984. It knows after that date many developments that capture and improve the debate on the relationship between the characteristics of CEO's performance and strategic decision ((Hambrick, et al., 2005). Hambrick (2007) summarizes that the theory is based on two facts related: the first is that leaders choose their actions based on personal interpretations, and the second is that these interpretations are based on the experiences, CEO's values and personalities. It means that CEO's cognitive characteristics and behavioral biases are expected to play a key role in the drawing of business strategies. Hambrick (2007) also highlights two important ideas: The first concerns the unit of analysis is constituted by the management team comprising senior executives (top management team), a choice that would produce better results than the consideration of only CEOs (Chief Executive Officers). The second relates to the operationalization of the model, but it deals with the mode of apprehension of executive's cognitive dimension, origin of interpretations. Hambrick affirm that these ideas can be more envisaged by the "demographics characteristics" (training, functional experience, tenure in industry or in firm, etc...). This approximation has enabled the development of empirical research which is a synthesis in Carpenter et al. (2004).

Hambrick and Finkelstein (1987) propose to introduce in the initial model of Hambrick and Mason (1984), the notion of managerial discretion (managerial discretion or latitude of action) as "moderator" variable to improve the explanatory power of their approach, and to identify that the effect of CEO's personal characteristics depends on the managerial latitude they have. In other words, if the executive has no latitude, strategy and performance should be insensitive to their personal characteristics.

For Hambrick and Mason (1984) managerial latitude exists when there is an absence of constraints and when there are many alternatives for achieving the CEO's objectives. They identify three categories of determinants of managerial latitude: environmental determinants, organizational determinants, and, personals and cognitive CEO's characteristics.

Environmental
Determinants

Figure 1: Managerial decision-making evoked under the Upper Echelon Theory.

➤ **Determinants associated to environmental conditions:** they assess the extent to which the environment allows variety and change. They correspond to the possibility for the managers to have a different strategy from other firms and to easily develop their strategy. In empirical studies, we find as variables assumed to approximate these determinants: the differentiability of products, demand volatility, capital intensity, market growth, the lack of regulation ... Carpenter et al. (2004) also cite external stakeholders and the external executives' labor market.

➤ **Organizational determinants:** they assess the latitude according to the facility of the company to be guided. In other words, the possibility to the management team to formulate and implement the strategic decisions it deems necessary for the company. Hambrick (1987) cites as an example of organizational determinants: the power of the board of directors. In addition, Carpenter et al. (2004) invoke the internal labor markets. Other determinants are also cited, such, the size supposed to measure organizational inertia or the availability of resources.

➤ **The determinants related to manager's personality:** many psychological dimension can be cited into this category, such, tolerance toward the ambiguity, and, even if it is not explicitly considered in the analysis of Hambrick and Finkelstein (1987), the concept of "locus of control" introduced in psychology by Rotter (1966), which conveys the idea of control that individual thinks have about the events of his life. Miller et al. (1982) show that there is a direct link between this notion and the nature of strategy. It can, also, be found in this category of determinants some social dimensions related to the social networks that can access the manager, or, to his social status. Consequently, this category may include both psychological and sociological determinants.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish in the literature of the UET, the concept of managerial discretion involved with two other notions often presented as moderators in the relationship between CEO's characteristics and strategic choices, which are: "Power" and "Executive Job Demands"(EJD) that can be defined as the requirements of the managerial function, introduced recently by Hambrick et al. (2005).

The notion of power is explicitly mentioned as a moderating variable by Carpenter et al. (2004) and Finkelstein (1992). Traditionally the CEO's power is defined as the ability of an individual to exercise his will. Four dimensions of power are identified: (1) Structural power, (2) The power associated to the property, (3) The power associated to the expertise, and, (4) the power associated to the prestige.

➤ Structural power is related to the dominant position occupied by the manager in the formal hierarchy.

➤ The power related to the property is directly linked to the part of capital owned by the manager, especially if he is the founder. More broadly, it depends on the position of executive in the management of the agency relationship between shareholders and managers.

➤ Power-related expertise is apprehended from the executive's competence to manage relationships with stakeholders. The higher this skill is elevated, the more the uncertainty of these relationships is low, and, the more the manager's power is strong. This skill is obviously a key in demonstrating that the environment is "easy."

➤ Finally, the power associated to the prestige depends on the reputation of the leader on the institutional environment and other stakeholders.

The analysis of these different dimensions of power reveals that they can be attached to all three categories of determinants of managerial discretion. Naturally, it is expected that the managerial discretion is based on the manager's power and the separation between two concepts is difficult to establish.

The notion of the "Executive Job Demands" is also mobilized as potential moderating variable between the CEO's characteristics and the strategy choices. It is defined as the degree of difficulty that the executive perceives of his job. It depends on three factors: (1) The task challenges; (2) The performance challenges, and; (3) The level of CEO's aspiration.

