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An Exploration of Leadership Styles and Motivation in Egyptian Business Organizations

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Abstract:

Transformational leadership is often lauded as an ideal approach to addressing the demands of the complex global business environment. The purpose of this qualitative grounded theory study was to understand the nature of employee motivation with regard to leadership styles and the role of transformational leadership in Egyptian business organizations. Seventeen Egyptian professionals were interviewed regarding their experiences with organizational leaders; their perceptions of the ideal organizational leader; their feelings about the tenets of transformational leadership; and how leadership styles influence their job performance, satisfaction, and the achievement of their career-related goals. This study yielded not only information that can make it easier to lead and motivate employees in Egyptian business organizations, but also led to the development of a theory for the ideal leadership style for Egyptian employees.

Keywords: Management, transformational leadership, employee motivation

Introduction

Organizational leadership is one of the foremost concerns of organizational stakeholders in the contemporary business world. Leadership style has a significant influence on organizational performance and success (Jamaludin, Rahman, Makhbul, & Idris, 2011). Traditionalists have historically viewed the ideal organizational leader as one who is capable of commanding, controlling, and directing those in an organization (Houglum, 2012).

The complex challenges that have arisen in the global business environment have led many researchers and business leaders to rethink these principles in favor of conceptions of leadership that allow organizations to adapt to the changes and demands of an increasingly complex environment (Pless, Maak, & Stahl, 2011). The rift between traditional leadership styles and the demands of the global business environment have given rise to many different approaches to leadership.

Although many leadership styles exist, certain leadership styles have been heralded as being more capable than others of addressing the challenges that contemporary leaders face. An increasing number of researchers have suggested that transformational leadership is an ideal leadership theory for organizational leaders to adopt as they strive to meet the demands of the changing global environment

(Riaz, Ramzan, Ishaq, Akram, & Karim, 2012; Warrick, 2011). In spite of increased knowledge and literature regarding the behaviors of successful leaders, many organizational leaders still cling to traditional or outmoded forms of leadership (Pless et al., 2011). Furthermore, the majority of existing research regarding transformational leadership in the workplace has been limited to Western organizational settings (Miao, Newman, & Lamb, 2012). The extent to which transformational leadership would succeed in various global contexts has yet to be established. In this study, the subjects of leadership and employee motivation in an Egyptian context were explored.

The influence of culture on the perception of a leader's conduct and performance is a relevant consideration for assessing different leadership styles. Holt, Bjorklund, and Green (2009) suggested that the hopes and expectations for the conduct and manner of organizational leaders from their followers can be dependent on culture. Suliman and Moadkhan (2013) explored the influence of national culture and its dimensions on various leadership styles and found that national culture tends to support the use of certain leadership styles while dissuading others.

Few researchers have conducted qualitative studies of culture and its relationship to leadership, particularly in an Egyptian context. Combining various elements



of preceding studies enabled a qualitative exploration of leadership in Egyptian organizations with respect to cultural factors. The aim of this study was to help build support for ideas regarding the ideal leadership styles for motivating employees in Egyptian organizations, potentially benefitting organizational stakeholders in a number of ways.

The merits of participative and less authoritarian styles of leadership have been covered in countless contemporary studies, yet have seemingly failed to take hold in Egypt. The detrimental effects of the use of antiquated methods of leadership for organizational stakeholders have been established (Flemming, 2011; Sakiru, D'Silva, Othman, DaudSilong, & Busayo, 2013). The general business problem is that despite evidence of the problems associated with authoritarian leadership styles, the practice of directive leadership, rather than empowering forms of leadership, seemingly persists in business organizations in Egypt.

The purpose of conducting this qualitative study was to interview the lived experiences of Egyptian professionals who are working in Egyptian business organizations. The focus was to explore leadership styles being utilized by leaders in Egyptian business organizations. How these styles compare and contrast to the tenets of transformational leadership was examined in order to establish the current state of leadership in Egyptian business organizations as well as how applicable the tenets of transformational leadership are within the Egyptian cultural context. Singh and Krishnan (2007) suggested that many leadership theories are rife with assumptions that primarily hold true in a North American setting that may not extend to other cultures. Understanding the place of transformational leadership in the Egyptian workplace remained an unexplored subject matter and presented an opportunity to further the understanding of transformational leadership in a non-North American context.

