

HOW ARAB EXECUTIVES LEARN

By

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Educational Psychology and Educational Technology – Doctor of Philosophy

2015

ABSTRACT

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This exploratory investigation aims to identify best practices associated with classroom-based professional development programs and examine the relationship between culture (both values and geographical regions) and learning preferences of Arab leaders. Existing research indicates that approaches to learning vary across cultures and that incongruence exists between modern (i.e., imported Western) pedagogical models and traditional orientations to learning typically found in the Arab classroom. Yet empirical research in the Arab world around best practices and learning preferences of executives has been scarce. In this study, I raise five key research questions: (a) What are the most effective Arab leadership development practices (i.e. learning activities, leadership competencies, motivation enablers, barriers to participation, instructor's characteristics and learning environment) as identified by business and international management experts? (b) What are the similarities and differences between experts' and Arab learners' views of best leadership development practices? (c) How do regional differences relate to learning preferences of Arab executives? (d) How do cultural dimensions relate to Arab executives' learning preferences? and, (e) How do executives' characteristics (i.e. gender, sector, age and education background) relate to Arab preferences for leadership development? These research questions are addressed through the analysis of three sets of existing data. First, the Delphi process was utilized to survey 24 experts in the field of executive education to determine the factors that they deem significant in influencing the effectiveness of the design and delivery of leadership professional development programs. This survey was followed by eight face-to-

face interviews to elucidate issues (e.g., gender and cultural sensitivity), which arose from the Delphi process. The third phase of data collection used a forced-choice method questionnaire administered to more than 1,500 business leaders from 17 different countries, carried out by internet exchange, telephone and written correspondence. This large-scale survey identified Arab leaders' cultural background and gauged their responses to the methods that the experts interviewed in the first two phases identified as best practices. This study analyzes the responses, limitations notwithstanding, to identify best practices related to central aspects of classroom-based professional development programs and examines the relationship between culture and Arab leaders' learning preferences. Findings encourage the appreciation of local tradition and openness to new approaches to leadership and learning.

Keywords: Arab culture, best practices, learning preferences, leadership development, motivation, barriers to participation and instructional design.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Robert E. Floden, Ph.D., Dissertation Chair:

Thank you for believing in me, broadening my perspectives, and propelling me forward. Your unequivocal investment in me through your mentorship, your wisdom, your sharp delving questions, and your teachings have given me an example of how to enact true leadership. I sincerely appreciated your kindness and unwavering respect you showed to my own thinking and being my backbone throughout this journey.

Kimberly S. Maier, Ph.D.,

Thank you for being extraordinarily generous with your time, empathy, and nurturing spirit. Thank you for your guidance, especially with the statistical analysis, which would not have been possible without your patience and mentorship. Thank you for scaffolding my learning and caring so intently about my growth as a professional, scholar and person.

Patrick Dickson, Ph.D.,

Thank you for critically and aesthetically probing into my data. You planted the seeds in me awakening a new frame of reference on how to interpret meanings behind complex and large data sets and represent the information with purpose and vision. I am sincerely grateful for your and Robin Dickson's unconditional care and support.

Steven Weiland, Ph.D.,

Thank you for engaging deeply into the contextual challenges that intersect with leadership development and stretching my thinking about the historical and contemporary

issues facing the Arab region. I am deeply grateful for your continued support and guidance.

David Wong, Ph.D. and John Dirkx, Ph.D.:

Thank you for showing me the path for how adults learn and building the blocks for this study. Your mentorship, collegiality and friendship were both an inspiration and a force energizing me to complete the story. I owe you immensely.

Geert Hofstede, Ph.D., Richard Nisbett, Ph.D., and Abbas Ali, Ph.D.:

I am deeply indebted and grateful to each of you for your rich scholarly work, which was the foundation of my conceptual framework. You have made significant impact on my growth and learning as I have developed my expertise in cultural psychology, business management and comparative research.

Family, Friends, and Colleagues:

Farouk, my son, this dissertation is dedicated to you, my proudest achievement in life. Dear husband, mother and family, thank you for laying the groundwork for my success and helping me achieve my dreams. A sincere thank you for my friends and colleagues around the world, particularly, at Michigan State University.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Political and Socioeconomic Landscape

While Arab leaders across the private and public sectors face perpetually turbulent political and socioeconomic changes, they must also deliver ambitious results that support institutional reform and economic growth. As such, unpacking effective leadership development models capable of channelling the productivity of the Arab world's human capital is vital to the stability of the region (Mameli, 2013). The globalized and complex make-up of many Arab countries calls for versatile leaders who strike a balance between indigenous and modern practices, promoting the engagement of their employees and performance of institutions. Therefore, it is critical to examine universal leadership practices against local cultural contexts and imperative to study how such flavored approaches differ across Arab executives. Identifying best practices for leadership development by drawing on experts in the region and understanding variations across executives' learning preferences will guide the effective design of classroom based leadership development programs. Customized leadership development programs would support in (a) defining ways to integrate Western practices within Arab constructed scenarios, (b) understanding key leadership qualities that executives need to move their team and organizations toward a productive, fair, and stable future, and (c) addressing the variability across executives within the Arab world. To that end, this study begins by examining the socioeconomic and political system that confronts business leaders and culminates in recommendations that enable constructive reflection on how, what and why Arabs CEOs learn, according to experts and executives' views.

Political, economic, and social forces have historically shaped both concepts of leadership and leaders' attributes and behaviors. Today, the rich yet volatile Middle East and

North Africa (MENA) region calls for deft leaders capable of tapping into the vast opportunities that lie ahead and leading their people to more secure environments in the years to come (Jreisat, 2009b). The effects of the 2011 Arab Spring--the popular revolutionary uprisings--are still reverberating across the MENA region. In the Gulf region, Kuwait and Al Bahrain, for example, are experiencing Iranian-fueled tension between Shiite and Sunni, leading to instability. Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Iraq have seen their regimes collapse in less than three years. Yemen and Syria, affected by Sunni fundamentalist ideologies (Al Qaeda and Islamic States), have collapsed into devastating civil wars. Lebanon and Palestine continue to suffer either from a lack of leadership or globally recognized statehood. Even the most stable Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) monarchies, such as Saudi Arabia, are losing their resilience and need to respond to a generational change polarized between negotiating more liberal reforms and enforcing conservative regimes. An increasingly young population-- 60% of which is under the age of 30-- is driving this tension between liberal and conservative ideologies (Future Trends in the Gulf, 2015).

The Gulf. On one hand, several gulf oil rich countries are trying to benefit from vast natural resources and push for improvements in their competitiveness (World Economic Forum & OECD, 2011). However, oil-dependent resources in many of those GCC states are proving insufficient to sustain the 'break-even' prices needed to meet the bills of their growing population heavily dependent on public-sector wages. It is estimated that hydrocarbon resources will in fact run out within the lifetime of gulf citizens born today. Furthermore, the volatility of world prices, lack of diversification of other industries, and conflicts resulting from the fair distribution of wealth among the elite and citizens who expect more in how they are governed and sharing their countries' wealth are forces that may contribute to the phenomenon known as

the Natural Resource Curse (Frankel, 2012). Thus, oil abundance in many resource rich countries may be viewed as a double-edged sword. While oil-based economies have led to short-term economic growth, the oil abundance has also led to a less developed knowledge economy. Fostering such a knowledge economy is much needed, as it could bring high-valued educational and innovative intellectual products and services independent from oil driven sectors to MENA nations.

North Africa and Levant. Other Arab states, many of which are in North Africa and the Levant, do not possess vast access to natural resources and face numerous impediments. These challenges include deterioration in security, an influx of refugees (The Associated Press, 2015), disrupted and stagnating economies, underdeveloped financial markets, corruption, and a brain drain (Iqbal, 2014). According to Khalid al-Wazani, an economist with the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the so-called “Arab brain-drain” (i.e., the loss of educated workforce to developed states) is increasing with an estimated loss of 10-15% of young Arabs in 2012 leaving their countries for better opportunities. This figure is accentuated among Levant countries (e.g., Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan) and is linked to decades of political instability (Ozden, 2006).

Even though many young Arabs are leaving the MENA region for better opportunities abroad, 2.8 million young people still enter the labor market every year. Despite the considerable differences between MENA states, the common denominator that business leaders need to confront across the three regions (North Africa, Levant and GCC) is the dire need to create employment opportunities for these young people (World Economic Forum & OECD, 2011).

Faced with adverse disparities in regional economies, political turmoil, and social unrest, Arab human capital experiences tough pressures and has significantly deteriorated since the uprisings (Khan, Ahmad, & Shah, 2014). The current environment that government and business

leaders are operating within applies three critical human capital related pressures: (a) localization of labor (also called nationalization); (b) a mismatch of skills; and (c) gender imbalance in a workforce dominated by men (Mameli, 2013).

Nationalization. Job creation is mainly hampered by the disproportionate weight of the public sector in the region's economies (e.g., 70% of non-agricultural employment in Egypt, for instance, is in the public sector) (WEF & OECD, 2012). In an attempt to reduce the heavy reliance on public sector employment of nationals, several Gulf countries are enacting policies and imposing quotas on the private sector to develop and substitute expatriates with local talent. Such regulatory measures have produced mixed results. While this policy may increase the employability of nationals, employers, whether national or foreign, are concerned that the enforced nationalization schemes will impede them from reaching their business objectives and performance indicators due to the lack of adequate qualified local workforce (World Economic Forum & OECD, 2012). Indeed, the WEF-OECD report identifies the inadequacy of skills is a key deterrent to foreign direct investment (FDI) and successful expansion of multinational industries in the region. The lack of job opportunities, underperforming educational systems (Khan, 2013), and rising living standards as a result of increasing inflation can induce instability and discontent among citizens. Around 60% of GCC citizens, for example, are under 30. Indeed, the mismatch between youth's aspirations to join the workforce and the realities of the Arab labor demand has been identified by many economists as one of the driving forces for the Arab Spring (Reinl, 2015).

Skills mismatch. The second issue facing executives is the mismatch of skills across many parts of the Arab region. Unemployment in MENA is not only featured among the unskilled and burgeoning youth population but also acute among the most educated (Chaaban,

2010). In 2005, approximately 25.3% of workers in OECD countries for which data are available were overqualified for their jobs, and 22.2% were under-qualified. One of the reasons for this pattern is a persistent gap between the skills acquired at universities and the requirements of job market. In nations where economies are stagnant (typically in the Levant), tough recruitment and firing regulations are often associated with reduced job opportunities, underutilization of overeducated talent, and the brain drain. Another reason that accentuates the mismatch is the practice of granting job opportunities based on rampant workplace discrimination, also called *wasta* (Beschel, 2010). As family businesses constitute over 85% of the whole Arab non-oil GDP, staffing and recruitment rests heavily on personal or familial connections. This system promotes a culture of nepotism over meritocracy and discourages the pursuit of education. The meritocracy index measures the degree to which businesses fill positions based on professional managers (as opposed to relatives and friends) and the relationship between pay and productivity. Results from the World Economic Forum and the OECD study (2012) showed that at least 50% of the Arab countries rank at the bottom half of the Global Competitiveness Index (i.e., 71st or below).

Gender balance. Another area of significant unrealized potential is the female labor force. The low participation of women in the labor force is widely considered as a missed opportunity for economic growth. Approximately 33% working-age women join the labor force, compared with 61% in OECD member countries. The gender gap in unemployment is the most acute in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Yemen, and Egypt, where the female unemployment rate is nearly quadruple the male unemployment rate. The male-dominated workplace is attributed partially to a patriarchal culture that is reluctant to engage women in leadership roles and decision-making processes (Maaitah, Oweis, Olimat, Altarawneh, & Al

Maaitah, 2012). Gender discriminating laws are also attributed to the gender gap. Despite such gender discriminating culture and laws, Khodr (2012) contends that several GCC cities are likely to end up largely peopled and run by women due to women's increasing access to tertiary education and recent emphasis on gender balance.

Fostering steady and sustainable growth entails addressing higher levels of formal private sector employment in the long run. Indeed, according to the WEF and OECD report on The Arab World Competitiveness (2012), employment is arguably one of the most vital development challenges for the Arab states. With that in mind, several public and private sector leaders are currently collaborating towards higher levels of diversification (across oil reliant countries), healthier competition, the creation of a dynamic economic environment for the private sector, strong private/public partnerships, the acceleration of entrepreneurship (registering only 0.6 new firms per 1,000 working-age people, compared with approximately four firms in high-income countries), an established middle class, an equalized distribution of wealth, high quality educational systems, and cultures of ethical governance and high performance.

Having competent leaders who are capable to navigate the aforementioned pressures will significantly help nations shape the supply and demand sides of job creation and competitiveness of the Arab workforce. Gainful reforms will pave the way to increased private-sector activity, enhanced market efficiency and sustainable employment that would benefit present and future generations.

Arab Leadership

Against this background, public and private sector leaders have an opportunity to contribute to and be active agents in current efforts to create a business environment that nurtures and supports the creation of a knowledge economy (e.g., UAE 1% federal budget allocation to

support innovation, UAE national plan to promote medical research and academia, and UAE transition to 80% e-government services by 2018). As leadership contributes significantly to building and engaging an inclusive workforce, the Arab region calls for leaders who are able to “influence a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2013, p. 5) amidst political instability, volatile economic landscape, and challenging pressures deeply affecting the Arab human capital. In response, this study will examine best practices needed for the development of such leaders by drawing on the views of international and business management experts. To help customize leadership development programs to suit the specific needs of Arab executives (e.g., educational background and cultural values), the study will investigate the variability among Arab leaders.

Under these circumstances, this study argues that the design and delivery of learning and development interventions of executives have to appreciate three types of differences: (a) differences between imported Western leadership models and Arab specific context; (b) differences between educational backgrounds of executives; and, (c) differences within the Arab world. The study will draw on social science research, interviews and surveys to shed light on those differences. The following section will discuss briefly the importance of examining each difference. This structure will help frame the research questions that emerge from the study.

Differences between Western and Arabic leadership models. Investigating Western practices and their relevance to local Arabic contexts will enable the examination of the universality of leadership development concepts and ways such theoretical pillars may be customized to suit the learning of Arab leaders. Expatriation is costly and temporary. The importance of cultivating a pipeline of Arab leaders cannot be underestimated in the face of present and future challenges. Arab leaders are now asked to adapt their behaviors, lead their

institutions in a globalized market, build high performing teams using Western best-practices, and engage their local workforce by staying authentic to their cultural roots. The predominant scholarship tackling effective leadership development programs advance Western leadership models (Al-Dabbagh & Assaad, 2010). While drawing on Western practices may seem reasonable to positively impact organizational performance, several studies have found that cultural incongruence between Western approaches and Arab culture may have been attributed to cultural clashes, misunderstandings, and disengagement of employees (Ali, 2010; Branine & Pollard, 2010; Gillespe & Riddle, 2005). The tension between addressing Western best practices while maintaining local traditions exists globally. As such, the aim of this study is to identify which modern leadership development practices can be embedded within leadership concepts traditional to Islamic and ethnic tribal cultures. Finding a balance or a way to integrate both worldviews (Abdallah & al-Homoud, 2001; Sarayrah, 2004) is vital and currently unresolved in many Arab countries, particularly in the public sector, where leaders are challenged to attain stable footing and deliver noteworthy results (Mameli, 2013).

In his prominent book, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations* (2001), Geert Hofstede explains how cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings, conflicts and wars. Hofstede quotes Pascal, writing, "Vérité au deçà des Pyrénées, erreur au delà" (There are truths on this side of the Pyrenees that are falsehood on the other) (Pascal, 1671, p.74). In support, Richard Nisbett, in his book *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently ... and Why* (2003), argues that social practices dictate individuals' worldviews, which in turn promote certain thought process; and the thought processes both warrant the type of worldviews and endorse the social practices. His research has led him to conclude that such homeostatic relationships have

implications for understanding how individuals from different cultures think and the effective educational strategies that suit different people. As the world is flattening and the Arab region undergoes rapid economic growth and political unrest, leaders, reluctant to lose their cultural heritage, have to embrace change. However, cultural differences take time to change and dissipate. Examining how cross-cultural Arab leaders need to sustain and stabilize a competitive knowledge economy in a diverse region in terms of languages, ethnicities, religions, as well as turbulent political and economic systems is a complex task (Berdrow & Evers, 2014; Osman-Gani, 2014). Studies that take the cross-cultural approach look at potential misalignment between Islamic and Western workplace cultures, performance-based evaluation, skills development, risk-taking to risk-averse, reflection to action, and preferred interaction with supervisors (Ali, 2010; Ali, Krishnan, & Kamp, 2005; Aycan, Al-Hamadi, Davis, & Budhwar, 2007). While several studies conclude that Western practices--like transformational leadership (Bealer & Bhanugopan, 2014; Sheikh, Newman, & Abdul-Fattah Al Azzeh, 2013) and high performance work practices (Mohammed, Mostafa, & Gould-Williams, 2014; Ramdani, Mellahi, Guermat, & Kechad, 2014)--have a positive impact on Arab employee satisfaction and organizational performance, results also revealed that employees often feel that local customs are ignored (Syed, Hazboun & Murray, 2014).

The diversity and complexity within the region is mirrored in academic scholarship that continues to be fragmented, conceptual and descriptive in nature, making the universality of leadership models difficult (Afiouni et al., 2014). Similarly, Zahra (2011) contends that the vast majority of the leadership development research on the region remains anecdotal, case study based, normative, and conceptual (Afiouni, Ruël, & Schuler, 2013). In fact, research on leadership for MENA countries has been scarce (Common, 2011; Leung & Bond, 2004; Smith,

Achoui, & Harb, 2006). As such, it is clear that a focused empirical study encompassing several Arab countries which represent the three regions (i.e., Gulf, Levant, and North Africa) is required to unpack effective, Arab-centered understandings of the topic in these settings (Mameli, 2013). This study will gauge the views of international business management experts working in the Arab region to synthesize the standards for the design of leadership development programs specific to the Arab context.

Differences between educational backgrounds of executives. According to the World Bank enterprise data, less than 18% of firms in the MENA region offered training to their employees, with 39.4% of staff receiving formal training from their companies (compared to 52.6% globally). A much smaller portion of this percentage targets developing Arab leaders who are usually faced with a choice to either enroll in leadership programs imported from the West or traditional Arabic leadership programs. The choice between the two types (Western vs. Arabic) of programs is linked to the fact that education in the Arab world has been long influenced by both an Islamic worldview and a colonial secular approach to learning and development. As a result, Arab education has been marked by two distinct educational systems that have evolved separately and independently. On one side, higher education and business schooling follow modern methodologies and concepts in teaching dominant in Western education (Cook, 1999). The effectiveness of importing such Western models to train and develop Arab learners is yet to be determined. However, approaches to the design and delivery of learning and development programs are typically based on the assumption that the target group will be from a Western background (Lum, 2009). In adopting such a stance, academic and corporate learning interventions run the risk of ignoring important aspects of cultural and educational differences of Arab learners. Parallel to the modern/Western practices, the Arab/Islamic educational institutions

co-existed with no interaction or convergence with their Western counterparts. Such traditional institutions follow didactic and teacher-centered methodologies stemming from Islamic educational practices that value authority, respect, and absolute truth. Such conformist educational systems are facing a crisis, attempting to preserve the cultural and religious identity of the *Umma* (i.e., universal Muslim community) while modernizing their practices to foster growth and openness in a rapidly globalized world (Cook, 1999). Across several dimensions (e.g., autonomy, consensus, truth, etc.) Western and Islamic educations are at extreme ends, resulting in tensions over what, how, and when subjects need to be taught.

Cognizant of this tension, scholars and practitioners in non-Western countries, often in collaboration with researchers from the West, are exploring ways education can be modernized without being Westernized-- a process of integration without assimilation (DeGagne & Dirkx, 2009). One important theme that arises from such efforts is understanding the difference between Western and non-Western perspectives of learning, which may provide a logical and empirical basis for some of the constructs underpinning how executives prefer to learn, depending on their educational background (i.e., whether they have attended an Arabic or Western curriculum in K-12 school years).

According to Merriam and Associates (2007), learning and knowing are often deeply intertwined with culture and religion; conceptions of learning are rooted in a way of life rather than being delegated to educational institutions; and learning and development are generally conceptualized in a way different from dominant Western views, including the overall purpose of schooling, best-practices, learners' characteristics, barriers to participation, and concepts of leadership. As such, it would be expected to find differences in learning and cultural beliefs

between executives who have been exposed to an Arab curriculum and those who have attended schooling built on Western curricula.

Effective leadership development demands that executives' educational background and cultural values are well-understood to guarantee that the concepts, linguistic nuances and messages intended by the teacher are cognitively and emotionally relevant to learners within the context of their own society (Hofstede, 2001). Bond (1992) cautioned against using Western procedures with Asian audiences, contending that the occupational culture of intercultural trainers is founded on the use of Western, mainly U.S., practices. Bhawuk and Triandis (1996) stress the particular understanding of cultural differences and the necessity of learning the symbols, the heroes, and the rituals of a particular culture; that is, while instructors may never share the values and beliefs of their students, they may at least intellectually grasp how their values differ. To date, the limited number of studies still struggles to examine Arab executives' learning preferences and how they vary across their educational background. In this study, executives' educational background will, therefore, be inspected as an independent variable. Findings will shed light on how the schooling system that executives have attended relate to their learning needs and preferred instructional strategies.

Differences within the Arab world. The emerging field of cultural psychology posits culture at the center of its theories and research about learning. The central tenet of cultural psychology is that one cannot understand individuals without understanding their culture. They argue that mind and culture are inseparable and mutually constitutive. Shweder (1991) succinctly defines cultural psychology as "the study of the way cultural traditions and social practices regulate, express, and transform the human psyche, resulting less in psychic unity for humankind than in ethnic divergences in mind, self, and emotion" (p. 72). Cultural psychologists study not

only the differences between groups but also the reciprocal relationship between individuals' thoughts, behaviors, and culture. They contend that replicating cross-cultural research settings raises important questions about the universality of constructs and their established meanings in cognitive or behaviorism theories (Elliot, Chirkov, Kim, & Sheldon, 2001). As such, examining how approaches to learning and concepts of leadership vary across the 17 Arab countries in three Arab geographical regions may help design culturally sensitive training programs that address differences within the Arab world.

The following section starts with defining the construct of culture and how it was operationalized in this study. The subsequent section discusses the importance of examining the relationship between culture (national values and geographical region) and executives' learning preferences.

The construct of culture. Taras, Rowney, and Steel (2009) conducted an extensive review of the methods by which culture was defined and measured by psychology, anthropology, business, and management scholars. They found 121 different instruments used to quantify the concept of culture. Based on Taras et al.'s review, three important considerations frame the study of culture. First, despite the large number of instruments, a general consensus about what culture is and is not cannot be found. Culture has been coined with its surface level "objective" artifacts and its behaviors expressed by less visible "subjective" values (Triandis, 1972, p.4). Second, culture is shared by a group and distinguishes the members of one group from another. Culture determines the uniqueness of a human group and is different from personality and identity, which are associated with the individual. Lastly, culture is relatively stable. In general, societal norms shifts will be gradual unless outside influences are aggressively violent (e.g., military conquest, deportation, loss of language or independence). There are many definitions of culture,

but the essence of all of the definitions is crystallized in VandenBos's (2007) description of culture as "1. the distinctive customs, values, beliefs, knowledge, art and language of a society or community. 2. the characteristic attitudes and behaviors of a particular group within society, such as profession, social class, or age group" (p. 250). Another prominent definition of culture was construed by King (2002) as "a sense of peoplehood and commonality derived from kinship patterns, a shared historical past, common experiences, religious affiliations, language or linguistic commonalities, shared values, attitudes and perceptions, modes of expression and identity" (p.89). According to Taras et al. (2009), one of their review's most prominent conclusions is the degree of similarity between the instruments and procedures utilized to assess culture. Further, they assert that the majority of instruments resembled Hofstede and Bond's (1984) study and Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv, and Sanders' (1990) research on national cultures in the international corporate workplace. Long before Hofstede, social scientists Ruth Benedict (1887-1948) and Margaret Mead (1901-78) argued that all societies face the same problems, and that it is only their response to those problems that differentiate them. In 1954, Inkeles and Levinson attempted to identify four basic problem areas common to all societies: relationship with authority; conception of self as shaped by the individual and society; an individual's concept of masculinity and femininity; and ways of dealing with conflict.

National cultures. Building on Inkeles and Levinson's findings, Hofstede's (2001) work as a social psychologist, starting in 1967, focused on over 50,000 employees working in the International Business Machines Corporation (commonly referred to as IBM) in 50 countries. Hofstede identified five independent dimensions of national culture differences: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, and long-term orientation.

- Power distance relates to the problem of human inequality and the degree to which members of a society accept hierarchical differences.
- Uncertainty avoidance refers to a society's stress level in the face of an unknown future.
- Individualism is the degree to which individuals are integrated into and tied to groups. Individualism is the opposite of Collectivism, which stands for a society that encourages strong and cohesive links among group members from birth onwards.
- Masculinity is characterized as the dominance of "ego goals," such as achievement, competition, and assertive behavior in a society. Masculinity represents a culture in which social gender roles are clearly distinct with men playing assertive roles and focus on material success. In contrast, women are expected to symbolize modesty, tenderness, and concern to the quality of life.
- Long-term orientation embodies a culture that fosters virtues oriented towards future rewards, particularly forward thinking, perseverance and thrift. Short-term orientation represents a society that promotes values attached to the past and present, such as respect for tradition, preservation of "face," and performing social obligations

As the most widely cited typology for describing national cultures, Hofstede's (2001) work has received criticism regarding the validity of its constructs, methods and limitations of its studies. This reaction is probably due to some extent to the dominating influence this work has exerted and attention it has received. Nonetheless, any application of Hofstede's work and recommendations must be carefully considered. Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) surmise that while every group or category of people carries a set of *common mental programs* that form its culture, measurement of culture does not imply that everyone in a given society is

programmed in the same way. Statements about culture do not describe individual differences or within-country variances; they are all general and relative and represent nations (thus the use of “country/nation index or dimension”).

As applications of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions in education have often demonstrated the influence of cultural values on approaches for learning, examining how national values associate with Arab executives’ approaches to learning may help inform the design of culturally responsive leadership development programs.

For example, Yamazaki’s (2005) re-analysis of four empirical studies conducted by Boyatzis and Mainemelis (2000), Yamazaki and Kayes (2005), McMurray (1998), and Kolb and Fry (1975) found that members in a strong uncertainty avoidance culture possess a feeling of anxiety or fear when facing unfamiliar risks, deviant ideas, or tension with others. In his view, their primary concern is to avoid failure and mistakes which would jeopardize their chance for success. He further exemplified the Japanese culture as having a strong uncertainty avoidance. In contrast, American culture is described as having a much lower uncertainty avoidance level.

Through the individualist-collectivist lenses, Hsu (1985), Pratt (1991) and Triandis (1989) provided evidence that the conception of ‘self’ discloses possible explanation for the variation of learning preferences as a result of variance in culture. Because ‘the self’ is more associated with ‘the group’ in collectivist cultures (Triandis, Brislin & Hui, 1998), Chinese collectivist societies may encourage individuals to learn through listening and advise people to adopt a neutral or middle stance throughout the process. In this context, knowledge is external to the learner and is transmitted from the expert into the learner whose uniqueness and creativity may be suppressed (Taylor, 1990).

Geographical regions. In addition to the common mental programming that constitutes national cultural values (i.e., aligned to one's country), Hofstede et al. (2010) asserts that each individual carries various layers of mental programming corresponding to different levels of cultures, such as regional and/or ethnic and/or religious and/or linguistic affiliation level and gender, generational, social class and organizational levels. Values, norms, and practices from these levels are not necessarily in harmony. However, powerful forces of integration (e.g., one dominant national language, political system, economic-technological development, or educational system) enable regions to form a developed whole based on a significant body of citizens with common mental programming. It is those general common mental programs that make it easier to anticipate people's behavior in a new situation.

Noticeably, two main regions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) portray distinct visible cultural norms and practices: MENA Asia or Levant (Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Syria) and MENA Gulf (United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen). The Gulf and Levant regions anecdotally vary not only across their economic, social, and political makeup, but also regarding their religious and wealth composition. Such differences may help us speculate how people in each region approach learning. On one hand, the Levant-- or MENA Asia-- typically has a higher level of democratization, a more pronounced religious diversity, and service-based economies. On the other hand, MENA Gulf countries export oil, are ruled by monarchies, and are characterized by a homogenous population of Muslims. The economy of its non-oil exporting MENA Levant neighbors is not nearly so buoyant, and the long-term economic prospects are less predictable. The chasm between the economic stability and wealth of the two regions, combined with their differing cultural and religious characteristics, constitutes an intriguing nexus for a comparative study. If we presume

that the dissimilarities between regions affects behaviors and norms, we may also predict that such cultural consequences have implications on the ways societies partake learning. In particular, I expect that people living in the Gulf would be more attuned to traditional ways of learning. Conversely, I anticipate that citizens living in the Levant region would be more inclined to learn using modern ways of instruction. As such, this study aims to examine whether participants perceive leadership development practices differently based on their geographical location.

In a study that illustrates such regional differences, Ralston, Egri, Riddle, Butt, Dalgic, and Brock (2012) investigated the cultural values of managers in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Pakistan, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates, which they cluster into a group they called Greater Middle East (GME). The authors studied three value dimensions: collectivism, individualism and universalism. Specifically, they investigated the relevance of macro-level influences such as past sociocultural (historical) attributes and present business ideological influences (economic-technological development level, political system, level of democratization) on managerial values. Ralston et al. (2012), found that Arab Islamic nations (UAE, Algeria, and Egypt) scored higher on the collectivism dimension than non-Arabic countries (Pakistan and Turkey). Religious diversity (Lebanon and Israel) yielded less collectivism. In a previous study, Ralston et al. (2009) found that the level of economic development predicted the managerial ethics in non-Greater Middle Easter countries (as defined by G8). However, they assert that this relationship was not supported in the study undertaken in 2012. Ralston et al. (2012) surmise their data demonstrates that the GME is not a homogeneous entity, and that the reasons for this heterogeneity are not clear. Hence, levels of democratization

(as well as other aspects of political systems) may also need to be examined to explain variance among managers' cultural values.

It is therefore vital for this study to investigate how the current socioeconomic and political landscape, the rapid change and unrest, may affect the role and expectations of Arab leaders in both the public and private sector. Culture will be examined from both perspectives: national values as operationalized by Hofstede and regional differences as a product of geographical clustering. The relationship between culture (country Hofstede's index and geographical region) and Arab learners' views of classroom-based leadership development programs will be investigated.

To establish the ground for the proposed leadership development model that addresses the aforementioned cultural differences (i.e., regional, national, and educational background), the research questions for this study will seek to (a) identify what training experts consider as best practices for classroom-based Arab leadership development programs, (b) examine how 1521 leaders from 17 Arab countries respond to the best practices highly recommended by the experts, and (c) highlight how executives' backgrounds relate to their learning preferences. The study will specifically investigate how cultural dimensions, as defined by Hofstede (2010), geographical regions, and demographics relate to executives' learning preferences (e.g., executives' views on various aspects of leadership development curricula, instructional methodologies, leadership competencies, motivation enablers, barriers to participation, instructors' characteristics and learning environment). Findings will inform theory on the role of Arab culture as it intersects with executives' approaches to learning and leadership. Practical recommendations will be put forward to design culturally responsive leadership interventions.

As in all studies of teaching and learning, the most that can be expected is the identification of some general connections between independent variables and outcomes. Although, educators and policy makers would prefer to find tight connections that provide accurate predictions of outcomes, variability in all human learning makes this impossible. This study will reveal some relationships that exist between region, nationality, culture, demographics, and executives' learning preferences, which should be helpful as policy makers and educators design leadership development interventions. It should be noted that while approaches to learning and leadership will be proposed, individual executives are expected to vary in their response.

The next chapter will distill literature that examined leadership professional programs across both Arabic and Western scholarly publications. Chapter three illustrates the design of the research study and elaborates on the statistical methods used to analyze the data. Chapter four presents evidence for the differences found across individuals and regions. Evidence is based on experts and executives' views related to classroom based leadership development programs. Chapter five delineates implications for theory, research and practice. In particular, that chapter will propose a conceptual model that highlights variability in learning preferences of executives across the Arab world. Throughout, the term "Westerner" refers to people of European culture (e.g., European American). Westernization should not be confused with modernization, which is often defined as industrialization (increased occupational structure, wealth, social mobility, literacy and urbanization) (Huntington, 1971). Both China and the United Arab Emirates are becoming more modern but still far from becoming Western. The term "Arab" is used in this document whenever an individual from the MENA region is concerned. Even though subcultures across the MENA region are not identical (e.g., Gulf versus Levant), people are exposed to

similar social, political and cultural influences (e.g., language and tribal norms). In some general respects, the Arab cultures are similar to one another and different from Western countries. I apologize in advance for the labeling and hope that the broad brush term “Arab” is justified in the context of this study.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Methods of Review

This study has been conducted to offer insights on three main themes: (a) best practices for leadership development according to experts' views, (b) differences and agreements between experts' recommendations and executives' preferences, and (c) the relationship between learning approaches of Arab executives and their background (national culture, geographical region, and demographics). The literature on leadership development programs, which I summarize below, seeks to understand how Western and Arab scholarship addresses leadership development.

The literature relevant to this review is found in many disciplines related to educational psychology, cultural psychology, adult learning, and business management development. Five broad categories of research are included: theoretical or foundational books relevant to understanding the relationship between culture and learning, previous literature reviews of leadership development, empirical research from cross-cultural and comparative studies that addresses teaching or learning leaders or managers in both contexts (Western and Arabic), policy and management consulting reports, and discussion and white papers from established research institutes. Together, the literature provides the theoretical framework for this study, identifies adult learning principles that underpin professional development, background and context for leadership in the Arab world, outlines the relationship between culture and learning, and distills best practices for training from human resource scholars and practitioners.

To examine the literature related to the first research question, which identifies best practice recommendations made by experts, this review provides a comprehensive perspective on best practices related to classroom-based leadership in both the Western and Arabic contexts. To explore literature directly targeted at practitioners and corporate organizations, this review seeks

to understand leadership development from various sources: adult learning, industry or discipline specific journals (e.g., *Engineering Education*), technical reports (governmental and American management associations), and handbooks related to cross-cultural, acculturation and intercultural psychology, learning needs assessments, training best practices for practitioners, and human resource development. The majority of studies base their findings on industry business practices often originating from companies that operate on a global scale (multinational companies, or MNCs). Literature addressing best practices in the Arab context often draw on Islamic practices. Publications written in Arabic were synthesized from various sources: the Quran, Islamic Hadith (i.e., prophetic traditions), Al-Azhar University, the Library of Alexandria, and handbooks originating from the MENA region (e.g., Al Suwaidan, 2002).

To scan the research related to the second question, which compares experts' recommendations to executives' actual learning preferences, I looked at literature that discusses learning preferences related to classroom-based leadership development programs, particularly domains linked to learning activities, leadership competencies, motivation enablers and barriers, instructor's characteristics, and the physical learning environment. Literature on Arab leadership development, which was written in English, takes a decidedly Western bias when it comes to researching employee training. No research has examined *both* the experts in the field of leadership and executives as learners across the MENA region. Available studies often used the same language to describe different leadership concepts and employed various measurements to validate the same theoretical constructs, making it difficult to build a comprehensive synthesis of what is best for executives according to experts and determine what executives themselves want. In regards to the learning environment (i.e., physical space of the classroom) literature, the field is still emerging, and most of what was included in this review is extracted from articles

published by architecture and design firms (e.g., Dugdale, 2009) as well as few academic references (e.g., Burruss, 2011).

To distill the literature linked to the relationship between executives' background (geography, national culture and demographics) and their learning preferences, I mainly drew on cross-cultural and comparative studies. Research contrasted Western practices to either Arab local traditions or Islamic practices highlighting a mismatch between both approaches without clear directions on how to tackle the schism. Overall, these studies indicate that some level of Western training and leadership practices, when combined with some traditional aspects of Arab work attitudes, should be employed in the Arab world to improve organizational performance and employee engagement. Those studies focused on only few countries in the MENA region. Furthermore, to examine aspects related to the socioeconomic and political landscape of the MENA region, the review also included policy reports (e.g., World Economic Forum & OECD, 2011), white papers (Frankel, 2012), and discussion reports (e.g., Kinninmont, 2015).

The primary sources of literature were journals that directly address learning, culture, and leadership models, including Journal of Educational Psychology, Psychological Review, Educational Management, Applied Psychology: An International Review, The Journal of Continuing Higher Education, American Psychologist, Journal of CrossCultural Psychology, International Review of Education, International Studies of Management & Organization, Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal, Life Science Journal, Adult Education Quarterly, Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, Academy of Management Learning & Education, Journal of International Business Studies, International Business Review, The International Journal of Human Resource Management, International Journal of Intercultural Relations, and Journal of International Management. Those journal searches

followed several alterations and combination of keywords in Google Scholar and promising citations in bibliographies of key articles. It should be noted that this review does not cover every publication that tackles the main themes of this study; doing so seemed impossible, given the reach of articles across the globe and disciplines as well as the preliminary state of research on Arab leadership development.

Expert Recommendations of Best Practice Principles for Leadership Development

Research question one asks what leadership development program experts working in Arab nations believe to be best practices. Here, I review Western- and Arabic- centric literature to provide a basis for identifying where the beliefs of these Arab nation experts both resemble and depart from the broader literature on best practices. It is worth noting that the majority of literature related to leadership development, which is concerned with best practice or benchmarking, is driven by corporate and private sector efforts to improve employee performance (McCauley, 2008) and rarely employs the typical research methodologies used in social science. The following section summarizes literature around experts' recommendations of best practice principles related to aspects of classroom based leadership development, such as learning activities, instructor's characteristics, learning environment, leadership competencies, motivation enablers and barriers to participation.

Western best practices. This section captures findings related to best practices suggested by leadership development program experts in Western classrooms. While the literature identified many best practices for Western classrooms, adult learning figured centrally in a number of discussions around leadership and professional development. Until 50 years ago, learning referred solely to practices taking place in elementaries, secondary schools, and universities. With the development of adult learning and the concept of lifelong learning, the

field of learning in adulthood has emerged as a study, practice, and an important foci for research and theory. The concept of andragogy (Knowles, 1980) has been appropriated by many scholars and practitioners to refer to differences stemming from working with adults. A significant difference between childhood and adult learning is that learning in adulthood is voluntary (Johnstone & Rivera, 1965). In other words, adult learners vote with their feet. Further, adult learning is largely directed toward preparing learners for work or developing their current professional skills. If individuals find that their professional development course, for instance, does not effectively address their needs, interests, or ways of learning, they will simply not participate or drop out before they complete the program's goals. Life experiences and developmental differences delineate learning in adulthood as a separate field from learning in childhood or youth. Knowles (1980) argues that several assumptions demarcate andragogy from earlier forms of learning: adults are capable of being self-directed, and their readiness to learn is closely tied to their social roles; adults seek immediacy of application for what they learn; and adults' life experiences serve as a rich reservoir for learning.

Learning activities. Based on how adults learn, experiential learning theories emerged as one of the most common and effective methods for developing leaders in the corporate sector. As Keeton and Tate (1978) argue, experiential learning emphasizes “learning in which the learner is directly in touch with the realities being studied. It is contrasted with learning in which the learner only reads about, hears about, talks about, or writes about these realities but never comes into contact with them as part of the learning process” (as cited in Beard & Wilson, 2013, p. 4). Based on the foundational work of John Dewey, Malcolm Knowles, David Kolb, David Boud, and John Mezirow, it is generally understood that experiential learning involves internal and facilitated reflection, formal training, informal experiences, incident-based learning,

interpersonal communication, and some iteration of action learning and problem solving (Marsick, Nicolaidis, & Watkins, 2014). Experiential learning emerges across several disciplines, such as adult education theory, rehabilitation, therapy, corporate training and personnel development, outdoor development and adventure, and recreation-based training and development. Each uses a different approach to immerse learners in the experience. Learning activities designed with experiential learning in mind typically include role playing scenarios based on workplace realities--rehearsing situations, role reversal, games, puzzle solving, team building, simulations model building and other non-work based activities. The purpose of such activities serves to encourage learners to “use” experience for learning (Fenwick, 2001). The argument is that traditional learning, with the teacher lecturing and participants regurgitating facts without deeper involvement, does not produce meaningful learning outcomes (Beard & Wilson, 2013).

