

Leadership Styles: A Study of Managers in Bahraini Organizations

Hajee, Zahra R.¹, Al Hashemi, Suhaila E.²

^{1,2}Department of Management and Marketing, University of Bahrain, Bahrain
(¹zhajibussuob@yahoo.com, ²suhailabrahim@yahoo.com)

Abstract- Leadership is considered to be a vital element in organizations today which include: vision creation, goals accomplishments, ambition, self-awareness, character and skills in tuning into others' emotions, through the ability to establish relationships and bonds. The literature provides an insight into the topic but it focuses on research conducted in the West and particularly in the United States. Little material is available on leadership in the Gulf area. This article examines the relationship between these two concepts, within the context of national and organizational culture in Bahrain.

The research covered five major organizations in Bahrain: petrochemicals, petroleum, telecommunications, shipbuilding and repair, and banking. It examined the relationship between six leadership styles (Coercive, Authoritative, Affiliation, Democratic, Pacesetter and Coaching), and components of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social skills) identified by Goleman (2000). The research adopted a deductive approach using the Emotional Competency Inventory as well as interviews with 103 executives and managers. The research found that the six leadership styles were used by the executives. National and corporate culture influenced such leadership styles. The standardized tests used need to be adjusted to suit the culture in Bahrain. The findings of this research therefore add a new dimension (namely, national and corporate culture in the Gulf Region) to the concept of emotional intelligence.

Keywords- *Leadership Styles, Emotional Intelligence, National Culture, Corporate Culture.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Leadership has been a focal point and debate among many scholars and practitioners (such as Caruso, Mayer & Salovey, 2001; Fineman, 2003; George, 2000; Goleman, 2004). What leaders ought to and should do and what leaders can in practice do, to get the performance and results for which they aim, eludes many experts (AlHashemi, 1987). These experts are constantly searching for an answer to the question 'what kind of leadership approach or behavior would transform an organization's performance?' Leadership is proving to be even more vital nowadays, with the change in the nature of the workplace, changes in the business environment, organizations eliminating

layers of hierarchy towards achieving flatter structures, changes in societies as well as changes in the markets (Hay Group, 1999). Leaders are therefore required to clarify their values, develop new strategies, learn new ways of operating businesses, focusing on corporate social responsibility, managing people and being emotionally intelligent (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2001).

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing leaders is mobilizing people to do adaptive or challenging work (Hesselbein, 1996; 2000). Some authors believe that leadership is "something you are born with," (Higgs & Dulewicz, 1999 p.85; Hock, 2000 p.6).

Sullivan (2000) stresses leadership as being the most important element for organizations. Different authors define leadership in different ways but they appear to share common ideas or key words like: creating a vision, accomplishing goals, taking charge, developing others and having a character (Bennis, 1999; Cummings & Worley, Goleman, 1998; 1993; Kotter, 1998; Pagonis, 2000). Each writer concentrates on a specific aspect of leadership Champy (2000) for instance emphasizes leaders as having ambition; Leider (1996) stresses self-leadership as being essential for managing change and others towards success; Pagonis (2001) views leadership as an emotionally laden process. Smith (1996) views leadership as 'the following part of a leader;' entailing leaders to learn how to follow their vision, and encouraging all the people to fulfill the organization's vision. Such leaders are also responsible for their own development. Research goes further by pointing out those leaders with the best results do not rely on only one leadership style but a combination depending on the situation (Goleman, 2000). Other writers emphasize emotional intelligence along with leadership as key elements in organizational success (Goleman, 1998; Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2001; Merlevede, Bridoux & Vandamme, 2001; Orme, 2001; Orme & Cannon, 2000).

The majority of research into leadership has been located in the Western economy. Research into its applicability in different context is limited. In this article, these concepts are applied to a 'Bahrain context'. Bahrain is a country which plays a major role in the Gulf Region in maintaining political stability, and in the Gulf cooperation council, and is considered as a major financial centre serving the region and internationally. Bahrain is also considered as one of the Gulf's

most advanced economies and most progressive political systems (www.heritage.org)(31.01.2007).