➤ The task challenges are defined as the conditions that make it difficult for a manager to achieve a certain level of performance. Carpenter et al. (2004) and Finkelstein (1992) state that task challenges are entrenched in the environmental and the organizational characteristics, and that dimensions which evoke (complexity, environment dynamism, complexity and limited resources for the organization) were related to latitude determinants.

➤ The performance challenges are determined mainly by the shareholders and directors, but also depend on other stakeholders, including employees and customers. Found at the origin of the organizational pressure, most disciplinary mechanisms mobilized in the current financial governance: board of directors (explicitly mentioned by Hambrick (2007), the market for takeovers, ownership structure... which are also cited as latitude determinants.

➤ Concerning the CEO's aspiration level, Hambrick et al. (2005) cite, firstly, as crucial, subjective dimensions such as the desire of accomplishment and locus of control, secondly, objective dimensions related to incentive compensation systems.

Except the desire of accomplishment, the similarity between latitude and EJD appears strong and the importance of distinguishing the two concepts is not very clear.

Hambrick et al. (2005) indicate, however, that the concepts of managerial discretion and EJD play a different role and both are useful. Moreover, these two concepts are also correlated. Authors consider that a high latitude lead to low EJD.

In fact, to fully understand the difference between the concepts of latitude and EJD, and the interest of the EJD, it is necessary to return to the levers by which EJD influence management decisions, in a way, its behavioral consequences. According to Hambrick et al. (2005), an increase in EJD would reduce rationality of strategic decisions, and thus, manager would be forced, under pressure, to make reasoned and less rushed choices. This pressure would lead managers to greater reliance on their existing cognitive capacities, from their training or previous experience, or even the mimetic choices. In other words, strengthening the EJD imply that personal characteristics have greater explanatory power. Pressure would also induce more extreme choices and most brutal strategic reorientations (Hambrick et al., 2005).

The harmful effects of EJD are also expected to affect the executive's leadership behavior, particularly in increasing the pressure executed on subordinates and the management of the executive's impressions they want to express such a sense of calm in a crisis, or vice versa. In total, Hambrick et al. (2005) conclude that too much EJD reduces performance. Thus, referring to incentive systems, beyond a certain level of pressure, their negative effects outweigh their benefits in terms of motivation.

This analysis, which introduces individual or social psychological dimensions, going beyond the arguments generally used in the context of agency models to justify greater or lesser efficiency of incentive systems, related, for example, to the task controllability, the sensitivity of the performance efforts, the cost of effort, etc... The introduction of the concept of EJD and its behavioral consequences lead to the conclusion, for example, that the building of a system that aims to exert too much pressure for managers to maximize shareholders' wealth, could, in certain contexts, induce, contrary, a degradation in these shareholders performance. However, Jensen (2004) qualifies the perverse effects of the stock options systems by "managerial heroin" to discuss impact of incentive systems on CEO's behavior.

Given the content and analysis of the determinants of the latitude in UET, it is important to knowing how this concept differs from that proposed by the agency theory, to the extent that, similar to some latitude determinants (or related concepts such as power and EJD), there are numerous mechanisms invoked by the current financial governance.

Managerial decision-making process under the Corporate governance Theory.

If managerial discretion has only a moderating role in UET, introduced in the relationship between CEO's characteristics and nature of the strategy, to better explain the strategic choices, its status appears, at first view, more central in the theory of governance. Thus Charreaux (1996, 1997), following the logic of prior analyzes of Alchian and Demsetz (1972) and Jensen and Meckling (1976), defines corporate governance as "the set of mechanisms that define powers and influence decisions of the chief executive, in other words, the mechanisms that govern his conduct and define managerial discretion" (in Wirtz 2011). In other words, governance systems in the view of the founders of disciplinary governance set the "rules of the managerial game" and thereby define managerial discretion.

It is through this latitude delimitation that the governance system influences the firm performance, thus Charreaux (2008) precise that the nature of governance is defined by the limits of discretion. Thus, it is supposed to, recurrently; ameliorate the governance system to allow improved performance. For example, if the national legal and regulatory context, and/or, the board of directors led to poorer performance, strict reforms are required.

The approximation of managerial latitude in the corporate governance theory differs from that which underlies UET. In the UET, discretion was suggested as a moderating variable in the relationship between CEO's characteristics and performance in strategic choices. If the latitude is low, CEO's characteristics are supposed to have no role.

In the governance theory, the latitude is the central determinant which links the governance system, the executive and the performance (figure 2).

Figure 2: Charreaux (2008) meta-model of governance.

Source: Adapted from Charreaux (2008)

To clarify this causal link, it is necessary to further explore the essence of the notion of latitude in the governance theory and its influence on performance. Such exploration was conducted by Charreaux (2008) who showed how this concept had, progressively, evolved the theory developments, in particular to consider the actual CEO's behavior.