Overall, the literature that tackles best practices in leadership development focuses primarily on the need to both apply knowledge in the workplace and evaluate the effectiveness of programs to promote business results, rather than gauging what learners might actually prefer. This may indicate a bias in the industry literature; since several companies are ultimately motivated by profit and driven by competition, the efficacy of their leadership programs leans towards post-program results (performance evaluation and return on investment from training interventions).

For example, a study conducted by the American Management Association (2005) provides an overview of challenges and trends facing leadership today and explores best practices for leadership development (i.e. technology, globalization, organizational structures, and a diverse, world-wide talent pool). It outlines key learning competencies and summarizes

best practices through a fictionalized company based on a survey of 1,573 executives and managers as well as interview data and comprehensive survey data. While it is called a “global” survey, the participants were mostly from the U.S. and Europe. This study focuses on the prevalence of development activities such as mentoring sessions, experiential opportunities, online learning (hybrid approach), 360-degree feedback, action learning projects and post-training reinforcements to highlight the activities that best suit leadership development courses.

The American Productivity and Quality Center (2006) investigated selected organizations (e.g., PricewaterhouseCoopers, Cisco Systems, PepsiCo, Caterpillar, and Washington Group International) that are commonly recognized for their leadership development practices. Best practice organizations use approaches and tools that help build executive talent through experiential and action learning, executive roundtables, technologies for learning (interactive activities, teleconferencing, and intranet), instructor-facilitated classroom learning, case-based studies, communities of practice, special projects, psychological exercises to stimulate personal reflection, and experiential learning. In its case study on Cisco Systems, the study refers to the value of embedding coaching and group workshops in leadership development as well as linking skills to the workplace context. It also points out the need to integrate its Global Leader Program for managers who work outside the U.S.

McCauley (2008) found that experiential and action learning constitutes a critical component of leadership development. Leaders, she claims, need to focus on “individual and collective learning as they work on the projects, often guided by a coach who encourages reflection, dialogue, and feedback” (p. 42). She contends that organizations make use of experiential and action learning as a developmental activity to promote organizational change initiative or as part of an ongoing tool to instill a culture of organizational learning (Marsick &

O'Neil, 1999; Dotlich & Noel, 1998). She concludes that more research is needed to better understand the impact of action learning on leader development.

Instructor's characteristics. In this context, an educator's role is to facilitate the construction of knowledge, critically recall participants' prior experience, and value adult learners' voices. The facilitator instigates (i.e., engages learners experientially), coaches (e.g., builds trust and creates a safe environment while correcting undesirable outcomes), and is capable to judge, assess, and give credit to people's newly acquired experiences (Fenwick, 2001). In support, Tootoonchi, Lyons and Hagen (2002) conducted a review of literature and a research study with 117 business students to distill the most salient instructor's qualities for effective management programs. They contend that participants overwhelmingly endorse the use of real world scenarios in class followed by open discussions as the most effective approaches that influence their learning. Through the self-administered surveys, respondents also identified the characteristics of an instructor that would promote their development, including communication skills, knowledge of subject matter, attitude, fairness, and general personality. The authors assert that such findings are consistent with other relevant literature, and they emphasize that 21st-century instructors need to be equipped with additional skills, such as the ability to integrate technology, to effectively model ways that bridge the generational digital gap.

Learning environment. The design of a learning environment--both the physical elements that constitute a classroom and the feeling and behaviors that trainees bring to a space--ultimately affect how students learn (La Marca, 2010). This section summarizes literature that tackles the learning environment, including literature that analyzes both the physical space and course materials of training programs. Drawing on experiential learning theories, popular studies that address the setup of training environments contend that professional development

interventions need to create educative experiences that allow two key dimensions: continuity (relating prior experience with new knowledge) and interaction (actively interacting with his or her environment) (Dewey, 1938). Based on such assumptions, practitioners have endeavored to design learning environments conducive to reflection, social interaction, application of theory through simulation, authentic and concrete activity, immersive experience, problem-based learning, emotional engagement, situated learning and dialogue both inside and outside traditional classroom spaces (Fenwick, 2001).

In response to those dimensions, course materials need to warrant the opportunity for learners to be involved in their education by using tools that allow reflection (e.g., personal journals), analytical thinking (e.g., diagrams), conceptual understanding before or after the activity (e.g., readings), connecting theory to practice (e.g., books on workplace best practices or industrial implication of knowledge), and active problem solving and decision making (e.g., flipchart and case studies handouts for team work). Learning materials are more often saved on mobile, removal storage disks and accessible 24/7 on the web. Course materials are created to cater to various types of learning styles such as visual learners, auditory learners, reading/writing-preference learners, and kinesthetic/tactile learners. Attuning learning elements and pedagogical tools to suit learners' preferences draws on several cognitive science studies and such learning styles theories as Kolb's model, Peter Honey and Alan Mumford's model, and Neil Fleming's model (Stahl, 2002; Holden, 2010). In spite of the popularity of matching instructional tools to enhance learning, learning styles have been criticized. Such criticism has pushed scholars and educators to transcend the debate and advocate an eclectic approach that is problem- or practitioner-centered. Pedagogues or instructors in this case are in control, able to "grab" the

tools based on the need of the situation and challenge the students to learn in different ways (Fenwick, 2001, p.55).

Physical spaces also necessitate the support of multiple learning styles, a hybrid experience, web-based access to content, diffuse vs. centralized distribution of functions, comfort, experimentation, access to off-site learning, convenience, and collaborative work (Dugdale, 2009). Since this field is still emerging, very few studies have researched corporate training classroom environments and fewer have measured their effectiveness on learning. The majority of studies dealing with learning landscapes are conceptual in nature and focus on the design future and sustainable schools, higher education institutions, and libraries. They stress the significance of such features as light, acoustics, colors, ergonomic considerations, visual access, connection to nature, adaptability, health and ecological properties of buildings, mobile and media displays in human-centered learning designs (Gee, 2006). Burruss (2001), for example, observes how lighting, temperature, type and position of furniture, acoustics, and surface color and texture impact the comfort level of learners, which in turn affects their overall learning experience. He also encouraged adult learning spaces that endorse active learning and social interaction. Similarly, Beard and Wilson (2006) examined how both indoor and outdoor spaces facilitate or hinder learning. A particular emphasis in training programs links outdoors spaces to development of authentic leadership skills through activities like obstacle courses, sailing, hiking, and survival training. The training curriculum in this case gravitates around team building, collaboration, and problem-solving.

The architectural firm DEGW (now known as Strategy Plus) used the term “learning landscape” to encompass informal and formal settings, multipurpose and specialized spaces, and physical and virtual spaces (Dugdale, 2009). The DEGW strategy, like other campus planners in

the 21st century, increasingly adapted campus spaces to be learner-focused, promoting hands-on and collaborative learning, infusing technology seamlessly, and situating design in the context of the university, academic unit, department, or student service. The firm, interestingly, contended that the learner has to be involved in the design process so that his or her preferences are incorporated into the final landscape.

Leadership competencies. With regard to classroom content, executive education curriculum designers draw on several models that govern leadership development (e.g., Goldstein & Ford, 2001; London, 2002; see also Hrivnak, Reichard, & Riggio, 2009). These studies suggest that educators must assess each participant's needs and background to customize the program's content to suit each learner's context (in contrast to adopting a universal approach for what it means to be a leader). Western leadership models include (but are not limited to) trait theory, the path-goal theory, leader-member exchange, team leadership theory, servant leadership, transformational leadership, transactional and authentic leadership (Mameli, 2013). Principally, modern leadership theories are based on "progressive Western business values-those values feted by business ethics as a discipline: transparency, accountability, consultation, tolerance and equity" (Neal & Finlay, 2015, pg. 39).

Best practices in the Arab classroom. Unlike Western scholarship, literature around leadership development in the Arab world lacks a clear and specific identification of the golden standard. Instead, authors draw on the Islamic philosophy or Western-centric pedagogical practices. The studies are scarce and limited by their narrow focus on one or two countries from the MENA region.

Learning activities. Ali (2010) explored potential challenges to human resource management (HRM) in predominantly Muslim countries, acknowledging that Western human

resources practices are the most prevalent in these countries. He proposes that the application of *apprenticeship* (which encompasses shadowing, training, monitoring and testing prior to taking on new professional roles), as per Islamic philosophy, offers a useful framework for the development of Arab leaders.

Branine and Pollard (2010) conducted a review of literature to outline challenges for studying HRM in the Islamic world, including the prevalence of Western HRM practices and the tendency to group all Islamic countries together, despite the strong local tribal culture of many Arab countries. The study emphasizes the need to fully understand the principles of Islamic management and recommends valuing face-to-face personal interactions and considering the power associated with older age/status/experts in the development of talent.

Gillespie and Riddle (2005) investigated the effectiveness of case-based teaching methods in business education in the MENA region. The authors discuss the cultural incongruence caused by Western-centric approaches to case-based instruction. They argue that case-based instruction may pose a challenge to Arab learners, who are accustomed to rote learning and often lack the synthesis and evaluation skills required to analyze case studies. In spite of such a challenge, the study encouraged training providers to integrate case study into the class activities. Also, the authors recommend taking into consideration the local cultural values and norms by enticing casewriters to incorporate locally relevant real scenarios and equipping Arab leaders with skills needed to challenge and debate the content of case-studies.

Reflecting on two case studies in the Arab world, Al-Dabbagh and Assaad (2010) discuss the challenges associated with leadership development. They contend that there are two general themes that mark leadership development in the Arab world. First, leadership development practices need to prioritize leadership development over leader development. That is, the

leadership development programs currently in place focus more on the personal competencies that allow a person to behave in a certain way, rather than focusing on transforming the relationships between people. Therefore, the challenge regionally is to understand and conceptualize relational approaches to leadership development, rather than focusing on individual approaches. Second, in defining the public good, there needs to be a precise definition of who the public is, and what the public need is, conceptualizing the public good in a local, regional and global context. Currently, “public” refers only to nationals and precludes other members of the community living in the same country (Al-Dabbagh & Assaad, 2010, p. 12). Thus, by only selecting students belonging to a certain religious sect, tribal affiliation and ethnic background, the leadership development program may not be effective in addressing how aspiring leaders are able to reconcile sometimes conflicting forces that exist within local, regional and global contexts (Al-Dabbagh & Assaad, 2010). The study proposes a number of recommendations for advancing leadership development regionally. One of which includes a practical suggestion to “culturally immerse” (p. 14) leadership trainers in the Arab world prior to the delivery of programs. The collaboration between international leadership experts (program exporters) and local leadership providers (program importers) will help contextualize perspectives and leverage knowledge from both Western and Arab worlds.

Al-Husan, A-Hussan and Perkins (2014) conducted a longitudinal case study of Human Resource reform initiatives in three multinational companies based in Jordan. The study examined knowledge transfer processes from French parent companies to local Jordanian managers. The authors concluded that the development of subsidiary managers is mediated through “socially rich communication focused on trust-building, semantic fit and experiential learning” (p. 248). In particular, it is vital to equip these managers with a shared HRM syntax

(language) and common semantics (interpretation capability) (Carlile, 2002) to bridge the psychic boundaries that exist during business acquisitions in the Middle East.

Culpin and Scott (2012) discuss a leadership experiment that a manager in the United Arab Emirates adopted to outline how perceived behavior and culture change as a result of a unique intervention (p. 6). To gain a greater understanding both of himself and his immediate team, the experiment necessitated that the manager swap roles with his subordinates. Throughout the iterations, executive coaches mentor the manager and the team. Anecdotal records show that even though the experiment faced resistance within the organization, the study subjects gained wide-ranging positive attitudinal effects, such as added levels of confidence, trust, and appreciation between staff.

McKinsey & Company (2015), an American multinational management consulting firm, identified a set of best practices that its consultants integrate in leadership training programs offered across the Middle East. Those are very similar to Western models for leadership development and include interactive e-learning modules, peer coaching, experiential and action learning, 360 feedback, role-play, and reflection activities.

Leadership competencies. The following section summarizes literature examining experts' views on the leadership competencies that should be taught in Arab executive education programs. The content of leadership programs should typically develop and instill a set of leadership competencies that represent qualities of an effective leader, are relevant to the Arab culture, and responsive to the needs of business and political unrest.

Models to define leadership skills or to articulate what makes an Arab an effective leader are mainly influenced by Islamic and/or modern practices. Although authoritarian styles typical of Arabic leadership models seem to dampen the performance and efficiency of employees, they

impel in-group loyalty, self-group protectiveness, belonging, and commitment, thus positively affecting employee engagement (Mameli, 2013). Conversely, Western--or modern--practices may encourage a higher performance culture (performance, however, was largely gauged by employees' individual perceptions) (Combs, Liu, Hall, & Ketchen, 2006; Ramdani, Mellahi, Guermat, & Kechad, 2014; Mohammed, Mostafa, & Gould-Williams, 2014; Cherian & Farouq, 2013) and focus on a single country, yet they neglect the Arabic customs and regional differences critical for building relationships in a collectivist society where self-group protectiveness is vital.

Leadership models influenced by Islamic religious practices generally discuss societal, national, military, tribal, or political types of leadership with the prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) acting as a role model for Muslim leaders and followers. This belief is supported when God says the following about Prophet Muhammad: {And you stand an exalted standard of character.} (Al-Qalam 68: 4). Only few studies tackle business or institutional types of leadership. Al Suwaidan (2002), in his influential *The Making of a Leader*, which targeted Arabic executives, explains how current businesses can benefit and draw from Islamic leadership principles. He defines leadership as the process of influencing and mobilizing followers to achieve a goal. Key competencies involve a combination of traits (e.g., charisma, humbleness, strength/power, courage, will), competencies (interpersonal connections built on trust, loyalty, honesty, integrity, and selfless service), and skills related to control, balance, sound decision making, and strategic thinking. In addition, Souaidan claims that closeness to Allah and followers are two of the most important characteristics of a good leader. In fact, the word Islam means to be in peaceful submission, to obey and surrender to the will of Allah and his law (i.e., the Quran).

To illustrate, Ali (1993) presents research on relationships between Arab culture and conceptions of leadership. Ali's (1993) study built on the work of Hofstede (1980) to examine the relationship between decision-making styles and the global dimensions of individualism and risk-aversion. A survey of 117 Arab (predominantly Saudi Arabian) managers revealed that individualism in a leader's decision-making is simultaneously respected and downplayed among Arab managers. Ali reported a "pseudo-participatory" environment among managers and subordinates where decision-making power resides entirely with the Arab manager but is not overtly displayed. Instead, Arab managers are keen to cultivate an atmosphere of consultation and mediation in matters of direction, transition, and conflict, even when decisions in those matters have already been made. Ali referenced Islamic and tribal influences where Arab tribal leaders have traditionally acted as mediators between aggrieved or interested parties. Leadership is perceived as practicing wisdom but is not necessarily imposed in a forceful manner. In regards to the risk aversion global dimension, the Arab executives scored low on attitude towards risk except on two issues: adherence towards predetermined steps and being cautious in making decisions. The authors found that Arab executives traditionally believe that rules are man-made contrivances and hence inherently flexible – they can be bent or even broken if the situation requires. On the other hand, strong religious beliefs often give Arab executives a sense of inner strength and certainty when making decisions. The proclamation "*Insha Allah*" or "God willing" is a reflection of their belief that the ultimate outcome of events rests with God, so their faith is their most valuable asset.

The Quran also emphasizes the importance of education, lifelong learning, communal obligation to share knowledge and teacher-student relationship in Islam. Learning, at all ages, is considered sacred and obligatory and a form of *jihad*, which means struggle. In the very first

verse of the Qur'an, the Prophet, who was illiterate at forty years, was instructed to read: "Read! In the name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists). Read! And your Lord is the most generous. Who has taught (the writing) by the pen. Has taught man that which he knew not' (Qur'an 96:1-5). The Islamic notion of education encourages the intersection of the rational, spiritual and social dimensions of a person (Cook, 1999). Being a scholar and a teacher is valued in Islam, and the student-teacher relationship is, therefore, sacred. In another hadith, the Prophet advises a person to "be a teacher...or be a student who studies, or be a listener who listens to people who teach. Do not fall into the fourth category: hater of the above." Seeking reflecting and sharing knowledge regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, is noblest of all in Islam (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). Merriam et al., as a consequence, argue for the need to consider the notions of the Islamic view and their implications on learning taking into account the greater emphasis on interdependence, community concerns with learning, holistic and spiritual aspect to learning, legitimacy of informal learning, the sacredness of the teacher/scholar, and the need to discipline oneself as one interacts with one's teacher. Based on these principles, leaders are compelled to learn from the Quran, experts, and followers (Al Suwaidan, 2002).

Compared to the West, leadership in Islam focuses more on the dynamism between leader and follower and engage human feelings in the process of reaching the goals set for the group or community (AlSarhi, Salleh, Mohamed, & Amini, 2014). Other than business objectives/actions, both social and spiritual actions are linked to the performance of a leader (Kader, 1973). Leaders are required to trust, guide, protect and treat the followers fairly with justice (*'adl*). However, just like their Western counterparts, Arab leaders are accountable for their decisions and actions (AlSarhi et al., 2014). Having said that, it is worth noting that even though religion plays a critical role in the day-to-day lives of Arab leaders, several studies point

out that the MENA region is passing through an identity crisis and challenged by applying the true work and leadership ethics of Islam (Al Suwaidan, 2002; Ali, 2010).

Mameli (2013) discusses how various Western leadership theories may correspond to the MENA context or present potential synergies with the Arab leader who is tasked to advance a high performance and engagement culture. He argues that authentic leadership requires leaders to internalize ethical and moral structure in building trust and achieving their goals. The ethical and moral base would help Arab leaders leverage their inclination to building larger in-groups, thus building ethical linkages between leaders' actions, character, goals, power, integrity and values (Northouse, 2009). Ultimately, such competencies would position leaders to better address the realities of public sector nepotism (also called *wasta*), fraud, waste, mismanagement, inefficiencies, and abuse (Mameli, 2013, p. 395).

Similarly, Al-Dabbagh and Assaad (2010) suggest that leaders need to deploy both internal and external competencies that enable individuals to raise their self-awareness and ethics as well as transform relationships between people. The development of both types of abilities place leaders on a firm ground for completing their tasks. Internal skills are a conduit to building core and much needed values, such as corruption control, transparency, and accountability (Mameli, 2013). Networking, engagement, communication and cross-cultural interaction are examples of the socially driven process. However, it should be noted that studies tackling professional skills enabling leaders to drive the business (e.g., strategic goals, management during economic crisis, and financial targets) were scarce.

Homogeneity. Few studies explored the need to create cultural congruence between classroom-based leadership development elements (e.g., language, gender of instructor and participants) and executives. Wilkins (2001) contends that it is vital that instructional language

mirrors the native language of participants, as language is the primary barrier to management development. He also advises that, for students from the Gulf area where gender segregation is common in schools and/or workplace, instructors need to be sensitive to challenges caused by mixed gender groups. Ali (1992) urges Arab management researchers to develop theories and conceptual models that seek to understand Arab learners within the Arab context, instead of copying Western models that “frustrate the progress of Arab management thinking and may create confusion” (p. 12).

Research in the Arab world on executive education is at a very early stage. Broadly, the literature suggests that effective leadership development learning activities would benefit from practices such as apprenticeship, face to face interaction, the development of a global mindset, relevant case-studies, shared language/semantics, job rotation and on the job training, and experiential learning. There seems that across several areas, Western best practices reinforces Arabic and pre-existing Islamic ideals overlap (e.g., trait, ethical and servant leadership theories). The Arab leader has been painted as an authoritarian leader who controls the situation and uses pseudo-consultative approaches to decision making. The situation, however, is a flexible entity which may change and affect individuals’ behaviors. Thus, leaders approach performance by looking holistically at both the individual and the context, and cautiously avoid confrontations and imposing their rule on followers. According to the reviewed literature, leading teams necessitates (a) a set of qualities (addressing personal, emotional and ethical dimensions), (b) specific skills/competencies, and (c) the involvement of the spiritual aspect of leadership. In regards to qualities, humbleness, honesty, selfless service (to followers and community/public good), balance, and charisma are stressed by scholars. Further, it appears that human feelings, interpersonal connections, cultural congruence, conflict avoidance, and mediation are

accentuated in the Arab context (in both instructional strategies and leadership competencies). In regards to leadership skills, strategic thinking, problem solving and knowledge of the job/wisdom have been emphasized. Skills related to driving the bottom line or business objectives have not been overtly discussed in the literature. The spiritual aspect is also valued by Islamic influenced literature, which calls for the closeness to God and using the prophet as a role mode.

Regarding motivational enablers and participation barriers, the majority of the studies claim that findings are mostly based on students' perceptions of what motivate them to enroll in leadership development and factors that hinder their participant. The only prominent motivation enabler covered by the Arabic literature is the need for leaders to always seek knowledge (life-long learning) and aspire to be knowledgeable/wise as suggested by the Islamic religion. As such, literature related to enablers and barriers will be covered under the learning preferences section. None of the studies examined best practices related to the learning environment.

Instructor's characteristics position the mentor in a sacred pedestal, which grants power and utmost respect to the instructor/expert/scholar. It is worth noting that existing literature on the concept of homogeneity (inclination to collaborate with same gender participants, self-group protectiveness and affinity, and tribal/nationality affiliation) seems to increase the engagement of followers and loyalty of in-groups to their leader. Homogeneity had no counterpart in the Western review.

Comparing Experts to Executives' Views of Leadership Development

Research question two asks not only what the learning preferences of Arab learners are, but also how those compare with experts' views of best practices. In this section, I examine the literature that addresses Arab executives' learning preference and summarize the similarities and

differences between experts' views and actual learner preferences. In particular, I sought to investigate executives' learning approaches to (a) learning activities, (b) leadership competencies (content of leadership development classroom), and (c) reasons why adults choose to learn and barriers that prevent them from participating in learning.

Learning preferences of executives. The concept of ways of knowing and learning has also been expressed as learning preferences, a term referring to the way people internalize and process information or stimuli from their environment. Scholarship around adults' learning preferences suggests that adults' ways of approaching learning reflect predispositions or attitudes that are either psychological in nature or shaped by the sociocultural or disciplinary environments in which they work. For example, some adults are eager to engage in hands-on, action oriented, and participatory activities typical of experiential learning approaches to instruction, while others prefer to engage in reflective, conceptual, and lecturing types of learning activities typically aligned with didactic pedagogies. Keefe (1979) broadly defined learning preferences as "cognitive, affective, and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with and respond to the learning environment" (p.4). To date, there have been more than 10 ways that learning preferences have been operationalized. Perhaps the most well-known is Kolb's (1984) learning style, which fits into his experiential learning theory. Dunn described learning style preferences as "the conditions under which an individual is most likely to learn, remember, and achieve" (Dunn, Dunn & Price, 1989, p. 5). Essentially, researchers who have investigated learning preferences argue that methods to design and deliver instructions ought to be congruent with individuals' learning orientations.

Preferred learning activities. A substantial body of writing focuses on learning styles and adopting an experiential approach to avoid the one-size-fits-all instructional approach. The

studies available indicate that learning orientations vary according to and are influenced by ethnicity, national culture, and profession. For example, Heffernan, Morrison, Basu, and Sweeney (2010), investigated learning styles among Chinese and Australian students in a transnational business program. They surveyed students using the Felder and Solomon (2000) learning styles index. The study found that Australian students were more active, verbal, and sequential learners, while Chinese students were more global, less verbal, and less intuitive. The study elaborates on how such differences have implications on the modification of instructional methods. For example, for global learners, it is valuable to use teaching strategies that aid students to “grasp the total picture” (Felder, 1993, p. 288). Contextualizing course examples and considering “what if” scenarios should also be part of the curriculum. Felder and Silverman (1988) suggest offering global learners an opportunity to solve creative problems and generate alternative solutions to work related challenges.

Recent literature suggests that learning and development experts are beginning to demonstrate interest in engaging learners’ views/preferences in the design of leadership professional curricula. For example, Coloma, Gibson, and Packard (2012) investigated middle-management training programs conducted across 8 U.S. governmental organizations. 166 middle managers were involved in the design of the programs and chose to incorporate “360-degree feedback, individual development plans, workshop sessions conducted by both professional trainers and the directors of the participating agencies, individual journaling, coaching, a book club, and intensive opportunities for dialogue and networking” (p. 9).

The bulk of the literature that investigates learning preference of Arab learners is found in cross-cultural research and considers the process by which Arab culture affects students’ approaches to learning. Research on intercultural management contends that learning preferences

may vary across cultures (see, e.g., Abramson, Keating, & Lane, 1996) and nations (see, e.g., Trompenaars, 1998). While this correlation may seem intuitive, a dramatic and a clear conclusion regarding this relationship remains elusive. In comparing student use of collaborative learning strategies, Tang (1996) distinguishes between formally structured, teacher initiated activities, such as group projects and facilitated discussions (often seen in Western classrooms), and spontaneous collaboration practiced by students from Confucian heritage culture backgrounds, particularly outside the classroom context. Indeed, if learners across cultures and nations exhibit different learning preferences, then universities and educational systems may need to rethink learning support systems, modify curricula, and adjust teaching methods to create the most effective learning environment for those involved (Kolb, 2014).

Al-Harhi (2010) examined cultural variations between Arab and American distance learners to explore learners' preferences and identify the ways they self-regulate and interact in a virtual learning environment. Her research aimed at investigating the effectiveness of online courses offered through the Arab Open University (AOU), which used modern Western approaches to instruction. American students scored higher than Arab students on planning, monitoring, effort, time and environment management and self-efficacy, all of which are critical constructs to succeed in a web-based environment. Arab students struggled with their self-regulating strategies and were found to prefer significantly higher structure and more interaction with their instructors than American students. She suggests that AOU needs to re-examine factors that will help students enhance their self-regulation processes and understand the culturally associated behaviors that could facilitate or impede this process. This research reflects yet another argument for developing pedagogical and curricular practices that are culturally

appropriate and sensitive to the ways of knowing that characterize learners participating in web-based or face-to-face classrooms.

Holtbrügge and Mohr (2010) used Hofstede's models of power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculine/feminine, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term oriented societies to investigate learning style preferences of students attending business administration courses at universities in Germany, the UK, the USA, Russia, the Netherlands, Poland, China, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The authors use Kolb's experiential learning model to support their hypothesis that only individualism and masculinity affected the ways students approach learning. They contend that masculinity (typical of Arab individuals) had a positive influence on students' preference for Assimilation, that is, a learning style characterized by reflection and abstract conceptualization.

Desired leadership competencies. The literature below discusses leadership attitudes and skills based on executives' preferences.

Perhaps the best known and most widely cited research study of culture and leadership is the Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness Study (GLOBE). Founded in 1991 by Robert House of the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania, the GLOBE project has published two major reports: "Culture, Leadership, and Organisations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies" (2004) and "Culture and Leadership across the World: The GLOBE Book of In-Depth Studies of 25 Societies" (2007). Approximately 200 researchers conducted quantitative and qualitative studies to investigate 17,300 mid-level managers from 951 organizations in 62 countries. Similar to Hofstede's work, the GLOBE studies were based on the assumption that perceptions of effective leadership are inextricably embedded within the culture of the organization and surrounding society.

Two of the most commonly cited analyses are the country clusters and the leadership styles. Countries with similar cultural dimension profiles were organized into 10 clusters: Middle Eastern, Eastern European, African, Latin European, Germanic, Anglo, Nordic, Latin American, Southeast Asian, and Confucian. Arab countries included Algeria, Qatar, Morocco, Turkey, Egypt, Kuwait, Libya, Tunisia, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Jordan, Iraq, UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Oman. Middle managers were asked to rate the desirability of 112 leadership characteristics – modesty, decisiveness, autonomous, and trustworthy, for example – when considering what it means to be an outstanding leader, a term which they defined as someone who was exceptionally skilled at motivating, influencing, or enabling you, others, or groups to contribute to the success of the organization or task. From this data, the researchers derived six leader styles using statistical and conceptual clustering methods: performance-oriented style, team-oriented style, participative style, humane style, autonomous style, and self-protective (and group-protective) style. Leader styles were then correlated with country clusters sharing similar cultural dimensions. Notably, for the Middle Eastern societal cluster, the performance-oriented and participative-oriented styles were lower ranked than any other style. This indicates these styles were valued the least by this societal cluster. Instead, the Middle Eastern cluster was inclined toward “in-group collectivism” (Northouse, 2013, p. 392). By contrast, the same leader styles were higher ranked by the Anglo societal cluster, which indicates that, in these countries, this style of leadership was valued more than other styles. The GLOBE study found that the 22 characteristics were typically seen as contributing to outstanding leadership. Further, eight characteristics were typically seen as inhibiting outstanding leadership. GLOBE investigators labeled these as “universal” characteristics of leadership. Additionally, 35 characteristics were identified as culturally contingent – that is, various countries perceived them differently in

relationship to leadership. For example, attributes such as ambition, risk taking, logical thinking, enthusiasm, and formality were considered culturally sensitive because they are valued differently across countries. GLOBE researchers argued that such variations may be linked to other GLOBE cultural dimensions like uncertainty avoidance. Even among the “universal” characteristics, cultural differences may be found in how the characteristic is enacted by leaders from different countries. To illustrate, decisiveness can be perceived as a universally positive characteristic. However, to be decisive in the Middle East may mean to take action with too little consideration, whereas in France or in Germany, decisive leaders are seen as acting with deliberate, precise, and well thought out steps.

In contrast to the GLOBE study, Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) interviewed Kuwaiti and Qatari middle managers and concluded that they both endorsed a strong desire for consultation to be practiced between leaders and their followers. In both countries, charismatic-value based traits (a dimension found in the GLOBE study), considerate traits, and self-protective attributes were considered to be desirable. Autocratic traits were perceived to be ineffective. Interviewees claim that the power of the leader – a political or military leader – comes from the personality, aptitude, and acceptance of their subordinates. In contrast, the power of the manager – a business executive, for example – may be derived from his seniority. As such, successful leaders need to be equipped with desirable personality characteristics, aptitude, and an ability to solve unexpected problems using personal resources. Conversely, successful managers need to possess administrative skills and be able to deal with routine problems based on rules, regulations, and knowledge.

Learning enablers and barriers to participation. I will now examine literature related to reasons why adults choose to learn and barriers that prevent them from participating in learning.

It appears that there are many similarities/overlap between learning goals and barriers to participation for both Arab and Western adult learners. Research from Arab scholarship accentuates the importance of family commitments, the effects of language (i.e., foreign vs. Arabic/native) and cultural sensitivity (i.e., irrelevance of content to local culture) as barriers to participation.

Perceived motivation enablers. As mentioned above, a critical differentiating factor that sets adults apart from pre-adult learners is the richer life experiences that Kidd (1973) noted over thirty years ago: “Adults have more experiences, adults have different kinds of experiences and adult experiences are organized differently” (p. 46). It is these experiences that often act as strong incentives for engaging in learning activities (Merriam & Clark, 2006). Merriman et al. observes that life experiences are “also what motivate many adults to seek out learning” (2007, p. 425). The purpose of this section is to analyze scholarly work that is specifically concerned with what drives and motivates adults to participate in learning.

Houle (1961) investigated the reasons that prompt adults to partake in learning, analyzing the ways in which adults view themselves and learning in relation to their beliefs, needs, and goals. In his study of relatively a small sample of 22 respondents, Houle reported that adult learners are classified into three groups with distinct learning goals and learning orientations: (a) goal-oriented, (b) activity-oriented learners; (c) and learning-oriented learners. His research findings have been tested against a large set of data (from over 10,000 learners internationally) and expanded its footprint across cultures from Africa, Asia, New Zealand, and North America. Based on its applicability across numerous cultures, several practitioners have adopted his typology to promote synergy between adult learners’ goals and instructional design in the interest of positively affecting educational participation (Boshier, 1973).

A study in the United States that examined African-American adults' motivation to participate in church-based education found that a familiar setting, spiritual development, time with family, service, and social interaction drove these groups. The author asserts that the church behaves as a protective space for the African-American community, minimizing the racism that would otherwise exist outside of the church. There they find a convenient space that they share with others of a similar ethnic and religious background (Isaac, Guy and Valentine, 2001). This indicates the significance of the space and interconnectedness in which adults learn and its place in larger social structures.

Al-Barwani and Kelly (1985) indicated that learners in their Oman sample focused more on learning as an enabler for fuller participation in the community:

Economic, academic, and spiritual reasons appear to be the important motives for enrolling in literacy education classes in Oman, but of these, academic reasons (simply wanting to know how to read and write) may predominate. The need for literacy for its own sake superseded the need for literacy for economic gains or spiritual elevation. Economic reasons represent the most frequently mentioned reasons for enrolling among male respondents, and academic reasons were most frequently mentioned by females (p. 5).

Perceived barriers to participations. Merriam and colleagues (2007) contend that “it is enlightening to understand why adults do not participate in adult learning because “knowing why adults participate... does not tell us why many do not” (p. 65). The authors claim that the two most cited reasons for non-participation are lack of time and lack of money. The UNESCO study conducted by Valentine (1997) also confirms these two reasons as the main factors; with 45% of respondents asserting that lack of time was a barrier for professional development programs;

60.1% for non-job related education; 33.4% answering that the cost was as a barrier for job related education; and 25.4% reporting it for non-job related education.

Through their study of participation in adult education, Johnstone and Rivera (1965) also found that 43% of adults cited cost as a barrier, and 39% said they were too busy to attend. Family commitments were the next most significant barrier. Johnstone and Rivera (1965) cluster 10 potential barriers to participation into two groups: internal, or dispositional barriers, and external, or situational ones. External barriers are “influences more or less external to the individual or at least beyond the individual’s control” (p. 214), such as the cost of the training program. Internal barriers are linked to personal attitudes, including an individual’s perception of being too old to learn.

Further, McGivney (1993) offered a similar way of assessing barriers by classifying them into situational, institutional, and dispositional factors. Situational barriers are those stemming from one’s situation at a given time and include lack of money, lack of time, and lack of transport. Institutional barriers are those associated with procedures that exclude or deter from participation and include inconvenient schedules or locations of training courses, lack of relevant programs, and an emphasis on full-time study. Dispositional barriers are those concomitant with attitudes and self-perceptions and include feeling too old to learn, lack of confidence due to previous achievement, being tired of school or class. In support, Carp, Peterson and Roelfs (1973) inspected the learning practices of adult learners involved in professional development. The study found that the barriers, in order of importance, were cost, lack of time, lack of desire to attend school full-time, responsibilities at home, responsibilities at work, and the duration of time required to complete the training.

Gallay and Hunter (1979) examined adults who dropped out from college and did not return. They found that adjusting study schedules around their lives was one main barrier. Other barriers included tuition and cost, entrance examinations, bad past academic achievements and fear of failure. In a study of a public urban university, Hengstler, Haas, and Lovacchini (1984) identified several institutional barriers, encompassing childcare, cost, and scheduling. Similar studies conducted by Beder (1990), Domberg and Winters (1993) and Ryder, Bowman and Newman (1994) found that low self-esteem and low confidence were significant barriers. Respondents also identified family problems, low personal priority, cost, negative attitudes toward learning, bad previous educational experiences, as well as lack of information, flexibility, convenience and time as barriers.

Family commitments can also act as potential barriers. Hagedorn (1993) found that marriage enhanced the probability of dropping out for women by 83%. This may be because family structures still burden wives with the brunt of the housework (Devault, 1997; Pleck and Rustad, 1980; Allen and Walker, 2000). Since the undertaking of a training program is highly contingent on leisure time and flexibility, it is only logical that marriage increased the probability of dropping out for older women.

Al-Barwani and Kelly (1985) found that in Oman, the most common reason cited by women for dropping out was family responsibilities (i.e., difficulty of juggling between home responsibilities and studies) as well as program-related reasons (i.e., the difficulty of the content, failures in assessments, and inconvenience of class schedules). More female than male respondents cited family-related problems as drop out reasons. Female respondents cited the location of the training center as an important factor of enrollment vs. non-enrollment.

Mohsenin (2010) examined culturally responsive teaching through a group of Arab and non-Arab students enrolled in postsecondary distance learning courses designed within a U.S. cultural context. He found that course participants assessed the experience as difficult and confusing. Mohsenin argues that the absence of shared cultural beliefs among participants in the course produced challenges that inhibit full participation.

The review of research in the area of motivation enablers and barriers not only provides useful results and differences across gender, but also highlights significant gaps and a lack of a comprehensive set of factors that focus primarily on Arab leadership development.

Desired instructor's characteristics. Wilkin (2001) examined the qualities that 37 managers preferred of an instructor at an institute in the United Arab Emirates. He contends that Arabs prefer instructors who “use face-to-face interactions to produce the trust, support and encouragement that are required for candidates to learn effectively” (p. 262). Additionally, he asserts that participants prefer indigenous training professionals, as they understand local needs accurately, the influence of religion on management practices, Arabic styles of leadership and Arabic organizational cultures. Trainers should avoid challenging or criticizing students in the classroom and to be wary of exposing their weaknesses. Candidates confess that trainers need to explain and clarify the terminology continuously as language is a major hurdle to understanding content delivered in English. The study found that misunderstanding and conflicts often happen between trainer and trainees if the trainer does not act in the way expected by trainees” (p. 265) (i.e., saying unsuitable remarks about Arab customs and traditions, failing students on an exam, using content not relevant to local context).

Ideal learning environment. In the Arab world, no studies were found that outline executives' preferences for the location, set-up, and design of the learning environment. In

regards to course materials, few studies (e.g., Neal & Finlay, 2008) indicate that American business education students in Lebanon “cannot read as fast, or as much, as first-language students, with the result that they may take more time to follow core ideas and theories” (p. 67). Accordingly, teaching in the Arab world may require reducing the dependency on foreign language materials (or reducing the number of pages to be read) and offer more opportunities for using local case study materials, which are deficient in quantity and quality across the MENA region.

Executives’ learning preferences versus experts’ best practices. Studies show that executives’ preferences overlap with experts’ views on several aspects of leadership development with experts’ views (e.g., face to face interactions between instructor and learners, use of case studies with local content, importance of instructor’s expertise/age/status, dispositional and situational barriers, learning goals orientations, and instructor’s qualities/skills such as facilitation, technology integration, trustworthy, and engaging). Conversely, experts and executives seem to disagree in the domains of accountability, equity, and use of assessments to measure learning or performance. Experts have recommended, for example, the use of apprenticeship (which includes testing) and 360 degree evaluation procedures. Executives tended to shy away from both practices, either to prevent competition with others or for fear of public criticism. In contrast to experts’ recommendation for equity in the classroom (e.g., inclusive of various nationalities, gender and backgrounds), females executives attending the UAE leadership program preferred a learning environment with participants of the same gender, nationality, and managerial level. Besides, there does not seem to be a consensus between experts and executives around the concept of accountability. Studies show that a leader, on one hand, needs to be fully responsible for the outcome of the business/institution and, on the other hand, the final outcome

is assumed to be God's final will or/and cannot be separated from the context. In other words, failure or successes may be attributed to situational elements that go beyond the leader's control. Understanding those nuances, which may seem conflicting, is vital in the design of effective performance management systems, leadership competency models, and development programs.

Further, business management participants expressed that they found reading and studying course materials that are not in their first language challenging. They also stressed the need for higher quality Arab resources to be developed. Additionally, Arab participants preferred instructional methods that are structured, promote higher levels of interaction, teacher initiated, and require reflection and abstract conceptualization of content.

In regards to the leadership competencies that need to be taught in the classroom executives have showed a preference to personality qualities (similar to Western trait leadership theories), lower inclination to autocratic approaches, stronger orientation for in-group collectivism, and leadership skills such as problem solving and maneuvering the daily administrative requirement of management demands. Several studies, however, disagreed on Arab leaders' preference towards performance, consultative and participative approaches for leadership.

Empirical research showing similarities and differences between experts and executives' views in relation to classroom leadership development practices is almost non-existent. No studies available indicate what leaders across the MENA region want to learn and compare their preferences to best practices identified by executive education experts.

