## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

by

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#### Abstract

What is Educational Leadership? Leadership is the process where power is given to one person to control others to achieve some specific goal. What is Educational Culture? It is the norms, principles, rules and regulations of an institution. There is a relationship between culture and leadership because each leader has their own culture. There are major differences in the Moral Leadership: East and West because of cultural and religious differences. Is it possible to have a leadership model that can be used for education in any culture of any country? That's what we hope to find out.

Model of educational leadership and important factors including the impact of culture on leadership are some things I try to explain. The Convergence Economic Theory says that the economy of a country affects its culture. There are many cultural influences on the leadership of the world. Is There a Certain Place or a Certain Time for Leadership? It is determined by the circumstance. I provide a comparison between leadership in Saudi Arabia with United States.

Attempting to find the relationship between culture and leadership, I have used an Interview and Survey style research to try and show this relationship. I give and take recommendations on how to better influence educational leadership in any culture, and explain what I will take back to my own country.

## Acknowledgements

In the name of God the most merciful, praise be to Allah (God); prayer and peace on our beloved messenger Mohammad (PBUH). I dedicate this research, which was developed from my experience over the years of my study in the U.S.A, to the imam of the Holy Mosque, Abdullah bin Abdul-aziz Al Saud who gave me the opportunity to complete my studies in the U.S.A. I would also like to dedicate my research to my parents, my sisters who helped me through this long path; encouraged me to complete my studies and overcome the obstacles that I have faced. Also, to my daughter, Athba and my son Abdulrahman, who were the source of my happiness and kept my eye on the goal of completing my studies

# بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

شكر وتقدير

الحمد لله رب العالمين؛ الصلاة والسلام على حبيبنا محمد (عليه الصلاة والسلام). أهدي هذا البحث الذي تم تطويره من تجربتي على مدى سنوات دراستي في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، لخادم الحرمين الشريفين الملك عبد الله بن عبد العزيز آل سعود الذي قدم لي الفرصة لإكمال دراستي في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية وأود أيضا أن أهدي بحثي إلى والداي وأخواتي الذين ساعدوني خلال هذا الطريق الطويل؛ وشجعوني على إكمال دراستي والتغلب على العقبات التي واجهتني. وأيضا، إلى ابنتي عذبه وابني عبد الرحمن، الذين كانوا مصدر سعادتي وإبقاء عيني على هدف استكمال دراستي .

#### CHAPTER 1

## Basis for Educational Leadership

#### What is educational leadership?

"One of the most common definitions of leadership is that it is a process where power is given to one person to control others to achieve some specific goal (Barna, 1997)."

Most common definitions of leadership assume that this involves a process whereby influence is exerted intentionally by one person over many others to organize all activities and work among people or groups for which the leader is responsible. Another basic assumption is that it is a process intended to control many people. It refers to people motivating others to achieve specific goals, such as achieving a positive school culture and encouraging women to be strong leaders within the school system. These are common goals to be effectively achieved under leadership. Whether it's educational leadership or organizational leadership, both require the same duties and responsibilities of the leader. However, the difference in both terms, organizational and educational leadership, is the leader's positional authority. In organizations all leadership is given to upper level or middle level management.

From an educational point of view we grant this responsibility of motivation and control to the principal or head master in the school or college. Leadership is not however, necessarily given to the principal as it is free of positional authority. Whoever is in charge of the school or college uses his or her position to achieve certain purposes. The main difference between educational leadership and organizational leadership is that organization leadership is limited to management positions only, while in educational leadership we see that leadership can emanate from the part of school not dependent on formal management positions and any member of the organization can be granted some authority, even students for some purposes. For example class

proctor, monitors, teachers or even administrative staff can be seen as leaders. (The importance of leadership and education management, 2012)

#### What is Educational Culture?

Different people have defined culture in a variety of ways (O'Neil, 2006). In the nineteenth century E. B. Taylor used the term "culture" for the first time in organizational leadership. Taylor defined culture as: "That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morale, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits as acquired by man as member of society." His assumption was that society and culture go hand in hand and to study any one of them alone is incomplete. That is because every culture has differences and culture does effect the behavior of society. Society's behavior also affects the relationships between people. Culture is not formed by one person alone. Rather it is a product of many people referred to as a society. Social interaction results from development of a culture. Culture cannot be possessed by a single person rather it is something that is shared. For example, customs, beliefs, ideas, values, morals, traditions, etc. are all shared to become part of the culture for many people

The same is true for educational culture, every institute whether schools, college or university has a different culture. Their norms, principles, rules and regulations are different from other schools. These are formed by principals, teachers and head staff. Students join the school and are inculcated into their culture. They learn, observe and then adjust to their culture. When they move to another school or higher level institution, they change themselves according to meet that culture. They don't invent it themselves. That's why if they encounter a totally opposite culture they face cultural shock. In short I can say that each society has its own culture (Bhatt, 2007).

## Relationship between Culture and Leadership

The relationship between culture and leadership has been extensively studied by many scholars. This large body of research and presentations has confirmed that culture can influence leadership. Culture does have small but significant impacts on the effectiveness of leaders. Culture can affect personality characteristics of the leader; expectations from different stakeholders and types of structures created. In education when we consider how culture of the institution affects leadership, the following points are raised:

- The culture of an institution plays an important role in shaping personality or behavior of the leader to that of the institute, whether it's the principal, teacher or headmaster etc. In every culture the definition of what an ideal leader should be is different. To fit that definition certain changes have to be made in one's personality by the person himself. For example depending on the institution a leader may need to be more flexible, ethical, a good public speaker, someone who has a strong sense of community, etc. Work values are also influenced. For example, in some colleges there is more focus on academics while in others the focus is on relationships. This focus also shapes how the leader will schedule all things to meet those expectations (Gerstner, 2011).
- In some schools, colleges or other educational institutions we see there is a very strict environment while in others the environment is more relaxed and provides the students opportunities to learn cooperatively. These values also determine the attitude and behavior of leaders. For example, it will determine how leaders and junior staff and students will interact with one another.
- Values not only impact the behavior or the attitude of the leader, but it also impacts the behaviors of students as well. Sometimes, students can reject such behavior because of

cultural shock, but most of the time they have to change themselves according to the culture of the institute at which they are studying (Amateur, 2011).