➤ **Disciplinary determinants:** in early versions of the financial governance theory, focused on agency relationship between shareholders and managers, latitude corresponds to the ability of agents, who seek to satisfy their own interests, to deviate from the objective fixed by the principal, explicitly the maximization of the firm value. Latitude is synonymous to creating agency costs and effectiveness of governance systems is measured in terms of reducing these costs, which include not only the direct operating costs of incentives compensation and monitoring, but also the opportunity cost associated to the loss resulting from imperfect choices. This underperformance is called "residual loss". It is the loss of profit incurred comparing to an ideal situation where information would be perfect, where there would be no conflict of interest or opportunism.

The agency problem is, obviously, related to the degree of separation between ownership and decision-making.

Referring to the principal-agent contract and regarding to the asymmetry of information it would be impossible to predict the future and redact a complete contract for all likely situations that may happen, it would be difficult, also, to redact such a voluminous and solids contract at the present and no one would be capable to treat the totality of the information in the contract. Therefore, bounded rationality states that decision-makers are considered to be rational, they are goal-oriented and competent, but because of personal cognitive and emotional limitations, they occasionally fail to be so.

Accordingly, if we believe that the firm is a nexus of contracts; contractual relationships are the cores of the company. The incompleteness of contracts has significant costs. Since contracts are incomplete, contracting parties have to decide on the allocation of control rights for all decisions that are not definite in the contract. The subsequent institutional policy constitutes what we designate as corporate governance. It allocates control rights for the exploitation of the firm's resources. Thus, contractual relationships are affected by major complications which are pronounced by the agency theory.

The two mains agency problems which results from asymmetric information in firms are adverse selection as well as moral hazard.

Firstly, adverse selection defines an agency problem where asymmetric information subsists before the transaction occurs, causing, usually, an inefficient allocation of resources (hidden information). Very often, shareholders face problems of adverse selection when contracting a transaction and they have incomplete information about this transaction and the risk management of the company.

Secondly, the notion of moral hazard as well has its foundation in the insurance industry. Compared to adverse selection, moral hazard designates an agency problem which happens after a transaction is occurred, causing, usually, an inefficient allocation of resources (hidden action). Applied to corporate governance, the principal-agent relationship shows that agents may, after concluding their employment contract, start performing in a way which profits themselves but not the owners. This stimulates all of the problems debated above with executives behaving opportunistically.

Thus, one of the basic concerns of agency theory is opportunism, an issue discussed profoundly by Williamson. Opportunistic behavior mentions the self-interest searched by economic actors and their considerable actions to mislead, falsify and disguise information.

Theoretical and empirical survey within the principal-agent viewpoint uses this notion of opportunism to describe and envisage the efficiency of contractual relationships and organizational performance. Essentially, the study of opportunism has significant actual implications because this is inefficient when the subsequent cost to the principal exceeds the profits to the agent. If the agent is remunerated by the principal on a basis which does not compensate her performance, the agent could not have the encouragement to employ the maximum effort. The losses resulting from this agency problem contains both the loss of potential opportunities and the costs of mechanisms defined to diminish the loss of potential profits. These costs were termed “agency costs”.

Hypothetically, theorists in the disciplinary corporate governance approach attests that monitoring and incentive agents are two ways to governs adverse selection and moral hazard. Primarily, they defend the idea that opportunistically performing directors will stop acting so if they are menaced and penalized. While, employing monitoring is very costly and inevitably diminishes the flexibility of firms. Incentive opportunistic agents, however, are an inexpensive way to decrease the moral hazard problem. With the implementation of incentives, directors should be interested to align their interests to the ones of their shareholders.

Unfortunately, these mechanisms are themselves issue to new problems. Facing monitoring system managers may behaving actively by employing complex strategies like entrenchment which resides in manipulating the managers’ control systems and, consequently, increase the ineffectiveness of some mechanisms and/or benefiting about his discretionary space opportunistically. Similarly, Bonuses and stock options incentives encourage short-term revenue maximization by managers without thinking about the long-term performance of the firms, also another problem, which became particularly inherent during the financial scandals, is that executives utilized their competences in accounting to enlarge their profits.

The question of the structure of the governance system is important in order to elaborate a rapprochement with the UET especially concerning the determinants of discretion; either they are related to the environment, to organization or to the person (manager). Many environmental determinants are found in both market mechanisms and the legal and regulatory mechanisms retained in the broadest descriptions of financial governance. It is the same for the organizational determinants, the board of directors, and, the monitoring of management team, are mentioned in the literature on governance. Some personal dimensions appear also in the governance literature, such as, for example, CEO’s social network and state, CEO’s reputation ...

The main determinant considered by UET, but excluded by the disciplinary approach of governance is related to psychological dimensions. The theoretical foundations of financial governance are marked by economic mainstream which ignores the notion of cognitive dimensions due to the hypothesis of rationality. If, in the UET, latitude intervenes to prohibit the variety of cognitive characteristics to play and influence performance; in financial governance, lever is different. It considers opportunities as “exogenous” variable

which is independent of the manager cognitive visions, moreover, the issue of managerial opportunism and discretion born from the simple information asymmetry between manager and shareholders.