Culture and Leadership Development

The last three questions examine the relationship between learning approaches of Arab executives and their background (national culture, geographical region, and demographics). In

this section, I review a selected and relatively small number of Arab-specific studies that illuminate how learning preferences and leadership practices may be perceived somewhat differently by respective Arab nations and how such variability relates to executives background. To a large extent, the literature rarely accounts for differences within MENA (whether it involves socioeconomic, political, or national cultural distinctions) (Mameli, 2013). Generalizability and variability in leadership approaches across gender, nations, educational background, and sectors proved challenging, as studies often used similar language/terminology to discuss different leadership concepts, and used unclear or various ways to measure the same constructs, or only looked at one or two countries.

Learning preferences and culture. Andragogy, experiential, and self-directed learning focus on the individual becoming an independent learner who relies mostly on himself or herself in the process. Self-directed learners (SDL) are metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active in their own learning processes and in attaining their own goals. To engage in optimally effective self-directed practice, students possess a set of self-regulatory competencies that include but are not limited to learning strategies, goal setting, time management, self-evaluation, self-attribution, help seeking, and environmental structuring (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2006).

Cultural psychologists argue that such Western perspectives as Andragogy, experiential learning and SDL, among others, tend towards ethnocentricity. Both Andragogy and SDL exist in stark contrast to non-Western learning traditions where the concept of learning and self are interdependent and enhanced only in relation to others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Even though the basic structure of several universal learning principles (subject to cognitive limitations) are inviolable, theories may be culturally bound. As such, educational scientists need to consider

what features should be modified or contextualized to face human variability (i.e., ecologically or genetically determined) without turning phenotypic differences into genotypic similarities. That is, studying how the magnitudes of cultural antecedents and determinants of universal constructs may *differ* or act as *moderators* between groups or individuals is essential to understanding how adults learn. This approach, one in which the effects of sociocultural contexts are included in the study of learning, has caused tension between situated and cognitive perspectives. Kitayama (2002) argued for a systemic cultural perspective, a perspective which describes the need for understanding the role of culture and the ways culture interacts, strengthens, or weakens students' learning propensities, motives, and processes. This systemic cultural approach helps researchers question, for example, if the meanings of autonomy and achievement are the same across all cultures and ethnic groups or if individuals in different ethnic groups and cultures are higher or lower in different motivational beliefs, such as values, goals, and control (see also Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). Studying how concepts are seen and experienced by the people in various cultures is largely concerned with "better theory development and conceptualization of important variables" (Triandis & Brislin, 1983, p.6). Such challenges are, to an extent, related to methodological limitations, which will be discussed in details in chapter 5. The advantages of investigating principles of motivation cross-culturally allows for theory expansion by examining its robustness (Schunk, Meece, & Pintrich, 2014), testing the universality of Western-centric constructs (Elliot, Chirkov, Kim, & Kennon, 2001), the extension of self-construal models, and the isolating/controlling for some unconfounding variables (Sue, Zane, & Ito, 1979). The following empirical studies suggest that culture can either give rise to incongruence between instructional practices and students' learning preferences or act as a moderator on learning constructs.

Abdel Bary's (2007) study offers an example of how differences in national culture relate to differences in learning preferences. Bary studied over 800 Arab learners enrolled in a web-based professional development program to develop an understanding of the nature of Arab adult learners and their needs. Similar to Westerners, participants reported time pressures in submitting their work as a constraint of the online environment. The instructional methods used in the training reflected a constructivist approach to learning, where students assume responsibility over the process and require high self-directedness to navigate the materials. Abdel Bary reported that learners were challenged by the lack of clear set of objectives to guide their learning, demanded more interaction and feedback from teachers, and requested that the content be broken down into simpler, practical and skill-oriented steps. The results of the study show that the needs of the learners mirror a traditional learning orientation typically found in a Arabic classroom, wherein the teacher is solely responsible for directing and communicating the learning process.

To denote the role of culture as a moderator and investigate whether students need autonomy to optimally function in all global classrooms, Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, and Kasser (2001) examined college-age students from individualistic (U.S.) and collectivistic (South Korea) cultures. The authors found that both groups ranked autonomy, competence, and relatedness at the top of their lists, and that the three needs explained distinctive variance in students' well-being. Other Self-Determination Theory (SDT) research supports that autonomy is indeed a universal psychological need, though it also identifies findings that emphasize degrees of cultural specificity (Reeve, Deci, & Ryan, 2004). For example, even though individuals from collectivist cultures find autonomy satisfying, they mostly find a relatedness experience to be even more satisfying (Sheldon et al., 2001). Furthermore, unlike members of individualistic

societies, collectivists generally find a controlling climate to be relatively less threatening to their psychological needs (Reeve et al., 2001). In another study, Iyengar and Lepper (1999) found that while students of all cultures demonstrate higher intrinsic motivation when offered choice in instructional settings, collectivists (Asian American) students performed best of all when these choices were made by individuals with whom they had a personal connection (e.g., parent and peers). On the other hand, individualist (Anglo American) learners performed just as poorly when choices were made for them by important in-group members as by complete strangers.

A dialectic approach. The aforementioned studies show that differences in learning may emerge from cultural differences and that cultures may moderate approaches to learning among individuals. The SDT universality claims that sociocultural influences can either nurture students' self-determined approaches to learning or neglect and thwart these same inner individual psychological needs. The examination of cultural factors does not imply that there are no universals or that scientific inquiry about how learning responds to various cultures should cease (Pintrich, 2003).

A Western perspective is often tied to classical Greek culture in which “personal freedom, individuality, and objective thought” (Nisbett, 2003, p. 30) were imported to Europe and expanded to other parts of the world through European colonization. By assuming a colonialist mindset, modernist science created universal meanings and determined realities: “such capabilities legitimate particular ways of seeing and delegitimate others” (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999, p. 31). To avoid marginalizing others systems of learning, Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2007), among others, assert that researchers need to expand our understanding of learning by examining other systems and cultures. The purpose of this study is not to replace the valuable contributions that Western science affords, particularly in the field of education.

Instead, the study aims to recognize both non-Western and Western views by examining experts' views on best practices for leadership development programs in both Western and Arabic traditions.

Adopting a dialectic approach that seeks a middle ground between the relativistic and postpositivist extremes and considers the potential influence of cultural moderators on generalized universal principles will help advance the science of education *and* help teachers understand how, when, and why learning and development models do or do not hold for different groups (Pintrich, 2003). As a result, examining how Arab executives' approaches to learning differ or are moderated by national cultures and geographical regions would help design leadership models that would respond to learners' preferences.

Leadership practices and culture. To explain the difference in findings between the GLOBE and the study conducted by Abdalla and Al-Homoud, Kabasakal and Dastmalchian (2001) argued that the data on Iran, Turkey, Kuwait and Qatar from the GLOBE study confirm the need to examine the complexity of using cross-cultural dimensions to determine leadership outlooks. They stress the value of considering such contextual factors as historical and political development, language, social and religious outlooks of the region. For example, despite the fact that all nations studied are predominantly Islamic, they differed significantly in both the role of religion in politics and even the denominations that make up the majority of believers. In their conclusion, Kabasakal and Dastmalchian (2001) noted:

In line with their organizational cultures, implicit leadership theories in these societies involve more performance and future orientation as well as other universalistic attributes such as charisma and supportive behavior. Organizational leaders are expected to be sensitive to local cultures and traditions yet at the same time become initiators of change.

Training programs for managers in all types of organizations and academic theories would require such sensitivity to both emic and etic dimensions, and would increasingly need to involve a combination of universalistic dimensions with culture-specific manifestations of these attributes and local traditions. (p. 486)

Elsayed-Ekjiouly and Buda (1996) conducted a comparative study between Middle Eastern Arab and U.S. executives, examining the way they handle interpersonal conflict with their managers. The Middle-Eastern Arab countries included Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Kuwait. American executives' approaches to management were characterised as more dominating, whereas Arab executives' approaches were more integrating, conflict avoiding, and holistic (c.f., similar to Eastern cultures where laws are seen as a flexible quantity that is not separated from its context; Nisbett, 2004). Linguistically, managers (Western vs. Arabic) vary in degrees of directness— explicitness, communicative strength, and bluntness-cushioning. This variation is interpreted and valued differently across cultures. In high context cultures, such as Asian and Arab cultures, routine communication assumes a greater degree of shared understanding among people speaking. In other words, communication is often implicit, rather than explicit, and more is left unsaid. High context cultures tend also to have low racial diversity and a strong sense of tradition and history. By contrast, in low context cultures, such as Germany and the United States, day-to-day speakers assume a lower degree of shared understanding, rely less on inference, and tend to be more explicit in the way they talk (Copeland & Griggs, 1986). As such, the likelihood for miscommunication may be greater. Humour may be missed or misinterpreted, individuals from a higher context culture may feel left out when speaking with others or may feel talked down to when speaking with someone from a lower context culture (e.g., Western manager). Accordingly, a leader's unfitting approach to management,

communication, and problem solving may thwart employees' engagement in their leader's vision and their willingness to perform beyond the call of duty.

Similarly, Ali, Krishnan, and Camp (2006) examined Hofstede's individualism and collectivism dimensions and their influence on decision-making strategies of Arab and American executives. The sample included 83 Arab executives participating in an international development management program and 81 American executives enrolled in an executive MBA program in the US. Both Arabs and Americans surveyed preferred consultative and participative decision making. Americans scored higher on individualism measurements than the Arab participants, but they also found that Americans who worked in the public sector tended toward collectivism. Results suggest the importance of looking at the sector as an independent variable affecting leadership preferences and the value of understanding differences among cultures to overcome workplace challenges caused by cross-cultural communication.

Khakhar and Rammal (2013) provided an updated view of how business is conducted in the Arab world. They examined how political, cultural, and socio-economic factors influence the way Arab managers conduct business. Authors interviewed 30 Arab managers in public and private sectors in Lebanon. They hypothesized that the high political risk, collectivist, and polychronic tendency of Arabic culture would shape how managers build trust and relationships in negotiations. They argue that such tendencies translate into managers requiring more investment of time to build long term relationships to advance the business or close deals. However, the study showed that in reality, and due to globalization, Lebanese managers are moving away from being polychronic and becoming more monochronic (e.g., attending meetings on time and sticking to hard deadlines). However, the concept of *wasta* (doing business based on connections and nepotism) remains an important factor in advancing the business and

influencing negotiations positively. This study demonstrates how Western practices are becoming more prevalent in the MENA and the importance of understanding the nuances of the local culture (e.g., *wasta*).

Aycan, Al-Hamadi, Davis, and Budhwar (2007) studied the effect of culture on human resource development preferences for 712 Omani employee trainees across six Omani companies. The survey was based on 11 dimensions of cultural orientation developed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961). It specifically examined human nature organization, person-nature orientation, activity orientation, and relational orientation. Respondents showed a preference for mastery, thinking, and doing, with a weak orientation for collectivism, being, subjugation, and hierarchy. While some results are aligned with previous studies on the Islamic work ethic, data also showed that Omanis, especially young workers, are more individualistic than would be have been indicated in previous studies. This study is valuable, as it highlights the importance of age as an independent variable, its influence on the affinity towards traditional national values, and the need to tackle the gap between actual and desired HRM practices to engage the new generation (i.e., the Millennials).

Ali, Azim, and Krishnan (1995) compared cultural values and decision-making styles of expatriate and indigenous managers in the UAE. 289 participants from eight organizations, from private and public sectors in the UAE (32% Arab expatriates and 10% foreign expatriates), were surveyed using the Values for Working Questionnaire and decisional styles statements. Results showed that Arab expatriates were more conformist (i.e., they had low tolerance for ambiguity and adheres to norms) than foreign expats. Data also showed that Arab expatriate and national managers displayed a high preference for participative and pseudo-participative styles, while foreign expatriates show a high commitment to consultative style. Foreign expats scored higher

on egocentric and manipulative values. There were also differences between sectors with private employees showing less tendency for conformism than government employees. Authors conclude that outer-directed values (i.e., submissive to authority and/or tradition) are the primary work values in the UAE, which means that traditional aspects of conducting business are the norm. Multinational organizations may benefit from recruiting individuals who display or understand tribalistic, sociocentric values to manage their businesses in the UAE. The authors also contended that differences between foreign expatriates and host country nationals need to be fully understood “to minimize potential problems and devise personnel policies essential for successful operations abroad” (Ali et al., 2015, p. 6).

Bakhtari (1995) studied Middle Eastern and US managers working in multinational companies located in the United States. 95 US-born and 59 Middle Eastern-born immigrants were surveyed using the Managerial Style Inventory, which categorizes leadership as coercive, democratic, authoritative, affiliative, pace-setting, and coaching. Demographic data on gender, age, affiliation, and time in America were collected. Results showed that Middle Eastern managers scored higher on the coercive scale and US manager scored higher on authoritative and pace setting. Findings indicated little to no impact on styles in educational attainment or time spent in the US. Middle Eastern managers had a higher level of education. The author argued that Middle Easterners working in the US demonstrate managerial styles associated more with the US than with the traditional Arab context. This study indicates a level of assimilation and acculturation with the exception of more coercive styles, which likely stems from a traditional hierarchical structure of organizations in the Middle East. This assimilation and acculturation may imply that workers tend to adapt to the dominant culture of the country in which they are employed.

The consensus in cross-cultural research on learning is that cultural differences may lead to incongruence between instructor and students and/or moderate certain approaches to learning (e.g., self-directed learning, the need for belongingness, higher interaction and feedback levels from the instructor). Studies around the relationship between leadership and culture show that several practices are changing (e.g., through acculturation and globalization). However, existing approaches for doing business and leading institutions in the Arab vary from their counterparts in the West in different ways (e.g., communication and humour, conflict resolution approaches and degrees of directedness, time needed to build relationship and close deals, influence of *wasta*/ personal connections, and levels of conformity with regulations and submission to authority). Examining the competencies underpinning effective leadership according to Arab executives would shed light on the preferred aspects of leadership development programs. Several research studies illustrated or/and probed the effect of sector, gender and age as important independent variables influencing executives' views on leadership.

Summary of Findings from Research

Expert recommendations of best practice principles for leadership development.

While Western literature on leadership development largely focused on methods to encourage high workplace performance, Arabic literature often highlighted the local needs of executives and the incongruence between Western and Arab models for leadership and learning. Using experiential learning as a best practice to promote high workplace performance, Western researchers developed valuable and pragmatic frameworks for implementing leadership development programs. Both the facilitator's characteristics and the learning environment aim at supporting the principles of experiential learning. Leadership competencies drew from a toolbox of models that could be matched with the culture of the corporation or/and styles of leaders.

Research around recommendations for Arab executives were influenced either by Islamic or Western principles, and the studies stressed the incongruence between modern/Western values or instructional methods and the Arabic learner. In particular, scholars called for culturally relevant pedagogical practices and the contextualization of Western leadership models to the local challenges leaders are facing. An emerging theme that perpetuated among the scarce literature was the need to reclaim the identity of Arab culture or the fear of diluting Arab culture in the face of globalization. Explicit recommendations in relation to instructor's characteristics and design of the learning environment were not included in the literature. Studies, in general, only covered one or two countries at a time. Accordingly, this study aims to address the gaps by examining all countries across the Gulf and Levant regions, integrate practices that would both promote a high performance culture (i.e., drawing on Western methodologies which may be applicable in the Arab context) and attend to the nuances of the local needs of executives (avoiding to address the local nuances may lead to reduced engagement/frustration of followers). This study will also investigate the ideal elements for promoting an effective learning environment and recommended qualities of instructors teaching in Arabic classroom.

Comparing experts to executives' views of leadership development. Very few studies have studied executives' approaches to leadership development. Available research shows the stark differences between Western practices and Arab executives' preferences, and studies highlight the conflicts which arise from importing instructional methodologies or modern leadership practices. Existing studies on Arabs' learning preferences examined a limited set of learning constructs. For example, research on motivational enablers and barriers, instructors' preferred qualities and ideal environment, from the learner's perspective, was sparse. In relation to leadership competencies, substantial evidence showed that leadership approaches vary across

Hofstede's dimensions. Leadership models and preferred styles were examined in very few countries and still need to account for socioeconomic and political forces of the MENA region. Studies comparing learning preferences and leadership approaches of executives to experts' views on best practices lacked a clear conceptualization of how they differ and on what they agree. In response, this study's overarching goal is to survey executives learning preferences (i.e., learning activities, leadership competencies, motivational constructs, instructors' characteristics and learning environment) across the MENA regions. Even more, the study will seek to identify the similarities and disagreement that exist between experts and executives' views in an attempt to offer recommendations on how to reconcile both views and include both perspectives (i.e., adult learners' needs and executive education professionals).

Executives' background and leadership development. In the face of globalization, scholars are investigating ways Westernized leadership principles can be integrated without assimilation, especially if locals are being taught in their home country. Research in cross-cultural psychology and business management suggests that effective learning requires that cultural values (e.g., Hofstede's national indices and geographical regions) be well-understood to guarantee that the concepts, linguistic nuances, and messages intended by instructors are relevant to learners within the context of their own society. Even though factors influencing executives' approaches to learning are embedded into his or her demographic makeup (i.e., age, gender, sector, and educational background), it is not clear in the literature how this interplay unfolds. Existing research points to the need for further examination of how executives' background may be related to variability in learning preferences. The limited studies that address the relationship between executives' background and learning preferences suggest several areas in need of research. This study aims at gathering evidence to describe the nature of this relationship and

propose recommendations on how to leverage differences across executives (regions, nationality, age, gender, sector, etc.) to design responsive and customized leadership development programs.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Research Questions

As evidenced in the literature review, few studies focus specifically on identifying best practices related to Arab leadership development or examine executives' preferred approaches to learning. These studies show that although adult learners in the Arab classroom report sharing similar views on leadership development to their Western counterparts, the Arab learner seeking leadership development faces a different set of contextual conditions that need to be considered. Consequently, this research relies on and draws from Arab leadership development experts and investigates the extent to which sociocultural factors relate to executives' approaches to learning. Examining how executives' beliefs vary by cultural background (national values and geographical regions) and demographics is critical to the design of customized, culturally responsive education models. It is particularly vital to the development of existing and aspiring leaders' skills and knowledge base as the region continues to modernize itself within the boundaries of its distinctive cultures. In an attempt to put forward recommendations on how to integrate both traditional and modern views of leadership development and examine how diversity within the Arab region relates to executives' learning preferences, there are several research questions that this study attempts to address:

Q1- What are the most effective Arab leadership development practices as identified by training experts?

Q2- What are the similarities and differences between experts' and Arab learners' views of best leadership development practices?

Q3- How do geographical regional differences relate to learning preferences of Arab leaders, particularly to their views about central aspects of leadership development program?

Q4- How do cultural dimensions relate to learning preferences of Arab leaders, particularly to their views about central aspects of leadership development program?

Q5- How do learners' characteristics (i.e. gender, sector, age and background education) relate to Arab preferences for leadership development?

To address those questions, I have drawn on an existing set of data generated by a research team working in a multinational consulting firm based in the UAE. This chapter aims to (a) describe the data used for the study, (b) discuss the methods used to generate the data, (c) identify the scales created to measure the variables, and (d) outline the statistical analyses that will use the scales to answer the research questions.

Description of the Existing Data

This study is a secondary analysis of existing data collected in 2012 by a research team composed of 12 members from various backgrounds (e.g., academic, consulting, analysts, leadership, research, etc.), which I led while working at a multinational consulting firm (Khatab, 2012). The firm granted me full permission to own the intellectual property (IP) of the data. The data consists of three sets: 174 items related to leadership development best practices (as identified through surveys given to 24 experts), transcripts from a focus group (eight one-on-one face to face interviews) of high profile senior executives, and responses of 1521 executives to 115 survey items (total of 174,915 data cells) related to culture and learning preferences.

The experts. A panel of experts in Arab leadership development were selected to participate in three rounds of surveys. The purpose of this iterative process – called the Delphi procedure (Linstone & Turoff, 1975) – was to identify what experts felt were the most important elements of effective leadership development programs. Details about the Delphi process and results will be discussed later in this chapter. A subcontracted market research company adopted

a stratified random sampling to select an expert panel able to represent a diverse, high-level perspective on Arab leadership development. The sample pool consisted of CEOs, research directors, university provosts, foundation leaders, and government officials. The experts represented wide ranging sectors including technology, financial, petroleum, academic, foundations, consulting, government, and parliament. With an average experience of 20 years in executive education, the experts (two females and 22 males) came from both the public and private sectors (see Table 1). The Delphi group was composed of 15 Arabs, two East Asians and seven Westerners who have been extensively involved in leadership development in the Arab region (e.g., Ernst and Young, London Business School, Harvard Business School, Etisalat, Center for Creative Leadership, ministries, etc.), as well as in the West (Europe, Asia, and USA).

Table 1: Delphi Demographics

Age Group	Number of Delphi	Average Number of Years Experience	Number Working in Private Sector	Number Working in Public Sector
Generation X	14	12.36	12	2
Boomers & Veterans	10	24	7	3

The focus group. The research team conducted one-on-one face-to-face interviews with eight Arab industry and academic leaders (vice presidents, CEO, CAO, Managing Directors, Chairwoman, and a country Sheikh) across Jordan, Qatar, and the UAE. Participants were selected based on their extensive experience with leadership development (i.e., they have attended several executive education programs), their senior leadership roles in both public and private sector institutions, and accessibility/availability to be part of the interview process. These

interviews provided important insight, input, and validation of the results of the survey of experts.

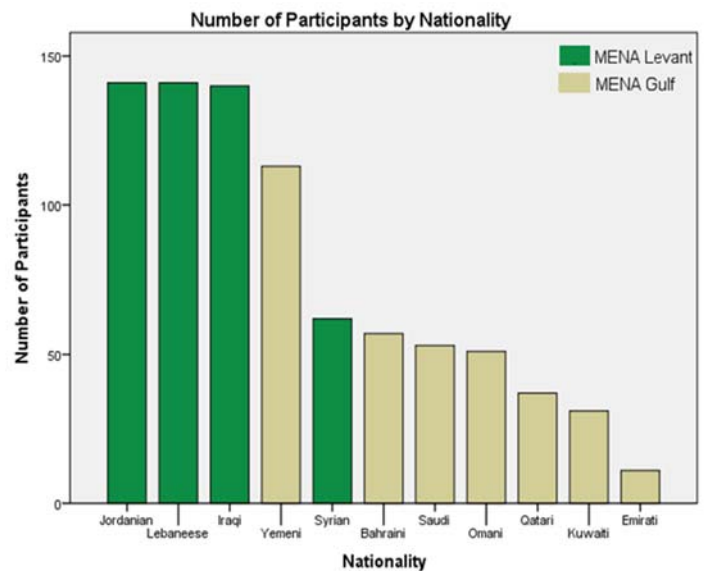
The executives. The third population surveyed by the research team constituted of 2,250 executives working in both public and private sectors across 17 Arab countries. A Large Scale Survey (LSS) was used to gauge Arab business leaders' responses to the best practices identified by the experts interviewed during the Delphi process and the focus group. The market research firm used a stratified random sampling method to select the 2,250 senior managers, directors, and executives and target various sectors, both gender, and a minimum of 100 respondents from each MENA nation. To ensure the respondent qualified for participation, a set of criteria questions were asked prior to the actual survey. The qualifying criteria largely revolved around the participating respondent's designation and nationality. Interviews were conducted using a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) methodology, a methodology shown to be the most efficient in conducting large scale data collection in a timely and efficient manner. CATI is an interactive front-end computer system that aids interviewers to ask questions over the telephone. The answers are then immediately keyed into the computer system by the interviewer. This platform allows interviewers to perform multiple tasks of interviewing, data entry and simple coding simultaneously. The questionnaire and interviewer script is preprogrammed and software-driven – providing interactive controls to question branching or skipping – and validates the data as it is entered. The interviewers key the information directly into the computer system. As a result, data entry as a separate process is no longer necessary. Most of the questions are in multiple-choice format, and the response is translated directly into a code by the CATI system and updated in the database. The interviews for this study were conducted in Arabic, English, and French by professionally trained multilingual interviewers. To ensure timely

completion of the survey, respondents were provided an option to electronically complete the survey through email or web portal. Although over 500 participants opted for this approach, and only 16% of those participating returned completed and validated interview forms. Moreover, in order to reduce the number of CATI respondents dropping the survey prior to completion, interviewees were given the option of completing the (already commenced) survey at a later more convenient time. One thousand five hundred twenty-one forms were completed and validated, achieving a response rate of 68%. Of the different Arab nationalities, 11 were selected to be included in this study because they are within the two regions of interest - Middle East & North Africa (MENA) Gulf and MENA Levant, resulting in a sample of 837 respondents. Figure 1 and Table 2 show how the countries are divided into regions, as well as the number of participants within each birth nationality.

Table 2: Birth Nationalities

Birth Nationality	N
Jordanian	141
Lebanese	141
Iraqi	140
Yemeni	113
Syrian	62
Bahraini	57
Saudi	53
Omani	51
Qatari	37
Kuwaiti	31
Emirati	11

Figure 1: Participants by Nationality



The charts in figures two through six describe, at a glance, the demographic makeup of the LSS sample of executives.

Figure 2: Arab/Non-Arab Schooling

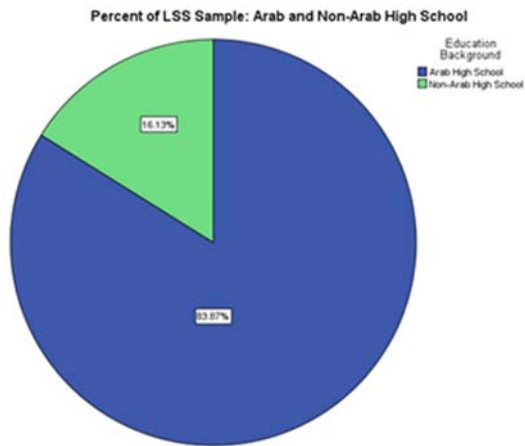


Figure 3: Participant Gender

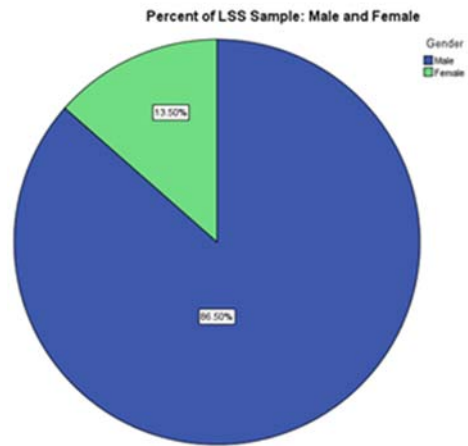


Figure 4: Participant Region

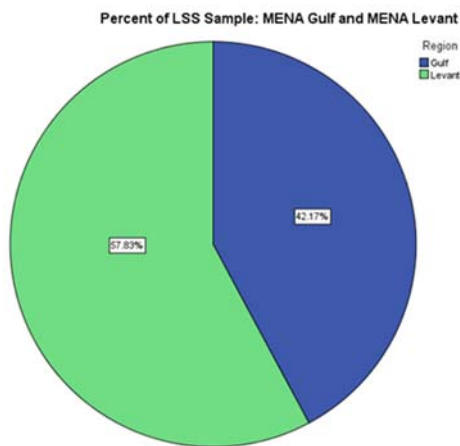


Figure 5: Participant Age

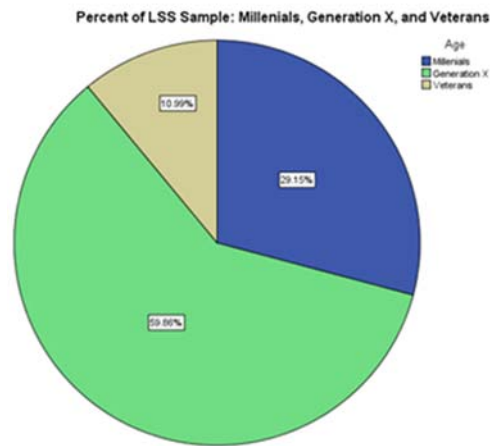
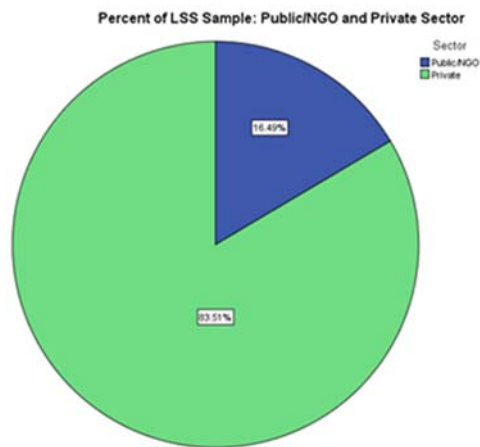


Figure 6: Participant Sector



Methods to Generate the Data

This section describes how data was generated from the three groups (Delphi experts, one-on-one interviews with the focus group, and executives' large scale survey). The three sets of data, on which this study is based, produced the data to elicit: (a) views of experts (based on the Delphi procedure), (b) elaborated views of 8 experts (based on interviews), and (c) survey of leaders across the Arab region. In the next section, I will explain how the data was gathered from the first two groups and items were created to form the large scale survey.

The Delphi method. A Delphi technique was used to develop consensus by 24 nationally and internationally known experts in executive education. This has resulted in generating 174 items capturing best-practices for classroom-based leadership development programs. The Delphi process prioritized 50 items that were then used to form the bulk of the Large Scale Survey.

The Delphi survey of experts represents the first stage in the overall data collection process that generated the data that this study draws upon. The purpose of the Delphi procedure was to determine the experts' views on four key areas of leadership development programs:

methods of leadership development, content to be included in leadership development, motivational factors affecting participation, and barriers to participation. The 174 items generated from the Delphi were prioritized to produce a list of 50 items, which were then included in the Large Scale Survey (LSS). To prioritize the 174 items, the Delphi procedure followed a three steps approach:

Round One: The main features of the Delphi Method include a group of expert participants, a moderator, three rounds of survey questions, and anonymous and independent participation. In the first round of surveying, participants are asked their opinion on the key issues at hand (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Leadership training experts were asked to list as many factors as they wished in the following categories: methods of leadership development; content to be included in leadership development; motivational factors affecting participation; and barriers to participation.

The research team reviewed the results of the Round One. Factors were organized into subgroups within each category. Redundant or high similar factors were eliminated.

In Round Two, participants are shown a list of all responses from the first round and asked to examine the factors identified in Round One and rate the strength of their effect or importance to leadership training. Experts could add additional factors if they wished. Experts rated items on a 5-point Likert-type scale (5 = strong positive effect/most important to 1 = strong negative effect/least important to leadership development). The mean ratings for each item are calculated.

In Round Three, experts reviewed the central factors determined by an analysis of the group's consensus in the Round Two survey to have the most impact on the effectiveness of Arab leadership training. They were shown their rating alongside the group mean rating for each

item and were given a chance to change their rating. The Delphi Round Three ratings were reviewed and rank ordered according to the mean. As a result of the Delphi procedure, the group of experts will have produced both a list of opinions on an issue and a rating of the importance of each opinion. As a tool for consensus building, the Delphi has several advantages. Compared to face-to-face meetings, participants' responses are confidential and independent. Participants are unaware of the identity of the other experts until the conclusion of the survey. Effects related to individual's status, reputation, and personality may be reduced by the anonymous nature of the process. Additionally, because questions are independently answered, they are less likely to be affected by group dynamics that favor one point of view over another (Sackman, 1974).

At the end of the Delphi process, researchers choose a cut-off point – usually the top 20%. Opinions above that cut-off point represent opinions that these experts felt to be the most important. In this project, the research team established a cut-off point on the basis of the item scores, conceptual framework, and practical constraints of the research. It was determined that the cut-off point would be the five top-ranked items for each section and subsection (refer to Appendix A for items with mean averages and their corresponding standard deviation). In some cases more than five items were selected from a subsection because they had the same mean score (e.g., 'interacting with the instructor' with a mean of 4.29 and 'role play activities' with a mean of 4.29). In other cases, the research team identified items, which were ranked low by the Delphi experts but have emerged and been reinforced during the one-on-one focus group interviews (e.g., 'cultural hurdles for women' with an average mean of only 3.38). Those items were also included in the final list of 50 "Delphi Items," which formed the basis of the LSS.

Validity and reliability. The selection of participants for a Delphi study is crucial to the overall validity of the study (Dalkey, Rourke, Lewis, & Snyder, 1972). The experts' profiles,

which were proposed by the market research firm, have been closely inspected and screened by members of the research team (two university professors and practitioners experts in Adult learning and leadership development) prior to generating the list of experts invited to participate in the panel. This assumption that the procedure has adequately identified items of interests through the expert panel strengthens the instrument content and face validity (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2011).

The experts selected items having a strong effect on leadership development (i.e., the rating score of the items is between “somewhat positive” and “very positive” resulting, on average, with a score above 4 out of 5). A cut-off point was established on the basis of item scores, conceptual framework, and practical constraints of the research. The research team determined that the cut-off point would be on average the first five top-ranked items for each section. Inter-rater reliability was measured using a two-way mixed, consistency, average-measures intraclass correlations (ICC) (McGraw & Wong, 1996) to compute the degree that the 24 Delphi experts provided consistency in their ratings of empathy regarding their views about aspects of classroom-based leadership development. The resulting ICC was in the excellent range, $ICC = 0.95$ (see Table 3) for the third Delphi round, indicating that experts had a high degree of agreement.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.95	24

Table 3 (cont'd)

Intraclass Correlation Coefficient

	Intraclass Correlation ^b	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.42 ^a	.37	.48	18.60	173	3979	0.000
Average Measures	.95 ^c	.93	.96	18.60	173	3979	0.000

Two-way mixed effects model where people effects are random and measures effects are fixed.

a. The estimator is the same, whether the interaction effect is present or not.

b. Type C intraclass correlation coefficients using a consistency definition. The between-measure variance is excluded from the denominator variance.

c. This estimate is computed assuming the interaction effect is absent, because it is not estimable otherwise.

The focus group interviews. Findings from face-to-face semi-structured interviews with eight Arab senior executives have helped generate 24 more items to the 50 Delphi items. The interviews have shed light on the priorities proposed by the Delphi experts and presented a thick description of executives' views in relation to the complexity of the context accompanied with the responses (Holloway, 1997). The open-ended exploration of topics, which was raised during the Delphi procedure, allowed the research team to record interviewees' impressions, feelings and thoughts that are not usually documented by surveys. Based on the results of the interviews, the research team added 24 items to the 50 Delphi items to form the bulk of the LSS. In the below section, I will describe how the interview process was conducted and generated the 24 items. In the analysis and results chapter (Chapter 4), I may need to refer to the transcripts of the

eight interviews to elaborate on or capture meanings in response to any significant gaps which may arise during the interpretation of the data. The combination of both qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (Delphi and LSS) methods may provide an expanded understanding of the research problems posed by the study.

Interview procedure. The interviewees were selected based on a list of high profile senior executives (academia and business sectors) recommended by the research team. Because of the seniority of the interviewees, it was vital to identify participants whom the research team have access to. Availability of executives and willingness to allocate time in their busy schedule also limited the pool of participants. Eight participants agreed on a time and place to carry out the one-on-one interviews with two members of the research team. Interviews were conducted in three different countries: UAE, Jordan, and Qatar. An interview guide was used to specify the questions, the sequence in which they are to be asked, and the general guidelines for what the researcher is to say at the beginning and end of each interview (refer to Appendix B for the interview protocol). The interviews lasted roughly one hour each. Interviewees were first asked to review Delphi's top and low rated items for each section, agreeing or disagreeing with them (e.g., 'Do you agree/disagree with training activities' items, which were ranked high and low by Delphi experts?'). Then, the interviewees were asked if they could think of other important items that did not appear on the list but that they would rate higher (e.g., 'Can you think of an important item that is not listed?' and 'Are there any additional issues that we have not addressed in this study in your opinion?'). The interviewees also discussed whether the items identified by the Delphi experts would change across nationalities/sectors/gender/age (e.g., 'Do you think the answers change across cultures/nationalities/sectors/gender/age?' Finally, a series of questions was used to allow participants the freedom to answer in whatever direction they chose while they

discuss challenges and successes related to leadership development (e.g., ‘What are the leadership development challenges faced by your organization? What are the strategies your company use to motivate employees to undertake those training courses? How is technology shaping lifelong learning or on the job training courses? How does your organization identify training needs and leadership skills?’).

Recording and analysis methods. Two members of the research team took handwritten notes directly during the interview. Once data was obtained, these notes were transcribed and organized into categories or segments of text (Rallis & Rossman, 1998). The coding process that followed was inspired by the eight-step procedure suggested by Tesch (1990). As a first step a general sense of the information was obtained to reflect the overall meaning, general impressions, and tone of ideas of respondents. Then, interview transcripts were reviewed to generate a list of similar topics (e.g., leadership competencies to include ability to take initiative, articulate a vision, transfer wisdom and commit to his people) across interviewees versus unique topics (e.g., disagreement on what motivate leaders to partake in leadership program according to nationality: people in Bahrain need to buy into “bigger and different carrots” versus in the UAE “a lot of things change every month and [we want] to remain up to date with all developments”). After turning topics into categories, a list of codes are conceptually clustered and compared to the Delphi material (sections and subsections). For example, interviewees’ script validated the Delphi top ranked items: “timing of the program,” “reputation of training provider,” and “too much content used in training.” Those items were clustered under the barriers to participation section. Markedly, Delphi low-rated items, such as “cultural hurdles for females,” “language of the program,” and “location of the training,” were also emphasized by interviewees as critical factors that influence enrollment of executives. In particular, the majority of the focus group

agreed that the “level of difficulty of the training (either above or below)” and “the cost of the program” are also important barriers to participation and need to be added to the list of priorities. Other new themes that emerged beyond the scope of the Delphi findings included comments related to nationality and gender of other classroom participants and linked to the importance of succession planning in the Arab region. Consequently, the research team added 24 items to the LSS (e.g., “Participants are from the same gender as me,” “Participants are all Arabs,” “Family connection or interpersonal connection” as an important method to promote individuals to business leadership positions).

Reliability and validity. Data collected from the interviewees were used to complement experts’ views related to leadership development and thereby offered triangulation of data that enhanced the internal validity. The symmetry and consistency found between different sections across various aspects of leadership development programs offers internal validity of experts and executives’ reports (Merriam, 1998). Interview transcripts were sent to and checked by interviewees, allowing them an opportunity to modify, clarify or expand on the initial interviews. Such checks helped ensure that the interview’s results were an accurate reflection of participants’ preferences and beliefs at the time of the interviews (Merriam, 1998).

To ensure the intercoder reliability of data, a peer examination process was conducted by a graduate educational psychology student and a university professor from the research team to efficiently identify any evident errors and validate the interview transcripts. Coding cross-checks were followed by tallying the number of agreements and disagreements between the graduate student and the professor. The intercoder reliability measure was computed by dividing the number of agreements to the number of agreements plus disagreement (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Interrater reliability for this cross-check was 96%.

The large scale survey. The third set of data was generated by the Large Scale Survey (LSS). The LSS consisted of 115 items, which included 74 items related to leadership development features, Hofstede's 28 items, and 13 demographic items. The LSS was administered to 1521 respondents, representing 27 different nationalities, and working in 17 different countries from the Middle East and North Africa. Using a five-point Likert scale, respondents were asked to rate their preferences for the practices included on the survey. They were asked to rate leadership development practices from 1 for "least preferred" to 5 for "most preferred" (exact wording of the LSS English translation for each item stem is included in the next section and in Appendix C). For the purpose of this study, I am only focusing on the data generated from countries from the Levant and Gulf regions (11 countries in total), narrowing the sample to 837 respondents. Their responses will help to identify perceptions of business leaders on effective practices for leadership development and determine their cultural orientations.

Translation. It should be noted that, to ensure the appropriate representation of items/questions' meaning across the cultures present in the Arab region, the Delphi, the focus group interviews, and LSS were translated and back translated to three languages: Arabic, French, and English. Cross cultural researchers typically seek to determine whether the same instrument is adequate across all cultural groups' studies. In response, Embretson (1983) has proposed to check whether the measurement procedure represents an adequate and complete sample of the behavioral manifestations of the construct that is being studied. This surely requires deep knowledge of both the psychological construct and cultural context in which the instrument will be applied. Researchers are faced with three choices: to apply the instrument, to adapt it or to assemble a new version (Berry et al., 1997). To help ensure that meanings and concepts have been captured across the three languages (French, Arabic and English), competent

bilinguals and monolinguals were on the research team to make adaptation necessary to rephrase, edit or replace items to address the missing aspects of some constructs. They have also taken the LSS survey in three languages to assess the accuracy of the translation. Exact English wording of the LSS items are included in the tables shown in the next sections (also the complete LSS is included in Appendix C). Exact English wording of the Delphi items are included in chapter 4 (complete list of items with mean averages and standard deviations is included in Appendix A). Exact English wording for one-on-one interview questions is included in Appendix B.