The conceptual framework of the study is transformational leadership theory. James Burns pioneered transformational leadership theory in the late 1970s as a paradigm for understanding and characterizing the interactions between organizational leaders and followers (Burns, 1978). Burns essentially categorized leadership styles in an organization as either transactional or transformational. According to

Burns, transactional leaders are those who attempt to leverage the ability to reward or punish as motivation for follower actions. Transforming leaders are those who seek to transcend a reward/punishment paradigm and inspire followers to higher levels of performance by looking beyond self-interest to a greater sense of collective good (Jamaludin et al., 2011). When juxtaposed, the two approaches clearly represent opposite ends of a spectrum with respect to leadership styles.

With respect to this study, transformational leadership theory was used as the conceptual framework to ground the study and as a lens through which to compare and contrast the current leadership styles being displayed in Egyptian organizations. As a leadership theory that has garnered much attention in the leadership literature, and one that many observers consider being an ideal model for leadership in the global business environment, transformational leadership theory is an ideal lens through which to interpret study findings.

The primary objective of data collection was gathering sufficient data capable of painting a complete picture of the topic. A carefully selected purposive sample of participants facilitated the gathering of relevant data (Charmaz, 2006). Participants who fit the profile of being an Egyptian professional, having an Egyptian organizational leader, and being fluent in English were sought out through professional contacts in order to build a sufficient sample. In-depth interviews were the primary mode of data collection for this study. In order to collect enough data to sufficiently understand the phenomenon, 17 in-depth interviews with individuals fitting the aforementioned criteria were conducted until data saturation was reached.

Materials and Methods

Leadership is herein defined as the process utilized by leaders to influence others to contribute to group goals (Kaiser, Lindberg McGinnis, & Overfield, 2012). Employee motivation is defined as the actions or words that provide that stimulate an individual's behavior (Achakul & Yolles, 2013). The operational definitions would ultimately serve to inform the data collection instruments and process.

Qualitative research was the tradition selected for this study. A qualitative methodology was appropriate because of the research question and sub



questions were open-ended in nature. The questions selected were done so to facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the meanings research participants attribute to the questions asked (Charmaz, 2006). The central question was what are the characteristics of the ideal leadership style for motivating employees in Egyptian organizations? Secondary questions included the following:

RQ1. How do employees in Egyptian organizations describe their experiences with their organizational leaders?

RQ2. How do employees in Egyptian organizations describe the influence of leadership styles they experience on their job performance?

RQ3. How do employees in Egyptian organizations describe the influence of leadership styles they experience on their job satisfaction?

RQ4. How do employees in Egyptian organizations describe the influence of leadership styles they experience on the achievement of their career related goals?

RQ5. How do employees in Egyptian organizations describe the characteristics of an ideal leader?

RQ6. How do employees in Egyptian organizations describe the relationship, if any, between the characteristics of transformational leaders and the characteristics of an ideal leader?

The approach selected for this study was grounded theory because there was an interest in exploring the general phenomenon in question, beyond specific instances of the phenomenon. A grounded theory approach enabled the collection and analysis of qualitative data designed not only to help provide an original analysis of the data collected but also allowed for the construction of a theory regarding the phenomenon studied. Constructing the theory came inductively from the findings of the

research, stemming from the interviews conducted for the research (Charmaz, 2006; Patton, 2002). The culmination of the research was the construction of a theory designed to answer the research questions.

The population of this study was Egyptian employees. Employees were defined as individuals who have pursued higher education or training in order to acquire specialized skills for their profession. The participants were Egyptian and employed in an organization that had an Egyptian leader. To facilitate the data collection process and ensure accuracy, participants were screened to be fluent in English, yet were required to be fluent in Arabic, the native language of Egypt as well to ensure they were not exceptionally unrepresentative of the Egyptian populace.

In order to collect enough data to sufficiently understand the phenomenon; 17 in-depth interviews with individuals fitting the aforementioned criteria were conducted in order to achieve data saturation. Data saturation is a concept within data collection that entails continuing to introduce new participants into a study until the data collected begins to become redundant in nature and new insights cease. The nature of achieving data saturation in qualitative studies can lead to ambiguity in the early stages of research; yet preliminary considerations included the quality of the interviews, the type of sampling used, and the level of experience of the researcher (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). Once data saturation was achieved, the data collection process was considered complete.