The manager is supposed to decide choices that favor its own interests; in contrast, governance mechanisms are responsible to forced him to make a choice in the interests of shareholders. The latitude is only seen in its negative aspect and as a reference for the shareholders' interests. Moreover, in the financial governance theory, managerial latitude, in its factual meaning of latitude of action is fairly low. The decision-making process (in its four phases: initiative, ratification, implementation, and monitoring) is consistent with that shown by the neo-classical economic analysis. The level and nature of the choice that would maximize shareholders' wealth or the interests of managers are perceived as known. If latitude is completely leaving to the manager, it is known in advance that his choice is dictated by the maximization process, it is, therefore, an "imposed" latitude independent to CEO's cognitive characteristics. Governance mechanisms intervene only to reduce the gap between optimal choice for manager and best choice for shareholders. Thus, these mechanisms can influence strategic choices. Consequently, some studies establish relationship between boards of director's composition (insider directors vs. outsiders), the structure of executive compensation (fixed component against variable component) and the measures of performance (accounting and financial measures against qualitative measures, objective assessment against subjective assessment). But these links are independent to the CEO's cognitive characteristics.

Due to a highly interventionist board or very strong pressure exerted by other governance mechanisms, latitude amplifier depends, so, to the capacity that have the manager to wander away to the discipline. If for example, manager have a significant part of capital, if the board is dependent, if the labor market is inefficient... So, his latitude becomes important.

To ignore this negative vision of managerial latitude, characterizing financial and disciplinary governance, a different approach has been introduced which consider the positive dimension of managerial discretion.

➤ Cognitive determinants: introducing the possibility of an active CEO's behavior is an initiative to minimize discipline and let the manager to expand its latitude and to struggle against the pressures. Therefore, other possible causal links emerge with the strategic choices than those presented by the financial governance theory, where certain investments and certain strategic choices find to be explained by opportunistic reasons. Thus, it is possible, now, to justify some strategic decisions strongly, by CEO's cognitive characteristics.

The cognitive approach of the governance, based on the cognitive dimension, participates to the conception of the firm as knowledge's processor and competences' repertory. This approach proposes new causal links between governance, latitude and performance different from those presented by disciplinary approach. The central hypothesis in the cognitive approach is that performance reposes generally on the firm skills, which depend largely to the CEO's competences. This hypothesis is shared by the UET which attributes to the manager the capacity to guide the firm to a superior performance in function of the quality of its strategic vision.

The cognitive conception of governance poses hypothesis that governance system cognitively affects manager and its latitude. Independently to the interest issue, a cognitive conflict can appear between manager and directors, if its strategic vision is considered as no receivable by their cognitive mind sets. Thus, they may establish a cognitive restriction of managerial latitude associated to their perception of the possible causal links between strategic choices and performance.

Cognitive influences that have the governance system on manager's decision cannot be limited to the board of directors, others mechanisms can affect cognitively the manager. For example, if the executive recruitment is intern, CEO's formation will be internal cognitively oriented, also, markets (especially takeover market) play a great role in the cognitive governance in the measure that exchange is accompanied with a cognitive experience which affect the CEO's mind-sets and skills.

➤ Behavioral determinants: the consideration of only disciplinary and cognitive latitude determinants fails to reproach the governance theory with UET in the discernment of managerial discretion notion. One of the most important differences between the latitude approach in the UET and the financial governance is the ignorance of the psychology dimension. In Hambrick and Mason (1984), Hambrick and Finkelstein (1987), and recently, Hambrick et al. (2005), with the introduction of the EJD notion, the psychology dimension has an important role in the explication of the relationship linking the CEO's personal characteristics and the firm performance.

As the definition of the disciplinary and cognitive governance precise that the role of governance mechanisms is to align manager's interests and decisions, enrich his skills, and limit his discretion, the central question, here, is to apprehend the influence of the behavioral dimension on CEO's latitude. Even the cognitive lever, behavioral dimension influences can also enlarge latitude. Supposing, for example, a board of directors where their members suffer from optimism biases, obviously, this cause an expansion of CEO's latitude and, consequently, this encourage manager to taking risk.

2.2. Manager attitude and behavior in decision-making process under binding communication theory.

Behavior change is often seen as a direct consequence of the change in attitude. Thus, numerous approved researches show that is sufficient to change the attitude of others to see the expected behaviors realized.

Most prevention campaigns, more general prevention communication, believe this assumption. However, analysts' outcome of persuasion based on the change of attitudes conclude that good cognitions do not necessarily lead to the realization of the behavior associated with it.

Consequently, two separate issues are addressed to researchers, but also to social change specialists:

- 1 - How to persuade others to change their attitude?
- 2 - How to convince others to change their behavior?