Scales from the LSS

Approach to creating the scales. To conduct this study, I created new scales to measure constructs that capture preferences related to various aspects of classroom-based leadership development programs. Drawing on the literature review and the conceptual framework of this study, I used existing items, which were part of the large scale survey (LSS contained 115 in total), to create scales for this study. I have classified 64 items of the LSS, which could be reasonably grouped into scales, to form seven constructs that represent various aspects of classroom-based leadership programs. Overall, I used 64 items (of the 74 items dedicated to learning preferences), five items (of the 13 items dedicated to the demographics information), and eight items (of the 28 items from the Hofstede module) to generate the results. This section describes what the constructs are and how the scales were constructed.

Six of the constructs were used as dependent variables: learning activities (LA), leadership competencies (LC), motivational enablers (ME), barriers to participation (BP), learning environment (LE), and instructor's characteristics (IC). The seventh construct entitled homogeneity (HO) was used as an independent variable instead and will be elaborated on later in this chapter. The items that compose each construct, their respective factor loadings, and their

computed Cronbach's alpha are found in Tables 6-12. The Cronbach alpha for all the scales were considerably high showing a high internal consistency and that items grouped together under each scale are closely related as a group.

Independent variables include regional areas (two regions, 11 nationalities), Hofstede's cultural values/dimensions (PDI and UAI), demographics (gender, educational background, sector and age), and the construct homogeneity (HO). Table 10 describes what each variable stands for and how it was computed.

All constructs' measures reflect how important the items nominated by the Delphi experts are to executives (learners who have taken the LSS survey). The Delphi items may be viewed as the *desirable* practices valued by the experts. The scales items on the LSS may be considered as the *desired* practices selected by the executives. Based on the literature reviewed the majority of the items relatively reflect many approaches to learning adopted in the West. In particular, a high score on LA means, the individual prefers practices related to experiential learning approaches. A relatively low score on LA means, the respondent shows higher preference for traditional approaches to learning (rote learning). A high score on LC reflect, generally speaking, leadership qualities that are taught in Western executive education programs (e.g., fuses elements of trait, situational, relational, ethical, and servant models of leadership). A low score on LC reflect an authoritarian approach of leadership. A high score on ME demonstrates how much executives attach importance to the items nominated by the experts (e.g., common to Western motivational enablers (i.e., goal, activity, and knowledge orientations as well as practical and clear content). A low score on ME indicates a lower emphasis on items nominated by executives. A high score on BP show that the respondent does not attach the same importance to barriers participation identified by the Delphi experts and focus group interviewees (e.g., dispositional and situational

barriers commonly included in Western literature). Similarly, a high score of LE show agreement between experts and executives and to some extent mirror aspects of leadership development programs incorporated in Western classrooms (i.e., digitally connected physical space that has university like features, comfortable, and outside the workplace environment with course materials, which reinforce industry best practices and allow for an immersive experience). A low score of LE reflect an inclination that turns away from best practices adopted in the Western leadership development programs. A high score on IC reflects a preference for a facilitator who is able to engage the audience, with business leadership experience, and with a high pedigree qualification. A low score on IC demonstrate a preference towards an instructor who delivers knowledge through lectures and theories using a didactic approach and little interaction with participants. HO does not have an equivalent in Western literature but a high score on HO reflects the affinity of executives to choose aspects of leadership development programs that are similar to their cultural backgrounds and characteristics (e.g., same gender, same nationality, content in native language, and instruction attuned to Arabic methods).

In regards to the 64 items which were extracted to form the scales of the seven constructs (LA, LC, BP, ME, LE, IC and HO), a two pronged approach was used to create the scales of this study.

First, based on my own judgement, several items were dropped/unused, as they were redundant in conveying meanings to be measured or sought to capture the same meaning in an opposite direction. For example, “Instructor from a Western country” was eliminated. Instead, “Instructor from an Arab country,” “Instructor from the same country” and “Instructor from a different Arab country” were used in creating the homogeneity scale to convey congruence between Arab executives with the nationality/culture of the preferred instructor. Similarly,

“Participants are balanced between males and females” was not included; instead, “Participants are from the same gender as me” was included in the homogeneity scale, as it reflects congruence with participants own gender. In another case, item nine, which was a multiple choice (with three different learning activities options), was dropped, as it did not match the likert scale common to other items.

Figure 7: Development Session Preference Item

(9) For you as a participant, the most effective development sessions consist mainly of which of the following (Select one)

- ☐ High quality presentations (1)
- ☐ High quality group activities such as discussion or simulations (2)
- ☐ An equal balance of high quality presentations and group activities (3)

Then, an iterative method was used to determine which items should be included in a scale. Based on the theoretical framework of the study and literature reviewed, items were assembled in the scales. Then, factor analysis of all items was conducted to confirm and represent the strength of the association between the variable and the unobserved or latent factor. For example, even though “Notebook allowing an opportunity for writing individual reflections and practical ways to implement” had a low factor loading of 0.396, it was kept in the Learning Environment scale, as it represents the type of course materials that would be needed in an experiential learning environment where individuals reflect on their experiences and related content to practical scenarios (Beard & Wilson, 2013). In another instance, item 51, which measures the importance of “family connections and personal connections” in becoming a business leader, aligns theoretically well with other items such as “personal qualities” and “job-related competencies” under the Leadership Competencies (LC) scale. However, when placed under LC, item 51’s factor loading was 0.07. When I placed item 51 under the Homogeneity (HO) scale, its factor loading increased to 0.5. With 625 executives (out of 837) scoring it

between 4 and 5, item 51 not only shows that over 75% of executives agree that having family or interpersonal connections is an important conduit to leadership advancement, but also reveals the value of feeling associated or personal with chosen leaders.

Figure 8: Leadership Qualities Item

In your opinion, rate each of the following in terms of its importance to how individuals should become business leaders. 5 (most important) 4 (important) 3 (somewhat important) 2 (not important) 1 (least important)

		Least Imp 1	2	3	4	Most Imp 5
(50) Personality qualities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(51) Family connections or interpersonal connections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(52) Job-related competencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Across the scales, the majority of items' factor loadings were above 0.6, which means that selected items strongly associate with the latent variables represented in their corresponding scale (see Figure 9). The strong correlations among the majority of the constructs (shown in Table 4) were statistically significant, which means that the constructs may share a common trait which account for learning preference. It should be noted that HO portrays a weaker (moderate) correlation with the rest of the scales.

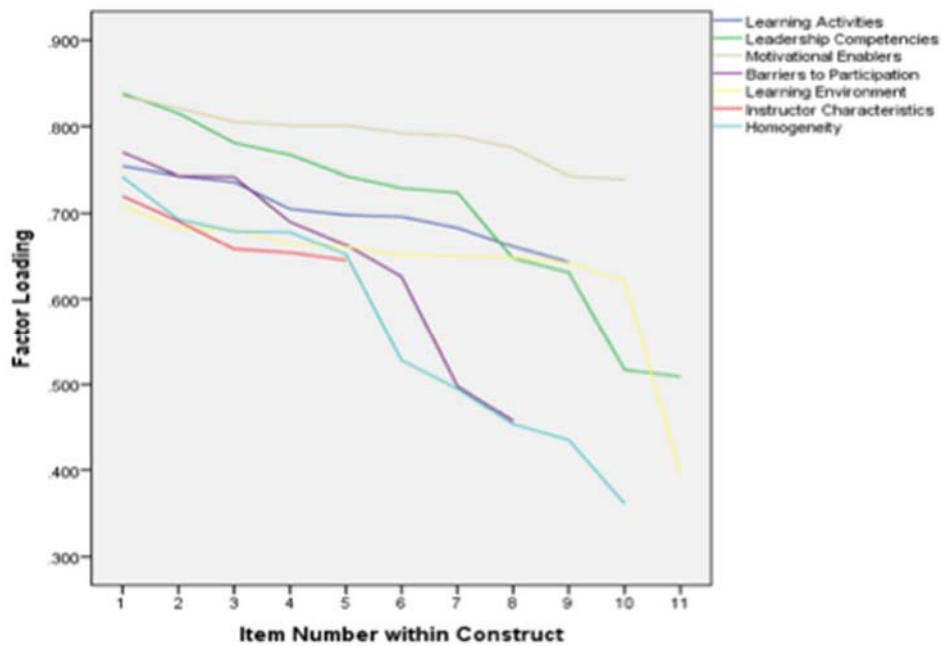
Table 4: Correlations

	Learning Activities	Leadership Competen cies	Motivati onal Enablers	Barriers to Participat ion	Learning Environm ent	Instructor Character istics	Homogen eity
Learning Activities	1	.804**	.803**	.66**	.82**	.77**	.39**
Leadership Competencies		1	.88**	.68**	.80**	.79**	.38**

Table 4 (cont'd)

Motivational Enablers	1	.67**	.79**	.78**	.36**
Barriers to Participation		1	.71**	.68**	.49**
Learning Environment			1	.81**	.52**
Instructor Characteristics				1	.50**
Homogeneity					1

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

Figure 9: Factor Loading

It should be noted that none of the scales perfectly capture the construct either from a Western or Arab perspective. However, the scales adopted and created through the Delphi and

focused interviews, attempt to address the scarce empirical research around classroom-based leadership development practices in the Arab context and avoid the risk of overlooking valuable local nuances by limiting the study with Western-centric constructs. Table 5 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the mean scores of all the constructs. The construct scores were calculated for each participant with the items' scores summed and then divided by the total number of items. The skewness was between -1 and 1, which indicate a normally distributed of data.

Table 5: Construct Scores

Descriptive Statistics for Construct Scores

Construct	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max	N	Skewness
Learning Activities	4.20	0.66	1.89	5	837	-.40
Leadership Competencies	4.30	0.62	2.55	5	837	-.54
Motivational Enablers	4.23	0.71	1.4	5	837	-.51
Barriers to Participation	4.08	0.67	1.5	5	837	-.22
Learning Environment	4.10	0.64	2.55	5	837	-.51
Instructor's Characteristics	4.22	0.68	2	5	837	-.18
Homogeneity	3.85	0.66	1.8	5	837	-.34

Preferred learning activities (LA). The scale attempted to capture preferences highly ranked by the experts as effective classroom activities. They were as follows: collaborative problem solving, simulations, sessions delivered by practitioners, ice-breaking activities, case studies, interaction with participants and instructors, role playing, and opportunities for talking and less reading. Collectively, these preferences reflect experiential learning practices employed

in professional development courses (Beard & Wilson, 2013). As found in previous research, these items were positively correlated, and I therefore averaged them into a single overall preferred learning activity construct (refer to Table 6). As such, a high score on the 5-point Likert scale shows an inclination towards experiential learning practices.

Table 6: Learning Activities Items

Rate the effect of the following training activities on leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect. 5 (strong positive effect), 4 (some positive effect), 3 (no effect positive or negative), 2 (some negative effect) and 1 (strong negative effect)

Learning Activities (Cronbach's Alpha = .897)

LSS Item Number and Description	Factor Loading
(3) Collaborative problem solving of non-work problems, like building a plane.	0.75
(7) Use of simulation tools	0.74
(6) Inviting key speakers /practitioners from the business community	0.736
(4) Icebreaker activities	0.71
(5) Interacting with the instructor	0.698
(8) Role playing exercises	0.696
(2) Interacting with other participants	0.68
(24) More opportunities for talk, and less reading material	0.66
(1) Case studies	0.64

Desired leadership competencies (LC). This scale represents the critical essential competencies and skills for effective Arab leadership according to experts' top rated ranking. The scale included problem solving ability, ability to meet targets, ability to lead teams, effective management during crisis and analysis of work situations, ability to serve as a role model,

charisma, democratic decision making, presentation skills, and personality qualities as well as job related competencies. These descriptors resonate with the need to develop both types of abilities (i.e., internal and external) that place leaders on a firm ground for completing their tasks (Al-Dabbagh and Assaad, 2010). As has been found in previous research, a high emphasis is placed on personal qualities such as charisma (i.e., trait leadership; Mameli, 2013). Even though democratic decision making processes and ability to meet targets or job-related competencies are not overtly discussed in literature on Arab leadership, the two items were added to the LC construct. They seem timely in addressing the need for a high performance culture (Combs et al., 2006) and the conflicting results from the literature around the nature of the decision making process (i.e., authoritative, pseudo-participatory, or consultative). The score on this scale reflects the mean of items related to executives' beliefs on the importance of each of the leadership competencies shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Leadership Competencies Items

Rate the effect of the following qualities or abilities in terms of how important they are to develop among participants in leadership development on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

Leadership Competencies (Cronbach's Alpha = .91)

LSS Item Number and Description	Factor Loading
(43) Problem solving ability	0.84
(42) Ability to meet targets or goals	0.82
(41) Ability to build and lead teams	0.78
(46) Effective management during periods of crisis	0.77
(47) Charisma	0.74
(45) Effective analysis of work situations	0.73
(44) Ability to serve as a role model	0.72

Table 7 (cont'd)

(48) Democratic decision-making processes	0.65
(49) Presentation skills	0.63
(52) Job-related competencies	0.52
(50) Personality qualities	0.51

Perceived motivation enablers (ME). The Delphi experts scored 10 items as highly important to motivate leaders to partake in professional development programs. Enablers included opportunity to network with other professionals and refresh thinking, practicality of content, quality and relevance of the syllabus, desire to see the big picture, learn new skills and go beyond what is required from the job, clarity of learning objectives, requirement of the organization, and extent to which training will contribute to participants' company. These motivation enablers reflect Houle's (1961) typology of adult learners' learning goals and learning orientations: goal-oriented, activity-oriented learners; and learning-oriented learners. The purpose of this scale is not to examine Houle's trinity hypothesis, however, a high score on the 5-point Likert scale shows agreement between executives and experts on the most salient drivers for participation. An analysis of individual items will be required to link the specific enablers to executives' backgrounds. Notably, the score on this scale reflects the mean of items related to executives' beliefs on the importance of each of the motivation enablers shown in the Table 8. (Rate the effect of the following factors in terms of how important they are in motivating you to participate in leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being most important and one being least important.)

Table 8: Motivational Enabler Items

Motivational Enablers (Cronbach's Alpha = .943)

LSS Item Number and Description	Factor Loading
(55) Opportunity to network	0.4
(60) Practicality of the content offered	0.82
(56) Clarity of the objectives	0.81
(54) Desire to broaden horizon and see the big picture	0.80
(59) Requirements of the organization	0.80
(58) Relevance and quality of the programme syllabus	0.79
(61) Need to update or learn new skills or competencies (personal development)	0.79
(62) Extent to which training will contribute to participants' company	0.78
(53) Opportunity to realign (refresh thinking with timely best practices)	0.74
(57) Desire to go beyond and not just following orders	0.739

Perceived barriers to participation (BP). In regards to highly ranked barriers to learning, experts acknowledge that timing of the program, poor reputation of training providers, too much content used in training, perception about training, location of the program, level of difficulty, and cultural hurdles to females are critical to executive's participation in leadership programs. The scale chosen to represent the construct BP confirms Johnstone and Rivera's (1965) clustering of barriers to participation into two groups: internal, or dispositional, barriers, and external, or situational, ones. The reputation of the program or pedigree of the institution, while understated in Western literature, has been included in the scale due to its pertinence to the Arab region, where low quality training providers and business schools are more common. To create a single score for each respondent, I have averaged the eight items into an individual BP

score. The score on this scale reflects the mean of items related to executives' beliefs on the importance of various elements which may act as barriers to participation (shown in Table 9).

Table 9: Barriers to Participation

Rate the effect of the following factors in terms of how important they are as barriers to participating in leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being most important and one being least important.

Barriers to Participation (Cronbach's Alpha = .84)

LSS Item Number and Description	Factor Loading
(68) The corporate culture	0.77
(70) Too much content used in the training	0.743
(69) Perception about training	0.742
(66) Timing of the program	0.69
(72) Location of the training too far away from home	0.67
(74) Level of difficulty of the training (either above or below your level)	0.63
(71) Cultural hurdles for females	0.498
(67) Poor reputation of the companies who conduct the training	0.46

Learning environment (LE). Learning environment has been conceptualized in this study to include both training location (physical environment) and course materials. The scale used to create this construct included such items as facilities available to relax, large and well equipped classroom similar to a university campus, facilities with access to internet and library, and outside the workplace setting. To represent priorities related to course materials, items such as content with summary page, book relevant to current best practices, materials with graphical illustrations, notebook for reflections, handouts, readings on flash disk, and pre-readings were also added to the scale. Those items mirror some aspects of learning environments which

promote experiential learning practices (e.g., Kolb's 1984 learning styles). Although this scale has not been either conceptually or empirically tested, I speculate that this construct will shed light on executives' preferences (across age levels, in particular) for the physical classroom elements that they may deem conducive to learning. The score on this scale reflects the mean of items related to executives' preferences towards various training location and materials attributes (shown in Table 10).

Table 10: Learning Environment Items

Rate the effect of the following aspects of the training location on leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

Learning Environment (Cronbach's Alpha = .882)

LSS Item Number and Description	Factor Loading
(12) Facilities available to relax	0.71
(34) Content with summary page	0.682
(10) Large, well-equipped place like university or high end comfortable training rooms such as in hotel	0.681
(13) Facilities with access to wireless network and library	0.67
(11) Outside the normal work environment	0.66
(37) Book relevant to current best practices and written by experts/ top thinkers	0.651
(33) Materials illustrated with diagrams and graphics	0.65
(36) Lecture handouts and readings saved on a flash disk	0.648
(35) Materials accessible on the Web (virtual learning environment)	0.64
(40) Pre-reading materials provided	0.62
(39) Notebook allowing an opportunity for writing individual reflections and practical ways to implement	0.396

Instructor's characteristics (IC). To operationalize the IC construct, from the LSS, I extracted the following items to create the scale: “instructor has experience as a business leader,” “instructor is able to explain the meaning and illustration of the content and use real examples,” “instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience,” “instructor is famous as a business leader,” and “the instructor is from a well-known university.” Those qualities align with some of the Western and Arabic literature that emphasize the need for instructors to engage participants through effective facilitation skills (Tootoonchi, Lyons, & Hagen, 2002). The two items related to the instructor's background (famous business leader and graduated from a well-known university) are atypical in the reviewed research, but their inclusion reinforces the need to establish a proven track of being a successful leader and credibility in the classroom. The score on this scale reflects the mean of items related to executives' preferences towards instructor's characteristics shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Instructor's Characteristics

Rate the effect of the following instructor qualities on leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

Instructor's Characteristics (Cronbach's Alpha = .80)

LSS Item Number and Description	Factor Loading
(21) Instructor has experience as a business leader	0.72
(22) Instructor is able to explain the meaning and illustration of the content, and use real examples	0.691
(25) Instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience	0.66
(23) Instructor is famous as a business leader	0.65
(30) The instructor is from a well-known university	0.645

Regional areas. In the LSS, respondents selected their place of birth, which corresponds with one of the regions MENA Levant or MENA Gulf. Socioeconomic and political factors differ greatly across both regions. Those factors will be described and associated to how executives approach learning. Although the LSS included both questions about nationality and nationality at birth, I have chosen to use nationality at birth (which may often differ from nationality), as it is common practice for many Arab executives to hold two passports (a foreign and Arab). To suit the purpose of this study, I am interested in their Arabic nationality rather than their dual citizenship/additional passport. Items from the LSS that include the nationality options are shown in figure 10.

Figure 10: Nationality Options

(105) What is your nationality?

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emirati (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Russia / CIS (8) | <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese (13) | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian (19) | <input type="checkbox"/> Singaporean (26) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bahraini (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Algerian (9) | <input type="checkbox"/> Moroccan (14) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani (20) | <input type="checkbox"/> American (27) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kuwaiti (3) | <input type="checkbox"/> Egyptian (10) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sudanese (15) | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese (21) | <input type="checkbox"/> British (28) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Omani (4) | <input type="checkbox"/> Iraqi (11) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tunisian (16) | <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino (22) | <input type="checkbox"/> Canadian (29) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Qatari (5) | <input type="checkbox"/> Jordanian (12) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yemeni (17) | <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese (23) | <input type="checkbox"/> Australian (30) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saudi (6) | | <input type="checkbox"/> Syrian (18) | <input type="checkbox"/> Indonesian (24) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Iranian (7) | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Malaysian (25) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | | | |

(106) What was your nationality at birth (if different)?

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emirati (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Russia / CIS (8) | <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese (13) | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian (19) | <input type="checkbox"/> Singaporean (26) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bahraini (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Algerian (9) | <input type="checkbox"/> Moroccan (14) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani (20) | <input type="checkbox"/> American (27) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kuwaiti (3) | <input type="checkbox"/> Egyptian (10) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sudanese (15) | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese (21) | <input type="checkbox"/> British (28) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Omani (4) | <input type="checkbox"/> Iraqi (11) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tunisian (16) | <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino (22) | <input type="checkbox"/> Canadian (29) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Qatari (5) | <input type="checkbox"/> Jordanian (12) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yemeni (17) | <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese (23) | <input type="checkbox"/> Australian (30) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saudi (6) | | <input type="checkbox"/> Syrian (18) | <input type="checkbox"/> Indonesian (24) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Iranian (7) | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Malaysian (25) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | | | |

Hofstede's cultural values. These cultural dimensions, also called national values, have been defined by Hofstede (2001). Hofstede's 28 items aim at measuring seven cultural dimensions (four items per dimension).

For the purpose of this study, only two dimensions will be examined: Power Distance Index (PDI) and Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI). PDI represents the employee-manager relationship (in this case teacher-student) and UAI reflects how individuals respond to formal organizations (in this case structured classroom rules). Hofstede (2010) created the indices using both a theoretical reasoning (discussed below) and statistics (ecological correlation analysis). The computation of indices originally derives from a comparison of subsidiaries of the IBM Corporation in 40 countries (Hofstede et al., 2008). As such, the formulae created by Hofstede (2010) and included in his Values Survey Module (Hofstede et al., 2008) aims to measure differences between national cultures and draw on the standardized values that validate the comparisons between nations. On the basis of four items per dimension, one can calculate a cultural index to compare two or more countries, regions within countries, or ethnic groups. The survey items attributed to a dimension were selected by comparing samples from other countries and identifying the dimensions that vary similarly across the four questions (i.e., the mean country scores on questions belonging to different dimensions are usually uncorrelated). The computation of the country indices use mean percentage values associated with the survey items, which were scored on a 5-point scale (1 = very frequently/of utmost importance, 5 = very seldom/very little importance), then multiplied by a factor that make their range and contribution to the index. The theoretical reasoning for the choice of items and the actual formulae to calculate PDI and UAI are as follows:

PDI items from LSS.

Please think of an ideal job, disregarding your present job, if you have one. In choosing an ideal job, how important would it be to you to ... (please circle one answer in each line

across): 1 = of utmost importance, 2 = very important, 3 = of moderate importance, 4 = of little importance, 5 = of very little or no importance.

(76) Have a boss (direct superior) you can respect

(81) Be consulted by your boss in decisions involving your work

In your private life, how important is each of the following to you. 1 = of utmost importance, 2 = very important, 3 = of moderate importance, 4 = of little importance, 5 = of very little or no importance.

(97) How often, in your experience, are subordinates afraid to contradict their boss (or students their teacher?)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (Please circle one answer in each line across): 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = undecided, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree.

(100) An organization structure in which certain subordinates have two bosses should be avoided at all cost

UAI items from LSS.

In your private life, how important is each of the following to you. 1 = of utmost importance, 2 = very important, 3 = of moderate importance, 4 = of little importance, 5 = of very little or no importance.

(90) How often do you feel nervous or tense?

(94) All in all, how would you describe your state of health these days?

(98) One can be a good manager without having a precise answer to every question that a subordinate may raise about his or her work

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (Please circle one answer in each line across): 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = undecided, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree.

(101) A company's or organization's rules should not be broken, even when the employee thinks breaking the rule would be in the organization's best interest.

Formulae.

$$PDI = 35(m81 - m76) + 25(m97 - m100) + C(pd)$$

In this case, m97 is the mean score for item 97 and $C(pd) = 30$ (this was chosen because the lowest raw PDI score was -25.4; thus, 30 would bring that number above 0). The index usually ranges between 100 (large PDI) and zero (small PDI). $C(pd)$ is a constant (positive or negative) that depends on the nature of the samples. It does not affect the comparison between countries. It can be chosen by the user to shift the country PDI scores to values between 0 and 100. The same rationale for calculation applies for other indices. The mean scores have been multiplied by 35 and 25 to make the range and their contributions to the PDI.

PDI “is a measure of the interpersonal power or influence between the boss and subordinate as perceived by the less powerful of the two” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 83). To measure national differences in power distance, items seek to capture employees' perception on whether employees are afraid to disagree with their managers, subordinates' perception that their boss tends to take decisions in an autocratic or persuasive/paternalistic way, and subordinates' preference for anything but a consultative style of decision making in their boss.

$$UAI = 40(m94 - m90) + 25(m98 - m101) + C(ua)$$

$C(ua) = 80$ (this was chosen because the lowest raw UAI score was -71.15, thus 80 would bring that number above 0). The function of the constant and multipliers are similar to those used

for PDI. Uncertainty-avoiding cultures avoid ambiguity and look for structure in their organizations, which makes events clearly interpretable and predictable. Paradoxically, societies with high UAI may often engage in a risky behavior in an attempt to reduce ambiguities (e.g., engage in war with an opponent rather than waiting for the unknown). Members with lower UAI tolerate ambiguities more easily and are more prone to change jobs and start a new business (Hofstede, 2001). Item 101 indicates that employees portray a high rule orientation and avoid breaking the rules, demonstrating a high uncertainty avoidance. The stress related item 90 is usually correlated with jobs that are low in satisfaction, where employees feel that their perceptions of alternatives in decision making have been reduced. Hofstede (2001) contends that this type of stress is “due to sociocultural environment (in the form of differences among nationalities) and due to one organizational factor, occupation” (p. 149), rather than personality or nonwork situations. When the level of anxiety is high, people try to cope with their stress by searching for security, which is visible in the rule orientation (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede argues that occupations that “posed risks of physiological and mental disorders were those combining high stress with low satisfaction” (2001, p. 149). As such, in spite of the stress’ soft subjective character, it may manifest itself through an objective consequence and affect the metabolism of the body affecting the physical and mental health as well as the performance of employees. Consequently, UAI is computed on the basis of the country mean scores for the three main factors: rule orientation (agreement with the statement that company rules should not be broken), certainty to have all answers to ambiguous situations addressed, and stress levels (nervousness and health concerns).

Validity and reliability of indices. The ecological dimensions used to capture differences in nations have been proven stable and validated against several external measurements and

replications without loss of validity (as demonstrated by Barkema & Vermeulen, 1997). A cautionary note, though--the indices should not be the only suitable way of measuring culture. The study will complement the nation unit (Hofstede's indices) analysis with information related to socioeconomic and political dimensions that represent the populations in this study.

The mean scores of four items that represent an index are highly correlated across nations (Cronbach alphas for IBM standardized items are .842 for PDI and .715 for UAI). However, the correlations among the four items across individuals are virtually zero. For example, it is not necessarily that an individual who perceives his or her own supervisor as autocratic will also describe colleagues as afraid and will prefer an autocratic boss (i.e., the individual does not adopt a consultative approach). The power distance measured can only be used to reflect the characteristics/climate/regime of social systems and not of individuals (Hofstede, 2001). In terms of reliability for responses to these items within the LSS, the Cronbach alpha coefficient across individuals are irrelevant.

Matching samples. In order to make valid cross-cultural comparisons, Hofstede (2001) advise that subjects from various cultural groups are matched in terms of background characteristics. This way differences may be explained due to cultural differences rather than differences specific to the sample. Ruling out the alternative explanations (e.g. educational level, work responsibilities, etc.) reduces the influence of unwanted intergroup variance and refocuses on observed cultural differences. Schwartz (1992, 1994) enhanced comparability of his subjects by investigating a sample of secondary school teachers from different countries. Should matching prove hard to achieve, it is advisable to treat major demographic variables as covariates in the data analysis. For instance, researchers examining the delinquent behaviors of adolescents in Hong Kong, Australia and the United States found that the educational standing of fathers in

Hong Kong was notably lower than that of the fathers of the Australian and American samples. To address this issue, the research team conducted an analysis of covariance to partial out the effect of the educational background of the father. Several cross-cultural studies tend to disregard sample differences or fail to evaluate the impact of such differences, causing confounded results to produce ambiguous conclusions (Berry, 2006). As the samples of executives were already matched in terms of their professional designation (business leaders) and ensured that they represent both the public and private sectors, other critical demographics will be treated as covariates and examined in this study.

Demographics. For the purpose of this study, information about participants' demographics was collected through items related to gender, age, type of education, and sector.

Age. To create the scale for the age variable, LSS items were categorized into three groups: Millennials (options 2, 3 and 4 from item question 104); Gen X (options 5 and 6); and Boomers and Veterans (options 7 and 8).

Figure 11: Age Item

(104) How old are you?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 20 (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-29 (3) | <input type="checkbox"/> 35-39 (5) | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59 (7) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20-24 (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> 30-34 (4) | <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 (6) | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 or over (8) |

Based on the literature reviewed, Ayman and colleagues (2007) have indicated that many, particularly the Millennials (i.e., born between 1977 and 1995), may exhibit leadership preferences different from employees older than them. This study will attempt to examine variability across generations. 'Generation' as a construct has been investigated by scholars in various disciplines related to social studies, notably in business management literature (Joshi, Dencker, Franz, & Martocchio, 2010). Giancola (2006) contends that "the generational approach may be more popular culture than social science" (p. 33). Generation is often defined as an

“identifiable group that shares birth years, age location, and significant life events at critical developmental stages” (Kupperschmidt, 2000, p. 66). Differences between generations are theorized to occur due to major influences in societies which impact development of personality, values, beliefs and expectations that become stable as individuals transition into adulthood (Noble & Schewe, 2003 and Twenge & Campbell, 2008). The socio-cultural events include wars (Noble & Schewe, 2003), the digital age, and significant changes to economic patterns that influence personality traits, work values, and motivations to work (Egri & Ralston, 2004). To date, most research in this field has been limited to the West and Asia. None of the studies, however, examined the behaviors and attitudes of generations in the Arab world. There seems to be a consensus that generations can be grouped into Veterans, Baby Boomers, Gen X and Gen Y (Kupperschmidt, 2000). The key characteristics of the different generations are outlined in the section below.

Veterans. Veterans are born before 1945 and are also called traditionalists. They are influenced by the Great Depression, World War II, and have witnessed the rise of television networks and mass marketing. Veterans view education as a dream and leisure as a reward for hard work. They aspire for stability in life, a predicted career ladder, and they are loyal and consistent. Additionally, they value integrity (Kim, 2008), commitment (Schaming, 2010), hard work and authority (Rood, 2011). Their main drivers are security and achieving status (Schaming, 2005).

Baby Boomers. Also known as the Woodstock generation, (Murphy & Gibson, 2007) Baby boomers experienced the post-war stress and prosperity, witnessed radical social changes including the emergence of the Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam War, the women's movement (Egri & Ralston, 2004; Smola & Sutton, 2002), the sexual revolution (Smola &

Sutton, 2002) as well as rapid technology change. Baby boomers were born between 1946 and 1965. Members of this generation view themselves as game changers, enjoy the notion of lifetime employment, seek progress, and dedicate themselves to work, with little work/life balance (Kupperschmidt, 2000). Their main drivers are financial remuneration and self-realization (Schaming, 2005).

Gen X. Gen Xers are also known as the MTV generation. Their birth years range from 1966 to 1976. This era experienced periods of economic prosperity and also stress due to the early 1980s recession (Krywulak & Roberts, 2009). They have lived in the shadow of the influential Boomer generation and, as a result, are cynical, self-reliant, entrepreneurial, market savvy, resilient and adaptable (Rood, 2011). Based on an online survey published by Ernst & Young (2013), out of 200 respondents, 57% believed that Gen X were thought to be best at managing through difficult times.

Millennials or Gen Y. Millennials have lived the era of globalisation and employment outsourcing (Krywulak & Roberts, 2009). The Y generation, also referred to as "Millennials" were born between 1977 and 1995. They were raised during the good time or empowerment years and are the first generation to grow up during the internet age. According to a report published by Adecco (2013) on workplace revolution that outlined Gen Y's work ethics and behaviours, this generation values a work/life balance, working in a creative and participatory environment, multi-tasking, global connectedness, environmental stewardship and professional development. They have an accentuated attitude of entitlement (Ernst & Young, 2013), have low loyalty to the institution they work in, are connected 24/7 on social networking sites, and have high expectations of self and employers (Armour, 2005).

While the generational differences have been highlighted in several studies, defining, categorizing, and specifying generations depends on the unique political, socioeconomic, and cultural makeup of their society (Hole, 2010). Studies propose that although generational differences may create conflicts in the workplace due to differences in approaching training, leadership practices, work ethics, and career development (Berl, 2006; Tulgan, 2000), they may not hold true across cultures/nations (Yu & Miller, 2005). For the purpose of this study, three generational groups have been created to explore differences in leadership development preferences among (a) the Millennials, (b) Gen X and (c) Baby boomers, which have been clustered in the same category of Veterans.

Type of education. The type of education was divided into two groups: Western educated and Arabic educated. The type of education was labeled Western if the participant selected Western or mixed curricula and Arab if the participant selected Arabic curriculum. Choices associated with high school type of education (item 107) were used for the scale based on the assumption that the acculturation of Western practices are higher earlier in adulthood.

Figure 12: Education and Training Item

Education & Training

For the following, identify what type of educational institution you attended.

	Arabic curricular	Western curricular	Mix (Western & Arabic)	Other	N/A
(107) High school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(108) Undergraduate (Bachelor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(109) Graduate (Masters)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(110) Doctoral (PhD)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sector. Public sector and NGO were merged to form the public sector group.

Figure 13: Work Sector Item

(112) Which sector do you currently work in?

- ☐ The public sector (1)
☐ The private sector (2)
☐ Other:

☐ Non-governmental organisation (NGO) (3)

(103) Are you: ☐ Male (1) ☐ Female (2)

Homogeneity. Items that fall into this construct demonstrate an individual's high preference for an Arab instructor, Arabic language of instruction, same gender participants, materials provided in Arabic, and leaders appointed based on family/interpersonal connections (see Table 10 for items, factor loading, and Cronbach alpha). Based on the reviewed literature, a common concern was repeatedly expressed by Arab executives which linked their challenge to embrace modernization to their fear of loss of national identity and culture dilution (Ali, 1992; Wilkins, 2001; Willemyns, 2008). The attachment to identity or affinity towards one's culture are represented in a construct I have created for this study. Those items related to cultural congruity between the leadership development sessions and the participants may yield important data related to the focus of this study. The score on this scale reflects the mean of items related to executives' beliefs on the importance of various leadership development aspects that resonate with cultural congruity shown in Table 10. Executives' ratings were based on how important factors are to effective leadership development on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being most important and one being least important. A high score shows that executives are more inclined to choose an instructor from the same background/nationality, participants with the same gender and nationality, instruction attuned to same Arab culture, leaders selected based on family or personal connections, and language of content and instruction of native language.

During some of the preliminary exploration of the data, it appeared that homogeneity (HO) was the only construct which was not statistically significant between the two regions. Since the HO scale embodies cultural preferences that represent preservation of individual's

identity and an affinity to choose classroom aspects identical to executives' own gender, nationality, and approaches to learning, it seemed that HO behaved like PDI and UAI indices reflecting personal values (i.e., individual characteristics). For this reason, I placed HO in level 1 of the HLM model. When HO was introduced to the model, I was able to explain that more than 15% in level 1 of variance occurred in the dependent variable (compared to explaining only 5% differences in dependent variable between people prior to adding HO in the model as a L1 independent variable). As homogeneity has no match in the Western literature and has not been operationalized in empirical studies in the Arab-related research, HO has its limitations in reliability and validity. For this reason, results from statistical analysis should be used cautiously.

Table 12: Homogeneity Items

[Since items for HO have been pulled from several sections of the LSS, no one single stem question applies to all items. Instead, in general, the respondent was asked to rate the level of agreement of the effect of the item/practice on leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being most important/strong positive effect and one being least important/strong negative effect.]

Homogeneity (Cronbach's Alpha = .83)

LSS Item Number and Description	Factor Loading
(28) Instructor is Arab	0.74
(18) Participants are all Arabs	0.69
(65) Instructor from a different Arab country	0.68
(31) Instructor is the same gender as me	0.678
(38) Materials provided in Arabic language	0.65
(20) Participants are from the same gender as me	0.53
(51) Family connections or interpersonal connections	0.495
(27) Instructor is from the same country	0.45

Table 12 (cont'd)

(73) Language of the program (Native Language)	0.44
(26) Instruction is attuned to the Arab culture, not Western culture	0.361

Data Analysis to Address the Research Questions

In this section, I discuss the statistical methods that address the five research questions. The first part will elaborate on methods used to address questions one and two, which are related to the Delphi experts' recommendations. The second part will discuss the methods employed to address questions three, four and five, which are linked to executives' background.

Delphi experts' related questions.

Q1- What are the most effective Arab leadership development practices (i.e. learning activities, leadership competencies, motivational enablers, barriers to participation, learning environment, and instructor's characteristics) as identified by training experts?

To answer the first question, data collected from the 24 Delphi experts will be examined. 181 items will be matched with the constructs of the study: Learning Activities, Leadership Competencies, Motivation Enablers, Participation Barriers, Learning Environment, and Instructor Characteristics. Then, items will be compared to the reviewed literature that discussed leadership development best practices in the Arab classroom. Findings will show how experts prioritized those items (by ranking mean ratings) that they deem most important to various aspects of classroom-based leadership development programs.

Q2- What are the similarities and differences between experts' and Arab learners' views of best leadership development practices (i.e. learning activities, leadership competencies, motivational enablers, barriers to participation, learning environment, and instructor's characteristics)?

The top expert responses from the Delphi were incorporated into the Large Scale Survey (LSS). Thus, one of the main purposes of the LSS was to assess the degree to which Arab leaders and executives (learners) agree with the experts' views on leadership development practices. To address Q2, I will compare the Delphi items with the LSS. First, all items common (50 items) between the two surveys (Delphi and LSS) will be matched to correspond with the seven constructs. Second, to identify agreements and differences between experts and executives' views, I will determine if any of the responses are statistically different between the two samples (experts vs. executives), a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted. The null hypothesis assumes that the scores of the items from the two samples are the same or distributed equally. The Mann-Whitney U looks at item score distribution between the two groups (executives and experts). To further examine the difference of the two distributions, the means of each items or both executives and experts, will be calculated, categorized according to the study constructs, highlighting with an asterisk the items that were found to have statistically significant differences.

Q3- How do geographical regional differences relate to learning preferences of Arab leaders, particularly to their views about central aspects of leadership development programs (i.e. learning activities, leadership competencies, motivational enablers, barriers to participation, learning environment, and instructor's characteristics)?

Executives' background questions. None of the studies thus far have gauged experts' views on leadership development practices in the Arab world using the Delphi procedures or compared experts' recommendations to executives' learning preferences across the MENA region. None of the studies have examined both how individual characteristics as well as national values relate to learning preferences using hierarchical linear modeling (HLM). This is why it is

important to discuss briefly the use of HLM in research studying culture at the national level as well as its citizens' individual characteristics.

HLM offers an opportunity to examine multilevel social processes and variables, including those central to this study -- cultural values across Arab countries as well as the socioeconomic and political forces that vary across geographies within the Arab region. The micro level examines a number of between individuals' relationships across societies. The macro level leverages the between-society correlation, which is based on mean square of the variables for each society. HLM, also referred to as multilevel modeling, multilevel analysis, or mixed models, is a statistical method that controls for data dependence and permits researchers to examine individual- and group-level variables simultaneously (Warne, Li, McKyer, Condie, Diep, & Murano, 2012). By ignoring the nesting or clustering present in our data, traditional regression techniques would violate the independence assumption, which could lead to smaller standard errors and increase the chance of Type I errors (i.e., higher probability of detecting statistical significance) (Tekleselassi, Mallery, & Choi, 2013). Aggregating individual-level variables to higher-order variables to conduct an analysis on a higher level using traditional regression techniques discards all within-group information (because it takes the average of the individual level variables) and wastes roughly 80-90% of the variance that is often present between individuals (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1988).