As discussed above we can clearly understand that culture plays an important role in determining leadership style. A leader should adopt his or her leadership style to the culture where they work. The leader must understand the culture in order to adjust. No matter how good they are in managing their work, the wrong leadership style cannot bring the desired results. Behavior of a leader that is inconsistent with societal norms is likely to be ineffective. Such behavior can ultimately result in low morale of the subordinates (Kotze, 2006).

The culture of an educational institute can provide guidance to the principal in making different decisions and actions. For example if an institution has always been focused on excellent test results and academic excellence, the leader is expected to keep that in mind before making any major decisions. Another example can be the criteria for student selection for admission which can also vary from institution to institution. In some institutions traits like kinships, birth, gender, age, connections and education, etc. can be considered for admission. The principal must know these things about his or her own institute in order to make any such decisions (Gerstner, 2011).

These points give a general overview about leadership, culture and their relationship to each other. Only a small description has been given to show that some relationship exists between them as it was important to have little knowledge about this in order to develop a question about the relationship between leadership practices and school or educational culture.

## **Moral Leadership: East and West**

I have recognized that there is a dramatic difference in culture and how leadership functions between the East and the West. These differences are marked by religion, traditions and history.

In the East, I have found that being in a very task-driven culture has truly affected how people work and learn. Religion, in most Middle Eastern countries, holds the rules for what the educational systems looks like and teaches. Saudi Arabia began giving people who are more trained in culture and have a larger perspective the higher leadership positions because the government knows that these people will be able to create a positive change in education.

Western culture, I have noticed, is not led by religion. These countries keep religion and government separated and the government creates the rules for what the educational system should look like. This gives people more freedom to learn about other cultures and gives them a standard of how to lead, while their personal beliefs do not affect their role.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

We have discussed that leaders have to change according to culture, but in our research we will focus on whether we can develop a model of leadership that is perfect for every type of culture.

Is it possible to have a leadership model that can be used for education in any culture of any country?

#### **CHAPTER 2**

#### Literature Review

Global competition and removal of all barriers can be confused with the point that cultural differences are also disappearing. Although companies are moving to other countries, even producing in their own countries they are trading with other countries. With internet and soft money everything has become very easy. But it doesn't mean cultural differences are disappearing and companies don't have to face them. They are still there and companies have to take care of them when trading in other countries (Dugan and Komives, n.d) "As economic barriers come down, cultural barriers go up, presenting new challenges and opportunities in business." Former CEO of Coca Cola, Doug Ivestor stated (Ivestor, 2007). According to him cultural barriers are increasing among counties and with more trade we cannot expect these barriers to come down. But these are not negative signs as expected always. These differences not always reduce opportunities to trade but they sometimes present new opportunities to trade (Ivestor, 2007).

According to Terpstra and David (1991), it depends upon differences between cultures of two countries and how far will they go in business, mergers and negotiations. If there are fewer differences there are more chances that their business dealings or mergers or acquisitions will be successful. However, if there are more differences, then chances of success of all such dealings are much less. This is because culture plays a very important role in the way you carry your business or how you like to deal with different situations.

These were from general point of view but now I will present ideas from education point of view.

According to Dimmock and Walker (2000), larger ideological factors play an important role in the formation of leadership. This formation of leadership directly relates to culture. To educational leadership there are cultural as well as moral aspects to it. These aspects, both moral and cultural, bring to bear necessary lenses which can help Westerners in learning more than mere market model leadership.

Wong (2001) held that the theme of moral educational leadership was emerging only in the West. In Wong's opinion, this concept of moral educational leadership is consistent with some traditions in Chinese culture. If we study very early Chinese traditions or civilization, we will see their ethical humanism had its own importance in Chinese culture. This emphasis on ethical humanism reached its peak when spiritual beings were given limited attention. They thought that good education involved many things like personality training, training people to be hard-working and to be selfless. At that time, there was also a belief about training people to be honest and ethical. They were expected to learn those values and apply them in serving people and the state. People were also taught that this is one of the main purposes for learning. Similarly, moral leadership was taught in schools. This was discussed by Western analysts who placed much emphasis on values and behaviors, rules, regulations, and policies of the place (Wong, 2010).

The Journal of Educational Administration stated that moral conscientiousness in education is indispensable; so we can say it is a human-centered leadership approach (Cranston, Ehrich, and Kimber, 2006). The study suggests that elementary principals' attention to teachers' learning is must. Further, this awareness shows how these school leaders exercised their ethical, specialized, and contractual responsibility to support thoughtful, knowledgeable ethics.

Similarly, McEwen et al. (2003) observed how British elementary principals' values were passed on in the different schools. To find this they used data from online research journals. These data indicated that government policy designed to improve school leadership in order to elevate these standards was not good enough due to educational market pressures. Many principals reverted to a leadership style of contingency management to cope with daily contingencies, with more complex issues falling by the way (Al, 2002).

## A Model of Educational Leadership

This paper contains reviewed literature highlighting chronological socio-economic circumstances that manipulate the leadership and managerial techniques involved in the field of education and learning. This research comprises a useful and successful framework that best suits the modern educational setting. It was concluded that unbending conventional representations of leadership that put emphasis on the allocation of schedules should be discarded for more fluid leadership frameworks that emphasize communication and human associations. Until now, in spite of what kind of leadership method managerial theorists and researchers claim to be attractive, in realism transformational leadership is mainly to be expected. It is for that reason that this research by Stephan J. Franciosi (Franciosi, 2012) will provide evidence to be helpful for practitioners and researchers to have enhanced understanding of the organizational configuration in which they labor, and for those in places of power to ultimately recognize which type of management possibly will work for their organization.