II. BAHRAIN AS THE STUDY'S CONTEXT

It is assumed that Bahraini executives or managers live and work in a society whose social structure, with all its diversity, has some distinctive features that have considerable impact on them (Alhashemi, 1987). Hofstede (1991) describes a national culture as a reflection of the overall general culture; a mere extension of the general culture with no visible tension between the two. Bahrain's culture is characterized by Islamic beliefs, traditions, and norms of behavior. It is a culture in which traditions and the extended family are powerful enough to reflect themselves both in its institutions and the interpersonal relationships of its members not just in Bahrain but throughout the Gulf States. It is not the least unusual in the Gulf to find the same family names in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman & United Arab Emirates. The influence of both the nuclear and extended family is based on a strong patriarchal system, ensuring that the father is always a towering figure (as explained by the Follow-up Bureau for GCC Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs Council, 1994). This implies that an average manager relies heavily on personalized and informal methods and styles in the management of his organization.

It can be argued that an executive or a manager in the Gulf area is viewed as a person who is at the helm of his organization, which is perceived as an open social system embedded in the larger system of community and society (Muna, 2003). Viewed from this perspective, one may regard the manager as being both a target and an agent of social influence and change (Muna, 2003). According to AlHashemi (1987), social pressures as well as business pressures impinge on the attitudes and behavior of a typical manager. The term social pressure refers here to the expectations, constraints or demands which society places on individuals. These pressures originate from, and are shaped by socio-cultural values, norms and mores that seem to have their roots in a long history of traditions, religion, and popular belief systems. The fact that the social cohesion in the Gulf area has proven its resilience despite the many tests to which it has been put does not – and should not – cloud the fact that it is coming increasingly under pressure and challenges ranging from the pressures of modern living having their toll on family ties, to materialistic and individualistic values propagated through the following: Consumerism; exposure to international media; widening the gap between old and young; the increasingly demographic imbalance created mainly by having about two third of the population below the age of 30, not to mention the demographic strains created by having to host sizeable expatriate contingents (AlHashemi, 1996). With such challenges, it is argued that leadership and emotional intelligence are one of the most elusive keys to organizational success (Goleman, 2000), especially under circumstances where the rate of change in economies, market and industries is outgrowing the ability of the conventional corporate structure to cope with. The researcher believes that Goleman's (2000) research could contribute towards investigating the relevance and applicability of his findings to the Bahrain's context. The

Western concepts of leadership and emotional intelligence may not be applicable to an Islamic culture setting. Therefore, this study aims to explore EI and leadership within Bahrain study and bringing out both national and corporate issues.

III. AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this study is to examine: the six leadership styles (Coercive, Authoritative, Affiliation, Democratic, Pacesetter, and Coaching), and the different components of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social skills) identified by Goleman (2000); the different leadership styles used by Bahraini managers and their level of emotional intelligence; cultural factors (corporate and national) that influence emotional intelligence and leadership styles. The deductive approach was used for this research based on a post-positivist philosophy, which requires the researcher to begin with abstract theory so as to create new observations (Gill & Johnson, 1997; Morse & Field; 2002), in trying to understand the cultural differences and experiences (Trochim, 2000) of managers within the Bahrain context (refer to fig 1).

IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Having read the literature on the topic, followed by discussions with some of the colleagues in the field of management and key managers of the organizations under study, the research approach, strategy and philosophy was decided. The strategy was to have a research design including a pilot study, data collection, data analysis and interpretation. Due to the nature of the topic, a multi-case research design was adopted with five major organizations in Bahrain covering the following sectors: manufacturing, telecommunications, banking, ship repair and petrochemicals. They were chosen because of their major contribution towards the economy of Bahrain, and being well-known successful companies. In addition the research had access to information in these organizations. The research approach followed was a deductive one using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, taking into consideration answers to research questions and testing of a hypothesis (discussed in section 1.4). The questionnaires adopted included: Managerial Style Inventory (MSI) and Emotional Competency Inventory (ECI). Other data collection was in the form of company reports, performance evaluation and interviews at the top, middle and supervisory levels of management with a sample size of 103 out of a total population of 250.