In cultural psychology, particularly, researchers correlating data through the survey method to investigate between societies trends often fall into the ecological fallacy trap. For data collected at the level of the society to compare societies, we should be focusing only on the 'between-society' correlations (also called ecological correlations). Any attempt to treat within-society correlations (individual level) as equivalent to between-society correlations may cause an

ecological fallacy. An example of such is found in the work of Robinson (1950, p. 352). This example deals with the connection between skin color and illiteracy in the United States. Relating percentages of blacks in the population and percentages of illiterates in nine geographical areas based on 1930 data showed that the ecological correlation was $r = 0.95$. Across 97 million individuals, the individual correlation was $r = 0.20$. The ecological fallacy happens when ecological correlations are interpreted as if they apply to individuals. Ecological fallacies are easy to fall into, as ecological correlations are often more powerful than individual correlations. It is also possible for social psychologists studying cultures to reach another type of confusion called 'reverse ecological fallacy,' in which cultures are treated as if they were individuals. This is commonly committed when indexes for individuals and cultures are created through the same questionnaire items. Usually, to construct indexes for individuals, items of the questionnaire should correlate at the individual level. If researchers ought to construct indexes for societies, items of the questionnaire have to correlate at the society level. When researchers fail to test whether items correlate with the corresponding level, they draw inaccurate conclusions. Ecological fallacies can be avoided. Ecological and individual correlations can be appropriately studied by tapping simultaneously on the same database to better understand the dynamics of complex social systems. An example of a multilevel research is a study conducted by Lincoln and Zeitz (1980), who examined 500 employees divided over 20 U.S social service agencies. They found that professional qualification and supervisory duties were positively correlated across individuals and negatively correlated across agencies. This is due to the fact that the more professional agencies required less supervision. Ecological dimensions can be effectively investigated by conducting the right level of correlations and when we have data from more (e.g. 10 or 15) societies (Hofstede, 2001).

Hence, appropriately studying the variation that occurs within and between nations' phenomena may enrich our understanding of leadership development and conceptualization of future research in this area. Data collected through the LSS survey is selectively analyzed to compute indices for individual (e.g., homogeneity's relationship with learning preferences) as well as nation (e.g., cultural values' relationship with average learning preferences) level correlations. An HLM model was run to represent the variations among executives taking into consideration both individual and country level characteristics. The HLM models were created and analyzed using the computer program HLM for Window HLM Software (Version 7.01, Copyright 1996-2013).

To address Q3, the clustering of individuals within countries clustered into regions needs to be taken into account. As several socioeconomic and political influences across MENA regions are not identical, investigating subcultures in geographical regions (Gulf vs. Levant) will shed light on the relationship between variability in learning preferences and executives' background. For this reason, instead of running an independent samples t-test, which does not account for clustering, I have performed an HLM analysis, which accounts for the impact of the clustering on the standard errors. The HLM model of country effects developed in this study captures how learning preferences vary across individual characteristics (demographics and the construct homogeneity) and country level variables (regions and national values). As such, level two predictors will include region (Gulf and Levant) and national values (PDI and UAI). Level one predictors will encompass gender, age, sector, educational background. The relationship between the predictors and executives' approaches to various aspects of leadership development (leadership activities, leadership competencies, instructors' qualities, learning environment, motivation enablers and perceived barriers) will be examined to determine the coefficient and

effect sizes. Coefficients will indicate how learning preferences vary with regard to executives' background. The effect sizes are a measure of a magnitude of the relationship between predictor and the outcome variable.

To conduct the analysis, I have standardized all seven constructs and then ran the two level HLM analysis with region being the only predictor. The resulting coefficients will show if there are statistically significant differences between the means of the two regions.

Level 2 Predictors Hypothesis (t-test for each slope to determine which one is non-zero):

H₀: $\beta_j = 0$ (slope in population is 0, there is no regional difference for Learning Preferences)

H_A: $\beta_j \neq 0$ (slope is not 0, there is a regional difference for Learning Preferences)

For further exploration in the regional differences, I performed a Mann-Whitney U test for each of the items within the constructs, to determine if there are regional differences in mean responses of the items.

Q4- How do cultural dimensions relate to learning preferences of Arab leaders, particularly to their views about central aspects of leadership development programs (i.e. learning activities, leadership competencies, learning goal orientation, barriers to participation, learning environment, and instructor's characteristics)?

Similarly, and since we have individuals nested within countries, the HLM model was employed to examine the relationship between national cultural variables (Level 2, or country, predictors) and learning preferences.

Level 1 (gender, age, sector, high school education, homogeneity)

Level 2 (two Hofstede's cultural dimensions, regions)

Unconditional Model Hypothesis:

H_0 : second level variance = 0

H_A : second level variance \neq 0

Level 2 Predictors Hypothesis (t-test for each slope to determine which one(s) is/are non-zero):

$H_0: \beta_j = 0$ (slope in population is 0, the specific cultural dimension does not predict

Learning Preferences)

$H_A: \beta_j \neq 0$ (slope is not 0, the specific cultural dimension does predict Learning

Preferences)

Q5- How do learners' characteristics (i.e. gender, sector, age and background education) and homogeneity relate to Arab preferences for leadership development?

In order to address Q5, I have examined the HLM results of Level one predictors.

Level one (gender, age, sector, high school education, homogeneity)

Level two (two of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, region)

Unconditional Model Hypothesis:

H_0 : second level variance = 0

H_A : second level variance \neq 0

Level 1 Predictors Hypothesis (t-test for each slope to determine which one(s) is/are non-zero):

$H_0: \beta_j = 0$ (slope in population is 0, the specific demographic variable does not predict

Learning Preferences)

$H_A: \beta_j \neq 0$ (slope is not 0, the specific demographic variable does predict Learning

Preferences)

For the research questions that explore the relationship between learning preferences and the independent variables, I have attempted to place the effect size within a comparable context (Nye, Konstantopoulos, & Hedges, 2004) by comparing effect sizes in existing studies which have examined learning preferences using regression models. Based on the Cohen d rule of thumb of effect sizes (small = 0.2 to 0.3; medium = around 0.5; large = 0.8 to infinity), I will suggest priorities in relation to the recommendations that would improve leadership development programs.

For further exploration in the demographic differences, I also performed a Mann-Whitney U test for each of the items within the constructs to determine if there are gender, sector, or educational background differences in mean responses of the items. I then performed a Kruskal-Wallis test to determine if any of the age groups were different from the others. By comparing group differences at the item level, I sought to deepen my analysis (beyond the constructs and at item level) to help recommend practical ways for what constitute effective education for executives.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings by Research Question

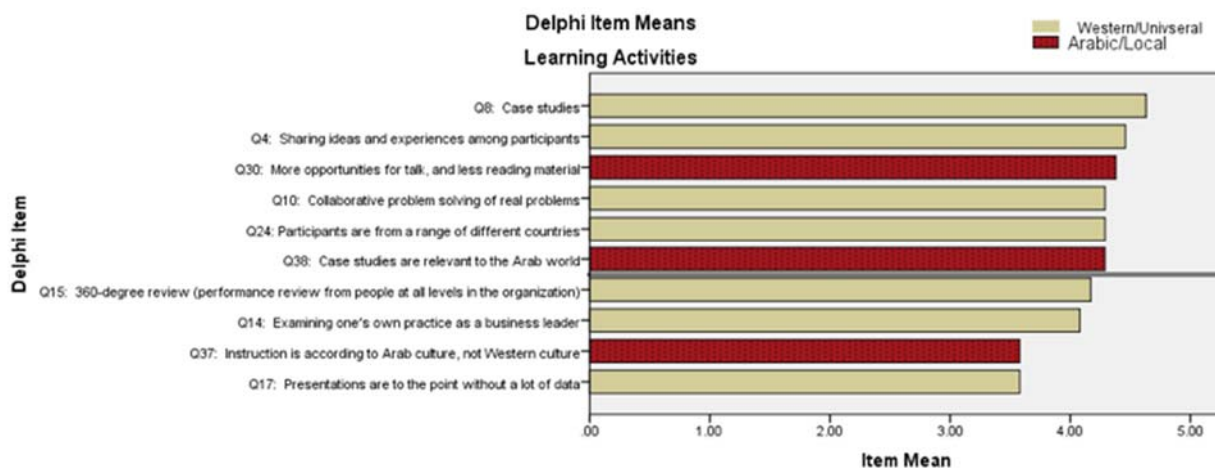
The following section details key findings pertaining to this study's research questions. While administration of the Delphi process, the LSS, and the Hofstede assessment produced substantial data, the study only includes findings related to the specific research questions and those with relevance to the design and facilitation of leadership training programs. This chapter (a) identifies best practices for Arab leadership development according to experts' views, (b) explores the comparison of experts' views to executives' preferences, and (c) examines the relationship between executives' learning preferences and their background (i.e., region, nationality, and demographics). The latter will draw on the HLM model of country effects developed in this study and capture how learning preferences vary across level one variables (demographics and the construct of homogeneity) and level two variables (regions and national values).

Expert Recommendations of Best Practice Principles for Leadership Development

What are the most effective Arab leadership development practices as identified by training experts? To answer the first question of the study, 24 experts were interviewed using the Delphi procedure. The bar graphs below show the experts' mean ratings and how they prioritized the items that they deemed most important to various aspects of classroom-based leadership development programs. Those dimensions were matched with the dependent variables of the study: Learning Activities, Leadership Competencies, Motivation Enablers, Participation Barriers, Learning Environment, and Instructor Characteristics. The grey bars represent selected items typical of Western practices (universal) as reflected in the reviewed literature. The red bars represent Arabic (local) practices emphasized in the Quran, Arabic English language scholarship

articles, and Arabic language publications focused on leadership in the Arab world. Findings represent recommendations from experts that integrate both universal (150 items) and local (24 items, which is 14% of the total Delphi items) approaches to leadership development. Each bar represents the mean of the item and the wide gray line represents the grand mean across the items within the construct.

Figure 14: Delphi Experts' Selected Item Means for Learning Activities



Learning activities. Figure 14 shows selected items that reflect Western (in grey) and Arabic (in red) practices. The full list of items is included in Appendix A. The majority of practices that fall under the learning activities scale reinforce experiential learning instructional strategies common in Western literature. For example, “case studies” (which scored highest, with a mean of 4.63 out of 5), “role playing activities,” “collaborative problem solving of real problems,” and “examining one’s own practice as a business leader” are learning activities that enable participants to immerse in and reflect on the learning experience (Fenwick, 2001; Beard & Wilson, 2013).

Ten out of the 14 experts’ top recommendations relate to practices that involve social interaction, which is also promoted as a best practice in Western leadership development

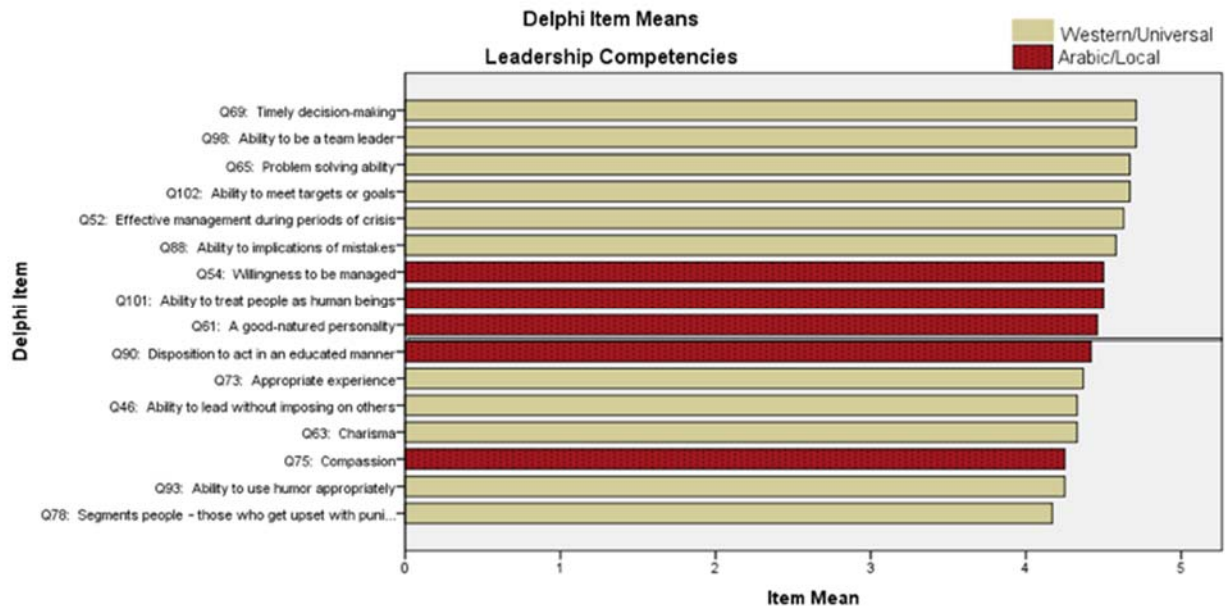
sessions (e.g., “sharing ideas and experiences among participants,” “interacting with instructor,” and “interacting with business leaders”). This seems to be equally important in the Arabic context as per Ali’s (1996) suggestion to use debates in theory building (called *mudarasa* and *munatharah* in Islam), where individuals introduce their perspectives and others comment on its strengths and weaknesses.

In agreement with Gillespie and Riddle (2005), experts suggest that best practices should include recommendations such as “instruction is according to Arab culture, not Western culture” (which scored the lowest, with a mean of 3.58 out of 5) and “case studies are relevant to the Arab world” (mean score = 4.29). “More opportunities for talk, and less reading material” was another highly rated item (mean score of 4.38) and is prevalent in Arabic literature (Wilkins, 2001). This underscores the need to design activities that promote discussions and encourage learners to converse about content with less reading and cognitive overload.

Moreover, experts, similar to Al-Husan and his colleagues (2014) and proponents of cross-cultural management practices (Hofstede, 2001), suggest that Arab executives would benefit from learning in a multicultural classroom with a heterogeneous makeup in terms of learners’ backgrounds (e.g., “participants are from a range of different countries” and “participants are from a range of different business sectors”). In comparison to the US, which is considered highly heterogeneous (Laurie, 1990), having participants from different backgrounds is unusual in the Middle East, an area considered much more “racially and culturally homogeneous” (Bakhtari, 1995, p. 112). Furthermore, based on the literature assessing the mismatch between Western and Arabic cultures, designing leadership programs that allow participants to experience various cross-cultural semantics and norms will help bridge the

psychic boundaries that commonly occur in the Middle East as markets grow and become more globalized (Al-Husan et al., 2001).

Figure 15: Delphi Experts' Selected Item Means for Leadership Competencies



Leadership competencies. The leadership qualities proposed by the Delphi experts cover a set of competencies and skills that draw from Western theories of leadership, such as trait, situational, relational (transactional, transformational and transcendental), ethical and servant perspectives. Several of the leadership characteristics recommended by the experts overlap with existing Arab best practices (ideal leadership qualities), and others are more specific to the Arab context. The bar graph shows selected items common to Western (in grey) and Arabic (in red) practices. The full list of items generated by the Delphi experts is included in Appendix A.

For example, the highest ranked qualities among the 62 leadership characteristics that need to be taught in a leadership development program are “ability to be a team leader” and “timely decision-making.” Both scored 4.71 out of 5.

In agreement with both Western (Fitzpatrick & Collins-Sussman, 2012) and Arab scholars (Al Suwaidan, 2002), leadership reflects not only the space that exists between the leader and the followers but also the process of mobilizing followers to achieve a goal. Fitzpatrick and Collins-Sussman assert that “leadership entails a dynamic relationship based on mutual influence and common purpose between leaders and collaborators in which both are moved to higher levels of motivation and moral development as they affect real, intended change” (as cited in AlSarhi et al., 2004, p. 47)). Similarly, Al-Dabbagh and Assaad (2010) suggest that Arab leaders need, first and foremost, to deploy both internal and external competencies to transform their relationships among their people. According to both Western and Arab perspectives, “the ability to lead a team” is a fundamental quality that leaders should be equipped with.

Scholars who studied leadership across the Arab region emphasized the “timely decision-making” competency. Khakhar and Rammal (2013) found that time sensitivity is an important factor to successfully and effectively complete business negotiations. They contend that Arab leaders spend considerable time making decisions, as they invest in personal relationships and trust building prior to closing a deal. Polychronic cultures, which include Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Mexico, New Orleans (US), Philippines, Pakistan, India, and many African cultures, view time as fluid and tend to not see a distinct division between time and tasks. As a result, timeliness and efficiency may be less important than other aspects of work (Hecht, DeVito and Guerrero, 1999). Cohen (1997) observes that "traditional societies have all the time in the world. The arbitrary divisions of the clock face have little saliency in cultures grounded in the cycle of the seasons, the invariant pattern of rural life, community life, and the calendar of religious festivities" (p. 34). In contrast, Western cultures, which are perceived as monochronic cultures, view time as a

tangible thing that can be managed, broken into smaller units, and arranged. According to Hecht and colleagues (1999), the monochronic perception of time grounded in the assumptions of the Industrial Revolution where "factory life required the labour force to be on hand and in place at an appointed hour" (p. 238). Monochronic cultures include Germany, Canada, Switzerland, United States, and Scandinavia. Even though the item "ability to think carefully" (rated 4.54) applies to leaders working in both worlds (Western and Arab), it resonates well with managers working in polychronic societies, where individuals tend to take more time understanding the particulars of the project, the stakeholders involved, and avoid hasty decisions before closing a deal.

The second most important set of qualities suggested by the experts were the "ability to meet targets or goals" and "problem solving ability" (both scored 4.67). Both focus on performance, results, and the bottom line. Competencies that focus on the activities or achievement oriented leadership styles are largely drawn from behavioral theories that support task oriented behaviors as related to leadership effectiveness (House & Mitchell, 1975). Other items that support high performance behaviors are "success factors in business," "understanding of balance sheet" and "appropriate knowledge." The latter is of a concern to the a Arabic/local context which was raised in the literature related to the need to increase leaders' efficiency/performance in the Arab region public sector and lack of qualified nationals in leadership positions (World Economic Forum & OECD, 2012).

The third (4.63) most important qualities according to the experts were "effective management during periods of crisis" and "ability to serve as a role model." Even though both qualities may be considered universal leadership competencies, being able to lead during periods of crisis is particularly salient to the Arab region, where political and economic landscapes are in

constant flux (Khakhar & Rammal, 2013). Thus, managing crises both internal and external to the business/organization calls for leaders who understand the political and regulatory environments impacting all aspects of local and international businesses (Ghauri, 2003). Furthermore, the notion of serving as a role model--or, colloquially, 'walking the walk'--is central to authentic leadership theory, which explains how exceptional leaders achieve their goals. By first internalizing a strong ethical and moral structure, the leader can then externalize those ethical attributes, connect to followers in a clear and focused manner, and propel followers forward. Mameli (2013) contends that there are a number of potential authentic leaders in the MENA region. A system of leadership development--one that cultivates both leader skills and leadership skills--is critical for preparing leaders to face the challenges associated with leading public sector entities in the Arab world (Mameli, 2013).

In support of the trait theories, experts recommended the following critical traits for effective leadership: confidence, adaptability, presentation skills, patience, diligence, innovation, and creativity. These qualities align with Collins' (2006) level five leadership model, which emphasized personal humility (i.e., modesty, integrity and patience) and professional will (desire to lead and influence other, drive and ambition, communication skill, wisdom and leadership efficacy). These personality traits have been also part of "the *sunnah* of Muhammad and other prophets for effective implementation of an Islamic organization strategy" (AlSarhi et al., 2014).

"Flexibility" (score 4.33) is another trait of particular interest to the Arab region (in addition to other high context nations). Western models of leadership associate flexibility with situational leadership where leaders, based on the context and relationship with followers, need to devise appropriate strategies specific to the prevailing situation (Daft, 1999; Guay, 2011). This contextualization approach to viewing objects and focusing on relationships results in different

ways of responding to events (Nisbett, 2003). Nisbett argues that the implications of a holistic approach to the world on individuals' reasoning would influence the way people approach conflict resolution, debates, relationships with others, change, and verbal presentation skills. Individuals who perceive objects in relation to the environment are more likely to detect relationships among events, believe less in controllability of the environment, see change rather than stability in events, emphasize long term relationships with others, and often equate silence (rather than speech) with knowledge (Nisbett, 2003). Further, when confronted with a conflict, individuals may be "oriented toward resolving the contradiction, transcending it, or finding a 'middle way' - in short, to approach matters dialectically" (Nisbett, 2003, p. 37). Under this context, "meetings are often little more than a ratification of consensus achieved by the leader beforehand," (p. 194) and managers tend to deal with conflict by avoiding the situation, whereas Americans are more inclined towards persuasion and confrontation.

Based on an empirical study conducted by Bealer and Bhanugopan (2014), UAE managers were more passive and avoidant than managers in the USA and Europe. It is very common among Arab leaders to recognize the role of situational constraints in affecting the outcome or behaviors of others (Beekun & Badawi, 1999). Arabs, who are from high context cultures, tend to attribute behaviors or events to situational factors, rather than attributing error or failure to abilities or personal traits. They are often holistic in assessing business relationships. Concepts related to giving evaluative feedback to employees and accountability may require the separation of the object from the content, verbal representations for guiding and growing performance, and mechanisms that allow criticism and improvements to be integrated into the system without being perceived as a threat or challenging the loyalty of authority. Because confrontations are perceived as intrusive and dangerous, Arab nations (with an absence of

systematic controls and established criteria for performance managements and evaluations; Ali, 1992), may find it challenging to establish systems that address controlled and scrutinized performance in the workplace. Jreisat (2009b) observes that the Arab MENA leadership continues to struggle with successful implementation of activities that promote audits, inspections, program evaluations, and the ongoing performance measurement and management systems. Arab employees often perceive performance management systems as discriminatory, unsupportive of accountability, transparency and equality. Instead, the system rewards loyalty rather than high performance (Neal & Finlay, 2008). This concern is reflected in the Delphi experts' responses, which suggest that Arab leaders ought to be equipped with "effective use of performance measurement and reward," "ability to find areas for improvement," "ability to see potential in others," "ability to implications of mistakes," and the ability to "segment people -- those who get upset with punishment and those who need different kind of punishment."

The use of reward in a fair and consistent manner has been highlighted by transactional theories of leadership. Mirroring principles of transactional leadership, Delphi experts also recommended that participants in leadership development programs learn about building "interpersonal skills," "effective management of people," the "ability to give instructions," and the "ability to supervise others." However, Bittel (1984) argued that employees need more than a tangible reward and a clear understanding of responsibilities to be motivated. The Arab region may benefit from *servant* approaches of leadership, where altruistic leaders empower and grow followers' abilities to lead in a selfless manner (Mameli, 2013). Sarayrah (2004) observed that servant leadership is an approach once employed in Bedouin-Arab culture. This may explain some of the items nominated by the Delphi experts, such as "knowledge of people with whom one works," "ability to gain trust of employees," "democratic decision-making processes,"

“ability to take the organization to where it should be,” “ability to lead without imposing,” and “ability to be accepted as a leader by those he or she leads.” Leadership influenced by Islamic and tribal traditions represents a psychological contract between a leader and followers. The leadership is a trust (*amaanah*) and a leader’s responsibility is to guide, protect and treat followers justly while remaining grounded in the values of consultative leadership practice (Beekun & Badawi, 1999; Ahmad & Ogunsola, 2011). As such, leadership is perceived as practicing Allah’s wisdom but is not imposed in a forceful manner (Ali, 1993).

Another set of items (e.g., charisma, ability to motivate and engage employees, ability to inspire others, and a vision for the organization) fall under the transformational leadership theory, where leaders share and shape a vision that provides direction, focus, inspiration and motivation to others (Blunt, 1991). Transformational leaders mobilize their teams through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, high-performance expectations and articulation of a vision (Bass, 1997). Transformational/charismatic leadership, which is more pronounced in Islamic management (AlSarhi et al., 2014) complicates leadership development, asking whether charisma is innate or learned. In other words, if experts believe that charisma (score of 4.33) is a key Arab leadership quality for followers to be engaged and energized, can individuals with no or little charisma become transformational leaders?

In the Arab region, particularly across the Gulf nations, a large number of expatriate managers and national employees work side by side (Markaz, 2012). With a need to effectively lead in a multicultural environment, the Delphi experts recommended that Arab leaders learn about cross-cultural management by identifying the competency: “ability to work effectively within a multicultural environment” and the need to have “a culturally inclusive mission statement.” This mirrors Western practices promoting the understanding of employees’ attitudes,

beliefs, behaviors, and effectiveness that change across cultures and call for differences in management practices (Newman & Nollen, 1996; Dwyar, Aydin & Pehlivan, 2010). According to Dubrin and Dalglish (2003), “a multicultural leader is a leader with the skills and attitudes to relate effectively to, and motivate people across race, ethnicity, social attitudes, and lifestyles . . . the leader must be aware of overt and subtle cultural differences” (p. 406).

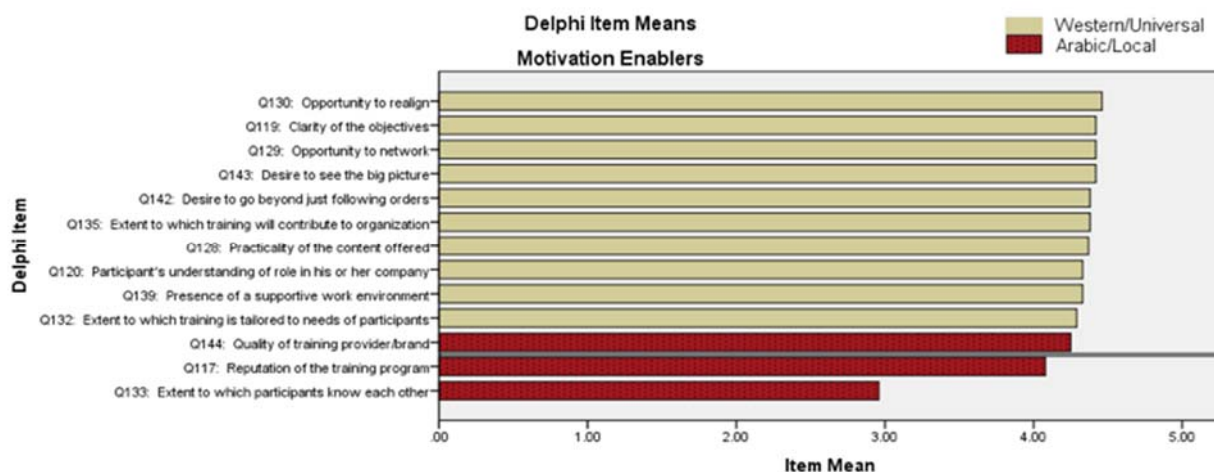
Leaders, when working in a multicultural environment, often face the challenge of establishing a shared understanding through effective communication across high and low context cultures (Hall, 1976). The Delphi experts note this important skill by identifying such leadership qualities as “ability to use humor appropriately,” “ability to choose and use the right words,” and “listening skills.”

Items flagged as Arabic/local are linked to leadership qualities that include “a good-natured (similar to a good attitude),” “compassion,” “ability to treat people as human beings,” and “disposition to act in an educated manner.” This role seems congruent with transcendental forms of leadership, where leaders cut across self-interest (i.e., transcend) and ground their actions in values, altruistic love, hope/faith, attitudes to meet the intrinsic and extrinsic needs of their followers, resulting in a positive organizational outcome (Fry, Vitucci, & Cedillo, 2005). Transcendental leadership subsumes the four fundamental nature of individual survival: the body, mind, heart, and spirit. Transactional and transformational leadership, however, only emphasizes the first three (physical, logic and feelings) (Fry, 2003). Human feelings (emotional engagement with followers and Allah) are at the center of leadership in Islam, as leaders’ performances rest on both social and spiritual actions (AlSarhi et al., 2014; Kader, 1973). Lastly, the “willingness to be managed” Delphi item was also flagged as locally specific, as it may relate to the challenge of nepotism common to Arab institutions. Ali (1992) describes

authority relations in the Arab world as a *sheikocracy*, which is characterized as hierarchical authority, rules and regulations contingent on the personality and power of the individuals who make them, an ‘open-door’ policy, subordination of efficiency to human relations and personal connections, indecisiveness, informality among lower- level managers, and a generally patriarchal approach. Nepotism is often evident in the selection of upper-level managers, but qualifications are emphasized in the selection of middle- and lower-level personnel. Chain of command . . . and division of labor are also characteristics of the *sheikocracy*. They are not as strictly observed as in the West. (p. 7)

The nexus of power and authority relations between leader and follower become multifactorial rather than dyadic and linear (Neal & Finlay, 2008). In this context, leaders function in open-systems, where external factors such as family or personal connections and authority can take precedence over procedures and actions within the organization (Ali & Wahabi, 1995) and may create conflict within the business.

Figure 16: Delphi Experts' Selected Item Means for Motivational Enablers



Motivation enablers. Figure 16 shows selected items that reflect Western (in grey) and Arabic (in red) practices. The full list of items is included in Appendix A. Adults’ experiences act as motivational enablers for engaging in learning. This section summarizes what the Delphi

experts view as the incentives that drive experts to participate in leadership development programs. The experts' top-rated motivation enabler was “opportunity to realign” (score of 4.46) and second top rate “opportunity to recharge” (score of 4.42). This may be particularly relevant to the Arab region, which is undergoing major changes in both socioeconomic and political arenas. Public and private sector executives, to cope with the growth spurred by oil and respond to the challenges facing the Arab world (political instability, competition/ monopolization, scarce workforce with appropriate talent, etc.), need to find ways to regularly align, recharge, and reflect on their practices to move their institutions forward and upwards. Continuously aligning executives' skills with the demands of the shifting landscape and globalization is critical for leaders' effectiveness, versatility, and agility.

Other items nominated by the experts fall into Houle's (1961) three categories: (a) goal-oriented, (b) activity-oriented learners, and (c) learning-oriented learners. The goal-oriented items mainly emphasize goals related to professional development or job competencies (e.g., "needs of one's work situation," "progression in one's career," "requirement of the organization"). More than 30% of the items proposed by the Delphi experts fall into this category and link motivation enablers to the workplace or corporation in which executives work (e.g., "presence of a supportive work environment," "roles in leadership," and "extent to which training will contribute to organization"). This high emphasis on the role of the institution/workplace in motivating learners to participate in training is worth noting.

Other items fell into the learning-oriented classification. Experts suggested that some executives would be keen to enroll in leadership programs because of their "internal need to grow," "a passion for excellence," "love of what one does," or "need to update or learn new skills

or competencies" (in agreement with the Omani sample examined by Al-Barwani and Kelly, 1985).

The third group of learners who are incentivized by community or social interactions have been emphasized by the experts, who rated "opportunity to network" as high as 4.42 and "extent to which participants know each other" as low as 2.96. Even though the idea of interconnectedness and networking has been examined in Western contexts (Isaac, Guy & Valentine, 2001), homogeneity of classroom participants has been flagged as specific to Arabic contexts. Arab executives may be more prone to participate if individuals with same background, level and experience join the training.

Four items were specific to the nature of curriculum and content of the leadership program ("clarity of objectives," "practicality of the content offered," "the nature of the training program syllabus," "extent to which training is tailored to needs of participants"). This means experts recommend that training providers and business schools ought to package and design courses in ways that suit the needs of participating executives, clarifying instructional objectives with practical relevance to the workplace and clearly outlined in the syllabus.

Items related to quality and reputation are more apparent in Arabic literature and have been flagged as local. Experts rated "quality of training provider/brand" at 4.25 and "reputation of the training program" at 4.08. Ali and Camp (1995) argue that "even among the best existing colleges of management and economics [in the Arab region], there are some which have unacceptable qualities" (p. 11). Similarly, Atiyyah (1993) indicates that the effectiveness of executive education programs is generally low due to inadequate needs' assessment, irrelevant curricula, non-engaging training techniques and lack of reinforcement of theory in the workplace. Thus, as time is valuable to executives, it is vital that leadership programs are

delivered by reputable and quality providers to maximize the return on investment from training interventions.

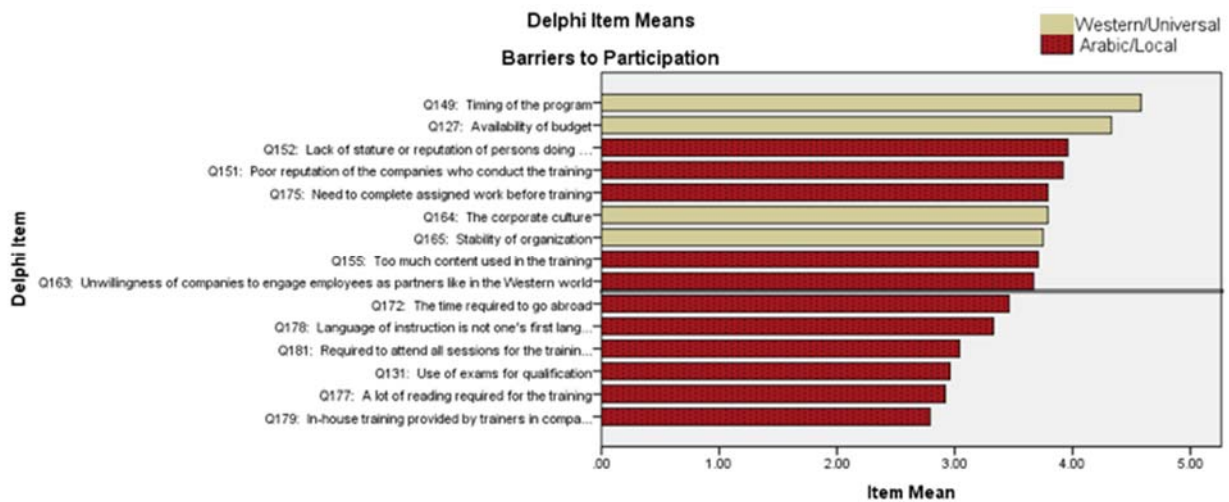
Items “participant’s understanding of role in his or her company” (rated 4.33) and “desire to go beyond just following orders” (rated 4.38) are of interest to the Arab context, as they relate to issues of government inefficiency (Levant) and the enforcement of nationalization policies (Gulf). Mameli (2013) points out that “public sector performance suffers, and public administrators are challenged to achieve stable footing to carry out their jobs” (p. 384).

Additionally, the nationalization efforts to replace expats with nationals often lead to a mismatch between human competencies and organizational needs (Al-Yahya, 2007). The lack of an adequately qualified local workforce (World Economic Forum & OECD, 2012) may increase the number of nationals in the workplace but will not resolve the problem of institutional inefficiency and the culture of underperformance. Governments need employees eager to be equipped with the right skills to fulfill the job requirements and who are motivated to do more than what the job requires (i.e., employees must demonstrate knowledge and engagement).

Engagement in one’s work “translates directly into discretionary effort—the willingness to do more than only meet job requirements and customer needs” (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2013, p. 5). It has been argued that, in contrast to employee engagement, job satisfaction is often linked to “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job” (Locke, 1976, p. 1304) resulting from meeting the hygiene factors of a job (e.g. status, job security, salary, fringe benefits, work conditions, good pay, paid insurance, or vacations; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Unlike satisfied employees, engaged individuals are not only motivated by extrinsic factors but also are intrinsically “most committed to their organizations put in 57 percent more effort on the job — and are 87 percent less likely to resign — than employees who

consider themselves disengaged” (The Role of Employee Engagement, 2010). As such, governments in the Arab region need to address not only the hygiene factors but also motivators (e.g., recognition, achievement, or personal growth) arising from intrinsic conditions of the job itself to promote employees’ engagement, performance and desire for lifelong learning.

Figure 17: Delphi Experts' Selected Item Means for Barriers to Participation



Barriers to participation. Figure 17 shows selected items that reflect Western (in grey) and Arabic (in red) practices. The full list of items is included in Appendix A. Similar to Merriam and colleagues (2007), the Delphi experts also found that executives find timing and cost as the top barriers for leadership development participation. Items “timing of the program” was rated highest (4.58), followed by “one’s work schedule” (4.42) and “the time required to go abroad” (3.46). These items mirror the challenges faced by Arab executives who work in the public sector. Government managers, particularly, work from 8:00 am until 2:00 pm and typically participate in training during work days. As such, if the training does not fit the weekdays’ schedule, it is usually difficult for employees to enroll in the professional development course. Further, due to the low quality training providers in the region, many

consider traveling abroad to attend courses (thus this item was flagged as Arabic/local specific). The impracticality of traveling may pose a barrier to participation.

Items such as “availability of budget,” “payment of training course by your employer (company),” “cost of the training program,” and “unwillingness of organizations to pay for expenses” reflect the prominence of cost as a barrier, similar to what Johnstone and Rivera (1965) cited in their study.

Similar to Ali (1992), experts nominated “family commitment” and “cultural hurdles” as crucial to executives who need to “establish equilibrium in one's individual and social life” and who feel that “family and work are the centre of life” (p. 14). Despite the fact that marriage, housework and family commitments are also common in the West (Hagedorn, 1993, Devault, 1997; Pleck and Rustad, 1980; Allen and Walker, 2000), based on the literature, females in the Arab world face an accentuated pressure/burden to comply with social and family expectations.

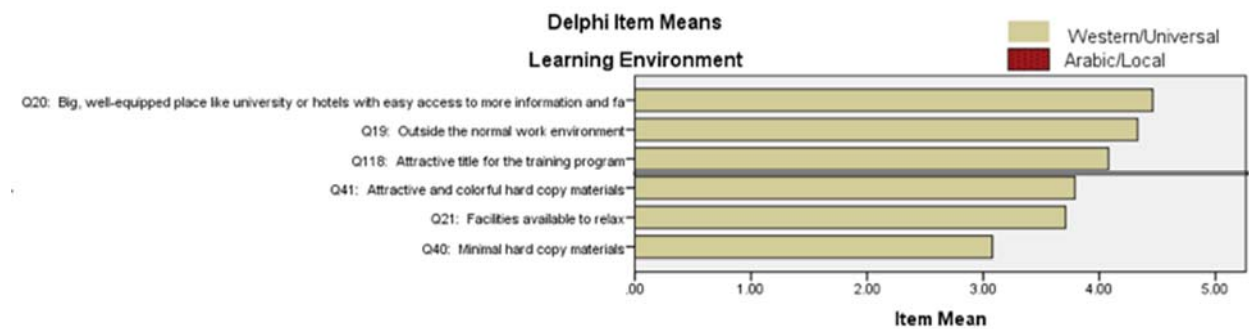
Reputation and the importance of quality training across the Arab region is highlighted through such items as “lack of stature or reputation of persons doing the training” (score of 3.96) and “poor reputation of the companies who conduct the training,” as well as considering “in-house training provided by trainers in companies” and “cheap locations for the training” not acceptable or up to par. Those items have been flagged as Arabic/local.

Experts also organized, like Johnstone and Rivera (1965), potential barriers to participation into two groups: internal, or dispositional barriers, and external, or situational ones. Internal barriers included “participants, fear of losing face if they show failure in the training,” “lack of confidence,” and “perception that participants will have to step out of their comfort zones.” Items such as “the corporate culture,” “lack of belief by the organization in human capital,” “lack of permission from one’s bosses,” “stress from work,” and “need to cope with

demands of work” fall into the situational barriers classification. It should be noted that 11 items out of the total 37 barriers are related to the corporation/institution. Two items that may be linked to the Arabic context are “stability of organization” and “unwillingness of companies to engage employees as partners like in the Western world.” The former may be a response to the high instability of businesses in the MENA region due to the rapid changes and political turmoil institutions undergoes. The latter is a belief that employees may feel unmotivated to seek professional development if they do not see a long term and clear career path (e.g., becoming partners/or owning shares from the company revenues) typical of corporate Western practices.