According to his viewpoint of Stephan J. Franciosi (Franciosi, 2012), the power that the digital culture has on current youth and young people's learning context is by making them more self-motivated and fast-changing. In a field described by technical modernism and transformation, leadership approach is important to make easy adjustment of useful knowledge,

which adds to winning knowledge results. In the meantime, a great deal of the conversation on digital culture and schooling is paying attention to the classroom, and extremely modest concentration is set to leadership infrastructure at the school, district or governmental stage. Franciosi's constructs are more generally talked about in the study of management or associations, and used to evaluate literature on leadership concerns in the contemporary learning background. It is disputed between cultures that educational leadership is supposed to be more flexible to deal with technology-driven transformations and new expansions. This involves moving away from a leader-centric managerial frame into the direction of an extra democratized representation. It is recommended that a transformational leadership method is most suitable for associations such as learning organizations servicing in an area differentiated by means of transformation in addition to modernization.

In some non-U.S. contexts, training in educational management is provided in order to develop those with leadership skills and experience. Particular influences of culture determine the form of leadership; leadership in non-US contexts is essentially changeable. That is, leadership is confidently joined to the political affairs and communal measures of definite educational backgrounds. As such, main beliefs/standards for leading flow from the educational atmosphere of the context. This organization of occupation discusses two big themes: leaders are culturally bound and leadership is a cultural performance.

At the same time that ideological forces factor into the configuration of leadership, the most important arrangement of leadership gives the impression to be culturally connected (Dimmock & Walker, 2000). That is, there are educational and yet moral features to educational leadership. These educational/ethical influences carry essential lenses all the way through. Westerners might study away from leadership in the economic model.

In the same way, Wong (2001) comments that the subject of moral leadership in learning is beginning to emerge in the West. According to the view point of Wong, moral leadership is constant by means of an extended academic civilization in Chinese culture in view of the fact that very early on in the Chinese civilization, there was stress on moral humanism in Chinese society. This nervous tension of moral humanism arrived at its climax with Confucius who gave little concentration to religious ideas and paid complete attention to human activities. Confucius believed that the purpose of education was character preparation, preparation of people to be hard-working and unselfish. He supposed that learning ought to instruct people to be upstanding and ethical. To be relevant it had to educate people to serve the inhabitants so that sooner or later, helping the state became one of the most important principles for education. In the same way, the shift for ethical leadership in schools, as talked about by Western psychoanalysts, put emphasis on principles and behavioral standards over regulations, set of laws, and guiding principles.

Wong (2001), in a later effort on Chinese civilization and leadership, continues that Chinese culture, similar to the other values in the human race, is rich in the past. Consequently, both history and content turn out to be most important mechanism in the creation of leaders and the responsibility of leadership. The Chinese civilizations, as a societal preference, contain an extended record of valuing leadership and preparing leaders with ethical foundations. Huang (1988) disagreed that the Chinese culture and principles have been to some extent dependable over the lengthy years regardless of the transformation of time. In this manner, Wong's center of attention is on moral leadership, a form of leadership that has established significant concentration in the English-speaking world. He proposes an original point of view to leadership theory for all-purpose and especially in education by asking us to start with the connection of

civilization to leadership. This association flanked by educational leadership and cultural performance as understood through such culturally observable facts as principles is not restricted to China. According to researchers Cranston, Ehrich, and Kimber, (2006) ethical (moderately more than "business") responsibility in culture is essential; so is a human-centered leadership approach. This conclusion from the research (Cranston, Ehrich, and Kimber, 2006) proposes that principals' sensitivity to a teachers' need for education gives an idea about how these leaders work out their ethical, specialized, and contractual accountability to hold up a kind, education ethic.

In the same way, McEwen et al. (2003) gives the impression of how principals' standards were performed in the school surroundings. They make use of data from online journals kept by principals for more than two 4-week time periods. The information gathered points out that the government policy of humanizing school leadership in order to lift up principals was dangerously negated by educational market forces. A lot of principals reverted to a leadership approach of emergency organization to deal with on daily incidents, with extra compound issues declining by the way. As such, the force to provide accommodation to western thoughts in leadership in complex state of affairs was put out of place by the principled choices of the leaders character. While leaders help to construct culture, leadership practices vary based on cultural contexts. In a study of educational leadership, Ardichvili (2001) investigated 695 managers and 1,696 workers in Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Russia. The study exposed important dissimilarities in cultural principles between the two sets. Considerable disparities between countries were evidenced in terms of educational value of leadership method, such as maleness, paternalism, and long-standing point of reference. In this light, we observe that educational leaders are instructed in their functions based upon cultural scripts.

Dosdall and Diemert (2001) explain how the community schools in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, promote efforts to authorize principals to build away from the administration panel, and treat them like a manager. They expressed three features (e.g., split leadership and schooling plans for these principals, continuing to be held accountable as a principal group, and principal organization) that have helped principals change into their innovative jobs. For them, leadership has a tendency to be driven by government contribution.

Dissimilar to Dosdall, Simkins and others (1998, pp. 131-146), reasoned the role of government and nongovernment influences on leadership in secondary schools in Karachi, Pakistan, initiate nongovernmental standards encompassing additional managerial liberty. However, governmental principals function under a smaller amount of individual power within their office. Their final attempt engaged in a straight management approach yet gave the impression to be endangered by parent participation.

Culture in educational leadership, even though productive, has a tendency to be indefinite. According to Cohen Brawer (2003), leadership is significant, but students along with trusted teachers who know how to co-lead school communities are another huge factor. School organization has to discover, recruit, teach, and support teachers who contribute to its future goals. Part of the educational script of learning leadership, then, is to strengthen, generate, uphold and change culture and impression (Riley, 1998). According to Johnson (1998), an employee's excellence is a significant school characteristic. Physically powerful, strong-minded leadership requires a principal's individual willingness to deal with underperforming teachers, defy doubt and unenthusiastic fundamentals in the school, and employ, keep hold of, and build up high-class, devoted staff based on ethical way of thinking. A two-way leadership culture

comes from empowering/captivating the most challenging faculty into the civilization that educational leaders encourage.