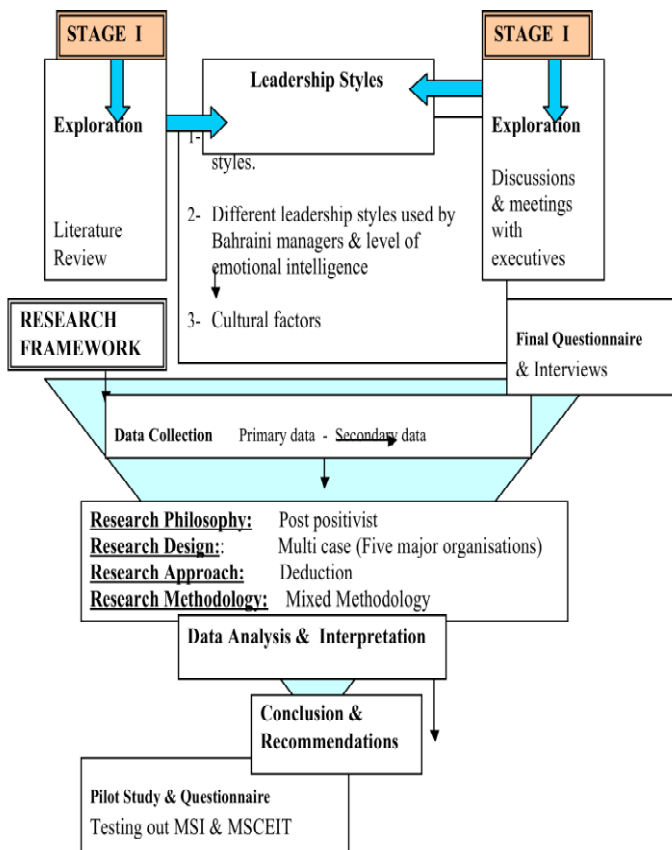


Fig 1 Diagram illustrating the research process of this study

3. What cultural factors in Bahrain influence the applicability of emotional intelligence and leadership styles?
4. What are the implications of conducting such research in Bahrain?

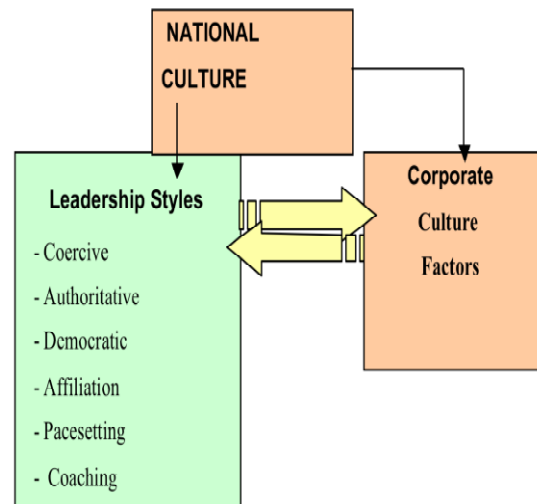


Fig 2 Hypothesis and the various factors under investigation

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Considerable literature on the concept of leadership has originated from the West based on research carried out in the context of advanced industrial economies. Very limited research has been conducted in the field in the Arabian Gulf countries and consequently hardly any literature is available on the subject of leadership. This paper is an attempt to extend the knowledge base and to fill in some of the gaps in this area. It is expected that the findings can also provide a foundation for further research in the Gulf area in the field of leadership styles in the Arabic culture. Furthermore, the study will help in revealing cultural issues in using standardized American tests. Hofstede (1980) indicates that theories developed in the West in particular United States do not address cultural differences and are difficult to apply in every culture. This study will explore this issue in relation to the concepts of leadership style and emotional intelligence.

VI. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

The research identified five specific questions as follows:

1. What are the leadership styles followed on Organizations in Bahrain?
2. Do managers in Bahrain rely on one or a combination of styles?

VII. RESULTS

The participants occupied the following managerial ranks: 31% are managers, 16% Superintendents, 12% Specialists, 10% Senior Managers, 6% Supervisors, 5% Auditors, 5% Administrators, 2% Assistant General Managers, 2% Engineers, 2% are Trainers, and (6%) did not report their position.

In terms of their education level, Fig.3 shows the percentages of the different educational levels. The majority BSC holders (37%) and the minority are PhDs (2%). Master's Degree holders consisted of 32% of the sample and 19% were Diploma holders. This sample appears to be well educated with all the managers possessing a high, post-school qualification. The study was not confined to specific departments but covered a sample from across the organization to include a range of departments as follows: Information Technology, Finance, Service Management, Business Development, Marketing, Electronic Banking, Operations, Human Resource, Engineering, Maintenance, Administration, Public Relations, Quality Assurance, Risk Management, and Power & Utilities.