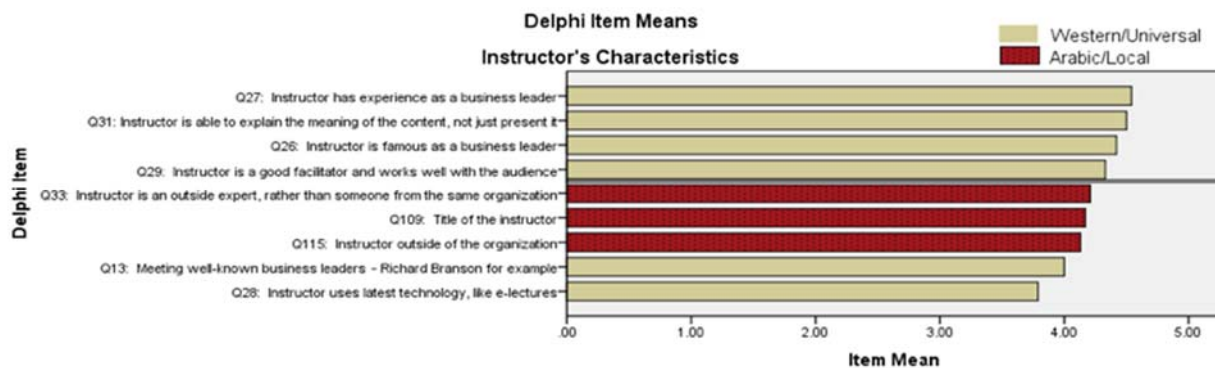
Items suggested by the experts and not prevalent in Western literature include “language of instruction is not one’s first language” (similar to Wilkins’ 2001 finding), “too much content used in the training” (echoing Mohsenin’s 2010 observation), “required to attend all sessions for the training,” “use of exams for qualification,” “need to complete assigned work before training,” and “a lot of reading required for the training.” Based on those items, training providers are advised to design leadership programs that minimize the use of readings, content, and assignments, reduce the use of assessments/formal exams, have flexible attendance criteria and are conducted in Arabic language.

Figure 18: Delphi Experts' Selected Item Means for Learning Environment



Learning environment. The top rated item recommended by the Delphi experts is the need to deliver the training in a “big, well-equipped place like university or hotels with easy access to more information and facilities” (score 4.46). Physical spaces with access to information (e.g., library, web-based resources, off-site learning, multi-purpose facilities) have been suggested by Dugdale (2009). To immerse Arab executives in the learning experience, the experts proposed that the training is conducted “outside the normal work environment” (4.33) and in “facilities available to relax” (3.71). In regards to aspects specific to the course kit, experts value the importance of choosing an “attractive title for the training program” (4.08) and using “attractive and colorful hard copy materials” (3.79) with “minimal hard copy materials” (3.08).

Figure 19: Delphi Experts' Selected Item Means for Instructor Characteristics



Instructor’s characteristics. In agreement with Tootoonchi and colleagues’ (2002) findings, the Delphi experts believe that the instructor’s ability to incorporate practical business lessons and real world scenarios is the most salient quality for effective management programs. Experts’ top rated instructor’s quality is “experience as a business leader,” with a score of 4.54. The Delphi experts also believe that for Arab executives, it is important that the “instructor is famous as a business leader” (4.42) as well as inviting and “meeting well-known business leaders” during leadership development interventions.

To promote the credibility of the instructor and bring in new/fresh multiple perspectives, the experts emphasize the importance of the “title of the instructor” and having an instructor who is an “outside expert, rather than someone from the same organization.” Those two items have been flagged as Arabic/local.

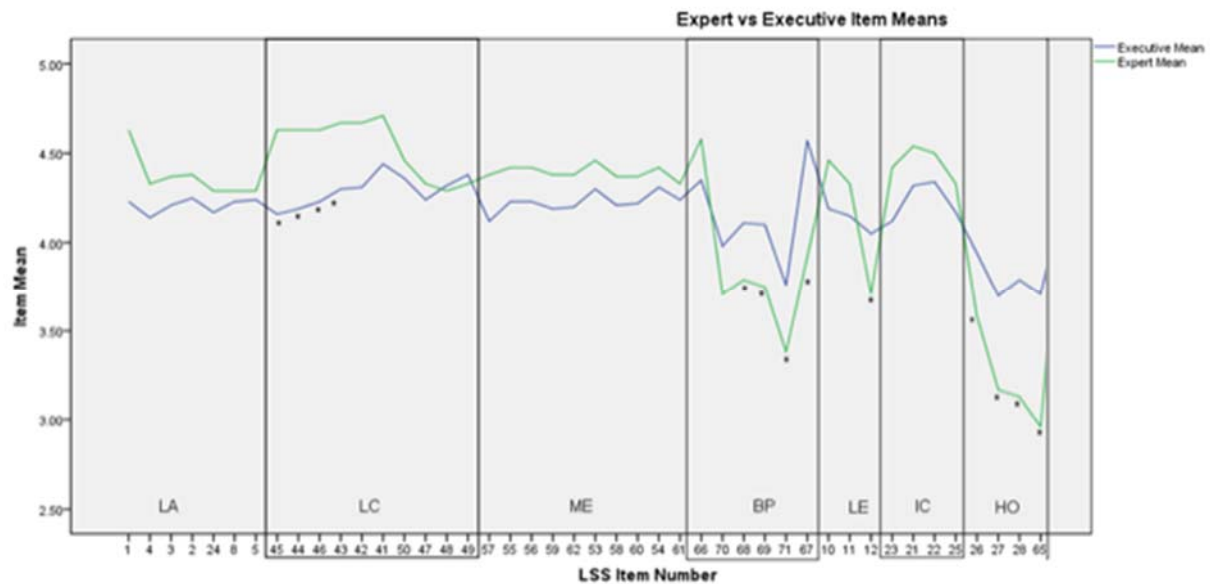
In support of Fenwick (2001), experts stress the role of an educator as a facilitator able to engage executives in learning, rather than just lecturing or regurgitating the content. This belief is reflected in both items “instructor is able to explain the meaning of the content, not just present it” (4.50) and “instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience” (4.33).

Experts also demonstrated a preference for instructors who were digitally savvy and skilled in technology integration. Consistent with Tootoonchi and colleagues (2002), experts contend that having an “instructor [who] uses latest technology, like e-lectures” should be modeled in leadership trainings.

Comparing Experts’ to Executives’ Views of Leadership Development

What are the similarities and differences between experts’ and Arab learners’ views of best leadership development practices? To answer question two of the study, I analyzed the 50 items matching between the Delphi and LSS findings using the Mann-Whitney U statistical test. This process identified agreements and differences between experts and executives’ views. In figure 21 below, the two lines correspond with either the experts’ or executives’ mean ranking of the items, respectively, and highlights with an asterisk the items found to have statistically significant differences. The graph also shows how the items have been categorized according to the study constructs. In Appendix D, the tables provide the executives (LSS) and experts’ (Delphi) means (from high to low) for each item and their corresponding Mann-Whitney U test statistic.

Figure 20: Mean Rankings of Experts vs. Executives



Executives and experts generally agreed on all constructs related to LA, ME, and IC. However, experts and executives disagreed on few items that relate to LC, BP, LE and HO categories. Executives put less emphasis on the need to develop problem-solving and analytical skills of leaders (LC), reinforced value on hurdles for females and the role of the institution/cooperation as a barrier to participation (BP), stressed on the need for comfort in the physical environment (LE), and underscored the importance of culturally responsive practices (HO). Findings are vital to designers of leadership development programs who aim to consider both sides (teacher and learners) and integrate executives' feedback/input into the curriculum, as recommended by Coloma and colleagues (2012). For each construct, items that appeared at the top of the list for both experts and executives of factors will be discussed to highlight areas of agreement and disagreement between the two groups.

Areas of agreement. Experts generally agreed on items that fall under the LA, ME, and IC categories.

Learning activities. Both experts and executives believe that experiential learning approaches are conducive to effective leadership development (e.g., case studies, role play, and collaborative problem solving activities). A particular emphasis was placed on the social and verbal aspects of instructional methods. Experts and executives rated interacting with instructors and participants highly. The item “more opportunities for talk, and less reading material” also reinforces Ali’s (1996) contention that “group interactions and team activities, if designed appropriately, could result in the optimal facilitation of intended changes” (p. 9).

Motivation enablers. Executives gave high ratings to all items proposed by the experts related to motivational enablers. These items addressed the three types of learning orientations: goal/work related (e.g., extent to which training will contribute to participant s company), activity/social (e.g., opportunity to network), and knowledge related (e.g., need to update or learn new skills or competencies). Two of the highest ranked items relate to the need for leaders to see the big picture (“desire to broaden horizon and see the big picture”) and keep pace with contemporary developments (“opportunity to realign [refresh thinking with timely best practices]”).

Instructor’s characteristics. The executives' ratings indicate high levels of agreement with experts on factors related to ideal/preferred instructor’s qualities. Those items mainly emphasize facilitation skills and ability to engage learners (“instructor is able to explain the meaning and illustration of the content, and use real examples,” and “instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience”). Further, experts and executives agreed on the need to incorporate authentic experiences into the classroom through the instructor’s status and background (“instructor has experience as a business leader” and “instructor is famous as a

business leader”). This is congruent with Branine and Pollard’s (2010) recommendation to consider the power associated with older age/status/experts in the development of talent.

Areas of disagreement. Experts and executives disagreed on a few items that relate to LC, BP, LE and HO categories.

Leadership competencies. The executives gave high ratings to several items proposed by the experts. Those include the need to develop abilities to lead a team and the importance of personal traits as well as job related skills. However, executives ranked less positively than experts items such as “problem solving ability,” “effective management during periods of crisis,” and “effective analysis of work situations.” The significant differences between experts and executives show that experts view analytical skills, problem solving, and responding to change/crisis as more important competencies to leadership development than executives. Another statistically significant difference in ratings between experts and executives was produced by the item “ability to serve as a role model,” indicating that experts placed greater emphasis on learning about ethical leadership approaches in training interventions.

Barriers to participation. Both experts and executives emphasized that the “timing of the program” and “too much content used in the training” were barriers to participation. Nevertheless, significant differences between experts and executives have been found on four items: “poor reputation of the companies who conduct the training,” “the corporate culture,” “perception about training,” and “cultural hurdles for females.” Executives placed higher importance on those barriers than experts.

Learning environment. Experts and executives agreed on the learning environment constructs (e.g., “outside the normal work environment” and “large and well-equipped place like university or high end comfortable training rooms such as in hotel”). However, executives

viewed “facilities available to relax” as a more important element than experts when it comes to designing physical spaces conducive to learning.

Homogeneity related items. Experts and executives did not agree on the influence of culture on leadership development programs. The data revealed that the largest and most common disagreement regarded culture-related issues (e.g., “instruction is attuned to the Arab culture, not Western culture,” “instructor is Arab,” “instructor from a different Arab country,” and “instructor is from the same country,” with p-values of $< .01$). In general, experts tended to see culture as having less influence on effective leadership development than executives. The underlying reason for this difference is unclear. When surveyed, experts' responses were not anonymous, whereas executives' responses were. In this context, experts may have been more likely than executives to respond properly or diplomatically about the role of culture.

Executives' Background and Learning Preferences

The last three questions examine the relationship between learning preferences of Arab executives and their background (i.e., national culture, geographical region, demographics, and homogeneity). In this section, I used an HLM model to explain how nation level -- or level two -- variables (region and national values) and individual characteristics -- or level one -- variables (gender, age, sector, educational background) relate to executives' approaches to various aspects of leadership development (leadership activities, leadership competencies, instructors' qualities, learning environment, motivation enablers and perceived barriers). The methods related to the process of accounting for the clustering in the HLM model, the determination of the reduction of unexplained variance due to the independent variable, and specification of the reference group are included in Appendix J.

Learning preferences and geographical regions. How do geographic regional differences relate to learning preferences of Arab leaders, particularly to their views about central aspects of leadership development programs? To address the third question, I will focus on the independent variable region (Gulf = 0, 1 = Asia = 1) within the level-two HLM model and how it relates to each outcome variable (six learning preferences/constructs). The results for the model are illustrated in Table 13. It is important to note this is the full model that includes both level-one (individual) and level-two (country) variables in the HLM. Therefore, I am controlling for the other independent variables while looking at the relationship between region and each dependent variable.

Table 13: Effects of Region on Learning Preferences

REGION, γ_{01}		
Dependent Variable	Coefficient	Effect Size (Error)
Learning Activities	.19**	0.294 (0.069)
Leadership Competencies	.23**	0.376 (0.096)
Motivational Enablers	.16*	0.223 (0.083)
Barriers to Participation	.15*	0.228 (0.068)
Learning Environment	.15*	0.238 (0.073)
Instructor's Characteristics	.198**	0.297 (0.067)

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

The table contains two important parameters: the coefficient (γ), which indicates how learning preferences in each nation change with regard to measured participant characteristic (conditional on all remaining independent variables), and the effect sizes, which are a measure of the magnitude of the (conditional) relationship between the independent variable and the

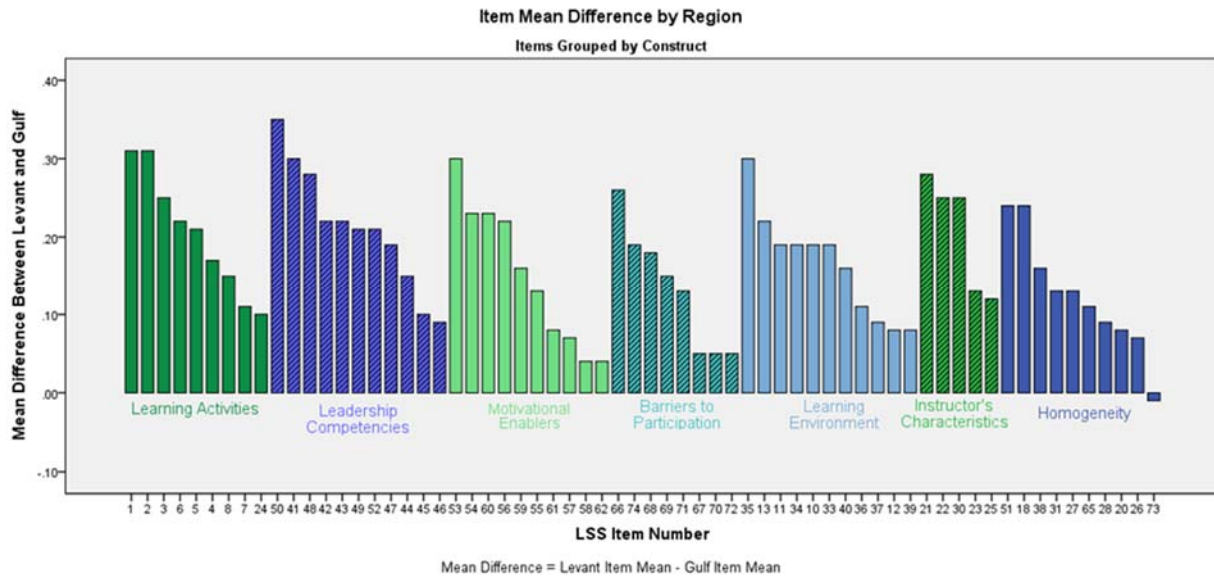
dependent variable. The coefficients used in our model are also called *fixed effects*. The final estimation of fixed effects did not use robust standard errors because the dataset has a small number of level two units, thus not meeting the criterion for the usage of robust errors (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002).

Based on the results, all constructs show a statistically significant difference between the Levant and Gulf regions. For example, learning activities scale is statistically significant with region as a predictor. Those in Levant tend to rate learning activities 0.19 points higher than those in the Gulf ($\gamma_{01} = 0.19$; $p\text{-value} < .01$), when holding PDI and UAI scores constant. The effect size of the independent variable region that relates to LA is 0.29. Cohen's general rule for the effect size states that the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable is small if the effect size ranges between 0.2 to 0.3, medium if it is around 0.5, and large if it is greater than 0.8. Even though the effect size is considered small, this effect size of 0.29 is the change of LA in standard units between Gulf and Levant, conditional on the remaining independent variables.

For further exploration in the regional differences, I performed a Mann-Whitney U test for each of the items within the constructs to determine if there are regional differences in median responses of the individual items. Figure 22 shows the item mean differences from high to low across all items, grouped by constructs. In Appendix E, tables show the item means for each region and then the region difference, which is marked with an asterisk if that item was statistically significant according to the Mann-Whitney U test. The results of this statistical test identify the items that the two groups are different, without controlling for nesting or other variables. As such, the outcome of the Mann-Whitney U test should be used with caution. The

findings should only be suggestive or descriptive and should only be indicative of what may be important to attend to by leadership development designers.

Figure 21: Item Mean Difference by Region (Item Grouped by Construct)



The variance between executives' preferences across both regions indicates that the executives from the Levant generally have a higher agreement level with the Delphi experts than executives from the Gulf region, when other independent variables are held constant. For example, with the learning activities scale, executives from the Gulf agreed less with the use of “case studies” (mean difference = 0.31; p -value < .01), which reflects a more Western (experiential) approach to learning. This confirms to an extent Gillespie and Riddle's (2005) contention that case-based teaching methods may pose a challenge to Arab learners, who are accustomed to rote learning and often lack the synthesis skills required to analyze case studies. Executives from the Gulf scored lower on the need for “democratic decision-making processes” (mean difference = 0.28; p -value < .01) as part of the curriculum being taught in leadership development programs.

In regards to the motivation enabler construct, executives from the Levant agreed more positively with drivers such as “opportunity to realign (refresh thinking with timely best practices)” (mean difference = 0.3; p-value < .01) and “desire to broaden horizon and see the big picture” (mean difference = 0.23; p-value < .01). Executives from both regions agreed on the importance of practicality of the course, scoring highly the “relevance and quality of the program syllabus” and “extent to which training will contribute to participants’ company,” with a mean difference of 0.04 for both.

Executives from the Levant agreed more positively with Johnstone and Rivera’ (1965) external or situational barriers scoring higher on “timing of the program,” “level of difficulty of the training (either above or below your level),” and “the corporate culture” than their counterparts in the Gulf. Executives from the Gulf agreed with Levant executives on several instructors’ qualities (i.e., “instructor is famous as a business leader”) and agreed less positively on whether the instructor needs to come from a “well known university” (mean difference = 0.25; p-value < .01). In regards to the learning environment, Levant executives emphasized, contrary to their Gulf counterparts, the need to have “materials accessible on the Web (virtual learning environment)” (mean difference = 0.30; p-value < .01) and “facilities with access to wireless network and library” (mean difference = 0.22; p-value < .01). This variance may show that leaders from the Levant value the integration of digital tools in the classroom as recommended by the Delphi experts. Across all constructs, the only item Gulf executives scored higher than Levant executives was “language of the program (Native Language).” In general, executives agree on the majority of the homogeneity items, including “instruction is attuned to the Arab culture, not Western culture,” “participants are from the same gender as me,” and “instructor is Arab.”

The variance between executives' learning preferences may reflect the regional variability that exists between their socioeconomic and political backgrounds. The political systems (majority ruled by monarchies) and economic-technological development (majority recently open to modernization to the discovery of oil) may relate to why Gulf executives score lower on the democratic decision making processes and digital requirements in leadership programs. Ali (1993) found that his Saudi Arabian (Gulf) research participants were more inclined to adopt a "pseudo-participatory" environment among managers and subordinates where the Arab manager uses consultation and mediation to resolve conflicts. Nevertheless, the decision-making power rests entirely with the Arab leader, but it is not overtly imposed in a forceful manner.

Conversely, executives in the Levant countries -- a region which possess a higher levels of democratization, modernization and religious diversity (Ralston et al., 2012) -- were more inclined to prefer experiential learning approaches, thus scoring higher on the learning activities construct. However, executives from both regions agreed on the level of cultural affinity in leadership development interventions, seeking congruence in instructional language, gender of participants, and nationality of instructor as well as the localization of content.

Learning preferences and national cultures. How do cultural dimensions relate to learning preferences of Arab leaders, particularly to their views about central aspects of leadership development programs? To answer this question, I will continue to use the level-two results, specifically looking at the results for PDI and UAI (please refer to Table 14).

Table 14: Effects of Hofstede's National Values on Learning Preferences

Dependent Variable	PDI, γ_{02}		UAI, γ_{03}	
	Coefficient	Effect Size (Error)	Coefficient	Effect Size (Error)
Learning Activities	-.004*	0.22 (0.07)	-.008	
Leadership Competencies	-.006*	0.29 (0.09)	-.01*	0.23 (0.095)
Motivational Enablers	-.007**	0.31 (0.08)	-.011*	0.22 (0.08)
Barriers to Participation	-.004**	0.21 (0.07)	-.015*	0.32 (0.07)
Learning Environment	-.003		-.01*	0.22 (0.07)
Instructor's Characteristics	-.004*	0.197 (0.07)	-.01*	0.21 (0.069)

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

National cultures. Figures 22 and 23 show, from high to low, PDI and UAI scores for each nationality. In general, the data showed that the Gulf countries had a higher PDI score than the Levant countries. The high PDI value in the Gulf area is typically associated with unequal distribution of wealth, low cooperation of citizens with government responsibilities/higher dependence on the public sector, lower freedom of speech/flow of institutional information, weaker labor unions, and autocratic regimes. Regarding UAI, there were high and low values for both regions. UAI is associated with the way nations deal with uncertainties. Levant countries fall higher on the UAI spectrum, as they have been destabilized by geopolitical uncertainty and volatility (e.g., economic crises and military conflicts in Syria, Iraq, and Jordan). Such instability

leads to higher anxiety levels (Hofstede, 2001). This section discusses the implications of the nation value indices (high versus low), differences in social norms and work organization practices based on the empirical studies that Hofstede (2001) and other researchers (e.g., Strobe, 1976; Spencer-Oatey, 1997) conducted. Hofstede's framework will be later used to relate the national values to the findings (learning preferences of executives) of this study.

PDI. According to Hofstede (2001), the power distance dimension is “the extent to which the less powerful of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (p. 98). The basic issue involved in measuring the power distance relates to how nations handle human inequality. Inequality can exist in areas such as prestige, wealth, and power, and it is usually formalized in employer-employee relationships. High PDI countries usually have national elites who hold relatively authoritarian values. These values usually reflect across social norms. In this context, employees and students place high value on conformity and see the world as an unjust place led by older people. Older people are respected and feared. As hierarchy equates to existential inequality, superiors consider employees as being different from themselves and vice versa. Relationships rest on coercive and referent power, and people tend to blame the weak (Hofstede, 2001).

In contrast, in nations with low PDI, authority is based on secular-rational arguments. Employees and students value independence and freedom. Inequality in society is minimized as all should have equal rights. Society stresses reward, legitimacy and expert power. As such, subordinates and superiors are both equal and judged according to their roles and performance. People tend to blame the system, and older people are neither respected nor feared (Hofstede, 2001).

In work organization, high PDI countries tend to centralize decision structures, instill tall organization pyramids and possess a large body of supervisory personnel. The ideal boss is a “well-meaning autocrat or good father” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 107) who relies on formal rules using authoritative leadership styles. Leader-follower relations are usually polarized and often emotional. In any case of power abuse by superior, it is expected that no defense will be taken against the supervisor. Leadership is associated with popularity, status symbols, and privileges. Subordinates are told what to do and creativity needs top-down support. Information is withheld by managers; job descriptions are ambiguous and overloaded; and white-collar jobs are valued more than blue-collar jobs.

On the other end, low PDI countries tend to have a strong preference for reducing the concentration of authority by decentralizing decision structures and flattening their organizational pyramids. Hierarchy means an inequality of roles, and the ideal boss is a “resourceful democrat who sees him or herself as practical, orderly” and relying on personal experience and on subordinates who are consulted during the decision making process (Hofstede, 2001, p. 107). The leader-follower relationship is pragmatic. Abuse is reported and defended by institutional norms. Information flows openly, innovation is adopted by champions with or without supervisory roles, and salary ranges are narrowed between subordinates and managers. Actually, privileges and status symbols are frowned upon.

UAI. The second dimension of national culture examined in this study is uncertainty avoidance. Uncertainty about the future is part of human life, and organizations that Arab leaders need to cope through the political turmoil, technological advancement and increasing demands of the globalized market. Hofstede (2001) defines UAI as “the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations” (p. 161). Nations differ in their

societal norms in response to avoiding ambiguity and unpredictability. Societies with high UAI tend to have a higher inner urge to be busy and stressed. Individuals in such societies are inclined to consider what is different as dangerous, take only known risks, and feel powerlessness toward external forces. At the organizational level, in high UAI societies, the power of leaders depends on control of uncertainties and innovation tends to be constrained by rules and processes are highly formalized. At the individual level, a high country UAI index manifests itself with a reduced ambitions for advancement, a preference for a specialist role rather than a leadership position, a higher approval to conformity/loyalty, a tendency to avoid competition and authoritative management, a dislike of working for a foreigner, resistance to change, a pessimistic outlook for employing institution/business. Instead, a preference for tasks with sure outcomes, long term employment and following instructions are valued (Hofstede, 2001).

In contrast, in low UAI societies, innovators are free from rules; power of superiors depends on position and relationships; and the duration of employment is short to average. Individuals feel comfortable undertaking tasks with uncertain outcomes, calculate risks, and leverage problem solving to achieve. In businesses, transformational leadership, generalists, and common sense are valued. Leaders are involved in strategizing, have a strong sense of achievement, and empower their subordinates (Hofstede, 2001).

PDI and UAI have implications on other areas of citizens' lives, such as the political system, family, psychological characteristics, legislation, and philosophical systems (religion and political ideologies). Hofstede (2001) contends that while those indices have proven to be remarkably stable over the past decades, they do fluctuate over time. He also notes that cultural dimension scores from one country are always relative to scores for other countries in the same study. One score (which always represents the mean scores of a nation rather than an

individual's) cannot be interpreted by itself because it only has relative, not intrinsic, meaning. The differences between nations, though, are robust and “are not expected to disappear in the foreseeable future” (p. 145). In this section, I will not delve into how each Arab country differs across the high and low continuum. Instead, I will focus on eliciting the different learning approaches that associate with the variability in those national dimensions.

Figure 22: PDI Values of Nations

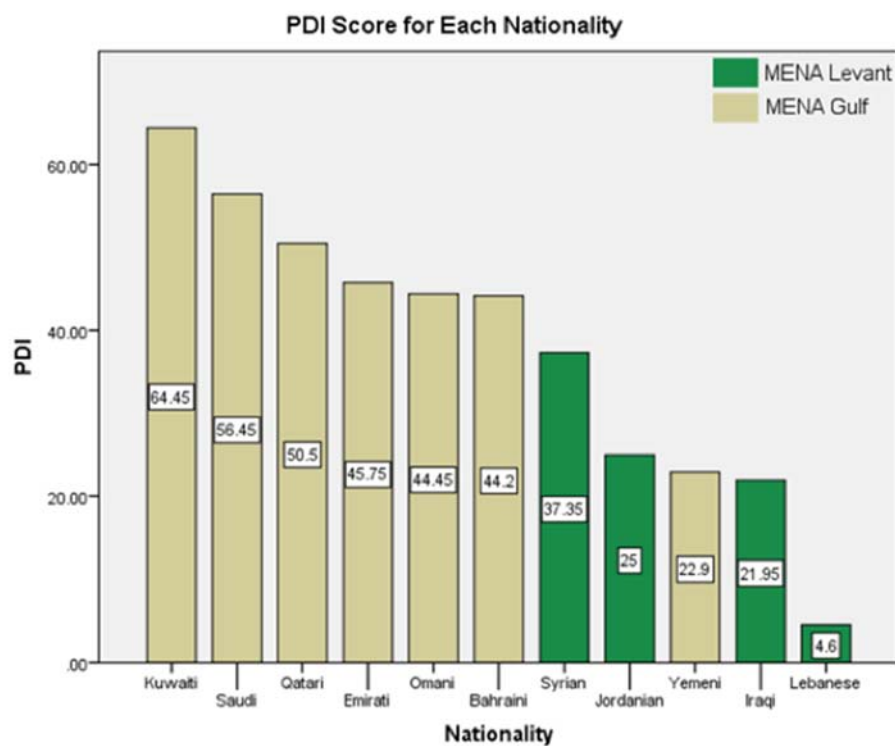
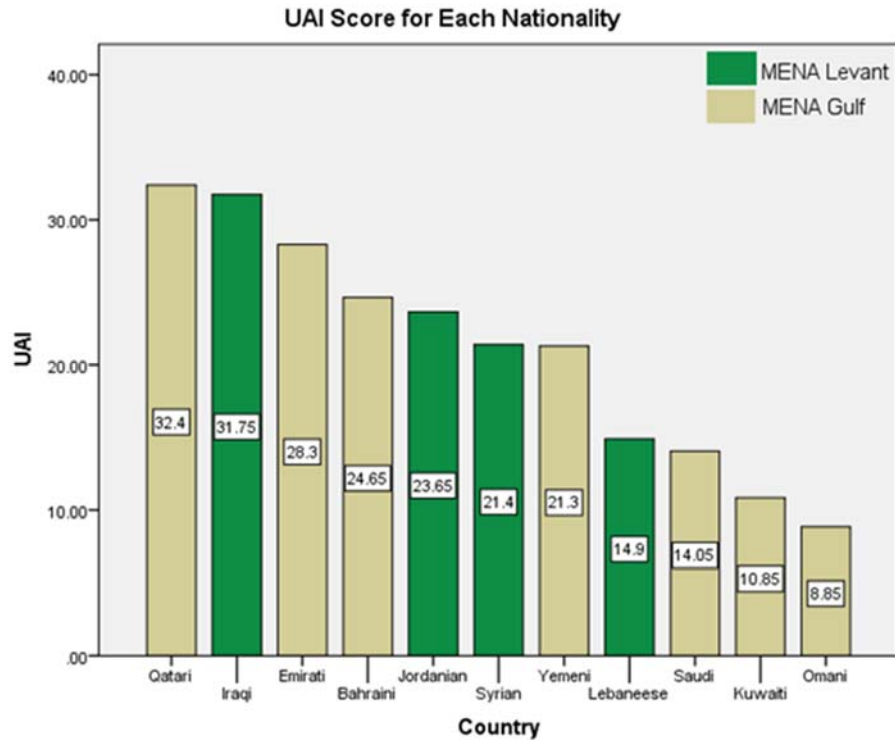


Figure 23: UAI Values of Nations



Effect of PDI and UAI on learning preferences. Results for both PDI and UAI were statistically significant across five of the six dependent variables, as illustrated in Table 14. For both PDI and UAI, the relationships are negative for those that were statistically significant; therefore, for example, if a country's PDI score increases by one point, then the learning activities score decreases by about 0.004 points ($\gamma_{02} = -0.004$; p-value < .05) when holding region and UAI scores constant. Similarly, if a country's UAI score increases by one point, then the leadership competencies score decreases by about 0.01 points ($\gamma_{03} = -0.01$; p-value < .05) when holding region and PDI scores constant. Below is a graphical representation of the relationships between PDI versus LA as well as UAI versus LC.

Figure 24: HLM Graph of PDI vs LA

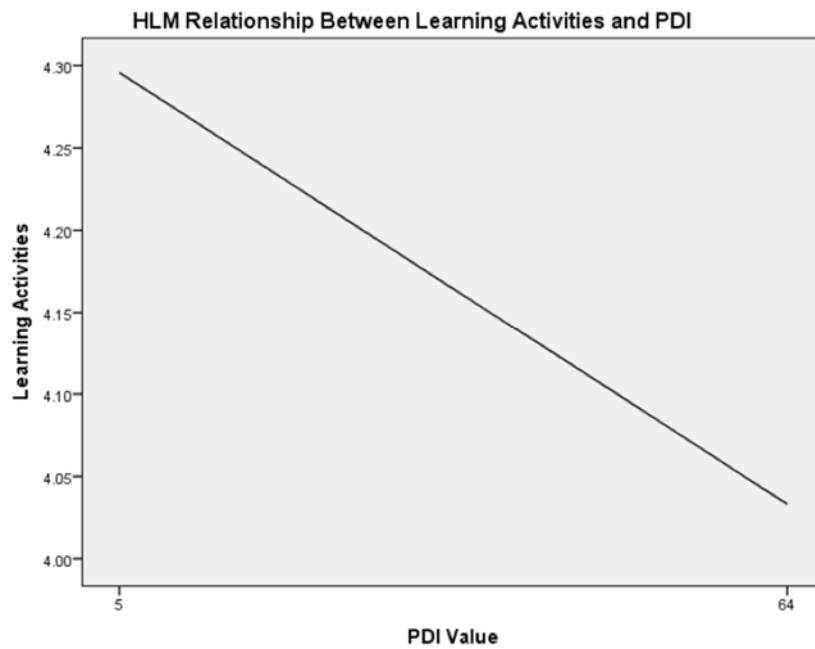
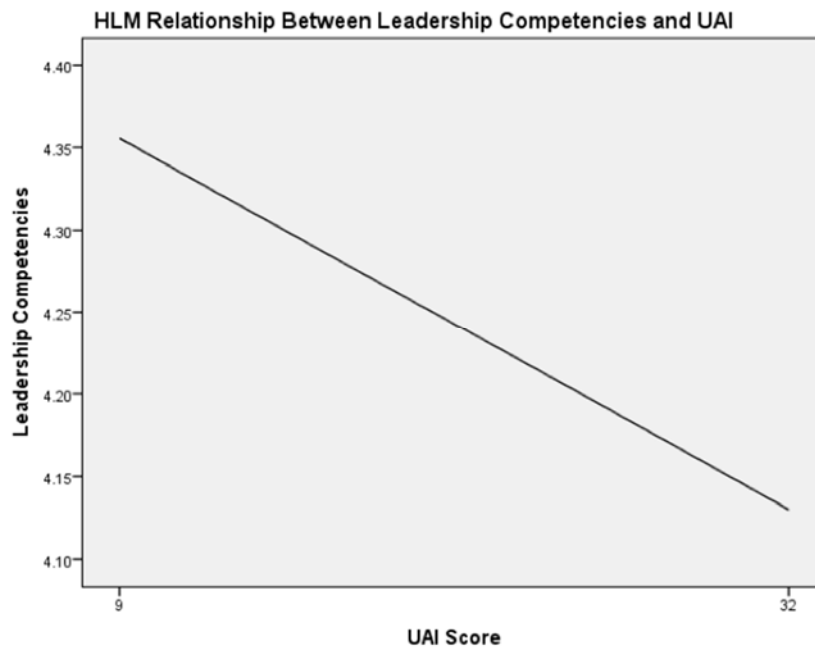


Figure 25: HLM Graph of UAI vs LC



Based on the HLM results, the higher the PDI, the lower the score on all the constructs. When PDI increases, and while holding other independent variables constant, executives' levels of agreement with the Delphi experts on the importance of aspects related to leadership development decrease. The LA's effect size for PDI is 0.217. The effect size is considered small and indicates the change of the dependent variable (constructs) in standard deviation units for a one standard deviation change in the independent variable (national index), conditional on the remaining independent variables. For example, regarding learning activities (LA), executives from countries with high PDI tend to be less inclined to adopt experiential approaches of learning. Experiential learning practices (e.g., simulation, role play, case study), which requires learner-centered approaches where students are self-directed and share equal responsibility for learning with the instructor, logically call for individuals from nations with lower PDI. Contrarily, in teacher-centered education (traditional typical of didactic approaches implemented in many Arab schools), teachers, seen as the sole source of expertise, transfer wisdom to students who take on a more passive roles. In a teacher-centered system, the quality of learning rests on the excellence and pedigree of teachers who are considered responsible for the learning process and are expected to initiate the majority of communication in the classroom. This may be particularly relevant for executive level education, where Arab executives tend to prefer smaller classrooms to increase homogeneity of participants (same management status levels) to "decrease the discussion-inhibiting effects of power distance and hierarchy" (Gillespie & Riddle, 2005, p. 145). The tendency to collaborate with pre-defined group membership may pose a challenge to collectivist (Arab) societies with a high PDI. Collectivist societies lack this spontaneous sociability. Gillespie and Riddle (2005) argue that when societies lack what Fukuyama (1995) identifies as *spontaneous sociability*--a process in which persons with no prior

relationship come together to get a job done-- individuals may find it challenging to trust outsiders in a global and open economy.

Comparably, UAI has a statistically significant negative relationship with all constructs (except LA). This means that, holding other independent variables constant, executives from countries with high UAI tended to agree less with the items nominated by the Delphi experts across the majority of constructs. For example, regarding leadership competencies (LC), with a small effect size of 0.229, executives from countries with high UAI were less inclined to value the leadership qualities nominated by the Delphi experts, as those items reflect a leadership, which necessitates crisis management, focuses on navigating situations that require critical and problem solving skills, and embraces a higher level of ambiguity (i.e., cognitive dissonance; Festinger, 1957). Shane, Venkataram, and Macmillan (1995) found that a low UAI corresponds to several championing roles within organizations. One of which is the transformational leader, who empowers subordinates, persuades followers of the institution to provide support for innovation, and instills a culture of high achievement by institutionalizing a robust performance management system and spreading the contagious drive to take on calculated risks (Liao & Chuang, 2007; Nemanich & Keller, 2007). In another study, Bealer and Bhanugopan (2013) found that managers in the UAE (a society with a considerably higher UAI than other Arab countries) are “less transformational and more passive avoidant than managers in the USA” (which exhibits a lower UAI) (p. 309). It seems that the higher the UAI index, the more Arab executives, to reduce uncertainties, may be inclined to both avoid confrontations/ accountability related issues and use *wasta* to reward loyalty and kinship (Branine & Pollard, 2010). Based on the leadership competencies that the Delphi experts have nominated, several qualities in the LC scale mirror characteristics (e.g., charisma, ability to build and lead teams, ability to meet targets

and goals) drawn from transformational leadership theories. Consequently, the negative relationship of UAI with LC may explain the lower preference of Arab executives from nations with high UAI to score lower on leadership qualities in the LSS survey.

Recognizing the differences in learning preferences related to low and high values of UAI and PDI and understanding the national values that underpin those differences may help instructors respond to learning variability across countries. Designing culturally relevant instruction may entail regulating the degree to which leadership development programs conform to the Delphi experts' recommendations and accounting for national values and the corresponding learning preferences.

Learning preferences and demographics. How do learners' characteristics (i.e. gender, sector, age and background education) relate to Arab preferences for leadership development?

To address the fifth question, I will focus on the independent variables (educational background, sector, gender, and age) within level one of the HLM model and how it relates to each outcome variable (six learning preferences/constructs). The results for level-one are illustrated under each section related to each of the demographics independent variables. It is important to note that this model includes both level-one (individual) and level-two (country) variables in the HLM; therefore, I am controlling for the other independent variables while looking at the relationship between demographics and each dependent variable.

Western and Arabic educational background. In this section I will analyze the relationship between education background (Arab = 0; Western/mixed = 1) and the learning preferences of executives. I will first elaborate on the HLM results illustrated in Table 15. For further exploration in differences between educational backgrounds, I performed a Mann-Whitney U test for each of the items within the constructs, to determine if there are differences,

across educational backgrounds, in the median of responses of the individual items. Figure 27 shows the item mean differences from high to low across all items, grouped by constructs. In Appendix F, tables show the item means for each educational background and then the educational background difference, which is marked with an asterisk if that item was statistically significant according to the Mann-Whitney U test. The results of this statistical test identifies the items on which the two groups are different, without controlling for nesting or other variables. As such, the outcome of the Mann-Whitney U test should be used with caution as an indication of what may be important to attend to by leadership development designers.