Two data collection instruments were employed in this study. The first, a short questionnaire was developed (see Appendix B) to help establish if participants met the criteria necessary to participate in the study and to capture demographic information, based on examples posited by Patton (2002). The questionnaire was administered prior to participation in the study. The questionnaire was designed to screen participants with a few basic questions and demographic information regarding their eligibility to participate in the study. Demographic information captured proved relevant during the data analysis phase of the research process.

The primary mode of data collection for this study was the interview protocol. The interview protocol constituted the second data collector



instrument(see Appendix B).The purpose of the interview guide was to ensure that the same general lines of inquiry were followed for each participant interviewed. An interview guide also helped to manage the limited amount of interview time spent with participants by following a sequence of predefined questions, while still providing flexibility within the interview framework(Patton,2002). The interview protocol would ultimately serve all these purposes and allow for the research questions to be answered sufficiently.

Data collected was almost entirely from the recordings of the in-depth interviews and notes taken during the interview process. Interview depth went beyond the surface of events and experiences to explore the topic being researched fully.The questions asked were intensive and open-ended, yet directed and emergent in nature. Upon completion, the data was hand-coded to help organize the data. Responses that correspond to a specific research question were coded accordingly and other themes and topics of significance that emerged were identified and coded. As part of grounded theory approach, a theoretical sampling strategy was used to help seek relevant data to help refine the emerging categories that were used to help develop the theory of ideal leadership. Theoretical sampling also aided in developing the properties of the categories identified until new categories were saturated (i.e., no longer emerged). Data was sorted, diagrammed, and integrated to aid in the development of content and analysis. Discrepant cases were grouped together and analyzed to help assess if they are simply outlying cases, or if there was a potential pattern or common thread underlying these cases worthy of being explored(Charmaz,2006). NVivo qualitative data analysis software was used to dig deeply into the data and strengthen the analysis while highlighting relationships and findings that might have otherwise gone unobserved.

The sum of the data and themes that emerged were organized, analyzed, and ultimately used to develop a theory of the ideal Egyptian leadership style grounded in the lived experiences of the participants of the study. The development of the theory was the culmination of the aforementioned processes and pondering, seeking possibilities, establishing valid connections, and asking relevant questions with respect to the research question and

the data collected. The ultimate aim of the theory developed was to use the power of analysis to theorize about how the actions, social structures, and meanings that participants have attributed to their lived experiences related to the research questions(Charmaz,2006). The generation of a theory that answered the research questions posed in the study was the culmination of both inductive and deductive processes.

Results

Two phases of data collection occurred. The first phase of data collection occurred with participants recruited through a carefully selected purposive sample.The second phase of data collection was done using a theoretical sampling strategy that was facilitated using the snowball method. Participants from the first phase of the data collection process were asked to refer individuals they believed would be interested in participating in the study and who they believed would be particularly insightful about matters discussed during the interview process. Seventeen total individuals with a diverse range of attributes participate in the study(see Table 1).

A total of two data collection instruments were employed in this study. The first was a short questionnaire(see Appendix A) that was developed to help establish if participants met the criteria necessary to participate in the study and to capture demographic information. The questionnaire was administered prior to participation in the study and was designed to screen participants with a few basic questions and collect demographic information regarding their eligibility to participate in the study. The second data collection instrument employed was the interview protocol(see Appendix B) designed to help answer the research questions.

Grounded theory research places an emphasis on inductive analysis, with studies moving from particular ideas to those that are more general in an attempt to develop new perspectives and theories from the observation process(Sbaraini, Carter, Evans,&Blinkhorn,2011).Research of this nature entails engaging in data analysis immediately, concurrently with the data collection process, a process that would ultimately facilitate the theoretical sampling process. As data were collected from participants, it was coded, which entailing analyzing the data and compartmentalizing the findings into



refined categories in order to facilitate the comparison of different data, cases, and events(Charmaz,2006). As data was collected, it was immediately recorded and transcribed. Transcripts were then coded.Nvivo 10, computer software designed to assist qualitative researchers in qualitative data analysis, was used beginning at this stage in the research to aid in the organization of data and to assist in categorization and coding.