This use of educational leaders, as civilization brokers, is tremendously difficult. Caldwell (1998) looks at the effects of school improvement on principals' leadership culture, through their representing on research conclusions from 1993 to 1998, and stressing probable future reforms in Victoria, Australia. According to Caldwell, principals are additional fulfilled with planning the work of the current period of time, rather than the past. Leadership involves previous preparation at times, more than being seen as heroic. The very important factor for the foreign instructive leader from the US point of view is a great deal similar as to an administrator inside the US, both administer and uphold the educational standards and principles of the particular civilization (Kirkland, n.d).

## **Important Factors**

There are certain factors that play very important role in defining and sustaining the leadership role in the culture. They also help in overcoming the culture influences on the leadership (Mueller, 2012). It is of utmost importance to know:

- The history of the region
- The domestic make up of leadership;
  - o Does the environment prefer a strong leadership, or
  - o Do habitants want a democratic leadership
- The leadership values in the society factors are also important as they define the role of the leader.
- The occurrences of the past are the predictions of the future outcomes

*The Customer*, an online magazine, defines this framework as the predictive analysis method that is currently being used by banking groups.

## Impact of Culture on Leadership

Dr. Nedine Theimann, of the Oxford University and her associates, (Mueller, 2012) repeated that in their paper "Context Tension" defined two primary ways the culture and leadership can converge. The most important of the leadership and cultural convergence theory is the convergence economic theory (Mueller, 2012).

## **Convergence Economic Theory**

According to the Convergence Economic Theory, or CET; culture is ultimately the derivative of the economic practices of a culture. CET adds that ultimately all the nations around the globe will create to show a common cultural and behavioral value. The theory emphasizes the role of the economic system in defining the culture. As discussed on previous pages, sell U.S. arms and building arsenals are political moves vital to nations. They lead to the economic and political survival of nations. The risk associated with the convergence economic theory is the risk of isolating the domestic traditions in this growing and new era (Mueller, 2012).

The role of the leader in such circumstances can't be simply ignored. It's the leader who has to make those moves, which is defined by the culture. In fact in poor nations the role of the leader can't be ignored. For example, in tribal areas the leaders are those who define the whole culture of the people working under them (Mueller, 2012).

## **Cultural Influence on Leadership of the World**

With globalization and cross cultural communication, the role of culture has become important in influencing the leadership process. Leaders are thus expected to be adaptive towards changing culture and to address cultural limitations and challenges.

Leadership can be defined as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Culture can be defined by several terms such as power, distance, uncertainty avoidance, gender and individualism. These terms describe to which extent inequalities are accepted among a society, how people feel and act toward unpredictable situations, distribution of roles between sexes and degree to which people in a society can be integrated into groups.

Evidence has shown that culture and leadership are correlated. The way in which people think about leaders is strongly influenced by their cultural differences. Dominant cultural values, assumptions and beliefs result in implicit leadership theories. The tendencies like ethnocentrism (tendency to give priority to one's own beliefs) and prejudice (a fixed judgment about others) can have impact on how people view their leader's attributes and behavior. These tendencies restrict the people to respect the word of others and can be major obstacle towards effective leadership. So leaders also have to face the challenges of dealing with these tendencies.

Here it is important to mention the two main leadership styles, which may be opted upon based on culture, transactional leadership and transformational leadership. In the first type the leader clearly determines and defines the role followers are required to perform and is involved in corrective criticism, negative feedback and enforcement. This type of leadership is generally linked to performance outcomes. On the other hand in the process of transformational leadership, leader encourages the followers to perform beyond expectation and to look beyond their own self interest. It is correlated with subordinated effectiveness, extra effort and satisfaction.

GLOBE researchers identified six different leadership behaviors based on how different cultures view leadership. These are: charismatic/value based, team oriented, participative, humane oriented, autonomous, and self-protective (House & Javidan, 2004).

- Charismatic/value-based leadership is based on leader's ability to inspire and motivate the followers to get better performance from individuals. Such leaders are inspirational, generous and conclusive.
- Team-oriented leadership emphasizes on team work and uniting individuals to work for a common purpose. This kind of leadership includes being cooperative, unifying and administratively efficient.
- Participative leadership is based on leader's ability to implement decision by involving others, taking their feedback and influencing them to participate.
- Humane-oriented leadership emphasizes being helpful, accommodating and unselfish.
- Autonomous leadership reflects independent and self-centered leadership, which includes being autonomous and unique.
- Self-protective leadership based on providing security to the leader and group. It
  includes leadership that is individualistic, conflict inducing, face saving, and
  procedural.

Thus individual's perspectives and convictions results into different leadership styles and determine the leadership attributes.

## Is there a certain place or a certain time for Leadership?

Now the question occurs: is there a certain place or time for leadership? For this it must be clear that what a leader has to do. A leader has to create a vision, to communicate the vision, to build commitment to the vision and to model it. Leaders are ordinary people having extra ordinary determination, who invite people to follow their vision rather than forcing them. A leader must be self-confident, interactive, worthy of being followed and should have right sense of direction. According to the Bass theory of leadership (2008), people become leaders because they possess personality traits and leadership abilities, due to a crisis or an important event which bring out their leadership skills or people can also choose to become leaders. So time and place might be important in case of uncertain condition or some crisis but apart from that some people are born to be a leader as well.

Leaders are always dependent on their environment for their existence and flourishing. Leaders always develop their opinions and their decisions once they know what their people are, how they think and what are their standards of good and bad. Leaders who are imported can never be true leaders if they don't know and belong to the people. They actually are the part of society and same culture which elevates them up to be someone noticeable. People give him or her authority and command of their lives if they know their leaders well. Leaders are expected to understand what they want. It is for this reason that a true leader always understands whether the nation wants a particular change or not. If the masses are in favor of a certain thing, then the leadership has to agree to it and if masses are not, then leadership either has to make them agree (through counseling and sometimes through force) or abandon that particular thing. The same is the case with the education and educational support. If the nation wants to improve itself through

education and there is a positive attitude towards education, then leadership will use the nation's resources to educate people.