Table 15: Effects of Educational Background on Learning Preferences

Dependent Variable	Education Background, γ_{30}	
	Coefficient	Effect Size (Error)
Learning Activities	.29**	0.45 (0.087)
Leadership Competencies	.245**	0.40 (0.089)
Motivational Enablers	.31**	0.44 (0.089)
Barriers to Participation	.24**	0.36 (0.083)
Learning Environment	.297**	0.47 (0.081)
Instructor's Characteristics	.33**	0.49 (0.082)

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

All constructs have a statistically significant difference across both educational backgrounds. For example, those with a Western/mixed high school education tend to rate learning activities 0.29 points higher than those with a full Arabic education background ($\gamma_{30} = 0.29$; p-value < .01), when holding region, age, gender, sector, and the homogeneity, PDI, and

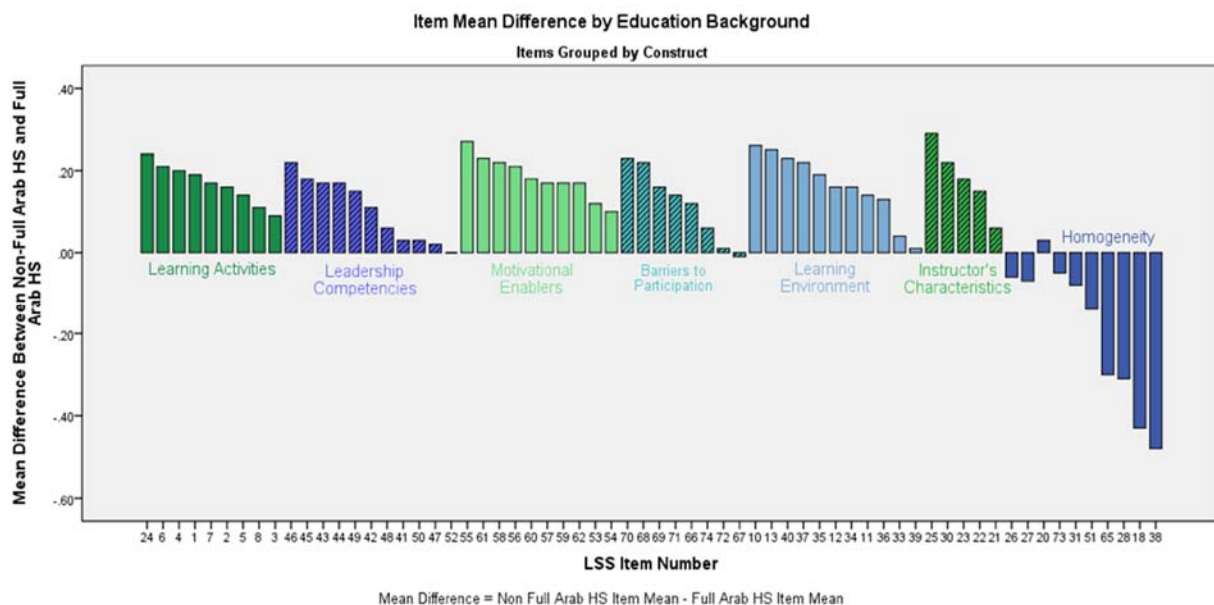
UAI scores constant. The effect size of 0.45 is considered medium and indicates the change of LA in standard units between Arab full and Western educational background, conditional on the remaining independent variables. When other independent variables are held constant, the variance between executives' preferences across both educational backgrounds shows that the executives with a Western/mixed educational background generally have a higher agreement level with the Delphi experts than executives with a full Arab educational background.

Based on Figure 26, executives with Western educational backgrounds scored higher on almost all constructs except on the homogeneity (HO) construct (mean difference roughly -0.2). This means that executives with Arabic educational backgrounds agreed more positively with experts when it comes to cultural congruence (e.g., items with statistically significant differences “instructor is Arab,” “participants are all Arabs,” and “materials provided in Arabic language”).

The higher agreement of executives who have attended mixed or Western educational institutions with the Delphi experts may be explained by the acculturation of Western-based learning approaches executives have been exposed to during their school years. None of the studies that I know of have examined, in the Arab world, the influence of educational background on approaches to leadership development. However, Bakhtari (1995), who studied Arabic managers who immigrated to the US, found that managers' education (mostly in the United States) was an important factor in the assimilation and acculturation process as they adapted to the new culture. Consequently, the type of education relates to the extent executives will be inclined to agree with the Delphi experts. In particular, executives with a mixed/Western high school (i.e., modern in contrast to didactic or traditional system) will tend to prefer experiential learning approaches (typically practiced in Western curricula) as recommended by the experts. For instance, executives disagreed mostly on the use of classroom discussions

engaging other participants, involving practitioners in the instructional process, adopting the case-based method, and integrating simulations as part of the activities (“more opportunities for talk, and less reading material,” “inviting key speakers /practitioners from the business community,” “case studies,” and “use of simulation tools”). They also disagreed on the importance of facilitation as a quality for the instructor (“instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience,” with a mean difference of 0.29, p -value < .01), the necessity to effectively resolve crisis in the corporation (“effective management during periods of crisis” with a mean difference of 0.22, p -value < .01), and the value of access to the internet during leadership development sessions (“facilities with access to wireless network and library” with a mean difference of 0.25, p -value < .01). In general, those items reflect best practices common in the Western executive education interventions.

Figure 26: Item Mean Difference by Education Background (Items Grouped by Constructs)



Public and private sectors. In this section I will analyze the relationship between sectors in which executives work in (Public Sector /NGO= 0; Private Sector = 1) and the learning

preferences of executives. I will first elaborate on the HLM results illustrated in Table 15 shown below. For further exploration in differences between sectors, I performed a Mann-Whitney U test for each of the items within the constructs, to determine if there are differences, across sectors, in median responses of the individual items. Figure 27 shows the item mean differences from high to low across all items, grouped by constructs. In Appendix E, tables show the item means for each sector and then the sector difference, which is marked with an asterisk if that item was statistically significant according to the Mann-Whitney U test. The results of this statistical test identifies the items that the two groups are different, without controlling for nesting or other variables. As such, the outcome of the Mann-Whitney U test should be used with caution. The findings should only be suggestive or descriptive and should only be indicative of what may be important to attend to by leadership development designers. In Appendix G, the tables show the item means for each sector and then sector differences, which is marked with an asterisk if that item was statistically significant according to the Mann-Whitney U test.

Table 16: Effects of Sector on Learning Preferences

Dependent Variable	Sector, γ_{50}	
	Coefficient	Effect Size (Error)
Learning Activities	.198**	0.31 (0.087)
Leadership Competencies	.14**	0.24 (0.089)
Motivational Enablers	.199**	0.284 (0.089)
Barriers to Participation	.08	
Learning Environment	.18**	0.281 (0.08)
Instructor's Characteristics	.17**	0.25 (0.082)

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

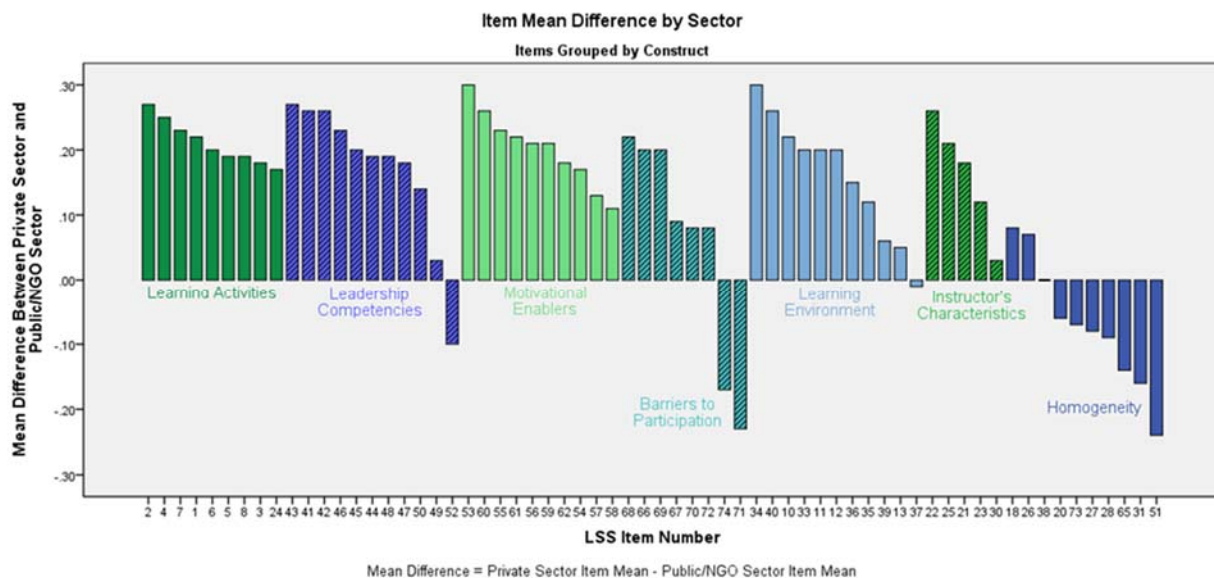
All constructs (except BP) have a statistically significant difference across both sectors. For example, those working in the private sector tend to rate learning activities 0.198 points higher than those working in the public sector ($\gamma_{50} = 0.31$; $p\text{-value} < .01$), when holding region, age, gender, educational background, and the homogeneity, PDI, and UAI scores constant. The effect size of 0.31 is considered small and indicates the change of LA in standard units between public and private sectors, conditional on the remaining independent variables. When other independent variables are held constant, the variance between executives' preferences across both sectors shows that the executives working in the private sector generally have a higher agreement level with the Delphi experts than executives who are working in the public sector or in NGOs.

Notably, public and private sector executives differed in their relationship to the “job-related competencies” leadership quality; public sector executives emphasized and scored higher than their counterparts in the private sector. This may be due to the need to address the “absence of a fair, equal and transparent recruitment policy, which may lead to favoritism, nepotism, and corruption, discriminatory or undeclared criteria, restricted information, and a lack of accountability, lowering the quality of employees and the image of public sector employment” (Al-Sayyed, 2014, p. 119).

Based on Figure 27, executives working in the private sector scored higher on almost all constructs except on the homogeneity (HO) construct (mean difference roughly -0.75). Even though public sector executives scored lower, it should be noted that the differences between means of individual items were not statistically significant. This means that executives from both sectors equally agree on the importance of homogeneity/cultural congruence.

Taken together, and holding other independent variables constant, the data suggests that private sector employees may more readily adapt to modern leadership development approaches, and that public sector executives' more traditional perspectives need to be appreciated and integrated into the curriculum.

Figure 27: Item Mean Difference by Sector



Age groups. As mentioned in chapter three, executives were divided into three age groups: Millennials are under 34; GenX between 35-49; and Veterans/Baby Boomers being above 50 years old. To reiterate, Veteran and Baby Boomers were grouped under the same age bracket to suit the purpose of the study. Based on the HLM analysis used to investigate the relationship across ages of executives (Gen X = 0; Millennials and Baby Boomers/Veterans = 1) and the learning preferences of executives, the age demographic was only statistically significant for the learning environment construct. This means that the conditional mean difference between Veteran/Baby Boomers and Gen X was statistically significant. Specifically, those older than 50 years tend to rate learning environment 0.16 points higher than Gen X (born between 1966-1976)

($\gamma_{20} = -0.16$; $p\text{-value} < .01$), when controlling for region, sector, gender, educational background, and the homogeneity, PDI, and UAI scores. The effect size of 0.25 is considered small and indicates the change of LE in standard units as a function of the age category, conditional on the remaining independent variable. To explore the difference between Veterans/Baby Boomers and the Millennials, I conducted a post-hoc test, which proved statistically insignificant.

Table 17: The Effects of Age on Learning Preferences

Dependent Variable	Millennials, γ_{10}		Veterans & Baby Boomers, γ_{20}	
	Coefficient	Effect Size (Error)	Coefficient	Effect Size (Error)
Learning Activities	.01		.01	
Leadership Competencies	-.014		.03	
Motivational Enablers	-.014		-.07	
Barriers to Participation	-.01		-.09	
Learning Environment	-.02		-.16**	0.25 (0.095)
Instructor's Characteristics	-.03		-.08	

* $p\text{-value} < .05$

** $p\text{-value} < .01$

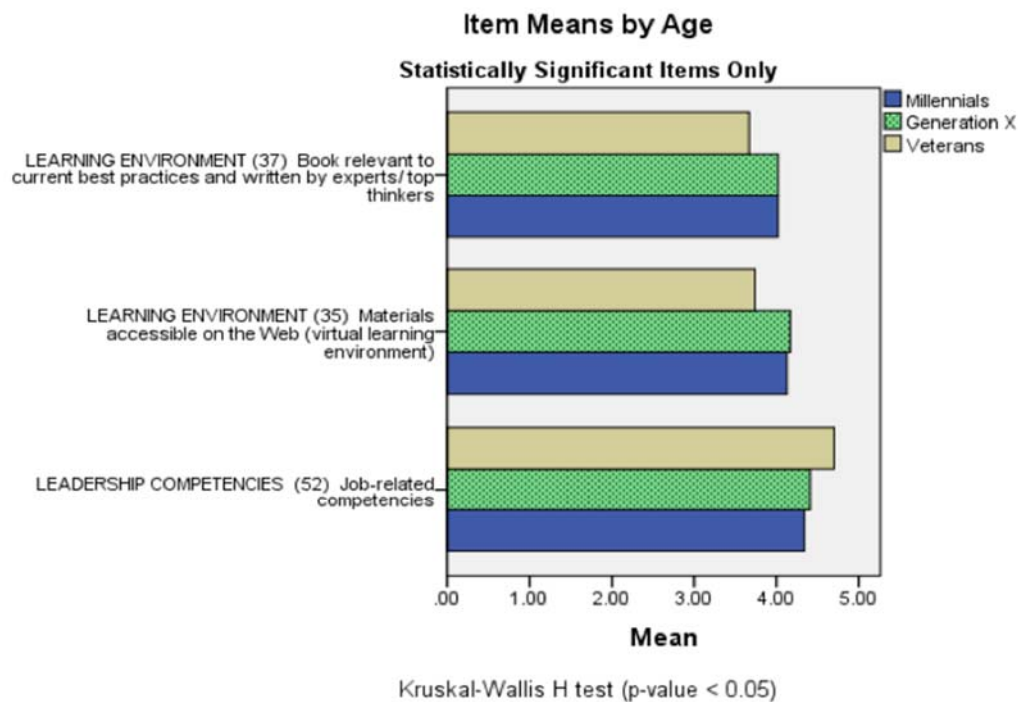
Figure 28 shows the item mean differences from high to low across the statistically significant items, which fall under the LE scale (tables with all items are included in Appendix H). The results are the outcome of the Kruskal-Wallis H test and thus should be used with caution. The findings should only be suggestive or descriptive, as the Kruskal-Wallis H identifies the items that the three groups are different, without controlling for nesting or other independent

variables. Those should only be indicative of what may be important to attend to by leadership development designers.

Findings show that both Millennials and Gen X value the use of learning resources in leadership programs such as “materials accessible on the Web (virtual learning environment)” and “book relevant to current best practices and written by experts/ top thinkers.”

Regarding the older generation, Veterans and Baby Boomers stressed the importance of “job-related competencies” as a conduit for effective leadership more than the other two age groups. This indicates the tendency for the older generation to value results, hard work and experience rather than just personal leadership qualities (Rood, 2011; Kupperschmidt, 2000).

Figure 28: Item Means by Age



Gender. Based on the HLM analysis, the relationship between the gender of executives (Male = 0; Females = 1) and their learning preferences was not statistically significant with the learning environment construct. To explore the difference between specific items of the LSS

across genders, I ran the Kruskal-Wallis H test, which proved statistically significant across some selected items. With age as the independent variable, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test should be used with caution. The findings only suggest the magnitude of the differences between the two groups without controlling for nesting or other variables. Those should only assist leadership development designers to note the nuanced differences suggested by the statistical test.

Table 18: Effect of Gender on Learning Preferences

Dependent Variable	Gender, γ_{40}	
	Coefficient	Effect Size (Error)
Learning Activities	.03	
Leadership Competencies	.04	
Motivational Enablers	.02	
Barriers to Participation	-.02	
Learning Environment	-.02	
Instructor's Characteristics	.02	

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

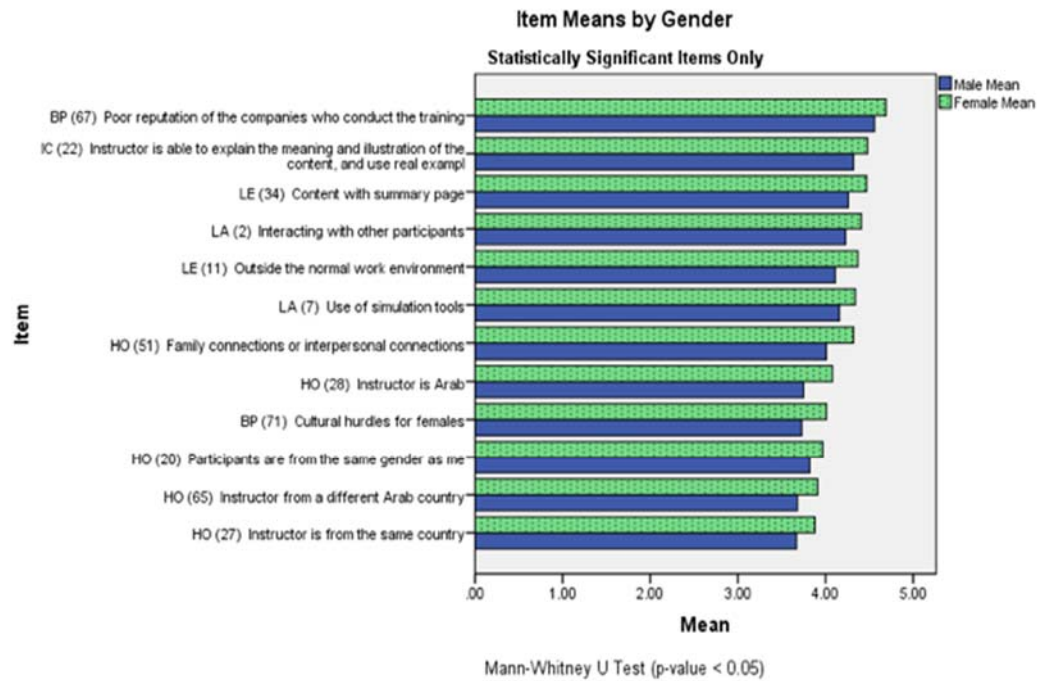
Figure 30 shows the item mean differences from high to low across the statistically significant items. The results are the outcome of the Kruskal-Wallis H test and thus should be used with caution. The findings should only be suggestive or descriptive, as the Kruskal-Wallis H identifies the items that the two groups are different, without controlling for nesting or other variables. Those should only be indicative of what may be important to attend to by leadership development designers.

Compared to male executives, females placed higher importance on several homogeneity items (e.g., “instructor is Arab”, 0.33, $p\text{-value} < .01$) and “family connections or interpersonal connections” as a leadership competency (0.31, $p\text{-value} < .01$) (please refer to the table with all items included in Appendix I).

In agreement with Western (Devault, 1997; Pleck & Rustad, 1980; Allen & Walker, 2000) and Arabic literature (Al-Barwani & Kelly, 1985), which indicate that marriage, household responsibilities and family structures are among the most common reason cited by women for dropping out, female executives scored “cultural hurdles for females” (mean difference of 0.28, $p\text{-value} < .05$) higher than their male counterparts. Bakhtari (1995), in studying the cultural effects on management styles, found that Arab women are faced with a “double glass ceiling” (p. 113) due to the accentuated barriers for women to break into managerial positions or pursue lifelong learning opportunities. This may be slowly changing, and recent trends in the Gulf region suggest that businesses are beginning to invest in women because they are less likely to drop out of university than men (e.g., at Kuwait University, women made up 70 per cent of graduates in 2012–13; Kuwaiti Annual Statistical Abstract, 2012). However, since women are often discouraged to travel abroad, it is usually the male students who receive scholarships to study overseas, thus increasing the divide in educational achievement between gender (Kinninmont, 2015).

To further examine the difference between males and females especially across regions (Gulf and the Levant), I recommend exploring the interaction between gender differences and region.

Figure 29: Item Means by Gender



Homogeneity. The homogeneity or cultural congruence predicted all dependent variables. The information in Level 1 HLM Table 19 illustrates that when HO's score increases by one point, then the learning activities score decreases by about 0.406 points ($\gamma_{60} = 0.41$; p-value < .001) when holding age, gender, sector, region, PDI, and UAI scores constant. The HO effect size related to LA is 0.82, which is considered large. Compared to effect size averages of other independent variables (UAI = 0.24; PDI = 0.25; Sector = 0.27; Region = 0.28; Education Background = 0.43; Homogeneity = 0.93), HO is associated with the largest shift in constructs for each standard deviation of independent variable (conditional on the remaining independent variable).

Table 19: Effects of Homogeneity on Learning Preferences

Dependent Variable	Homogeneity, γ_{60}	
	Coefficient	Effect Size (Error)
Learning Activities	.41**	0.82 (0.06)
Leadership Competencies	.37**	0.79 (0.06)
Motivational Enablers	.41**	0.77 (0.07)
Barriers to Participation	.51**	1.02 (0.06)
Learning Environment	.53**	1.095 (0.059)
Instructor's Characteristics	.54**	1.05 (0.06)

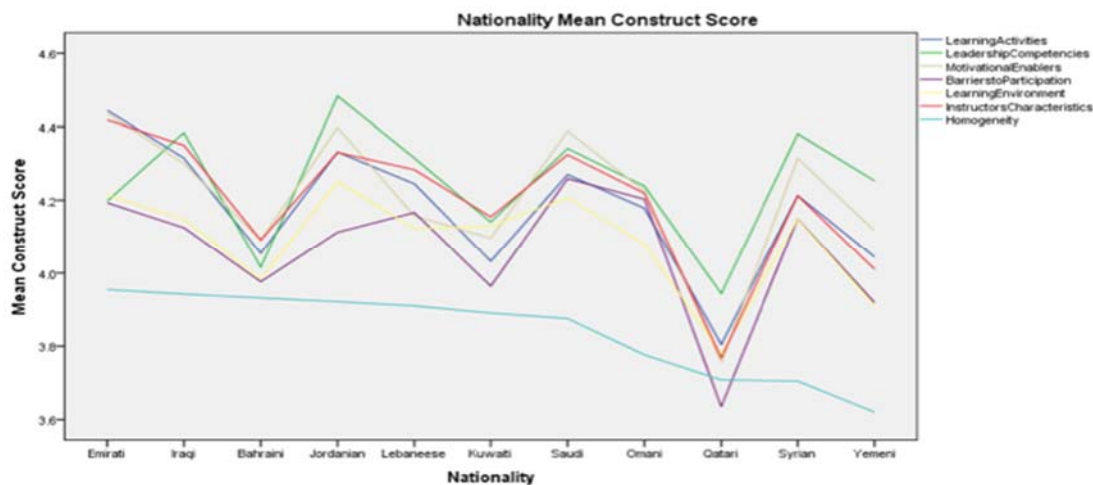
* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Results show that the executives with a higher HO generally have a higher agreement level with the Delphi experts than executives with lower HO. The sign and magnitude of the relationship between HO and learning preference constructs may be an indication that as aspects of leadership development programs become more homogeneous, executives will be more inclined to embrace best practices (which are in general similar to Western models) nominated by the experts. Cultural sensitivity manifests itself in the classroom through a variety of modes (e.g., congruence across language, gender, content, and instruction). The considerably low value of HO scores, the nonsignificant difference in HO across both regions (Gulf and Levant), and the statistical significant positive relationship between HO and constructs may well lead us to think that HO is not in conflict with modern ways of learning. In a culture of shame where “saving face” is important (Ali, 1996, p. 9), high context individuals have a strong awareness of the outside world and feel intensely sanctioned to meet the standards of the outside world (Benedict,

1946; Doi, 1979). Therefore, it is valuable to create a classroom environment where individuals feel safe to explore the less traditional practices recommended by the Delphi Experts. This would be particularly helpful for nations with a high levels of PDI and UAI, where considerations need to be taken to support learners in raising their self-awareness about how they deal with inequalities and ambiguities and implications on the way they approach learning and leadership.

Figure 30: Mean Construct Scores Across Nations



Demonstrating how nations compare across constructs, Figure 30 depicts the mean constructs corresponding to each nationality. Nations scoring higher on the homogeneity construct have placed a higher value to cultural aspects of leadership programs. Emiratis, for example, may have scored higher than Yemenis. In the face of the globalization and rapid growth transforming the United Arab Emirates, the minority Emiratis (compared to number of expats living in the UAE) feel that their cultural heritage is being diluted (Willemyns, 2008). However, as the data show, Emiratis were in higher agreement with the Delphi experts than Yemenis, which may be related to the drastic changes that the UAE has gone through. As the political and socioeconomic landscape changes, it may be that scores and preferences of executives evolve and adapt accordingly.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

This exploratory study aims to identify best practices, according to the beliefs of experts, associated with classroom-based professional development programs and examine the relationship between culture (both values and geographical regions) and learning preferences of Arab leaders. Existing literature suggests that approaches to learning vary across cultures and highlight the mismatch between modern (i.e., imported Western) pedagogical models and traditional orientations to learning typically found in the Arab classroom. Yet research in the Arab world on executive education is at a very early stage. To date, the limited number of studies still struggle to examine Arab executives' learning preferences and how they vary across nationalities, geographical regions, educational background (Western vs. Arabic high school), sector, gender, and age.

To propose a model for an effective leadership development program that addresses the aforementioned differences, this study endeavors to address the following overarching goals: (a) identify what Arab leadership development experts consider as best practices for classroom-based Arab leadership development programs, (b) examine how 837 leaders from 11 Arab countries view the leadership development best practices identified by the experts, and (c) highlight how learners' backgrounds relate to their approaches to learning. The study specifically examined how cultural dimensions, as defined by Hofstede (2010), geographical regions, and demographics relate to executives' learning preferences (e.g., their views on various aspects of leadership development curricula, instructional methodologies, leadership competencies, motivation enablers, perceived barriers, instructors' qualities and learning environment).

To respond to the study research questions, I have drawn on an existing set of data generated by a research team working in a multinational consulting firm based in the UAE. The data was generated through three phases. First, the Delphi process was used to survey 24 experts in the field of executive education to determine the factors that they deem significant in influencing the effectiveness of the design and delivery of leadership professional development programs. The Delphi procedure was followed by eight face-to-face interviews to elucidate issues (e.g., gender and cultural sensitivity) that arose from the Delphi process. The third phase of data collection used a large scale forced-choice method questionnaire administered to more than 1,500 business leaders from 17 different countries, carried out by internet exchange, telephone and written correspondence. This large-scale survey (composed of 115 survey items with a total of 174,915 data cells) identified Arab leaders' cultural background and gauged executives' responses to the best practices that the experts interviewed in the first two phases have recommended.

The study leverages the large scale survey to construct seven scales that capture the learning preferences of executives, particularly in relation to learning activities (LA), leadership competencies (LC), motivation enablers (ME), barriers to participation (BP), instructor's characteristics (IC), learning environment (LE), and homogeneity (HO). The relationship between learning preferences and national values (Power Distance Index and Uncertainty Avoidance Index), regional geographies (Levant and Gulf), and demographics (age, gender, sector, and educational background) was examined. The Levant region in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) included Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Syria. The MENA Gulf region included the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

Building on the study summary of findings, this chapter discusses three main themes: (a) the significance of the study in terms of theory and future research, (b) implications to practice/policies, and (c) limitations of the study.

Summary of Results and Discussions per Question

Research Question 1. What are the most effective Arab leadership development practices as identified by training experts? The Delphi experts nominated 174 best practices to be incorporated in leadership development programs. Recommendations from experts were qualitatively classified as universal/Western (150 items) and local (24 items).

- Aspects of leadership development programs recommended by the experts reflect an experiential approach to teaching, instructor's characteristics, and learning environment with a focus on higher levels of interaction/socially driven activities and less reading. Modern methods of learning (case based studies and assessments) require that executives are equipped with synthesis, analytical, reflection and evaluation skills as well as the predisposition to accept feedback/constructive criticism from others.
- When it comes to the design of the content and determining the leadership competencies to be developed, the Delphi experts cover a set of attributes and skills that draw from Western theories of leadership, such as trait, situational, relational, ethical and servant perspectives. Transcendental qualities of leadership were emphasized in particular attention to the emotional, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of a leader. Transforming relationships among their people without imposing as well as timely and democratic decision-making are critical to the effectiveness of Arab executives. Output/results driven competencies (reaching targets and understanding balance sheet) were stressed as well as clear, fair, and transparent approaches for performance

management. Experts recommend executives to see the potential and empower their followers, while adopting a structured approach to management and maintaining control over situations. Crisis management has been emphasized to promote agility in a region with economic instability and political unrest. L&D specialists may need to ensure that executives are equipped with skills that will enable them to effectively discuss performance of subordinates, resolve conflicts (negotiation, debating, and consensus building), and challenge the authority of superiors/peers/in-group members without showing insubordination or lack of loyalty/conformity to regulations.

- Motivational enablers fell under the three learning orientations (i.e., networking, job related, and personal growth) found in the Western literature with an emphasis on updating/refreshing/renewing executives' knowledge with timely best practices and a desire to see the macro picture (global learners). Further, the clarity of objectives and practicality of content as well as the quality and relevance of the program syllabus were valued. The extent to which participants know each other was also suggested as a motivator.

- Barriers to participation are typical of what was found in Western literature (dispositional and situational) with cost and timing of the program ranked highest. However, some Arabic specific barriers include time to go abroad, course requirements such as exams/attendance/readings, low reputation of the training provider, female related hurdles and perception of the training. Over 30% of the barriers were related to the corporation/institution, which may discourage individuals from pursuing lifelong learning through its disinterested culture, lack of a career path (partnership or sharing revenues), and stability/stress levels of the work environment.

- **Instructor's Characteristics:** Instructors with a highly recognized stature (title, reputation and seniority), recruited from outside the workplace/organization and equipped with high facilitation skills and strong business leadership credibility are valued. Experts demonstrate a preference for instructors who are skilled in using technologies and e-lectures in the classroom. Inviting well-known business leaders was emphasized.
- **Learning Environment:** A high emphasis was placed on a multifunctional classroom that warrants comfort, immersion in learning, access to off-site learning, convenience, collaboration and web access. The learning kit ought to avail industry-based resources and contain minimum hard copy materials.

Research Question 2. What are the similarities and differences between experts' and Arab learners' views of best leadership development practices?

- Executives and experts generally agreed on all constructs related to learning activities, motivation enablers, and instructor's characteristics.

Compared to the executives, experts emphasized problem-solving skills as well as on ethical approaches to leadership. Executives viewed such factors as hurdles for females, training providers'/business school's reputation, and the role of the institution/cooperation as having a more significant effect on participation than the experts did. Executives also valued more favorably the need for comfort in the physical environment (LE) and stressed the importance of culture related practices (instruction attuned to Arab culture, not Western and Instructor is Arab, from a different Arab country, and same Arab country).

Research Question 3. How do geographic regional differences relate to learning preferences of Arab leaders, particularly to their views about central aspects of leadership development programs? Levant executives agreed with the experts more consistently than their

counterparts in the Gulf. Levant executives placed higher emphasis on experiential learning practices (LA), Western models of leadership (trait, situational, relational, servant, and ethical perspectives), facilitative instructional practices (IC), and modern views for the setup of physical space and course materials.

Research Question 4. How do cultural dimensions relate to learning preferences of Arab leaders, particularly to their views about central aspects of leadership development programs? Individuals from nations with stronger beliefs in hierarchical and unequal power dynamics, as well as individuals from nations with low tolerance for ambiguities, agree less with the Delphi experts on the importance of several aspects related to leadership development. Higher values of PDI and UAI were, generally, related to an inclination towards didactic approaches of learning, autocratic models of leadership, lecture or theory based instruction and traditional views for physical spaces and classroom tools.

Research Question 5. How do learners' characteristics (i.e. gender, sector, age, homogeneity, and education background) relate to Arab preferences for leadership development?

- Statistically, the majority of constructs varied by sector, educational background and homogeneity. Findings suggest that private sector employees with Western/mixed educational backgrounds may more readily adapt to modern leadership development approaches. Conversely, public sector executives with Arabic educational backgrounds may be more inclined to prefer traditional perspectives of learning and leadership.
- Executives valuing homogeneity (inclination to collaborate with same gender participants, tribal/nationality affiliation, and instructional methods relevant to Arabic context) agreed with the Delphi experts more than executives with lower homogeneity. This may suggest that HO is not in conflict with modern learning practices and leadership

models. Instead, it may be a reflection of executives' attempt to preserve the cultural identity of the *Umma* while modernizing their practices to foster growth and openness in a rapidly globalized world (Cook, 1999).

- It was also suggested that the Millennials and Gen X exhibit a high preference for the use of digital- and industry-based resources. Compared to men, female executives believe that their leadership development faces higher cultural hurdles, and they are inclined to preserve cultural congruence in the classroom.

It should be noted that this study reflects experts' recommendations and executives' preferences captured in 2012. As such, findings relate to the socioeconomic and political landscape of the MENA region at a time when Arab spring uprisings had just begun, near the beginning of the civil war in Syria, and before the rise of the Islamic State. The relationships, which have been established in this study between regional differences (Gulf and Levant) and nations' PDI and UAI, encapsulate the current state of how executives approach learning and management situations. Because of the volatility and cultural shifts readily apparent in MENA, the experts and executives' approaches to leadership and education may shift with time, and a reassessment of their inclinations towards leadership development programs or a longitudinal study may need to be conducted as the Arab region's social values, economic status and political make up changes and evolve with current events (e.g., war conflicts and changes in regimes, distribution of wealth, and population density).

Significance of the Study

The How Arab Executives Learn (HAL) study, by drawing on experts who have identified a set of 174 best-practices, captures what (imported Western) features need to be modified or contextualized to respond to the needs of the Arab adult learner. This study

highlighted the practices specific to the Arab context but also showed that *within* the Arab countries, regional differences are associated with the way learners perceive those practices. Beyond regional differences, this study analyzed how cultural values (i.e., Hofstede's 2001 dimensions) relate to student's learning preferences. Understanding how such national constructs are associated with learning preferences has implications for educators. Can or should a training program at the leadership level inculcate values that are not part of the local culture, or should such programs only reinforce the norms already existing in a certain society? As this question is still unanswered, coupled with the fact that meaningful and long lasting change takes decades, I doubt that a single training program can change the minds or perceptions of Arab leaders living in the Arab world. As such, in this study, recommendations to educators will help situate students within their cultural context (i.e., the study identifies Hofstede's 2001 values specific to each nationality). The study also highlights how such cultural indices relate to the way that learning is perceived *by the students* in various Arab nations (e.g., a high power distance is associated with an understanding that a teacher is the guru, quality of learning depends on qualification of teachers, and students are dependent on teacher; Hofstede et al., 2010).

From an empirical perspective, the associations made between the variables are important for research, as the study attempted to explore and determine if and to what degree a relationship exists between cultures, learning preferences, and executives' characteristics. Future research, however, needs to examine whether such practices and learning preferences actually enhance the effectiveness of classroom-based leadership development programs. Future research also needs to offer insights and empirical data detailing the depth of these cultural differences, the level and quality of cultural beliefs in different groups, if differences reflect dissimilar behavioral

preferences or mirror deeper phenomenological differences, and how those differences respond to globalization (Sampson, 1989).

One of the study's central findings is that culture has a pervasive influence on executives' learning preferences. In this study, culture was operationalized using nationality and regional differences as independent variables. It was manifested in the classroom as a set of preferences exhibited by both experts and executives. As a result, the Homogeneity (HO) construct, which neither has an equivalent in Western scholarship nor has been empirically examined by Arab studies, expresses preferences for using instructional approaches attuned to the Arabic culture, incorporating the Arabic language and culturally relevant content in instruction, promoting leaders based on family and personal connections, encouraging the inclusion of participants and instructors with the same gender and nationality. Future research could investigate how the homogeneity scale relates to self-construals such as interdependence and the collectivist cultural dimension.

The methodological contribution of the study is the use of HLM, for the first time, to account for the clustering of nationality and regional differences of Arab executives learning preferences, all the while examining their individual characteristics. Limitations corresponding to the study methods will be discussed later in this chapter.

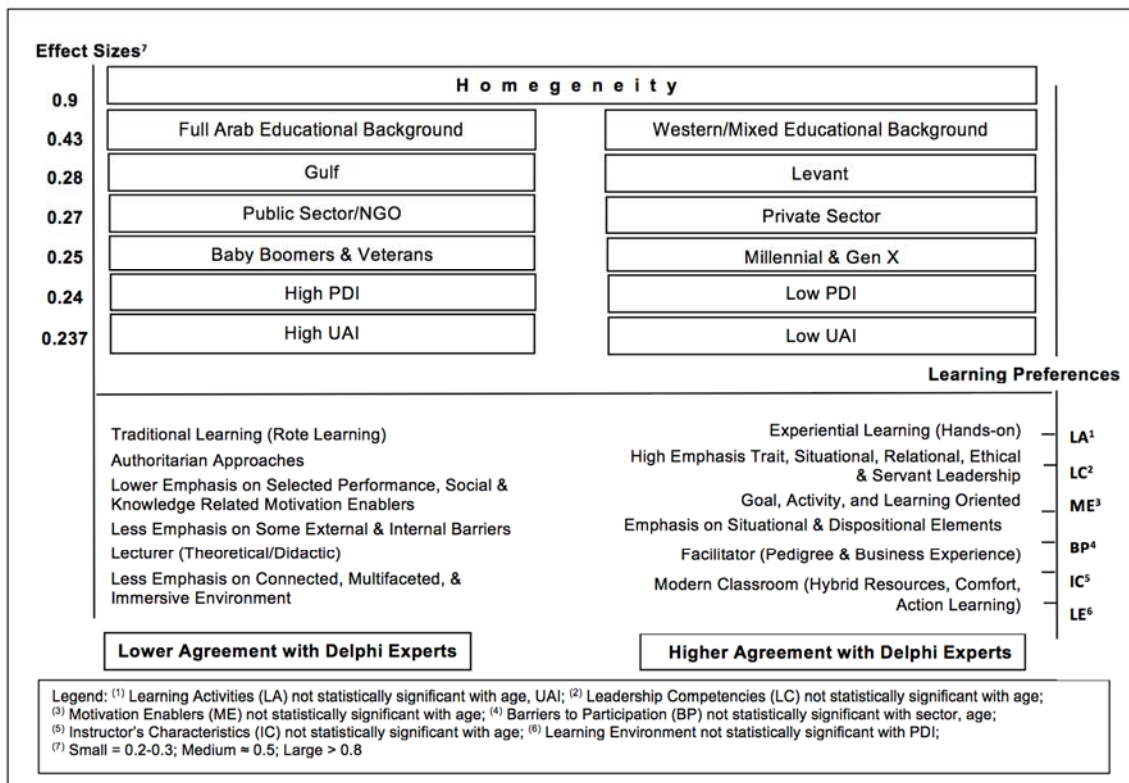
Implications to Practice and Policies

This study's practical implications include recommendations to key stakeholders in education, adult learning, and professional development such as governments (ministry of labor/education), business schools/training providers and organization capability development experts (instructors/trainers, Chief Learning Officers, and L&D consultants). The results of the study encourages the appreciation of local tradition and openness to new approaches to

leadership and learning. As the L&D practice cannot be taken in isolation, designing leadership development programs should consider the contextual parameters that surround the learning experience as well as the individual needs of the learner. Variability between regions and nationalities as well as within nations (among citizens) should be well understood to customize culturally responsive L&D interventions.

The conceptual model shown below captures how region, national values, sector, educational background, and age relate to executives' learning preferences, noting effect sizes and positioning executives' responses within the continuum of high versus low agreement with the Delphi experts. Based on the model, addressing variability between those who agree with the experts and those who considerably agree less with the experts may lead to two principal outcomes: (a) shifting leadership instructional strategies to suit what the experts belief is best practice and (b) in doing so, executives who have agreed less positively with the experts may experience tension in accommodating new ways of learning and modern approaches to leadership. Both the shift and tension are part of the strenuous process of change, which executives may need to undergo should they want to adopt the recommendations nominated by the experts. Practical suggestions on how to respond to change will be discussed briefly in the section below.

Figure 31: Conceptual Model Relating Executives' Characteristics to Learning Preferences



Need for a gradual shift. Based on the conceptual model shown in Figure 31, individuals with a full Arab educational background, from the Gulf, working in the public sector or NGO, with high PDI and UAI, and older than 50 years, were most likely to be in lower agreement with the Delphi experts, when controlling for independent variables. The analysis in this study showed that regional and national values explained, at least partially, the magnitude and direction of the relationship between culture and the inclination to agree less or more with the experts. Many sociologists believe that such national cultures and values do actually change with time. Beteille (1969) uses the concept of inequality (which relates to PDI) to illustrate how “[t]he decline of the legitimacy of social inequality did not start everywhere at the same time and has not proceeded equally far in every society... But today there are few societies in the world

where an ideology of inequality would be allowed to pass unchallenged” (p. 366-367). In contrast, Hofstede (2001) argues, based on his empirical IBM studies, that even though the PDI indices of some of the countries have been slightly reduced, they have not converged across countries. Because inequalities are deeply rooted in the history of a nation, the homogenization of individuals in regards to “dependence, independence and interdependence under the influence of a presumed cultural melting-pot process is still very far away, if it will ever happen” (p. 122).