After completing 17 interviews, perpetually being engaged in the constant comparative method while coding, categorizing, and writing memos, the categories reached saturation. Charmaz(2006) indicated that a category was saturated when the continued gathering of data neither provides theoretical insights nor contributes to the properties of core theoretical categories. Reaching this point meant there was no need to continue gathering data because interviews ceased providing new insights and the primary categories of the theory being developed were understood and fully fleshed out(Charmaz,2006).

The constant comparative method served as the cornerstone for both the data collection and data analysis processes. A table was created for each research question which aided in the analysis of findings and helped identify patterns, themes, and relationships between categories. Many categories and themes emerged throughout the data collection and analysis process, with the most dominant and frequently occurring themes being noted and those that only had one or two occurrences being dismissed as superfluous.

Table 1 summarizes results with respect to research subquestion1. Some of the key factors identified by participants regarding their experiences with their organizational leaders as well as the percentage of participants that identified with the sentiment are presented in the table.The results revealed that the experiences that participants related most were largely negative in nature.

Table 1

Demographics of Participants		Egyptian Employees' Descriptions of their Experiences with Organizational Leaders	
<i>Category</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Factors</i>	<i>Percentage of Participants identifying</i>
Males	9	Monetary incentives are main motivator	82
Females	8	Large power distance	76
Age 18-23	1	Untrusting	76
Age 24-30	9	Not empathetic	71
Age 31-40	6	Poor at communicating	71
Age 41-50	1	Lack of fairness	65
Age 51-60	0	Dictatorial	59
Age 60+	0	Lacking soft skills	53
		High Pressure	41
		Disrespectful	41
		Intimidation techniques	35
		Helpful technically	29
		Demean followers	23



Table 2 summarizes results with respect to research subquestion2 and the key factors identified by participants regarding the influence of leadership styles experienced in the workplace on their job performance. The results revealed that the vast majority of participants aligned their efforts at work with what was required to achieve financial bonuses and/or annual promotions in title. Poor performance and boredom in the workplace were also common factors. A significant number of participants also reported that their performance was self-driven, either by a sense of duty to organizational stakeholders, the belief that one must exert their utmost in the

workplace, or from a natural tendency to always work to the best of their ability regardless of the leadership style they encounter.

Table 2also summarizes research sub question 3 and some of the key factors identified by participants regarding how they describe the influence of the leadership styles they experience on their job satisfaction. The findings revealed that an extremely large percentage of participants identified with low levels of job satisfaction due to the leadership styles they encountered. Only 17% of participants stated they felt sufficiently satisfied with things the way they presently are.

Table 2

<i>Egyptian Employees' Descriptions of the Influence of Leadership Styles on Their Job Performance</i>		<i>Egyptian Employees' Descriptions of the Influence of Leadership Styles on their Job Satisfaction</i>	
Factors	Percentage of Participants Identifying	Factors	Percentage of Participants Identifying
Performance is aligned with effort required to earn annual bonus or promotion	71	Low due to leadership style	76
Performance diminished due to leadership styles creating depression/stress	53	Satisfaction tied to bonuses	65
Boredom in workplace hampers performance	59	Sense of apathy	59
Can meet deadlines and goals but put in no extra effort	41	Low due to lack of advancement	41
Desire to leave current employer keeps performance down	35	Dislike of job	35
Performance is unaffected	35	Makes them seek other job	29
Personal desire to achieve is primary driver of performance	29	Environment demoralizing	23
		Satisfaction higher with non-monetary rewards	23
		Feelings of depression	17
		Low due to gender insensitivity	17
		Feeling of being used in wrong area	17
		Satisfied as things are	17



Table 3 summarizes research sub question 4 and some of the key factors identified by participants with respect to the influence of leadership styles on their ability to achieve their career-related goals. The majority of participants related that there was a lack of ability to achieve larger, long-term career goals within their organizations. Almost half of the participants believed that the leadership styles they experienced were sufficient for achieving preliminary career goals, or those in line with what someone just entering the workforce out of college would aim to achieve with their first employer. A small number of participants felt that leadership styles they countered

facilitated career goals. The same number of participants suggested they were unable to achieve their larger career goals, but that it had less to do with leadership styles and more to do with overarching cultural factors that made advancement to upper-tier positions very difficult.