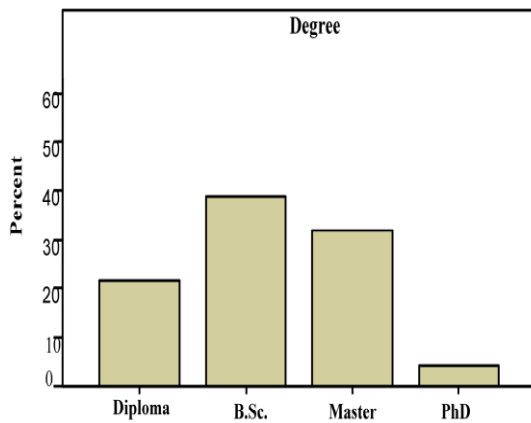


Fig. 3 The profile of informants: Education level

VIII. OUTCOME OF MANAGERIAL STYLE INVENTORY (MSI)

The MSI also known as the Inventory of Leadership Styles (ILS) is a 68-item multi-rater survey which provides managers with a profile of their managerial styles on six dimensions: Coercive, Authoritative, Affiliative, Democratic, Pacesetting and Coaching. Detailed explanation of the Inventory is covered in Chapters 2 and 4.

In interpreting and analyzing data regarding the MSI, there are some factors which need to be taken into consideration. First of all, the MSI questionnaire tends to draw on general assessments over time ('your manager does' rather than 'your manager did in this situation'). Such correlations would indicate cumulative effect of a style repeated over time and in a variety of situations rather than a specific situation. Secondly, the administration of the MSI is a single cut in time, and asks individuals to describe behaviors they consider characteristic of their managers. Their answers, in some cases, may be influenced by recent events, in the typical case the rater will be considering overall performance. Thus what is being examined is the impact of a pattern of behavior over time. This however must be distinguished from the impact of a feedback of a specific behavior on a specific situation. Last of all, self-report tests are subjective in nature where accurate feedback may somehow be difficult, particularly when people tend to avoid or minimize giving negative feedback.

The above points will help in understanding the outcome of MSI in this study and partially justify the interpretation of the results.

Do managers in Bahrain rely on one or a combination of styles?

To answer the above research question, correlations were investigated as well as looking at the means and standard deviations.

By looking at Table 6.4, an overall positive relationship prevails among the six leadership styles with some exceptions.

Table 1 Correlations within the six styles of leadership (of the informants)

| | Coercive | Authoritative | Affiliative | Democratic | Pacesetting | Coaching |
|---------------|----------|---------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| Coercive | 1 | .178 | .313(**) | .432(**) | .233(*) | .140 |
| Authoritative | .178 | 1 | .183 | -.378(**) | -.046 | -.269(**) |
| Affiliative | .313(**) | .183 | 1 | .176 | .094 | .188 |
| Democratic | .432(**) | -.378(**) | .176 | 1 | .372(**) | .307(**) |
| Pacesetting | .233(*) | -.046 | .094 | .372(**) | 1 | -.208(*) |
| Coaching | .140 | -.269(**) | .188 | .307(**) | -.208(*) | 1 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Referring back to Table 1 it shows that managers in Bahrain (in the five organizations under study) tend to use a variety of leadership styles. It is significant to note here that this research concurs closely with a previous study conducted by AlHashemi (1987) who also concluded that managers at that time also used a variety of leadership styles, and a recent study conducted by Al Ismaily (2006) who also found that Omani managers used a mixture of leadership styles. The Table shows a fair degree of positive relationship between the Coercive style and Affiliative (.313), and the Coercive style with Democratic (.432). The Democratic style maintained a fair degree of positive relationship with Pacesetting (.372) and Coaching (.307). It seems that using the Authoritative style reduces the use of Democratic and Coaching styles, as a negative relationship was found between Authoritative and Democratic (-.378), and Authoritative with Coaching (-.269). A negative relationship is also found between Pacesetting and Coaching (-.208), indicating that both styles are not compatible; where the use of one would reduce the use of the other.

To further support whether managers in Bahrain rely on one or a combination style and which style is favored, means and standard deviations (SD) were analyzed. The overall means and standard deviations for the Managerial Style Inventory dimensions were performed on the entire sample as one large data sample (look at Table 2). The means for all the styles are within the same range, with the lowest-scored mean being Democratic (3.11) and the highest Authoritative (3.75), and though the difference is narrow. The Coercive style has the next highest mean which explains how this style is being used more than the remaining styles (Affiliative, Pacesetting and Coaching). This is also supported by the feedback from the 16 executives interviewed who indicated that some managers in their organizations are still following the Coercive style, but on a lower scale than in the 1980s. As for the Affiliative and Pacesetting styles, they have almost identical means. The Table also reveals how the Democratic style was the least used as it has the lowest mean out of the other styles.