On the other hand, if the nation doesn't value education or is not inclined towards education, leadership will also not put much emphasis on these issues and will work for those problems where national interest is greater. We can take example of two nations here, Pakistan and United States. The people and nation of United States are very concerned about education and health issues especially, so the Government supports these efforts no matter what scenarios arise. On the other hand the People of Pakistan by themselves did not understand the importance of education in masses, so they are quite behind in this field today. And as people are not educated still now, they are actively living 30-40 years behind the world.

Another very interesting thing to see here is that, because of a less literate population, many of those people who run the nation may not be skilled, qualified or competent enough.

Ultimately what happens is that no true leader is produced in such nation and nation runs out of a people who can take nation into the right direction of national interest, prosperity and peace

Leadership of the U.S.A.

The personal experience of living in the US is quite different for someone who has lived in countries of South Asia and East Asia. Leaders and leadership in those countries are very different from what actually happens in the US. Leadership and people both consider each other as separated. There is a lack of harmony between both sections, they lack common interests even are more hard to find. Countries of South Asia, who are trying to build up the democracy, still lack a single point agenda and consensus as well. Leaders in Asia is often accused involved in cases of money laundering, bankrupting, bribery and every single act which is against national interest. On the other hand, the officials and leaders of US are quite very different. They

rightfully fulfill the demands of a true democratic government. They are the people who are for the people, by the people and of the people. They walk and travel with common men and are close enough to prove that they are a part of nation. The same is the case with every educated nation in the world. As the nations collectively have gotten themselves in the same education line, they have understood and carved out a way for living in prosperity. Those nations, who were fighting in those times and were standing against each other, have actually seen that their future is in dark if they don't give enough attention towards educating their people out. But obviously, as people are not educated enough so shall the leadership will be. So actually there will be no one to think of effectively.

#### Leadership of Saudi Arabia and the United States

There is huge difference between leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and that of United States. The prime difference is how the leaders are made and selected in both countries? Saudi Arabia is following a dynasty system where generation after generation the same family is governing the rule of law. While American democracy elects their representatives every 4 years. A difference also arises between the performances. People who are a part of a dynasty know that they ultimately have to adjust themselves somehow according to the rule of law while people of democracy will have their power in their hands in the form of voting system.

No doubt that KSA has equally good rules of justice and law and it matches the standards of US in some of aspects (crime ratio, poverty and education), but still many of the national issues are not yet solved because the rulers don't want it and the powers are still restrained in their hands. American democracy is not a democracy that is running without setting goals and standards. The world's biggest democracy has checks and balances so that each party's motive,

performance and efficiency can be put forward people and then they decide. This is what you expect from every good educated nation.

The results of the survey showed that there are large differences between the thinking about leadership and culture from the United States and Saudi Arabia. In my opinion, I believe that the difference is in the views about freedom. Americans are more focused on looking ahead towards the future and their vision for education does not change because it is based on freedom. Religion and laws are separated in the United States and welcome people from every culture and ethnic group. During the survey, I noticed that Americans were very quick to answer the questions positively about culture and leadership; they had no questions about it because it is already a normal thing in society. However, Saudi Arabians who answered the survey had more of a limited perspective about leadership in culture. They were not able to think about the future because their traditions control them. Changing their perspective is very difficult because their view focuses more on the negative aspects rather than the positive ones. Unfortunately, they use their negative aspects as the rules and traditions; they call it part of the religion when, in fact, this is not part of our religion at all. These traditions are used as an excuse not to change. I cannot say that Saudi Arabians must act like Americans, but I do believe that Saudi Arabians need to change their negative perspectives to positive in order for them to experience more freedom. During the survey, some Saudi Arabians questioned what was being asked, perhaps because they didn't understand why culture and leadership should go together.

Overall, through these surveys I was able to see how different these countries view leadership and culture. I believe that there will be improvements and changes in the future in Saudi Arabia, because there are many students studying abroad and who are also working to change the negative perspective to positive.

#### CHAPTER 3

## Methodology

In this research we explored the meaning of leadership and culture and the elements that affect them. I want the reader to see how culture influences leadership because there are some factors of culture that have an impact on leadership. Leadership has many different meanings. My research is meant to clarify and explain in an attempt to clarify these meanings and the relationship between culture and leadership. I wanted to find out if it is possible to develop a universal leadership model that would work in every country with any cultures.

All of the subjects in my study are in educational careers, and my research could potentially benefit them by providing them with a universal leadership model. This would be beneficial to the education system because it would allow people to use it in different cultures. This would benefit those in culturally diverse schools. A universal leadership model could also potentially close the gap between different cultures.

The survey and interviews (see Appendix) shows information and others' opinions. The interview with some teachers, principals, and students, helped me define different cultures. In Saudi Arabia, we have this issue and that makes people misunderstand some points.

The survey and the interviews were done with people that I know personally, classmates and some were chosen randomly. The participants responded to my questions on the phone, through email, or handed it to me personally. Using all of these techniques to gather the information was beneficial; I not only was able to interact with the people, but also could spend time listening to their thoughts on the subjects.

In conclusion, the research provides the reader to get information about culture and leadership. People will agree or disagree with some points, but the purpose from this research is

to try to create the model or personality for people who want to become a leader in the future in any culture and in every country.