Table 3 also summarizes research sub question 5 and some of the key factors identified by participants regarding how they describe the ideal organizational leader. The majority of traits that emerged were related to trust, a desire to develop followers, and a sense of concern for followers.

Table 3

Egyptian Employees’ Descriptions of the Influence of Leadership Styles on their Career Related Goals		Egyptian Employees’ Descriptions of the Characteristics of an Ideal Leader	
Factors	Percentage of Participants Identifying	Factors	Percentage of participants identifying
Lack of ability to achieve larger, long-term career goals	59	Trustworthy	88
Career goals can largely be achieved only within their current organization	47	Trusting of Followers	88
Satisfactory for launching preliminary career goals/gaining experience	41	Does not micromanage	76
Lack of motivation creates a lack of ambition	35	Make employees feel appreciated	76
Current techniques facilitate steady career goal completion	17	Encourage growth	71
Inability to achieve larger career goals, but due to cultural	17	Easily accessible	59
		Empathetic	53
		Strong communicators	53
		Interested in employee ideas	47
		Willing to receive criticism	47
		Friendly	41
		Support new concepts	35
		Interested in more than money	29
		Not threatened by followers	17



Table 4 summarizes research sub question 6 and how participants described their feelings towards the characteristics of transformational leaders with respect to their conception of the ideal organizational leader. Using the major tenets of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellection stimulation as a basis for the questions asked, the participants responded in an overwhelmingly positive fashion towards the traits of transformational leaders.

The one outlying finding with respect to the traits of transformational leaders and participants' conception of the ideal leader was that when asked about individual consideration and receiving attention to their personal needs, the majority of participants stated that individualized consideration was desirable only if it meant leaders did not get to know followers on too personal of level. When follow-up questions were asked, participants stated that they largely preferred to keep work relationships strictly professional in nature and that they did not feel comfortable with colleagues or leaders crossing into the realm of friendship. Further follow-up revealed that those holding this sentiment believed that they might be judged for their personal behavior, the way they lived their lives, or that the concept of friendship in the workplace would entail expectations for special treatment and that they were uncomfortable with that.

Table 4also summarizes the data on the central research question regarding the characteristics

of the ideal leadership style for motivating employees in Egyptian organizations. Research sub question 8 explored the overlap participants saw the characteristics of an ideal leader and those found in transformational leaders. For the purposes of answering the central research question, characteristics of ideal leaders explicitly stated by participants that could also be identified as being present in transformational leaders were grouped together under one of the main tenets of transformational leadership that characterized such behaviors: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration(Bass,1985).For example, individualized consideration/tending to needs and feelings of follower's covers a wide range of behaviors identified by participants as being present in the ideal leader. Behavior such as leaders making employees feels appreciated, encouraging employee growth, being empathetic, showing interested in employee ideas, and being interested in more than just money were thus placed under this broader category. Offering intellectual stimulation covered factors identified by participants such as showing interest in employee ideas and opinions, supporting new concepts at work, and encouraging employee growth.Idealized influence encompassed factors such as being interested in more than just money, willingness to receive constructive criticism, being trustworthy, and trusting of followers. Other prominent characteristics that were not as easily classified were identified on their own.

Table 4

<i>Egyptian Employees' Descriptions of the Relationship between the Characteristics of Transformational leaders and Ideal Leaders</i>		<i>Characteristics of the Ideal Leadership Style for Motivating Employees in Egyptian Organizations</i>	
Factors	Percentage of Participants Identifying	Factors	Percentage of participants identifying
Favorable attitudes towards individualized consideration/tending to needs and feelings of followers	100	Offer individualized consideration	100
Favorable attitudes towards intellectual stimulation in the	94	Offer intellectual stimulation	94



workplace			
Favorable attitudes towards	88	Offer idealized	88
idealized influence/leaders as		influence	
role models			
Favorable attitudes towards	82	Offer inspirational	82
inspirational motivation to		motivation	
achieve lofty goals			
Preference to not have leaders	76	Do not micromanage	76
as friends/involved in personal			
matters			
		Preference to not have	76
		leaders as friends	
		Available, easily	59
		accessible	
		Strong communicators	53
		Friendly	41
		Not threatened by	
		success of followers	

Piecing together how the different factors identified in this research interrelate facilitated the process of developing a theory for the ideal leadership style for Egyptian organizations. At its core, the proposed theory highly resembles transformational leadership theory. Extremely high levels of overlap were identified between behaviors associated with each of the four core tenets of transformational leadership theory: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation and participants' conception of the ideal organizational leader (Ismail, Reza, & Mahdi, 2012). In addition to the aforementioned overlaps, there are several considerations suggested based on the results of the research.