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Table 2 Summary of Means and Standard Deviations of the Six Styles of Leadership (from informants)

| Style | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|---------------|------|--------------------|
| Coercive | 3.63 | .67 |
| Authoritative | 3.75 | .54 |
| Affiliative | 3.38 | .46 |
| Democratic | 3.11 | .73 |
| Pacesetting | 3.36 | .61 |
| Coaching | 3.22 | .74 |

Nationality Findings

In order to investigate cultural issues, the styles of leadership were investigated in terms of nationality, to find out the styles used by non-Bahrainis and how the culture influenced their styles of leadership. This section attempts to answer the following research question:

Are there additional factors that need to be addressed to suit the culture in the Gulf Region?

Look at Table 3 which shows Chi-Square tests between nationality and the six styles.

Table 3 Chi-Square Test showing Nationality and the Six Leadership Styles of the informants

| Style | Pearson Chi-Square | Degrees of Freedom (df) | Assumption Significance (2-sided) |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Coercive | 23.350 | 25 | .557 |
| Authoritative | 22.053 | 24 | .576 |
| Affiliative | 24.636 | 23 | .369 |
| Democratic | 27.583 | 26 | .379 |
| Pacesetting | 15.390 | 21 | .803 |
| Coaching | 20.221 | 20 | .444 |

The above table shows no significant results for nationality because the differences between Bahrainis and non-Bahrainis for the styles are slim. This is also supported by Table 4 which shows detail means for both nationalities, and the styles which both nationalities have similar means such as Authoritative, Pacesetting and Coaching. The other styles have little variations where Non Bahrainis had a slightly higher mean such as the Affiliative, Democratic and Coercive styles. Perhaps the result that was not quite as expected is the higher rate of the mean for non-Bahrainis for Coercive style. One explanation for this could be the adaptation of the non-Bahrainis to the corporate culture in Bahrain. The result of such adaptation is using the preferred styles by managers in their organization and blending in with the corporate culture.

Table 4 Mean and Standard Deviations of informant's Nationality

| | Nationality | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---------------|--------------|----|--------|----------------|
| Coercive | Non Bahraini | 20 | 3.8560 | .51725 |
| | Bahraini | 76 | 3.5519 | .70342 |
| Authoritative | Non Bahraini | 20 | 3.7500 | .43540 |
| | Bahraini | 76 | 3.7334 | .55981 |
| Affiliative | Non Bahraini | 20 | 3.4795 | .31072 |
| | Bahraini | 76 | 3.3420 | .50522 |
| Democratic | Non Bahraini | 20 | 3.4457 | .60099 |
| | Bahraini | 76 | 3.0079 | .72120 |
| Pacesetting | Non Bahraini | 20 | 3.5393 | .34875 |
| | Bahraini | 76 | 3.3271 | .63493 |
| Coaching | Non Bahraini | 20 | 3.2667 | .70587 |
| | Bahraini | 75 | 3.2036 | .69969 |

Some of the non-Bahraini managers found that there were some similarities between the culture in organizations in Bahrain and the organizations they used to work in their own country, with slight differences. "I found that the culture in Bahrain and are very similar, where in both cultures people try to mould their style according to the leadership style." This is also supported by another study conducted in Oman by Al Ismaily (2006), where he found very little difference between Omani and non-Omanis managers when examining leadership styles. Other participants indicted that the style of leadership being followed in most organizations in Bahrain is still Autocratic, although they believe that this is gradually changing into a more Democratic style. The question raised by some of the managers is to what extent change will occur and how transparent will it be? They argued that "there are still some cultural norms that would take some time to overcome and to totally transform." According to some of the Bahraini managers (7 out of the 16), "in larger organizations, the leadership style is much more transparent due to the existence of labour unions."

It is interesting to note that one of the senior executives stated "It was always believed in Bahrain that the expatriates have more knowledge and are overall better than the Bahraini managers. Therefore, Bahraini managers had to put extra effort in order to change this view. I believe that Bahraini managers are among the best managers in the world, given the opportunity, proper training and development.... They can be among the best leaders and managers." He also stated that "International benchmarking studies by independent organizations' statement has proved the high level of Bahraini managers in this organization. This was not easy to achieve, because the managers had to overcome the various hurdles of the mental block that Bahraini managers are not capable."

The fact that there is little difference in nationality reflects the impact and role of national culture.

Outcome of the questions in the Managerial Style Inventory (MSI)

This section addresses the following research question:

1. What circumstances (situations) do they use the different styles?
2. What culture factors in Bahrain influence the use of emotional intelligence and leadership styles?

To answer the above research questions, the MSI questionnaires were analyzed. Additionally, this was also supported by the interviews conducted with 16 executives in the five organizations.