Two relevant responses are provided by the literature following the discipline of Experimental Social Psychology. The first is that of persuasion which provides important support for variables and parameters that may affect attitudes (Girandola, 2003). The second is the free will compliance which discusses the techniques of influences that lead to behavior change (Joule and Beauvois, 1998, 2002). The connection between these two fields is a supply path for those seeking to obtain, both cognitive and behavioral effects. Based on these reflections, Joule et al., (2007) brought together in a single research paradigm "binding communication", both persuasive communication studies, and, free will compliance studies. The objective of binding communication paradigm is to produce social influence techniques to improve the likelihood of someone freely do what you want it to do.

The concept of attitude is very wide, it covers any reaction or position tends to recur in the individual mind-sets in front to a similar stimulus. The dictionary defines attitude as a structure of mind determined by person experience, regarding a conceptual thing (problem, idea, doctrine, etc.) and which is to act a certain way.

The concept of attitude is one of the fundamental concepts of social psychology. According to the classical model of Rosenberg and Hovland (1960), the attitude is divided into three components: the affective (emotions toward the attitudinal object), cognitive (knowledge, beliefs and information credibility) and behavioral (action or intention to action). For Zanna and Fazio (1982), the attitude corresponds to the evaluation of the attitudinal object conforming to the scale going from the "unfavorable" to the "favorable" judgment. Each one of these judgments corresponds to a knowledge item with emotional, cognitive or behavioral type.

This is from the 30s of last century that social psychologists have sought to assess the nature and strength of the relationship between the individual attitudes and actions. The attitude-behavior relationship is a

relationship more difficult to identify. In Indeed, it is the subject of considerable debate for many years, and yet it seems not yet clearly defined.

Allan Wicker (1969) identifies in its study focused on the relationship between attitudes and behavior and reports the results of its own experiments. The main conclusion is to suggest that attitudes have little or no link with the actual individual behavior. Attitude is, so, considered as an intermediate variable which prepares the individual to act somehow with respect to a given object.

According to Wicker (1969), attitude change do not effectively stimulates new behaviors especially in situations where the discussed issues don't require high involvement from the part of subjects. The author proposes to reconsider the idea commonly accepted that the individual attitudes would be perceived as the main motivation of his behavior.

Relate to the lack of correlation between attitudes and behaviors, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) also report other errors founded during behavioral observations by researchers. They point the lack of methodological rigor and the poor quality of observations.

Researchers explain the low strength of the relationship between attitudes and corresponding behavior, basing on numerous features. First, they cite the effect of external constraints, for example, the person may have a favorable attitude to blood donation but never do, because constraints are too large (opening collection from 7am to 9am) (Girandola et al., 2008).

Secondly, they cite the competition from several attitudes, for example, person can like going to the beach and not go quite regularly, fear that sun exposure is not good for skin (Girandola et al., 2008).

In addition, the long delays between the observation of attitudes and behavior can cause weak relationship of these two variables. It can sometimes happen that the researcher measures a particular attitude of subject and, in a certain period of time, its behavior. If this time is too long, the attitude may have changed and no longer produce behavior desired. This is especially true for certain attitudes and behaviors that, for one reason or another, are not resistant to change.

To summarize, social psychologists have made a number of findings on highly irregular relationship between individuals attitudes expressed and real behavior. These findings relate to three main aspects: the unstable nature of attitudes, the non-suitability of measurement tools to assess the effective subject's behavior, and the low degree of correlation between attitudes and behavior. The need to reconsider the relationship between attitudes and behavior has given rise to several new theoretical models.

Rather than trying to predict behavior from attitudes, some Researchers have recently adopted a different approach. It consists to understand under what conditions a particular attitude influences individual to behave in a certain way. In other words, what are the necessary conditions for an attitude to may turn into a behavior? (Fazio, 1989).

According to Krosnick and Petty (1995), the strength of the attitude is attached to its duration and impact on behavior accomplishment. An attitude is sustainable if it tends to maintain over time and resist change. The impact of attitude is judged regarding its influence on individual's behaviors, belief and feelings.

The strength of attitude may be interpreted as a variable having a moderating role in attitude-behavior relationship. The strong the link between attitude and attitudinal object is, the higher the probability that attitude is activated during exposure to the attitude object is, and therefore it will an important predictive of corresponding behavior (Fazio, 1993). When the link between attitude and attitudinal object is very strong, the attitude is often automatically activated in a very short time and without mobilizing significant cognitive resources.

Fazio (1995) discusses five elements to determine the strength of the attitude:

- Repetition of the attitude: refers to the frequency with which the link between the attitudinal object and beliefs is reactivated;

- The diagnosis of the origin of the attitude: an attitude is even stronger if it is based on cognitive elements in possession;
- The nature of information causing the attitude: information acquired from the direct personal experience give stronger attitudes compared to attitudes formed from information obtained indirectly,
- Provoked emotional reactions: an attitude toward an act is even stronger when it has raised strong and numerous emotional reactions for the individual, and;
- Provoked Behavioral responses: an attitude toward an act is even stronger when it induces for the individual consistent and freely behavior.