In addition to a foundation built upon the principles of transformational leadership theory, participants identified the desire for hands-off leaders that do not micromanage. Leaders who are easily accessible, strong communicators, and who are not threatened by the success of followers were the most desirable in the eyes of participants. These traits are likely to be possessed by many effective leaders, with those who adopt transformationally, laissez-faire, or

participative leadership styles being the most likely to possess these traits (Al-Khasawneh & Futa, 2013; Arnold & Loughlin, 2013; Kovjanic, Schuh, Jonas, Quaquebeke, & Dick, 2012). Although these traits are not exclusive to transformational leaders, they are all commonly displayed by transformational leaders.

The most significant element of the proposed theory that could be considered to run counter to what is typically found among transformational leaders is the strong desire participants related for leaders who did not blur the lines between amiability in the workplace and friendship. An overwhelming number of participants related that while they enjoyed the idea of a leader who is friendly in nature and who catered to their personal needs, they did not want such relationships to extend beyond the workplace or to involve having their leaders be familiar with aspects of their personal life including matters related to family, finance, and leisure activities. The individualized consideration component of transformational leadership largely revolves around the individual attention followers receive from their leaders (Groves & LaRocca, 2011). As mentors deeply involved with their followers, transformational



leaders are typically familiar with the personal and professional needs of their followers (Bass,1985;Gandolfi,2012). This research revealed that Egyptian professionals in business organizations are not comfortable with the idea of their leaders being familiar with their personal lives and therefore this consideration should be accounted for by leaders trying to adopt such an approach to leadership in an Egyptian organizational context.

The different elements of the proposed theory brought together to reveal that the ideal form of leadership for Egyptian business organizations is a modified version of transformational leadership. The proposed leadership style should be built upon the four major tenets of transformational leadership theory, implemented by a leader who is a strong communicator has an amicable personality, and ideally implemented in a work environment characterized by a low power distance. The individual should be able to navigate the professional environment in such a way that they are capable of showing genuine care and interest in matters deemed important to their followers on a personal level without crossing into a relationship that would be deemed friendship in a non-professional capacity.

Discussion

Key findings include that Egyptian professional in business organizations have a largely negative view of the interactions they have with their organizational leaders and the motivational techniques they encounter in the workplace. Relationships with leaders are characterized by large power distances and leaders are deemed dictatorial in nature, uneven in their treatment of followers, and poor at communicating. Participants identified high levels of boredom in the workplace, a lack of productivity, and a tendency to align performance with what is required to receive annual bonuses or promotions. Participants also related low levels of job satisfaction and high levels of apathy in the workplace. The majority of participants also felt that the leadership styles they experienced limited their ability to achieve their long-term career goals. The conception of the ideal organizational leader for participants was an individual characterized as being trustworthy, trusting, easily accessible, relatively hands-off, and empathetic towards followers.

That participant held largely negative views regarding the majority of leadership behaviors and employee motivation techniques they presently experience in their organizations was one of the key findings. This research also established that the behaviors and attitudes exemplified by organizational leaders in Egyptian business organizations align with the characteristics of transactional and autocratic leadership styles.