In dealing with tensions, 43% use Pacesetting style and 26% use the Coaching style. On the issue of decision making, 31% seem to follow the Pacesetting style, and only a minority use Coercive style (5%). Managers prefer to make most decisions for their subordinates, expressed by 53%. The Authoritative and Pacesetting styles are used in equal proportions when it comes to the issue of managers requiring subordinates to submit reports on their activities, where 20% follow the former and 23% use the latter style. In determining the level of output for the subordinates, 34% agree on using Pacesetting style, where 26% use the Democratic style. In giving instructions to subordinates, two styles were used in equal proportions, 20% for both Affiliative and Democratic, 18% used the authoritative and 16% followed the Pacesetting. When it comes to reviewing subordinates' outcome, the style used is in favor of Pacesetting, as 26.2% agreed to that, and the rest of the styles have almost similar percentages except for the Coercive style, only 6% use this style. As for carrying out important tasks, it seems that managers prefer to do such tasks themselves to make sure it is carried out effectively, as 30% said they followed the Pacesetting style, where 21% let their employees participate, 13% use Affiliative, and 11% use the Authoritative. Developing close relationships with subordinates and managers seem to be favored, as 39% indicated using the Authoritative style, 17% use the Affiliative style, and 23% dictate relationships.

In terms of taking over a task from a subordinate, 34% do not seem to hesitate to do that because they are perfectionist and the outcome is vital to them, the rest consider the subordinates' feelings regarding this matter. Nonetheless, when subordinates' work begins to fall short, few of the managers would take over the task: 48% indicated following the Authoritative style, 26% follow Affiliative style, but 15% use force. Yet when it comes to explaining the task to subordinates, 31% use Pacesetting style to ensure immediate task accomplishment, 23% follow the Democratic style, and 14% follow the Authoritative style. Managers encourage employees to refer to them when they need help, while others prefer that subordinates act as advisors to one another. Several managers strive to be productive through perfecting things and guiding people (25%). Other managers try to be popular through using a mixture of styles. The outcome shows 42% of the managers are perfectionist when it comes to achieving tasks

that subordinates fail in, and 18% are democratic about it, and only a small percentage follow the Coercive style. In terms of being involved in the subordinates' work, 32% seem to get involved in their progress, 23% provide direction, and 12% are involved in every step. Managers have a habit of checking on subordinates' progress until their assigned tasks are due, as 32% follow the Pacesetting, 19% are Democratic, and 29% do not check on a regular basis.

It seems that managers work in harmony with each other, as 26% spend time looking for opportunities for their subordinates' professional development, 20% follow the Authoritative style, 14% are perfectionist, and 12% give their subordinates the freedom to decide. Through such an environment, managers learn through the personal contact with subordinates to use each person's talent most effectively. Work plans are developed based on the managers' ideas as 32% are perfectionist with these matters, 27% are democratic, and 17% take their subordinates' opinion and feelings into consideration. In terms of influencing others through relying on their knowledge and competence, 44% use the Authoritative, 15% are democratic, and hardly anyone uses Pacesetting and Coaching for such matters. On the other hand, 19% of the managers rely on their position to influence subordinates. Managers seem to put a great deal of effort into developing their subordinates, as 40% follow the Authoritative style and 21% use Affiliative style and only a small percentage use the Coaching style (3%). Personal problems of subordinates seem to be a concern for some managers, where 12% indicated following the Affiliative style, 36% follow the Pacesetting, and 19% are Democratic. Regarding the importance of subordinates' feelings, 57% expressed its importance, whereas 20% are not very concerned.

Issues involving subordinates in organizational matters, 34% follow the Pacesetting style, 14% would get subordinates involved because they are visionaries, and 16% follow the Coaching style. When there are changes in the company policy that require managers to discuss or announce such changes, 36% are visionaries, 31% are open to such issues, 11% are reluctant, and 10% appear to share such issues. When subordinates disagree, some managers simply tell them what must be done and others explain reasons of wanting something to be done in a certain way; 35% are in favor of following the Pacesetting style, 18% follow the Coaching style, and 20% are emotionally involved. The majority of the managers give orders to others by means of suggestion and being democratic about it. In terms of disciplining subordinates, 35% follow the Pacesetting style, 34% are Democratic, and 14% use their feelings in this regard. 38% of the managers strive to set difficult goals, 21% let subordinates participate in setting their goals, and 16% allow employees to express their feelings and opinions towards goal setting. At performance reviews, 25% focus on sharing the evaluation with their subordinates, assisting them on focusing ways in reaching their goals (21% for each Authoritative and Affiliative). Managers attempt to praise subordinates for their work, as 30% follow the Authoritative style, 17% implement the Democratic style and 16% use the Coercive style. Nevertheless, (35%) do not hesitate to criticize employees to get the desired outcome or to

reach a certain standard of work, whereas only a minority uses the Coercive style (2%).