Finally, experimental studies highlight some psychological and behavioral consequences of the strength of the attitudes: realization of consistent behaviors, skewing in the processing of information relating to attitudinal object, stability and persistence of attitude over time, resistance persuasion, and finally rapid decision making regarding the attitudinal object (Sales-Wuillemin, 2005).

Behavior changes under the theory of reasoned action (fishbein and ajzen, 1975)

According to the theory of reasoned action (TAR), the behavior of an individual is directly determined by its intention to accomplish this behavior. In turn, the intention is a function of two variables: the individual's attitude towards performing a behavior and subjective norm associated with this behavior. The attitude is formed by the set of beliefs about the consequences of the behavior realization, weighted by the importance that the individual places on each of these consequences. For its part, subjective norm refers to the set of beliefs of an individual about the opinion of people or groups of reference in relation to the fact that generates behavior. This shows that the behavior is completely controlled by the individual (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

The following diagram represents the theory of reasoned action:

Figure 3: The attitude-behavior relationship in the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975)

This hypothesis has been the starting point of the theory of planned behavior has criticized the model of reasoned action to explain that in certain situations to behave is beyond the control of the individual. The theory of reasoned action has been used by several researchers in the field of information technology during the last decade (Barki and Hartwick, 1994; Moore and Benbasat, 1991).

Behavior changes under the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1987/2012)

The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991, 2012) can be seen as an extension or improved version of the theory of reasoned action proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). This model defines the relationship between individual's cognitions, norms, attitudes, intentions and behavior. According to the theory planned action, the individual's behavioral choices are contemplated and planned choice, and that the intention to act is the only direct determinant of behavior.

Ajzen (1985, 1991, 2012) argue that certain behaviors require resources, skills and opportunities to which the individual has no control.

To take account of these barriers, he adds a third variable: “perceived behavioral control”, which corresponds to the individual’s perception of the facility or difficulty to accomplish a specific behavior.

So, three factors are taken into consideration to explain the adoption by an individual of a particular behavior: its attitude toward the behavior (cognition and consequences evaluation), subjective norms relating to its behavior in question (influence of environment, social pressure and motivation to compliance) and the perception of control over the behavior (resources, capabilities and opportunities available to behavior accomplishment).

Figure 4: The attitude-behavior relationship in the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 2006)

Some explanations and concrete examples are cited to better understand each of the three components that shape behavioral intentions, and therefore behavior. First, the attitude corresponds to the set of cognitive, emotional, social and moral factors related to particular behavior.

Second, subjective norms refer to the potential influence exerted by the individual's social environment. Others beliefs around our behavior affect our acts to the extent that we coordinate our actions with the standards or judgments shared within our social environment. Beliefs of all people, weighed according to the importance you assign to each of these people or each of its points of view, influence your intention to adopt a particular behavior and, therefore, lead to the adoption or not of the corresponding behavior.

Finally, perceived behavioral control refers to individuals beliefs on their personal skills to succeed behavior. This variable is close to the concept of self-efficacy by Bandura (1997) and the concept of feasibility of Shapero and Sokol (1982).

The behavioral intention is the combination or resultant of these three variables, namely personal attitude towards behavior, standards subjective shared within the individual’s social environment and the individual’s perception of the behavioral control. It should be noted that all these elements will not necessarily carry the same weight in the explanation or the prediction of a behavior.

Indeed, the influence of these factors on behavioral intention will vary depending on the individual and / or situation. Thus, some people are more sensitive than others to consider the social beliefs on them and their actions. In this case, the second factor has a greater weight to predict or guide a behavior.

The free will compliance and behavior changes

From the discovery of the freezing effect by Kurt Lewin (1947), we know the importance of obtaining a preliminary act from the subjects we want to change behavior. Persuasive strategies tested by Lewin (1947) during the Second World War aims to persuade US housewives to change their eating habits to prevent malnutrition.

Behavior that the researcher wishes to obtain from housewives is committing to cook small pieces of meat. After the conference, and returning home, they behave exactly as if they had not participated in the conference although they are quite informed and convinced by the arguments they had received (97% of them do not cook small pieces of meat).

In the light of these results, the researcher asks, like a group discussion, participants who decided to change their behavior to raise their hands. The results are completely changed. 32% of housewives pass from decision to actions.

Following the action research of Lewin (1947) we can see that the passage from cognitions to acts not done automatically. It is necessary to introduce a preliminary and intermediary link: the act of decision. This research demonstrates the importance of obtaining, from the subjects you want to change behavior, a preparatory act. These preparatory acts lead subjects to make decisions that achieve the preferred objectives fixed by the actors of social change.

From that pioneering work of Lewin (1947) a new way of behavioral change is initiated and gives birth, thereafter, to studies on the free will compliance (Joule and Beauvois, 1998).