Transactional leaders tend to use their formal positions of power and the ability to offer or withhold rewards their primary tool for motivation(Bass,1985; Burns,1978). An overwhelming number of participants in this study stated that monetary incentives were commonly used as the primary source of motivation they received from their leaders(See Table-1). Furthermore, the vast majority of participants revealed that their job performance was typically aligned with what was required to earn financial bonuses or promotions(See Table 2), revealing that their primary motivation was a reward they wanted to earn. Such behavior is typical in workplaces characterized by transactional leadership and can lead to diminished effort and a lack of achievement in the workplace (Shanker, Bhanugopan,&Fish,2012). Transactional leaders also have a tendency to favor established practices, routines, and ways of doing things without experimenting with techniques or newer ways of carrying out routine practices. Participants in this study related an inability for their leaders to accept new or creative ideas as well as having a tendency to preserve the status quo in the workplace(See Table 3), once again linking the practices participants' experiences with transactional leadership. Transactional leadership tends to be prevalent in culture driven societies, something Egypt can easily be classified as, so its prevalence in Egyptian business organizations is not surprising(The Hofstede Center,2014;Lee& Liu,2012). Transactional leaders while prevalent in Egypt are not the only kind of leader commonly found.

The prevalence of autocratic leadership in Egyptian business organizations was also established. Leadership that is autocratic in nature has a tendency to limit decision-making solely to formally designated leaders thus leaving followers feeling excluded(See Table 1). Participants in this study described their leaders as being inaccessible, not empathetic to



follower needs, dictatorial in manner, and commonly wielding intimidation techniques to get their ways (See Table 1). In spite of its prevalence, autocratic leadership is far from ideal for the contemporary global business environment as it can leave employees feeling disenfranchised, ineffective, and unable to achieve to their maximum potential (Hopen 2010; Sakiru et al., 2013). Many of the tendencies this research revealed about organizational leadership in Egypt can be traced to cultural factors more than any perceived effectiveness of the leadership styles.

National culture has a profound effect on leadership styles (Lee & Liu, 2012; Neves & Melé, 2013). Examining the results of this study through the lens of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory and the six dimensions included in its framework: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity, long-term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint, can further enhance the understanding of the findings of this study (Hofstede, 1983; Mirabela & Madela, 2013). The scores that Egypt received on the six dimensions are consistent with what participants related to their experiences with leadership styles and employee motivation.

Egypt score on the masculinity index was 45, revealing that Egyptian society tends to be rather masculine in nature. A high score on the masculinity index tends to suggest a society with workplaces that are authoritarian in nature and focused on the pursuit of material success (Herrera, Duncan, Green, Ree, & Skaggs, 2011; The Hofstede Center, 2014; Mirabela & Madela, 2013). That rewards linked to monetary gain or formal positions of power and status were the most common motivators used by organizational leaders was confirmed in this study. Furthermore, the majority of participants identified with the sentiment that their organizational leaders were dictatorial in the manner (See Table 1).

With a score of 80 for uncertainty avoidance, Egyptian society can be categorized as extremely risk-averse. Cultures with a high level of uncertainty avoidance tend to have organizations characterized by rigid codes of conduct, only a small range of accepted behaviors, and a low tolerance for ideas and behaviors that deviate from established norms (Herrera et al., 2011; The Hofstede Center, 2014; Mirabela & Madela, 2013). The findings of this study

confirm these assertions with participants reporting rigidity in the workplace, boredom due to established routines, and a desire for more freedom and support for new concepts in the workplace (See Tables 1, 2, and 3).

On the long-term orientation (pragmatism) index, Egyptian society received a score of 7. As a short-term oriented culture, Egyptians have a tendency to place a lower value on future circumstances than on preserving the past and present. For organizational life, such behavior tends to manifest in a preservation of the status quo and respect for traditional methods (The Hofstede Center, 2014). Once again, the findings in this study confirmed what the cultural dimensions index suggested. Organizational leaders in Egyptian business organizations were revealed to be rigid, unaccepting of new ideas and as having a tendency to cling to traditional forms of organizational leadership (See Tables 1 and 2).

Egyptian society received a score of 70 for power distance, meaning that it is characterized by high power distances with rigid, hierarchical power structures that tend to remain intact unquestioningly. Such an assessment is consistent with what participants related regarding their workplaces. Over three-fourths of participants described their organizational leaders as inaccessible due to a large power distance and reported an inhibiting ceiling for advancement within the formal hierarchy of the organization were reported by many participants (See Tables 1 and 3).