When subordinates suggest alternatives, 40% of the respondents follow the Pacesetting style, 19% use Democratic and 14% use Affiliative style. It seems that subordinates are very closely supervised, as 43% use the Pacesetting style and the rest are distributed among the other styles, with the Coercive style having the least vote (6%). In sharing information and ideas through meetings, the majority is towards using the five styles of leadership, except for 29% indicated using force and threat. Regarding following instructions, the majority are towards expecting employees to follow instructions when necessary.

The above discussion supports Goleman's (2000) findings and reveal how managers use and switch between the six leadership styles depending on the task and situation at hand.

The overall impression on the Questionnaires, its Relevancy to the Corporate and National Culture in Bahrain

With a sample size of (n=33), 91% thought that the questions in general were comprehensive, relevant and applicable to all organizations in Bahrain. They stated that most of the questions covered basic aspects, which are followed in all organizations around the world. As for the topics covered in the questionnaires, 40% regard it as interesting and significant such as: human relations, behavior, attitude, emotions and feelings, along with competencies which the respondents believe to be crucial for many organizations not only in Bahrain but anywhere in the world. Only a small percentage (15%) considered the questionnaires to be unique, and provided a useful way of diagnosing oneself. In terms of the structure, 40% said the questionnaires were organized, well presented, the questions were simple and straightforward, and they enjoyed answering.

On the other hand, 25% of the respondents found the questionnaires to be complicated and time-consuming, requiring intense concentration from the respondents. 18% felt that some of the questions had no mid-point and some questions were general and broad in scope, while other questions did not have the same focus. They also thought that it was difficult to make choices among these questions due to the difficulty in observing the situation and the relationship that exists between the manager and the subordinate. It is interesting to note that 30% of the respondents expressed that some of the questions were actually culture-bound and more Westernized, especially that the questionnaire was developed in the United States, making it more Americanized. They felt that there were some questions that did not capture the Arab culture. The following general comments were raised by some of the participants regarding the questionnaires (both the ECI and MSI):

Some questions had no mid-point, where respondents could not pinpoint an exact scale measure. For instance: 'When subordinates fail at a task, my manager lets them learn the reasons themselves,' and the other statement 'My manager does not hesitate to fire or transfer a person he/she considers to

be unmanageable.’ One of the respondents suggested that he uses a coaching style to help his employees establish the reasons. So he could not pinpoint a number on the scale as the question contained a statement that had no mid-point.

‘My manager helps subordinates think through the ‘who, when, and how’ of completing tasks’ and the other choice is: ‘My manager lets subordinates find ways to complete their tasks themselves.’ The question was not applicable to all of the participants because some of them simply tell their employees what to do. Some of the questions contained words which were misinterpreted by some of the respondents or were not fully understood: ‘My manager holds moderate standards of performance for subordinates’

Overall Impression of Managerial Style Inventory (MSI)

There were few comments concerning some of the questions in the MSI both the manager’s version and the employee. Beginning with the manager’s, the following comments were raised.

‘I work to develop close personal relationships with subordinates.’ Due to the culture in Bahrain, being in an Islamic setting, this tends to be difficult when it comes to women establishing personal relationships with men at work.

‘I am reluctant to fire or transfer a person I have found to be unmanageable.’ Such an issue is seen as too sensitive, especially with the Bahrainisation of jobs and the policy against discharging Bahrainis without sound justification.

‘I spend time looking for opportunities for my subordinates’ professional development.’ In some organizations, managers strive to develop employees and motivate them to further progress, but there are limits for promotions. So while the manager would very much like to see his/her employee progress, nothing further can be given or done due to the company’s policy.

‘I avoid talking to my subordinates about organizational issues until clear decisions have been made,’ and ‘I encourage my subordinates to participate in most decision making.’ These questions are considered as too general by some of the respondents, indicating that some managers may not discuss such issues with their employees. This is again due to cultural norms and politics at work.

‘I avoid disciplining my subordinates.’ This question is regarded as somewhat culturally sensitive, as it is similar to confrontation. Managers try to complement others especially with managers in the same rank and higher.