The paradigm of free will compliance is defined as the study of influences techniques may cause someone to freely change their behavior. In this paradigm behavior changing comes after the implementation of preparatory acts and acts of commitment. Much research has been done in this setting, the main ones (Katzew and Wang, 1994; Roussiau and Girandola, 2002; Girandola and Roussiau, 2003).

Among the free will compliance techniques we limit ourselves to quote the technique of foot-in-the door. This procedure is the most popular. It consists to get from the individual, following a free commitment behavior that cost little for him, another later more expensive. The "foot-in-the door" was studied at different levels: attitudes, behavioral intentions, and, actual behavior.

We will illustrate this with an experiment considered in the famous study proposed by Freedman and Fraser (1966). In this experiment, the experimenters seek to obtain from participants who have a modest house an agreement for the installation of billboards 16m² in their small gardens. For this, two experimental conditions were implemented:

The first condition is to directly ask participants to install a large sign advertising road safety "drive slowly". The second is to ask them if they accept as solidarity to put a sticker on their car. Thus, all participants accept without problem. The next day, they telephone them for billboards installation.

The result of the experiment shows that in the first condition 16% support the installation of the panel while in the second condition 73% of participants agree.

It is identified here as the free will compliance (Joule and Beauvois, 1998) in which, housewives, freely, would behave differently. Thus, the "foot-in-the door" is not the only technique of free will compliance; there are many other procedures (teasing, touch,...).

As a conclusion, we can perceive that the research conducted within the paradigm of free will compliance aims to show that the achievement of expected behavioral changes is more likely when the information and persuasive process is preceded by obtaining a preparatory act. The accomplishment of a preparatory act made subjects more influenced by the arguments and information later disseminated in the persuasive message.

Burger (1999) identifies a number of important features to ensure the effectiveness of preparatory act. To be effective, the preparatory act shall be effectively realized, having a certain cost, have the same identification of the action that the expected behavior, and should not be linked to financial compensation. To summarize, the preparatory act must be obtained only because of internal factors (desires, cognitions, attitudes), excluding all external factors (promises of reward or threats of punishment).

The theory of commitment (Kiesler, 1971; Joule and Beauvois, 1998; Girandola 2005) provides to the paradigm of free will compliance its main theoretical foundation.

According to Joule et al., (2007), it is in the psychology of commitment that should be seeking the theoretical foundation for the main techniques of obtain without imposing.

The paradigm of binding communication (Girandola et al., (2004), Deschamps and Joule (2005)) is an articulation between persuasive communication and commitment ('free will' compliance paradigm).

As in the case of persuasion, the main questions to be addressed in the binding communication paradigm are: "Who says what?", "To whom?", "How? ". While adding the question, "Making him do what? ", appears to be essential when seeking behavioral effects not just cognitive effects *"In any given program of communication, the main questions to be treated remain of course: "What type of information should be conveyed?" "What are the best arguments to offer?" "What are the most appropriate channels, tools, supports, and medias?" etc., but more importantly, "Which preparatory actions must I obtain from those I want to rally?" This last question imparts a status of player to the target, thus, setting apart a "binding" communication approach from a more "traditional" approach* (Joule et al., 2007 pp: 10)

The most important experiment in the context of this paradigm is that Girandola, et al., (2004) who show that coffee drinkers express a strong intention to reduce their coffee consumption after completing a preparatory act (write Text anti-coffee) and read a message anti-coffee "binding communication" only after reading this message "persuasive communication".

Similarly, Michelik and Girandola, (2007) and Girandola, et al., (2008) show that students express more favorable intention to be engaged in physical activity after completing a preparatory act (write an essay for sport) and read a persuasive message about the benefits of sport (binding communication) only after reading the message (persuasive communication).

Also, Joule and Azdia (2004) shows that the binding communication is efficient for improving environmental agreeable behavior for students aged between 9 and 10 years and also for their parents. Subjects express an attitude more favorable to the environment protection in response to a persuasive communication (read a post about the protection of the environment), but they express a very strong intention to change their behavior in response to a binding communication.

From these results of previous research, it can be concluded that binding communication is more efficient than persuasive communication in the achieving of behavioral intentions and actual behavior change. This efficiency is due to the articulation of, on the one hand, the commitment theory and the free will compliance paradigm, and on the other hand, the persuasive communication theory.

3. Conclusion and recommendations

Henceforth most of the literature puts accent on the weaknesses of "classical" agency problem and develop new approach in which the study of the process of creation of the organizational rents passes by studying the cognitive theory of the firm. Indeed, this theory lies in its analysis of the postulates of the behavioral theory of the firm, learning theory and theories of organizational resources and skills.

It has a radically different view of the process of value creating because it leads to attach great importance to the construction of skills and the development of firm's capacity to innovate, to create their investment opportunities and to change their environment.