# CHAPTER 4 Findings

The results of the survey are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Survey Results Aggregated by Agreement and Disagreement and Country of Participant

	Agree		Disagree		I don't know	
	KSA	USA	KSA	USA	KSA	USA
1) Your work environment and leadership position or "career" affects your leadership style.	42%	22%	17%	19%	0%	0%
2) Regulations and laws force your leader to follow a certain style of leadership that reduces the leader's abilities.	17%	39%	11%	33%	0%	0%
3) Formal relations between the leader and employee are important.	16%	19%	43%	22%	0%	0%
4) The leader's education degree affects their leadership style.	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%
5) When a leader has confidence in their employees, it affects their authority.	57%	29%	9%	6%	0%	0%
6) A successful leader is one who learns the qualities of leadership styles from their experiences and by having leadership qualities in their personality.	49%	51%	0%	0%	0%	0%
7) When a leader gives a bonus to his employee, it will affect their work.	49%	51%	0%	0%	0%	0%
8) When a leader uses intimidation and coercion methods with their employees, it will be successful.	0%	0%	37%	60%	3%	0%
9) The teamwork system says that it provides absolute confidence in exchanging information and is one of the best systems of leadership.	40%	57%	0%	0%	3%	0%
10) The leader in education system must be from the same culture as the community or there will be an imbalance in leadership.	40%	0%	0%	29%	6%	26%
11) When a leader works with their employees directly, it lowers his prestige as a leader.	35%	0%	8%	49%	5%	3%
12) When employees discover the leader's abilities, it is better than the leader showing off his abilities.	10%	13%	33%	30%	7%	7%

13) In the education system a successful leader can be successful in any place and	31%	63%	3%	3%	0%	0%
anytime, no matter how different the culture.						

A closer look at the data indicates that there is a difference between the agreement of the USA and KSA on many of the items. As Table 2 shows the gap between the USA and KSA in descending order

Table 2

Difference in Agreement in USA and KSA

	Difference in Agreement
	in USA and KSA
	Respondents (Positive =
	higher agreement from
	KSA and Negative =
	higher agreement from
	USA respondents)
10) The leader in education system must be from the same culture as	
the community or there will be an imbalance in leadership.	40%
11) When a leader works with their employees directly, it lowers his	
prestige as a leader.	35%
5) When a leader has confidence in their employees, it affects their	
authority.	29%
4) The leader's education degree affects their leadership style.	20%
1) Your work environment and leadership position or "career" affects	
your leadership style.	19%
8) When a leader uses intimidation and coercion methods with their	
employees, it will be successful.	0%
3) Formal relations between the leader and employee are important.	-3%
6) A successful leader is one who learns the qualities of leadership	
styles from their experiences and by having leadership qualities in their	
personality.	-3%
7) When a leader gives a bonus to his employee, it will affect their	
work.	-3%
12) When employees discover the leader's abilities, it is better than the	
leader showing off his abilities.	-3%
9) The teamwork system says that it provides absolute confidence in	
exchanging information and is one of the best systems of leadership.	-17%
2) Regulations and laws force your leader to follow a certain style of	
leadership that reduces the leader's abilities.	-22%
13) In the education system a successful leader can be successful in any	
place and anytime, no matter how different the culture.	-31%

## **Findings**

The people who participated in the survey were from different cultures and positions of leadership. Some of the people were teachers, students, and principals. The statements in the survey are meant to help people to imagine leadership positions with different elements and situations. Also, the culture and leadership included in the survey support my thesis question.

I noticed that people seemed to believe that there are factors that affect the leadership positions. The factors like the environment, relationship, culture, rules, teamwork, and behavior all have related behavior and similar meaning to the people who participated; I think the reason is because they are all from an educational system.

People around the world accept leaders from everywhere and from any culture, but a leader should be experienced and educated in leadership. There a many large companies who have leaders from other cultures. For example, in Saudi Arabia, there is a trading company who has leaders from other cultures.

The purpose of the interviews and surveys was to show people's perspective on the subject. The systems around the world are all different and the education system is important because it is created to teach people over generations. The leaders in this system have to study and get feedback in their learning to make the system successful.

#### **Thesis Interview**

I chose to interview and survey 30 people who work in the education system. The purpose for doing this is to help me gain insight about the relationship between culture and leadership in order to find a conclusion for my thesis.

#### **Interview Questions**

- 1. What is the difference between a leader and a manager?
- 2. What are the characteristics that make you a qualified principal?
- 3. How would you resolve any problems or conflicts in the school related to the students and faculty or staff?
- 4. What are some of the difficulties a principal might face?
- 5. If you have foreign students, faculty, or staff; would you accommodate their educational needs or would you strictly follow the policies and procedures of the school system?
- 6. In your opinion, what are some of the required characteristics for a principal and an educational leader?
- 7. Do you agree or disagree that the principal should be a foreigner even though the culture and laws are different to them?

I conducted this interview between people from both Saudi Arabia and the USA. There were many differing opinions about the topic and many different definitions about leadership in education; it was normal for them to differ because the cultures, traditions, religion, and beliefs have shaped their worldview. My objective in each interview and survey was to remain neutral and simply understand which elements most effect their beliefs.

#### People from Saudi Arabia

As I interviewed school staff in Saudi Arabia, the belief about leadership remains consistent throughout the country. The religion establishes a process and rules that a leader must follow. They used evidence from "Qura" and "Sonna" to explain what they believe and their own religious instructions to answer. The essentials come from their rules and their system. They encouraged the leadership although they hold opinions of leadership between men and women. The development in their education system is a support of their achievements; in Saudi Arabia, they always compare how education was between the past and the present.

Regarding the last question about having a foreigner in a place of leadership, I found in my interviews that it is not supported in my country. The reason for this is that there is no separation between government and religion; if a foreigner came to take a place of leadership there would be conflict because there is no separation.

## People from the USA

Their beliefs about leadership come from experience and academic results; leadership is something to be pursued through study in order to be a good leader. People accept the idea of having someone from another culture coming to lead them. It is possible, I noticed, when I arrived in the USA. As an example, the ELS program has a director that is from another culture, since he has all the qualifications he needs, there was no problem giving him the role.

I found some similarities between both groups which helped me answer the question for my thesis: Is it possible to have a leadership model that can be used in any culture of any country?

Leadership in the educational system is not an easy task; there are some people in positions of leadership who should not be leaders in the system because they do not have experience. It is easy for a person to lead by following rules and laws of their school, but a good leader will be able to lead well even without these set standards. In my opinion, a successful leader is able to adapt these rules to fit their personality and help people feel comfortable with their leadership. Some people need to see that their leader isn't just following the rules but that they actually care about the rules themselves and live by them. A successful leader is able to use their experience to help lead their employees and faculty member with flexibility, understanding, and by building good relationships with everyone. Culture is partly from society and personality. People cannot ignore their beliefs and societies hold different traditions, cultures, and religions.