Egypt received a 38 on the individualism index. The low score Egyptian society holds on the individualism index reveals that Egyptian society has a tendency towards collectivist behaviors. Within the context of organizational life, collectivist societies tend to allow membership or affiliation with important or influential groups influence employment opportunities and the treatment individuals receive within an organization. Career advancement is also often tied to membership in various groups of this nature (Herrera et al., 2011; The Hofstede Center, 2014; Mirabela & Madela, 2013). The majority of participants in this study confirmed these tendencies by reporting that they believed that a lack of fairness characterized the interactions of their organizational leaders with different followers (See Table-1). Furthermore,



participants related an overwhelming general sense of dissatisfaction with their jobs due to the leadership styles they encountered, with the majority of participants stating that they were unable to achieve their larger, long-term career goals with their organizations (See Tables 2 and 3).

On the whole, this research confirmed what prior research and the literature have revealed about the current state of leadership in the Arab World and Egypt. More importantly than confirming findings in the literature, this study revealed that Egyptian professionals in business organizations have a largely negative view of the interactions they have with their organizational leaders and the motivational techniques they encounter in the workplace. They feel underutilized, dissatisfied, and unable to actualize their potential to be satisfied and achieve their utmost in the workplace. The proposed ideal practices for motivating and leading Egyptian professionals in business organizations, in fact, share very little with what is currently being practiced in the majority of these organizations.

The interview guide utilized in this research facilitated exploration of the perspectives of Egyptian professionals and their relationship to leadership and employee motivation. The guide focused on two primary themes, the first was the lived experiences of Egyptian professionals with respect to the leadership and motivational techniques they had experienced in their places of employment and the second was the feelings of the participants towards the tenets of transformational leadership.

Despite the absence of transformational leadership behaviors in Egyptian business organizations, and cultural tendencies that would seemingly make transformational leadership practices unpopular with Egyptians, participants were very accepting and open to the prospect of leadership and motivational techniques that align with those found with transformational leaders (The Hofstede Center, 2014). Participants in this study related an overwhelming amount of overlap between the characteristics of their ideal organizational leader and the characteristics of a transformational leader (See Table 3).

The ideal organizational leader for participants is trustworthy, trusting, easily accessible, relatively hands-off, and empathetic towards

followers. They are also conceived of as being strong communicators, willing to receive constructive criticism, supportive of new concepts, and interested in employee ideas and opinions (See Table 3). Despite the overwhelmingly positive feelings participants held towards leaders with the characteristics of transformational leaders, there was a major consideration that data revealed regarding the manifestation of the tenet of individualized consideration, a component of transformational leadership dealing with the individual attention followers receive from their leaders. When practicing individualized consideration, it is not uncommon for leaders to become familiar the personal and professional needs of their followers (Bass, 1985; Gandolfi, 2012). This research revealed that Egyptian professionals in business organizations are not comfortable with the idea of their leaders being familiar with their personal lives and therefore this modification to transformational leadership theory should be considered an important element of the ideal theory for leadership in Egyptian business organizations.

The ideal theory for leadership in Egyptian business organizations proposed closely resembles transformational leadership theory. This research affirmed that Egyptian professionals are very receptive to the majority of the aspects of transformational leadership theory but with a potentially important exception, ensuring that the lines between a professional relationship and personal friendship are not blurred in the process of leading followers.

Conclusions

Transformational leadership is a flexible and effective approach to leadership. It has repeatedly been suggested to be one of the best leadership models for motivating diverse groups of individuals in an ever-changing global business environment (Gandolfi, 2012; Ismail et al, 2011; Warrick, 2011). This exploratory research provided a great deal of understanding and insight into the nature of employee motivation and leadership styles in Egyptian business organizations. The lived experiences of Egyptian professionals in business organizations with respect to their organizational leaders, their perceptions of the ideal organizational leader, their feelings about the tenets of transformational leadership theory, and how leadership styles influence their job performance, job



satisfaction, and the achievement of their career-related goals were all related. This study not only helped explore the current state of organizational leadership and employee motivation within Egyptian business organizations but also culminated in the development of a theory for the ideal leadership style for Egyptian employees. Organizational leadership and employee motivation are some of the most

pressing matters facing organizations and organizational stakeholders alike in the global business environment. The information gleaned from this research not only has great implications for theory and practice, but also for the ability of Egyptian organizations to effect positive social change with respect to their numerous stakeholders.

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