Therefore, the role of governance mechanisms is mainly advisory and incentive whose goal is the reduction of cognitive conflicts between partners. The central problem is not the reconciliation of interests, but more; it is the qualitative coordination, patterns alignment and cognitive anticipation models. Consequently, they try to surpass agency costs but create subsequently the “cognitive costs”.

Cognitive approaches can be advantageous from taking on the decision-making process the view of knowledge as historically, culturally, and socially originated. However, it has often been criticized of proposing a real individualised, static, and representationalist vision of organizational knowledge. While, the objective of governance theory is to struggle to provide a fully developed explanation of how skills and mental-patterns are constructed, reproduced, and potentially converted into actual actions.

Although, cognitive approaches has succeed to provide explanation to how organization may develop knowledge; advance justification into the reasons why executives come to believe authentically among their cognitive, emotional and behavioral biases; has invent new persuasive role of disciplinary mechanisms like learning, capitalization of information, and communication; but, these studies could not provide and predict a solid relationship between managers’ mental pattern and his behaviors, so, they fail to guarantee a potential authentic actions. While their evidence adds no value to organizations’ decision-making prediction, it does not intend to envisage what decision-makers will do, only to explain what they ought to do.

The concern of predicting managers’ behavior was started by the upper echelons theory which attests that managerial latitude is based on two facts related: the first is that leaders choose their actions based on personal interpretations, and the second is that these interpretations are based on the experiences, CEOs values and personalities. It means that CEOs cognitive characteristics and behavioral biases are expected to play a key role in the drawing of business strategies. They identify three categories of determinants of managerial latitude: environmental determinants, organizational determinants, and, personals and cognitive CEOs characteristics. Then, the governance theory exploits the perception of the UET and offers new decisional latitude model which conceptualize the latitude’s determinants as disciplinary, cognitive and behavioral features.

Cited models of decisional latitude was been inspired from the theory of reasoned action which postulate that if deciders assess the desired behavior as favorable (attitude), and if they believe their major others want them to accomplish the behavior (subjective norm), this leads in a greater intention (motivations) and they are more probable to decide so. Consequently, decisional latitude models predict the managers’ behavior from the high influence of attitudes and subjective norms to behavioral intention.

Contradictory, the circumstantial limitations which influence behavioral intention is an argument that has further been mentioned against the evoked relationship between behavioral intention and real behavior. Interestingly, Ajzen announced the theory of planned behavior (TPB) by adding a new variable, “perceived behavioral control” which imported from self-efficacy theory.

In its new version, the theoretical model of the theory of planned behavior suggests that behavior is dependent on deciders’ intention to perform the behavior. Intention in itself is determined by an individuals’ attitude (cognitions and beliefs about the consequences of the behavior), subjective norms (cognitions about what others believe the deciders should do or general social pressure), and, person’s perceived behavioral control (a personal’s perceptions of their capacity or feelings of self-efficacy to accomplish behavior).

Among perceived behavioral control, Ajzen specify the strong and direct influence of the actual behavioral control which refers to the level to which a decider has the skills, competences, and other preconditions needed to accomplish a desired behavior. Effective performance of the behavior necessitates not simply a

favorable intention but more an appropriate level of behavioral control explicitly resumed on the past behavior that can serve as a proxy of behavioral control and can be employed for the prediction of behavior.

Past behavior as an actual behavioral control indicator is wholly discussed in the setting of the theory of commitment. Commitment is the link between an individual and its actions. By this definition Charles Kiesler, the founder of the psychology of commitment implies that only acts are binding: The individual accomplish an act, when this individual is engaged, it means that he is linked to this act, that he makes it early.

The commitment leads to several effects which they can be classified, firstly, as cognitive effects such the freezing effect which is highly resistant to change. From the discovery of the freezing effect by Kurt Lewin, we know the importance of obtaining a preliminary act from the subjects we want to change behavior. Secondly, as behavioral effects, commitment leads to the perseveration of key behavior and the generation of new behaviors going in the same direction. Following this study, we can attest that the passage from cognitions to acts not done automatically. It is necessary to introduce a preliminary and intermediary link: the act of decision. This research demonstrates the importance of obtaining, from the subjects you want to change behavior, a preparatory act. These preparatory acts conduct subjects to make decisions that achieve the preferred objectives fixed by the actors of social or organizational change.

From that pioneering work of Lewin a new way of behavioral change is initiated and gives birth, thereafter, to studies on the free will compliance. The paradigm of free will compliance is defined as the study of techniques that may cause someone to freely change their behavior. In this paradigm behavior changing comes after the implementation of preparatory acts and acts of commitment. Much research has been done in this setting, the main ones (Katzev and Wang, 1994; Girandola and Roussiau, 2003).

Unfortunately, all these novelties in the behavioral change perspective have not been matched by a parallel revolution on the governance theory. While, the governance theory conserves its traditionally “persuasive” view and does not tolerate to the commitment theory approaches.

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