I cannot imagine a society that will fully accept leaders from other cultures. During my research, I learned about a large foreign institution for education in Saudi Arabia that is trying to develop students and employees from Saudi Arabia by teaching them in a specific school. The leaders and faculty members are multicultural; the company is fully functioning and a huge success. Saudi Arabians wish to study in this institution even though it is a different culture, religion, and traditions. For people in my country, it looks like a dream and many hope to study there. Clearly, the success of this institution is enough to see that the leader is effective and familiar with different cultures.

#### CHAPTER 5

#### Conclusion

Researching this project helped me gain insight into how Saudi Arabian society can improve culture and leadership in education. Saudi Arabia is in the process of change and the people do not have a wide perspective of other cultures so these changes are seen as unknown to this point.

#### Summary of Analysis

Some Saudi Arabians reject any leader who is from another culture, I believe, because they don't have any experience with other cultures and do not see how they would beneficial. At this point, I do not think I would be able to start implementing my research to show how important it is to have leaders of other cultures, but hopefully in the future people will be more accepting of it as King Abdullah's scholarship programs places more students in multicultural environments.

Different cultures are an important factor in education; they help people to gain perspective of the world and also provide a broader worldview. The difference between people in Saudi Arabia and the U.S.A. is that Americans have learned to live with a variety of cultures which has helped them to be more accepting of all people, especially when it comes to education. I want to be part implementing a more culturally friendly environment in the education system when I go back to Saudi Arabia. These changes will help education to continue growing in a positive way. Through this research I have learned that there is such a thing as a leadership model for education.

The conclusion of the whole research report is that education, society and leadership all go hand in hand. One cannot imagine a situation where the well-being of a society is possible without proper leadership. Similarly a true leadership is in full need of a positive environment

which gives a fertile soil for the leadership. Leadership does not always come out from depression and tyranny, but sometimes it can also come from a positive and responsible environment. A society where issues have been addressed properly to the upcoming youth, so they know it and can find out a way before this responsibility is completely on them.

Similarly, education and health education (which can bring positive changes to society and can produce good leadership) is possible only when the leadership and society pay heed to this issue for the betterment of everyone. Societies who have made education, and educating their criteria routine and have worked hard for it were always the leaders and will always remain while those who, due to their personal interests, have left this principle behind are left behind years ago. Education always demand, a good environment, a positive environment and this positive environment needs leadership to keep things go in harmony.

## **Recommendations for Future Study**

The study indicates that the largest gap between the cultures relates to #10, #11, #5, and #4 where there was the highest support from Saudi Arabians while #9, #2, and #13 show the highest support from Americans. The high results from Saudi Arabians were questions relating to leaders of the same culture, while the high results of Americans were questions relating to leadership styles and people skills. Future research could be helpful in explaining the cultural difference and future research into these differences in operating schools.

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#### **APPENDIX**

#### **Interview 1**

#### 1. What is the difference between a leader and a manager?

Leaders create changes, implement them, persuade, and create teams. Managers react to a change and have good ideas, communicate them and direct their group. Moreover, leaders take responsibilities and develop power with people. Unlike managers who take credit and exercise power over people. Ultimately, leaders focus on people, on the other hand, managers only focus on work.

### 2. What are the characteristics that make you a qualified principal?

- Work experiences in the education field
- Degree in education
- Trustworthy and honest
- Work ethics
- Assertive and confident
- A good communicator
- Look for future changes (in a good way that would help in student development)
- Nice, easy to talk too, a good listen, and able to relate/explain to/with real life experience to all ages (talk clearly and with simple words)

## 3. How would you resolve any problems or conflicts in the school related to the students and faculty or staff?

First, I would look closely to the problem, understand it, and then analyze it. Second, listen to all parties involved without bias. Third, arrive to a middle ground solution that would be in the benefit of all.

#### 4. What are some of the difficulties a principal might face?

Some of the students are hard to control, these student tend to create many troubles in the school. Because of the age difference between the students and the principle, both of them might not understand each other

Any issue, problems, and danger at the school the principle is the one who will be responsible for them. He is the one to blame if anything happened. As a result, principle should be alert at all time and try to solve problems as soon as possible.

5. If you have foreign students, faculty, or staff; would you accommodate their educational needs or would you strictly follow the policies and procedures of the school system?

It is my responsibility as a member of the education system to help and accommodate the educational needs for any foreign student, faculty or staff. We teach the student about democracy and peace. We would be hypocrite if we teach our student something and we do the opposite. This also would send a negative message to students, parents, and the whole community.

## 6. In your opinion, what are some of the required characteristics for a principal and an educational leader?

- Trustworthy and honest
- Good ethics and high moral
- Assertive and confident
- A good communicator
- Look for future changes (in a good way that would help in student development)
- Nice, easy to talk too, a good listen, and able to relate/explain to/with real life experience to all ages (talk clearly and with simple words)
- Able to understand others' cultures and differences
- Welcoming to all people from all ethnicity without bias

## 7. Do you agree or disagree that the principal should be a foreigner even though the culture and laws are different to them?

I do not think that the principle nationality matter as much as understanding others' differences. What is the point of having a principle from the area that cannot adapt with changes in the education system and accepting people that are different from him. Cultures and Laws are easy to learn, you do not have to grow up in that culture to understand them. For example, the US has many different cultures and laws in each state. You can be foreigner in your own country, only by living in another state. In the south part of California, you would feel that you are in Mexico, although most of the people there are American citizens with Latino culture. Ultimately, the most important thing is to be able to wide your horizons, which is not easy to learn or acquire.

1. What is the difference between a leader and a manager?

A leader has the ability to publish new rules and policies, deal with the affairs, determine the form of punishment, but the principal does publish policies after approval from the board and following the laws or procedures.