‘I spend as little time as possible on my subordinates’ job security and fringe benefits,’ ‘I often reward performance that is adequate.’ Job security and fringe benefits vary greatly between private and government organizations. Some of the respondents referred to this question as depending on the company policy.

Given the detailed description of the two instruments used in this research study, it is equally important to shed light on the target population and sample along with the pilot study conducted prior to distributing the questionnaires, in an attempt to get some feedback and comments.

IX. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The results of this research proved the hypothesis that there is a moderate relationship between the six leadership styles identified by Goleman (2000) and the various components of emotional intelligence. It also revealed that these managers possessed moderate to high levels of emotional intelligence. The analysis shows that corporate culture (which is part of and is influenced by the national culture) plays a role and can influence some of the leadership styles and components of emotional intelligence. The results also suggest that the national culture is an important element to be taken into consideration when designing and applying standardised measurements or tests. The study also shows that the six leadership styles are being used and applied by managers in Bahrain depending on the situation at hand, the nature of managerial activity and the tasks to be accomplished. There still remain some managers who continue to follow the old style by being tough and autocratic.

The Coaching and Democratic were the least used and least preferred styles out of the six. These unexpected results came from the negative correlations of the Democratic and Coaching styles. This is justified by the influence of national culture, where democracy has recently been introduced and is gradually taking shape. As pointed out by the 16 executives, the corporate culture in Bahrain is changing towards a more democratic and open approach. The managers interviewed agreed that employees nowadays are given the opportunity to express their opinions freely, participate in the decision making process and planning. Furthermore, managers are becoming more transparent in dealing with change and leadership styles. Nevertheless there still remain some difficulties such as confronting employees or leaving matters being ‘swept under the carpet.’ They indicated that this shift is gradually taking place, and that it would take some time when more democracy is practiced at various levels in all organizations in Bahrain. The managers also expressed their concern towards the minority of people who have negative attitudes towards democracy and change, as they consider this may hinder progress. They stated that they strive to make the workplace appealing for employees, through activities that help bring employees together especially after working hours. Another unexpected result came from the positive correlations of the Coercive leadership style that is normally negative correlations. The Affiliative style yielded low correlations, but was expected to have a stronger relationship with the emotional intelligence competencies due to the nature of the style. No significant results were found in terms of nationality and gender, although the only unexpected result came from the non-Bahrainis using the Coercive style at a slightly higher rate than Bahrainis. In terms of the emotional competencies, the managers showed high levels of competencies such as empathy, developing others, inspiration leader, and influence.

Various issues and concerns were raised by the 16 managers (in an interview) with regards to components of the questions in the questionnaire, the challenges that face managers in Bahrain, the style of leadership followed in their organization and in other organizations in Bahrain. The challenges that face managers in Bahrain as pointed out by the managers included: coping with the speed of change, creating a healthy working environment, globalization, competition, training and human resources, leadership style used, diversity, political environment, lack of natural resources, increase in population, economic constraints, and labor unions. The majority of managers emphasized the internal challenges in the country such as changes in the laws and shifts in people's needs. Another concern raised was the issue of competition, whether it was locally or internationally, and its impact on various aspects of the organization.

The questionnaires and interviews indicate clearly that managerial behavior in the Gulf region is heavily influenced by the social structure, and by values, norms and expectations of people. What is sometimes overlooked is that deep-rooted values and norms are slow to change, particularly when managers find themselves in an uneasy situation when introducing change in leadership style or up-to-date with scientific methods in their organizations. It can be assumed that managers in the Gulf region have been conditioned or socialized by common managerial practices and problems and that they are aware of and influenced by a commercial tradition that dates back to many centuries (Badawy, 1980). The use of personal ties and connections is evident in a wide range of activities (Al Ismaily, 2006). This has become an important and necessary means of doing business. However, managers share with each other exposure to modern business conditions through formal education and/or interaction with other Arabic and Western businessmen. The analysis also reveals that the majority of the executives are gradually changing with the change in the new political environment, as one executive said "so such managers will have to try to adapt to this change or they will find it very difficult to survive. Such managers must realize that in this new setting they will have to learn to be perhaps more approachable and be more open, setting examples for others to follow."

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Zahra R Hajee, Assistant Professor - Department of Management & Marketing, College of Business Administration- University of Bahrain. Email: zhajibussuob@yahoo.com

Suhaila AlHashmei, Assistant Professor – Department of Management & Marketing, College of Business Administration- University of Bahrain. Email: suhailaebrahim@yahoo.com