2. What are the characteristics that make you a qualified principal?

Self-confidence, experience, strong personality, ability to handle responsibility, ability to face situations and deal with the issue at hand

3. How would you resolve any problems or conflicts in the school related to the students and faculty or staff?

Managerial problems would be dealt with firmness and prudency, take the appropriate steps after study, however, the proposal would be faced by the appropriate solution without make the problem bigger

4. What are some of the difficulties a principal might face?

N/A

5. If you have foreign students, faculty, or staff; would you accommodate their educational needs or would you strictly follow the policies and procedures of the school system?

I respect the difference in education and would submit orders he could follow and train them with encouraging and supporting him

6. In your opinion, what are some of the required characteristics for a principal and an educational leader?

The manager would have the courage to not hesitate in issuing decisions with good morals with employees and understanding their situation, and following their work. The leader would be responsible for everything, high influence, ability to be creative, and ability to resolve problems and find the most suitable solution

7. Do you agree or disagree that the principal should be a foreigner even though the culture and laws are different to them?

I am with the idea of having a foreigner if we were in need and lack their experience

#### 1. What is the difference between a leader and a manager?

A leader has a great personality, uniqueness, creativity and ability to influence others; takes responsibility for their actions and mistakes and solves any problems that would arise. They also plan for the future. However, the principal follows policies and procedures of the school district and manages other people.

2. What are the characteristics that make you a qualified principal?

Trust, commitment, seriousness, fairness, justice, and optimism

3. How would you resolve any problems or conflicts in the school related to the students and faculty or staff?

The demand would be to influence, take care of, include, and build the students personality. Also, enhance their expertise and advise them in their education. Use educational and disciplinary methods to solve their problems; avoid mistreatment. Managerial would face the problem, know the cause and possible solutions and then choose the appropriate solution.

4. What are some of the difficulties a principal might face?

Limit the principal's term of employment which leads to a need for an assistant manager.

5. If you have foreign students, faculty, or staff; would you accommodate their educational needs or would you strictly follow the policies and procedures of the school system?

In the beginning I would understand the difference in education since they are a foreigner but then would direct and train them in our educational programs.

6. In your opinion, what are some of the required characteristics for a principal and an educational leader?

Good manners, strong personality, ability to handle situations properly, flexibility, experience, good influence

7. Do you agree or disagree that the principal should be a foreigner even though the culture and laws are different to them?

I am not against hiring a foreigner, however, they should be understanding to the difference in society and work with the understanding of the culture and follow policies and procedures of the school system

1. What is the difference between a leader and a manager?

A leader is one who takes the lead in the group and takes action when needed. A manager follows the rules and waits for direction.

2. What are the characteristics that make you a qualified principal?

Communication skills is the most important

3. How would you resolve any problems or conflicts in the school related to the students and faculty or staff?

To meet each group a side and see what is the problem and solutions. Set rules to avoid repeating the issue.

4. What are some of the difficulties a principal might face?

If the student come from a rich family and the school can't punish the student because they benefit from his money. Also, try to make the student equal to each other no gabs between them.

5. If you have foreign students, faculty, or staff; would you accommodate their educational needs or would you strictly follow the policies and procedures of the school system?

He needs to follow the school rules and adapt to them, but I will give the student time to understand them

6. In your opinion, what are some of the required characteristics for a principal and an educational leader?

Communication is more important, need to master active listening with the student and faculty

7. Do you agree or disagree that the principal should be a foreigner even though the culture and laws are different to them?

I agree with it, if he qualified to have the position.

### 1. What is the difference between a leader and a manager?

A leader has a great personality, uniqueness, creativity and ability to influence others; takes responsibility for their actions and mistakes and solves any problems that would arise. They also plan for the future. However, the principal follows policies and procedures of the school district and manages other people.

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6. In your opinion, what are some of the required characteristics for a principal and an educational leader?

Good manners, strong personality, ability to handle situations properly, flexibility, experience, good influence

7. Do you agree or disagree that the principal should be a foreigner even though the culture and laws are different to them?

I am not against hiring a foreigner, however, they should understand the difference in society and work with the understanding of the culture and follow policies and procedures of

## 1. What is the difference between a leader and a manager?

A leader tells you what to do and where to go, manages, delegates as well as leads.

### 2. What are the characteristics that make you a qualified principal?

Communications skills, good manager skills, honest and truthful, kind and yet not afraid to be in the middle of conflict.

# 3. How would you resolve any problems or conflicts in the school related to the students and faculty or staff?

Sit the students or faculty down to figure out what the problem is first, then go from there.

### 4. What are some of the difficulties a principal might face?

Faculty not agreeing with what you are doing, parents not liking what you do, children not respecting what you would do.

5. If you have foreign students, faculty, or staff; would you accommodate their educational needs or would you strictly follow the policies and procedures of the school system?

Accommodate their educational needs.

## 6. In your opinion, what are some of the required characteristics for a principal and an educational leader?

Kind, sense of justice, not a push over, intelligent and honest.

# 7. Do you agree or disagree that the principal should be a foreigner even though the culture and laws are different to them?

I think a foreigner can be a principal. It should not matter if the laws are different to them. It will be a growing and learning experience for them and those they lead.

## 1. What is the difference between a leader and a manager?

Both leadership and management are both good qualities to have although there are some differences between the tow. A leader pursues to make a difference rather than just a manager who just met the requirements. A leader focuses on the people who are under them while a manager just follows structure.

## 2. What are the characteristics that make you a qualified principal?

I would give them an example where you showed leadership rather than just managed. I would emphasize your concern for making sure that the needs were being met, not just that you were completing the tasks.

3. How would you resolve any problems or conflicts in the school related to the students and faculty or staff?

N/A

## 4. What are some of the difficulties a principal might face?

Some difficulties that a principal might face is dealing with a diverse range of personalities starting with students, parents and faculties. Although having skills.

5. If you have foreign students, faculty, or staff; would you accommodate their educational needs or would you strictly follow the policies and procedures of the school system?

I would focus more on the need of the students individually rather.

# 6. In your opinion, what are some of the required characteristics for a principal and an educational leader?

Patience, trustworthy, great communication skills, and a vision to make things better.

7. Do you agree or disagree that the principal should be a foreigner even though the culture and laws are different to them?

N/A