Beyond the debate around the changes in cultural norms, with the increased levels of education and technologies, the youth and the middle class are becoming more sensitive to the appeal for more equality (Lederer, 1982). This desire, even if it does not reflect the reality on the ground, is the first step in the change process. Going back to the sample of this study, it also seems that the majority of executives scored, on average, between 4 and 5 on all learning preferences. For example, even though the public sector executives exhibited a desire to agree with the experts to a less degree than employees working in the private sector, the average of all their mean scores related to learning preferences was 4.024 (mean scores on dependent variables ranged between 3.77- 4.5). This average suggests that, based on the stem of the scales, the majority of public sector employees choose options from the Likert scale that fell between no effect to some positive effect. This reflects an inclination (farther than the experts from than the private sector) to agree with the Delphi experts.

The statistical difference between experts across both sectors may be linked to the legal and economic structures in the Gulf region, particularly the structures that divide citizens from expatriates and drive the majority of nationals (locals) into the public sector (Gardner, 2011). This trend was accentuated after the Arab uprisings, which has led the Gulf region to revert to short-termist policies of increasing public sector spending and employment by investing more

than US\$150 billion to create tens of thousands of new public-sector jobs. Parallel to this development, expatriates, who cost less, have fewer labor rights, and often have more relevant skills that match the needs of the market/businesses (Kinninmont, 2015) are pulled into the private sector. Nationals, who constitute the bulk of public sector workforce, are more inclined to use traditional leadership styles and didactic approaches to learning, as they are usually graduates of public schools. Scoring lower on items related to the use of icebreakers, simulations, case studies, role play, facilitative discussions, problem-solving, and collaborative activities, indicates a preference for less modern approaches to leadership development.

Noting the preferences of public sector employees, governments, and business schools who wish to align with best practices proposed by the experts, are recommended to adopt a gradual approach in shifting beliefs around learning and leadership.

Governments can start influencing the shift early on by infusing modern instructional practices (e.g., social constructivist approaches and student-centered education) in Arabic/public school K-16 systems as well as embedding values related to transparency, responsibility, independence of thought, tolerance, diligence, flexibility, modesty and equality across disciplines, noting the value of their cultural heritage and national roots as well their Arab identity. The integration of some of the modern teaching and thinking practices may prepare aspiring leaders to be more inclined to adopt best practices in development and leadership as viewed by the experts.

Business schools and leadership development specialists (instructor/consultant/coach) are advised to follow a three-step approach to help established leaders with the gradual shift. First, leadership professors need to work with executives to understand *where* they are in the continuum by assessing their preferences against the best practices. Using this study solely to

make generalizations or predictions about a group of people with certain characteristics may result in the lack of appreciation of the individuality of executives. Consequently, instructors need to thoroughly assess *who* constitutes the group. Secondly, based on the assessment results, the instructor and executives need to identify aspects of learning and leadership approaches that need to be changed/shifted. This phase defines *what* the group wants to get out of the leadership development experience. Thirdly, based on a priority list that both instructor and executives agree upon, the instructor devises a curriculum that addresses the areas that need to be reinforced and changed. Involving the executives in the process may help increase their investment in the change process. This phase captures *how* the group will get where it wants to be.

Need to be cautious of the tension. Parallel to the gradual shift that needs to be adopted, moving executives from the Gulf region, who have been educated in Arabic curricula in particular, across the continuum may create tension. Based on the examination of the relationship between regions (Gulf vs. Levant) and executives' learning preferences, holding all other variables constant, Gulf executives agreed less with the experts than their counterparts in the Levant. Levant executives placed higher importance on experiential learning practices (LA), Western models of leadership (trait, situational, relational, servant, and ethical perspectives), facilitative instructional practices (IC), and modern views for the setup of physical space and course materials. To help executives from the Gulf shift towards the best practices as defined by the experts, Western instructional methods (e.g., use of case-study methods), Western models of leadership (e.g., democratic decision making as leadership quality), and digital technologies need to be incorporated into the curriculum. The rigidity of structures in autocratic leadership model and didactic approaches embedded in the Arabic K-12 schooling may lead to frustration and tension on the part of the Gulf executives who were educated in Arabic schools.

The Gulf, a space geographically and culturally positioned between the East and the West, is trying to leverage its economic prosperity, wealth of natural resources, and rapid growth to advance toward a future that is able to sustain development without depending on oil. Indeed, Gulf leaders have set an ambitious strategy to build its knowledge economy in the next decade. The region has a great potential to diversify its economy, creating a stronger middle class, encouraging entrepreneurial initiatives, advancing research and development agenda, increasing reliance on local innovative intellectual capabilities, and achieving gender equity across sectors and leadership roles. As such, to help executives from the Gulf respond to the changes facing their region, business schools may need to understand how experts' learning and leadership concepts may be at odds with the current beliefs of Gulf/Arabic educated executives. To advocate for experiential learning and modern approaches for leadership in management programs, L&D experts are recommended to, firstly, ensure that executives recognize the value of adopting experts' modern approaches. For example, for leaders to achieve targets or goals, effectively manage during period of crisis, and lead teams, they will also need to draw on fair performance management systems, take accountability for both successes and failures, and empower teams to promote autonomy in a systematic and structured manner. Associating the rise of a leader to *wasta*, adopting a laissez-faire approach to supervising teams, avoiding tough discussions required to address inefficiencies and corruptions, and following an authoritative style of leadership may not be a conduit to fair treatment and may impact negatively the formation of a high performance culture. Consequently, aligning leadership attributes with what the organization needs to implement its business strategy (deliver results externally) and perpetuate the principles of sound performance management system (internally) should be an integral part of the leadership development process. Engaging executives in identifying those

critical leadership attributes may promote their ownership and appreciation of the standards they set to themselves. L&D specialists, then, need to support executives in developing the specific skills and knowledge associated with the agreed upon competencies. Exercises and activities may include the development of debating, conflict resolution, democratic decision making, negotiations, and performance management skills.

Another example may be linked to the homogeneity construct, which was equally valued by the Gulf and Levant executives. Executives believed that instruction should be attuned to the Arab culture (local and relevant content) and delivered in Arabic. The selection of participants and/or instructor of same gender and nationality was also considered more important to executives compared to experts in promoting cultural congruence. Executives also viewed family and personal connections as a positive factor influencing how individuals should become business leaders. Based on the statistical analysis of items related to cultural congruence, data shows that the largest effect size (0.9) across all independent variables was produced by the Homogeneity construct. In the face of globalization, however, experts have recommended promoting cross-cultural management practices by pushing towards greater diversity and multiculturalism (e.g., a culturally inclusive mission statement and ability to work effectively within a multicultural environment). Thus, to reduce the tension or expressed concerns from executives regarding insensitivity to their local culture (which is represented through HO in the classroom), it may be wise to cautiously, systematically, and sensitively introduce participants from a range of different countries and a range of business backgrounds into the classroom. As such, it may be necessary to teach cross-cultural business semantics, norms, and approaches to leadership both within the Arab world and across non-Arab nations. In addition to highlighting cultural differences, it would be insightful to reinforce the commonalities that exist between

societies (e.g., overlapping concepts between Islamic principles and Western models). Building on common grounds and shared values as well as raising awareness of the importance of understanding others' perspectives and backgrounds may help promote synergy and dampen conflicts, which may arise between groups from different countries.

Study Limitations

This study does not address whether these shifts will happen, if tensions will resolve or if change can be sustained in the long term. The design of this research is exploratory in nature and is based on observational data (rather than an experiment). Results should be used cautiously because, as mentioned earlier, they reflect relationships between data points collected three years ago, in 2012.

Additionally, the study only aimed at examining the preferences of executives and the perceptions of what the experts view as desirable. This study does not investigate real behaviors of executives, which may be a more accurate measure of how they actually approach learning. Nor does it define best practices based on measured interventions. Further research may examine experts' recommendations to test the effectiveness of the instructional methods, which have been nominated during the Delphi procedure.

A third important limitation to this study is the lack of psychometric information for the homogeneity construct and the limited validity and reliability of all learning preferences constructs. One of the challenges associated with the limited validity and reliability is the assumption that the constructs were unidimensional. During the analysis of individual items under each construct, several items acted in a multi-dimensional nature. This multi-dimensionality suggests that the scale, which was created, did not take into account the complex relationships existing between items.

Further, the survey of the scores of the items may be limited by the effect of social desirability. Executives' nationalities may incline them to respond to items with bias. Research has shown that the Americans tend to use more extreme values in their scoring, whereas Easterners are more inclined to use moderate points (Heine, Lehman, Peng, & Greenholtz, 2002). Heine and colleagues (2002) explain that this inclination may be either related to cross cultural reasons or reference group effects, and that they may not be present with certain types of items. Items that require more introspection or comparison with internal, rather than external, comparisons and items that measure concrete behaviors tend to show less bias in cross-cultural comparisons. Johnson, Kulesa, Cho, and Shavitt (2005) actually utilized Hofstede's cultural dimensions and compared the different dimensions with two different types of response styles, extreme response and acquiescence. Their results showed that at least some of these cultural dimensions do have a significant relationship with different response styles.

When interpreting the UAI and PDI values, caution should be taken when considering the UAE, as the sample size of the group was 11. This sample is far smaller than the recommendations of Hofstede et al. (2008).

In regards to the modelling procedure followed in this study, the assumption of the linearity of the HLM model is a limitation as it imposes a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Lastly, doing statistical tests for individual items means that a large number of tests may produce a sizable overall error rate. Addressing multiple testing is an important concern in several contexts, such as testing a composite hypothesis, relying on statistical hypothesis testing as a mechanism for model-building, or when causal inference is the goal. However, the models

adopted in this study are considered to be hypothesis-driven and are not aimed at making a causal inference. As such, multiple testing concerns do not necessarily need to be considered.

Conclusion

This study adds to the literature in three main ways. First, the study identifies best practices for classroom-based leadership development programs as per experts' views. Second, the study compares experts to executives' views in regards to effective aspects of leadership development programs. Third, the study explores how regional differences, cultural values, and demographics relate to Arab executives' approaches to learning.

Drawing on the review of literature, some of the best practices recommended by the experts aligned with Western theories of learning and leadership and some were specific to Arabic scholarship. Experts' views may be captured as a way forward to integrate Western standards with Arabic nuanced practices.

Business schools, training providers and L&D experts that aspire to reduce conflict between what executives prefer and best practices nominated by the experts need to consider both sides of the equation (the learner and the expert). As such, designing programs that address the difference may help customizing interventions to not only suit experts' views but also executives' preferences.

Findings of the study show how region, national values, sector, and education background explain variability in executives' preferences to learning. Practical steps that may help facilitate the shifts needed to move executives closer to what the experts are recommending, have been proposed. Surprisingly, age and gender did not lead to statistically significant differences. However, post hoc statistical tests suggest that, unlike Veterans and Baby Boomers,

the Millennials and Gen X are inclined to choose to use technology infused and industry based classroom resources.

A main outcome of the study findings was the operationalization of the cultural congruence between executives and approaches to leadership development. The homogeneity scale captured executives' affinity to local cultural traditions/values in the learning environment. The fact that executives showed an inclination toward higher tightness to same grouping, language, instructional methods, and gender, the homogeneity construct was associated with a positive agreement with several Western models of learning and leadership. Would that be due to the fact that executives' way to express preferences towards alternating between two forms of beliefs: attachment to local/tribal culture *and* Western characteristics of learning and leadership approaches? There may be a resemblance between such inclinations and Nisbett's (2003) views of individuals who are exposed to Westernization and globalization, those prone to becoming "bicultural" (p. 228) in response to blended social systems, interests, and values.

If cultures are indeed converging (Nisbett, 2003), the differences in perception and beliefs of Arab executives may not only fluctuate with time but may also be deeply affected by the current wars, surge of fundamentalists, refugees exodus (e.g., Iraq, Syria, and Yemen), high labor turnover, incompatibility in types of educational levels/skills with the current market needs, and the mergers and takeovers processes of multinational corporations. This complex formula may lead to mounting levels stress and anxiety thus increasing countries' UAI levels. This shift to higher UAI is "noticeable in intolerance, xenophobia, religions, and political fanaticism" and all the other manifestations of uncertainty avoidance discussion in earlier in chapter four (Hofstede, 2001, p. 182). War threats may pull in other countries that did not show the same high levels of UAI but may need to engage in the conflict to reduce ambiguities, thus introducing a

new wave of anxiety to the region that could be a prelude to new wars. The challenge to the Arab world is to break this vicious circle. Effective leadership development may be a powerful path to that end.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Selected Delphi Items and Ratings

Methodological note: readers will note that the tables in this Appendix report on a large number of tests with statistical significance. Doing statistical tests for a large number of individual items will produce a sizeable error rate. I recognize that many of the reports of statistical significance at the .05 levels in these tables may represent such errors. However, in light of the purpose of this study I am reporting all these tests of significance without using some statistical procedure for controlling the overall error rate. Addressing multiple testing is an important concern in several contexts, such as testing a composite hypothesis, relying on statistical hypothesis testing as a mechanism for model-building, or when causal inference is the goal. However, the models adopted in this study are considered to be hypothesis-driven and are not aimed at making a causal inference. As such, the overall error rate is not a serious concern.

Relevant list of items and ratings for Round 2 and 3. The results of these rounds were compiled in terms of the average rating and standard deviation for each item.

Key

Top 5 highest expert-rated items –to be on Large Scale Survey

First Column – Expert initial ratings

Second Column - Expert revised ratings after seeing mean ratings of other experts

LV – unusually than average variance

Section 1. The methods of leadership training

1a. Training Activities

Directions. Rate the effect of the following leadership training activities on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect. 5 (strong positive effect).....1 (strong negative effect)

Case studies

4.63 4.63

0.49 0.49

Interacting with other participants

4.38 4.38

0.49 0.49

Collaborative problem solving of non-work problems, like building a plane.

4.29	4.38 LV
0.86	0.65
Icebreaker activities	
4.33	4.33
0.70	0.64
Interacting with the instructor	
4.29	4.29
0.46	0.46
Role-play activities	
4.29	4.29
0.69	0.69
Interacting with senior business leaders	
4.29	4.29
0.62	0.46
Collaborative problem solving of real problems	
4.21	4.29
0.83	0.55
Outdoor activities	
4.17	4.25
1.01	0.79 LV
Mind mapping activities	
4.21	4.21
0.66	0.66
360-degree review (performance review from people at all levels in the organization)	
4.17	4.17
0.56	0.38
On-the-job seminars (sessions are on-site)	
4.00	4.13
0.98	0.68
Team building activities	
3.92	4.13
1.32	0.95 LV
Meeting well-known business leaders – Richard Branson for example.	
4.00	4.00
0.59	0.42
Examining one's own practice as a business leader	
4.00	4.08

0.78	0.50
Presentations are to the point without a lot of data	
3.42	3.58
0.97	0.72 LV

1b. Training Location

Directions. Rate the effect of the following aspects of the training location on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

5 (strong positive effect).....1 (strong negative effect)

Big, well-equipped place like university or hotels with easy access to more information and facilities

4.46	4.46
0.66	0.59

Outside the normal work environment

4.33	4.33
0.70	0.64

Facilities available to relax

3.67	3.71
0.70	0.69

1c. Participants

Directions. Rate the effect of the following qualities of the participants on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

5 (strong positive effect).....1 (strong negative effect)

Participants are from a range of different countries

4.25	4.29
0.90	0.81 LV

Participants are from a range of different business sectors

3.83	3.88
0.87	0.74 LV

1d. Instructor Qualities

Directions. Rate the effect of the following instructor qualities on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

5 (strong positive effect).....1 (strong negative effect)

Instructor has experience as a business leader

4.54 4.54

0.51 0.51

Instructor is able to explain the meaning of the content, not just present it

4.50 4.50

0.51 0.51

Instructor is famous as a business leader

4.42 4.42

0.65 0.50

More opportunities for talk, and less reading material

4.38 4.38

0.58 0.58

Instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience

4.35 4.33

0.49 0.48

Case studies are relevant to the Arab world

4.29 4.29

0.55

0.62

Instructor is an outside expert, rather than someone from the same organization

4.21 4.21

0.72 0.72 LV

Sessions strive to provide more information in less time

3.79 3.83

.98 1.01 LV

Instructor uses latest technology, like e-lectures

3.79 3.79

0.78 0.72 LV

Instruction is according to Arab culture, not Western culture

3.58 3.58

0.65 0.58

Instructor is from the same country

3.17	3.17
0.38	0.38
Instructor is Arab	
3.13	3.13
0.54	0.61
Instructor is Western	
2.92	2.88
0.50	0.68

1e. Training Materials

Directions. Rate the effect of the following qualities of the training materials on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

5 (strong positive effect).....1 (strong negative effect)

Attractive and colorful hard copy materials

3.67	3.79
------	------

1.43	0.93 LV
------	---------

Minimal hard copy materials

3.14	3.08
------	------

0.99	0.72 LV
------	---------

Section 2. The content of leadership training

5 (most important)....1 (least important)

Ability to be a team leader

4.67	4.71
------	------

0.56	0.46
------	------

Ability meet targets or goals

4.54	4.67
------	------

0.51	0.48
------	------

Problem solving ability

4.67	4.67
------	------

0.48	0.48
------	------

Ability to serve as a role model

4.63	4.63
0.49	0.49
Effective analysis of work situations	
4.63	4.63
0.49	0.49
Effective management during periods of crisis	
4.63	4.63
0.49	0.49
Ability to be a team member	
4.58	4.58
0.58	0.58
Success factors in business	
4.54	4.58
0.51	0.50
Ability to implications of mistakes	
4.58	4.58
0.50	0.50
Ability and willingness to work hard	
4.58	4.58
0.50	0.50
Ability to work at multiple levels within the organization	
4.58	4.58
0.50	0.50
Ability to sees potential in others	
4.54	4.54
0.51	0.51
Effective use of performance measurement and reward	
4.54	4.54
0.51	0.51
Effective management of time	
4.54	4.54
0.51	0.51
Knowledge of people with whom one works	
4.54	4.54
0.51	0.51
Ability to be proactive	

4.50	4.54
0.66	0.59
Ability to supervise others	
4.54	4.54
0.51	0.51
Ability to give instructions	
4.50	4.54
0.66	0.59
Ability to be innovative	
4.50	4.50
0.59	0.51
Ability to treat people as human beings	
4.58	4.50
0.50	0.59
Confidence	
4.50	4.50
0.51	0.51
A sense of focus	
4.50	4.50
0.51	0.51
Creativity	
4.50	4.50
0.51	0.51
Hands -on experience	
4.46	4.50
0.51	0.51
Willingness to be managed	
4.50	4.50
0.51	0.51
Ability to motivate and engage employees	
4.46	4.46
0.51	0.51
A good-natured personality	
4.46	4.46
0.51	0.51
Ability to take the organization to where it should be	
4.46	4.46

0.59	0.51
Adaptability	
4.42	4.42
0.50	0.50
Ability to regularly communicate with employees	
4.42	4.42
0.50	0.50
Listening skills	
4.42	4.42
0.50	0.50
Ability to gain trust of employees	
4.42	4.42
0.50	0.50
Ability to find areas for improvement	
4.38	4.42
0.65	0.58
Ability to work effectively within a multicultural environment	
4.39	4.38
0.50	0.49
Ability to be accepted as a leader by those he or she leads	
4.38	4.38
0.58	0.49
Understanding of balance sheet	
4.21	4.38
0.59	0.49
Flexibility	
4.33	4.33
0.48	0.48
Presentation skills	
4.33	4.33
0.48	0.48
Charisma	
4.25	4.33
0.74	0.48
Democratic decision-making processes	
4.25	4.29
0.74	0.62

Ability to use humor appropriately	
4.25	4.25
0.61	0.44
Compassion	
4.25	4.25
0.44	0.44
Patience	
4.21	4.25
0.66	0.53
A culturally inclusive mission statement	
4.13	4.13
0.68	0.61
Diligence	
4.04	4.13
0.62	0.45

Section 3. Participants' Motivation

5 (most important)....1 (least important)

Opportunity to realign	
4.42	4.46
0.50	0.51
Desire to see the big picture	
4.42	4.42
0.50	0.50
Opportunity to network	
4.42	4.42
0.58	0.50
Clarity of the objectives	
4.42	4.42
0.50	0.50
Desire to go beyond just following orders	
4.33	4.38
0.56	0.58
The nature of the training program syllabus	
4.38	4.38
0.58	0.49

Requirements of the organization	
4.38	4.38
0.49	0.49
Practicality of the content offered	
4.38	4.38
0.49	0.49
Opportunity for personal development	
4.38	4.38
0.58	0.49
Extent to which training will contribute to organization	
4.38	4.38
0.49	0.49
Participant's understanding of role in his or her company	
4.33	4.33
0.56	0.48
Presence of a supportive work environment	
4.33	4.33
0.48	0.48
Need to update or learn new skills or competencies	
4.38	4.33
0.49	0.48
Availability of budget	
4.29	4.33
0.62	0.56
Needs of one's work situation	
4.29	4.33
0.55	0.56
Extent to which training is tailored to needs of participants	
4.29	4.29
0.46	0.46
Payment of training course by your employer (company)	
4.29	4.29
0.62	0.62
Roles in leadership	
4.29	4.29
0.46	0.46
Love of what one does	

4.25	4.29
0.53	0.55
Progression in one's career	
4.25	4.25
0.61	0.53
Qualifications of the instructor	
4.25	4.25
0.68	0.61
Presenters from institutions with worldwide reputation	
4.17	4.13
0.64	0.61
Reputation of the training program	
4.13	4.08
0.74	0.65
Days and times training is offered	
3.63	3.63
0.71	0.82
Instructor from a Western country	
3.21	3.21
0.59	0.59
Instructor from an Arab country	
3.04	3.04
0.55	0.55
Instructor from a different Arab country	
2.96	2.96
0.46	0.46

Section 4: Barriers to Participation

5 (most important)....1 (least important)

Timing of the program	
4.54	4.58
0.72	0.50
Poor reputation of the companies who conduct the training	
3.83	3.92
0.96	0.83
The corporate culture	

3.71	3.79
0.62	0.51
Perception about training	
3.71	3.75
0.69	0.61
Too much content used in the training	
3.58	3.71
1.06	0.62
Unwillingness of companies to engage employees as partners like in the Western world	
3.67	3.67
0.87	0.56
Cultural hurdles for females	
3.38	3.38
0.97	0.82

Appendix B

Face-to-Face Interview Questionnaire Guide

Section A: Interviewee Background

Background:

Respondent name:

Company name:

Title/position:

Complete address:

Telephone number:

Email:

Interviewee biography:

Interviewer name:

Date of interview:

Section B: Chore Questions

Q1: Please comment on whether you generally agree or disagree with the Delphi research results and report recommendations.

Q2: In your opinion, what results or recommendations are most significant? Please explain why.

Q3: What do you see as the primary value of the results and recommendations of this study?

Q4: What issues related to effective leadership development would you want to know more about from this study or a follow-up study?

Q5: The private sector, faced by an increasing competition, thrives to ensure maximum efficiency, profitability and growth. Hence the focus on recruiting the best top executives and best employees, and invest in their training. According to you, what would motivate the public sector to improve, be efficient, innovative and productive? Why and how far committed would the public sector recruit qualified leaders? Invest in further educating its employees? Invest in training and executive education?

Q6: With the new regulations related to nationalization quotas, lack of local talents and high number of expatriates in leadership positions, high unemployment rates in the Arab world, and a growing and young population, the Arab spring movement, in your views, how should the public sector respond to such demands?

Q7: What role should the private sector play in alleviating the skills gap through company training programs? Should the government create incentives for companies to train their employees? Would you like to see the government and the private sector offering incentives for international training institutes to open in your country? If so, in what kind of training?

Appendix C

Large Scale Survey

Part A: Selected Items from the Delphi Survey were included in the Large Scale Survey

Section 1. The methods of leadership training

1a. Training Activities

Directions. Rate the effect of the following leadership training activities on leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

5 (strong positive effect)

4 (some positive effect)

3 (no effect positive or negative)

2 (some negative effect)

1 (strong negative effect)

- Case studies
- Interacting with other participants
- Collaborative problem solving of non-work problems, like building a plane.
- Icebreaker activities
- Interacting with the instructor
- Inviting key speakers /practitioners from the business community
- Use of simulation tools
- Role playing exercises

For you as a participant, the most effective development sessions consist mainly of which of the following (Select one)

- high quality presentations
- high quality group activities such as discussion or simulations
- an equal balance of high quality presentations and group activities

1b. Training Location

Directions. Rate the effect of the following aspects of the training location on leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

5 (strong positive effect)

4 (some positive effect)

3 (no effect positive or negative)

2 (some negative effect)

1 (strong negative effect)

- Large, well-equipped place like university or high end comfortable training rooms such as in hotels
- Outside the normal work environment
- Facilities available to relax
- Facilities with access to wireless network and library
- Close by a commercial/entertainment area
- Remote from any commercial/entertainment distractions

1c. Participants

Directions. Rate the effect of the following qualities of the participants on leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

5 (strong positive effect)

4 (some positive effect)

3 (no effect positive or negative)

2 (some negative effect)

1 (strong negative effect)

- Participants are from a range of different countries (Arabs and Westerns)
- Participants are from a range of different business sectors
- Participants are all Arabs
- Participants are balanced between males and females
- Participants are from the same gender as me

1d. Instructor Qualities

Directions. Rate the effect of the following instructor qualities on leadership development sessions a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

5 (strong positive effect)

4 (some positive effect)

3 (no effect positive or negative)

2 (some negative effect)

1 (strong negative effect)

- Instructor has experience as a business leader
- Instructor is able to explain the meaning and illustration of the content, and use real examples, not just present it
- Instructor is famous as a business leader
- More opportunities for talk, and less reading material
- Instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience
- Instruction is attuned to the Arab culture, not Western culture
- Instructor is from the same country
- Instructor is Arab
- Instructor is Western
- The instructor is from a well-known university
- Instructor is the same gender as me

1e. Training Materials

Directions. Rate the effect of the following qualities of the training materials on leadership development sessions on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being a strong positive effect and one being a strong negative effect.

5 (strong positive effect)

4 (some positive effect)

3 (no effect positive or negative)

2 (some negative effect)

1 (strong negative effect)

- Attractive hard copy materials
- Materials illustrated with diagrams and graphics
- Content with summary page
- Materials accessible on the Web (virtual learning environment)
- Lecture handouts and readings saved on a flash disk
- Book relevant to current best practices and written by experts/ top thinkers
- Materials provided in Arabic language
- Notebook allowing an opportunity for writing individual reflections and practical ways to implement learning in the workplace
- Pre-reading materials provided

Section 2. The content of leadership development

Directions. Rate the following qualities or abilities in terms of how important they are to develop among participants in leadership development on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being most important and one being least important.

5 (most important)

4 (important)

3 (somewhat important)

2 (not important)

1 (least important)

- Ability to build and lead teams
- Ability meet targets or goals
- Problem solving ability
- Ability to serve as a role model
- Effective analysis of work situations
- Effective management during periods of crisis
- Charisma
- Democratic decision-making processes
- Presentation skills

In your opinion, rate each of the following in terms of its importance to how individuals should become business leaders.

5 (most important)

4 (important)

3 (somewhat important)

2 (not important)

1 (least important)

- Personality qualities
- Family connections or interpersonal connections
- Job-related competencies

Section 3. Participants' Motivation

Directions. Rate the following factors in terms of how important they are in motivating you to participate in leadership development on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being most important and one being least important.

5 (most important)

4 (important)

3 (somewhat important)

2 (not important)

1 (least important)

- Opportunity to realign (refresh thinking with timely best practices)
- Desire to broaden horizon and see the big picture
- Opportunity to network
- Clarity of the objectives
- Desire to go beyond just following orders
- Relevance and quality of the program syllabus
- Requirements of the organization
- Practicality of the content offered
- Need to update or learn new skills or competencies (personal development)
- Extent to which training will contribute to participant's company
- Instructor from a Western country
- Instructor from an Arab country
- Instructor from a different Arab country

Section 4: Barriers to Participation

Directions. Rate the following factors in terms of how important they are as barriers to participating in leadership development on a scale of 5 to 1, with five being most important and one being least important.

5 (most important)

4 (important)

3 (somewhat important)

2 (not important)

1 (least important)

- Timing of the program
- Poor reputation of the companies who conduct the training
- The corporate culture
- Perception about training
- Too much content used in the training
- Cultural hurdles for females
- Location of the training too far away from home
- Language of the program (Native Language)
- Level of difficulty of the training (either above or below your level)

Part B: Global Dimensions

Please think of an ideal job, disregarding your present job, if you have one. In choosing an ideal job, how important would it be to you to ... (please circle one answer in each line across):

1 = of utmost importance

2 = very important

3 = of moderate importance

4 = of little importance

5 = of very little or no importance

01. Have sufficient time for your personal or home life

1 2 3 4 5

02. Have a boss (direct superior) you can respect

1 2 3 4 5

03. Get recognition for good performance

1 2 3 4 5

04. Have security of employment

1 2 3 4 5

05. Have pleasant people to work with

1 2 3 4 5

06. Do work that is interesting

1 2 3 4 5

07. Be consulted by your boss in decisions involving your work

1 2 3 4 5

08. Live in a desirable area

1 2 3 4 5

09. Have a job respected by your family and friends

1 2 3 4 5

10. Have chances for promotion

1 2 3 4 5

In your private life, how important is each of the following to you: (please circle one answer in each line across):

11. Keeping time free for fun

1 2 3 4 5

12. Moderation: having few desires

1 2 3 4 5

13. Being generous to other people

1 2 3 4 5

14. Modesty: looking small, not big

1 2 3 4 5

15. If there is something expensive you really want to buy but you do not have enough money, what do you do?

1. Always save before buying

2. Usually save first

3. Sometimes save, sometimes borrow to buy

4. Usually borrow and pay off later

5. Always buy now, pay off later

16. How often do you feel nervous or tense?

1. Always

2. Usually

3. Sometimes

4. Seldom

5. Never

17. Are you a happy person?

1. Always

2. Usually

3. Sometimes

4. Seldom

5. Never

18. Are you the same person at work (or at school if you're a student) and at home?

1. Quite the same

2. Mostly the same

3. Don't know

4. Mostly different

5. Quite different

19. Do other people or circumstances ever prevent you from doing what you really want to?

1. Yes, always
2. Yes, usually
3. Sometimes
4. No, seldom
5. No, never

20. All in all, how would you describe your state of health these days?

1. Very good
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. Very poor

21. How important is religion in your life?

1. Of utmost importance
2. Very important
3. Of moderate importance
4. Of little importance
5. Of no importance

22. How proud are you to be a citizen of your country?

1. Not proud at all
2. Not very proud

3. Somewhat proud

4. Fairly proud

5. Very proud

23. How often, in your experience, are subordinates afraid to contradict their boss
(or students their teacher?)

1. Never

2. Seldom

3. Sometimes

4. Usually

5. Always

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

(Please circle one answer in each line across):

1 = strongly agree

2 = agree

3 = undecided

4 = disagree

5 = strongly disagree

24. One can be a good manager without having a precise answer to every question
that a subordinate may raise about his or her work

1 2 3 4 5

25. Persistent efforts are the surest way to results

1 2 3 4 5

26. An organization structure in which certain subordinates have two bosses
should be avoided at all cost

1 2 3 4 5

27. A company or organizations rules should not be broken - not even when the
employee thinks breaking the rule would be in the organization's best interest

1 2 3 4 5

28. We should honor our heroes from the past

1 2 3 4 5

Part C: Background Information

Some information about yourself please:

Are you:

1. Male
2. Female

How old are you?

1. Under 20
2. 20-24
3. 25-29
4. 30-34
5. 35-39
6. 40-49
7. 50-59
8. 60 or over

What is your nationality?

List 15 sample countries, and a space for Other

What was your nationality at birth (if different)?

List 15 sample countries, and a space for Other

Education & Training

For the following, identify what type of educational institution you attended.

(1. Arabic curricular, 2. Western curricular, 3. Mix (Western and Arabic), 4. Other,

NIA. Not Applicable)

High school	1	2	3	4	NA
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Undergraduate (Bachelor)	1	2	3	4	NA
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Graduate (Masters)	1	2	3	4	NA
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Doctoral (Ph.D.)	1	2	3	4	NA
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If you have or recently have had a paid job, what kind of job is it /was it?

1. No paid job (includes full-time students)
2. Unskilled or semi-skilled manual worker
3. Generally trained office worker or secretary
4. Vocationally trained craftsperson, technician, IT-specialist, nurse, artist or equivalent
5. Academically trained professional or equivalent (but not a manager of people)
6. Manager of one or more subordinates (non-managers)
7. Manager of one or more managers

Which sector do you currently work in?

1. The public sector
2. The private sector
3. Non-governmental organization (NGO)
4. Other

Which industry do you work in?

1. Financial Services
2. Entertainment and Media
3. Healthcare
4. Travel and Tourism
5. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
6. Retail and Consumer Goods
7. Transport
8. Logistics & Storage
9. Energy
10. Utilities
11. Mining
12. Real Estate

What country do you currently work in?

(List all 17 countries. Have respondent select one)

Is the company you work for Arab or foreign owned?

1. Arab
2. Foreign

Thank you very much for your time. We know you are extremely busy! Your feedback will remain anonymous and will be tremendously helpful to us as we continue revising and improving our methodology to better customize education and meet your specific needs.

Appendix D

Comparing Executives' and Experts' Scores

Table 20: Comparing Executives and Experts for Learning Activities (LA)

LSS Item Description	Executive Mean	Expert Mean	Mann Whitney U Statistic
(2) Interacting with other participants	4.25	4.38	9826.5
(5) Interacting with the instructor	4.24	4.29	9630.5
(1) Case studies	4.23	4.63	8019
(8) Role playing exercises	4.23	4.29	9970.5
(3) Collaborative problem solving of non-work problems, like building a plane.	4.21	4.37	9209
(24) More opportunities for talk, and less reading material	4.17	4.29	9181
(4) Icebreaker activities	4.14	4.33	8965

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Table 21: Comparing Executives and Experts for Leadership Competencies (LC)

LSS Item Description	Executive Mean	Expert Mean	Mann Whitney U Statistic
(41) Ability to build and lead teams	4.44	4.71	8539
(49) Presentation skills	4.38	4.33	8948
(50) Personality qualities	4.36	4.46	9863.5

Table 21 (cont'd)

(48) Democratic decision-making processes	4.32	4.29	9411
(42) Ability meet targets or goals	4.31	4.67	7984
(43) Problem solving ability	4.3	4.67	7892*
(47) Charisma	4.24	4.33	10004
(46) Effective management during periods of crisis	4.23	4.63	7861.5*
(44) Ability to serve as a role model	4.19	4.63	7690.5*
(45) Effective analysis of work situations	4.16	4.63	7192.5*

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Table 22: Comparing Executives and Experts for Motivational Enablers (ME)

LSS Item Description	Executive Mean	Expert Mean	Mann Whitney U Statistic
(54) Desire to broaden horizon and see the big picture	4.31	4.42	9974
(53) Opportunity to realign (refresh thinking with timely best practices)	4.3	4.46	9807.5
(61) Need to update or learn new skills or competencies (personal development)	4.24	4.33	9860
(55) Opportunity to network	4.23	4.42	9534
(56) Clarity of the objectives	4.23	4.42	9370
(60) Practicality of the content offered	4.22	4.37	9835.5
(58) Relevance and quality of the programme syllabus	4.21	4.37	9496.5
(62) Extent to which training will contribute to participant s company	4.2	4.38	9568.5

Table 22 (cont'd)

(59) Requirements of the organization	4.19	4.38	9538.5
(57) Desire to go beyond just following orders	4.12	4.38	8743.5

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Table 23: Comparing Executives and Experts for Barriers to Participation (BP)

LSS Item Description	Executive Mean	Expert Mean	Mann Whitney U Statistic
(67) Poor reputation of the companies who conduct the training	4.57	3.92	5537**
(66) Timing of the programme	4.35	4.58	9008
(68) The corporate culture	4.11	3.79	7444.5*
(69) Perception about training	4.1	3.75	7337*
(70) Too much content used in the training	3.98	3.71	7930
(71) Cultural hurdles for females	3.76	3.38	7290*

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Table 24: Comparing Executives and Experts for Learning Environment (LE)

LSS Item Description	Executive Mean	Expert Mean	Mann Whitney U Statistic
(10) Large, well-equipped place like university or high end comfortable training rooms such as in hotel	4.19	4.46	9015
(11) Outside the normal work environment	4.15	4.33	9386
(12) Facilities available to relax	4.05	3.71	7587.5*

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Table 25: Comparing Executives and Experts for Instructor Characteristics (IC)

LSS Item Description	Executive Mean	Expert Mean	Mann Whitney U Statistic
(22) Instructor is able to explain the meaning and illustration of the content, and use real examples,	4.34	4.5	9468
(21) Instructor has experience as a business leader	4.32	4.54	9257.5
(25) Instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience	4.17	4.33	9612
(23) Instructor is famous as a business leader	4.12	4.42	8779

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Table 26: Comparing Executives and Experts for Homogeneity (HO)

LSS Item Description	Executive Mean	Expert Mean	Mann Whitney U Statistic
(26) Instruction is attuned to the Arab culture, not Western culture	3.94	3.58	7390*
(28) Instructor is Arab	3.79	3.13	6033**
(65) Instructor from a different Arab country	3.71	2.96	5045**
(27) Instructor is from the same country	3.7	3.17	6376**

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Appendix E

Tables Comparing Executives Across Regions

Table 27: Mann Whitney U Results for Region

Item Number and Description	MENA Gulf	MENA Levant	MEAN DIFF (Levant - Gulf)	Construct
(50) Personality qualities	4.16	4.51	0.35**	LC
(1) Case studies	4.05	4.36	0.31**	LA
(2) Interacting with other participants	4.07	4.38	0.31**	LA
(35) Materials accessible on the Web (virtual learning environment)	3.94	4.24	0.3**	LE
(41) Ability to build and lead teams	4.26	4.56	0.3**	LC
(53) Opportunity to realign (refresh thinking with timely best practices)	4.13	4.43	0.3**	ME
(48) Democratic decision-making processes	4.16	4.44	0.28**	LC
(21) Instructor has experience as a business leader	4.16	4.44	0.28**	IC
(66) Timing of the programme	4.2	4.46	0.26**	BP
(3) Collaborative problem solving of non- work problems, like building a plane.	4.06	4.31	0.25**	LA
(22) Instructor is able to explain the meaning and illustration of the content, and use real examples,	4.2	4.45	0.25**	IC
(30) The instructor is from a well-known university	4	4.25	0.25**	IC
(51) Family connections or interpersonal connections	3.91	4.15	0.24**	HO
(18) Participants are all Arabs	3.56	3.8	0.24**	HO

Table 27 (cont'd)

(54) Desire to broaden horizon and see the big picture	4.18	4.41	0.23**	ME
(60) Practicality of the content offered	4.09	4.32	0.23**	ME
(42) Ability meet targets or goals	4.18	4.4	0.22**	LC
(56) Clarity of the objectives	4.1	4.32	0.22**	ME
(6) Inviting key speakers /practitioners from the business community	4.04	4.26	0.22**	LA
(43) Problem solving ability	4.17	4.39	0.22**	LC
(13) Facilities with access to wireless network and library	3.88	4.1	0.22**	LE
(5) Interacting with the instructor	4.12	4.33	0.21**	LA
(49) Presentation skills	4.26	4.47	0.21**	LC
(52) Job-related competencies	4.3	4.51	0.21**	LC
(47) Charisma	4.13	4.32	0.19**	LC
(11) Outside the normal work environment	4.04	4.23	0.19**	LE
(34) Content with summary page	4.18	4.37	0.19**	LE
(74) Level of difficulty of the training (either above or below your level)	3.65	3.84	0.19**	BP
(10) Large, well-equipped place like university or high end comfortable training rooms such as in hotel	4.08	4.27	0.19**	LE
(33) Materials illustrated with diagrams and graphics	4.15	4.34	0.19**	LE
(68) The corporate culture	4.01	4.19	0.18**	BP
(4) Icebreaker activities	4.04	4.21	0.17**	LA
(59) Requirements of the organization	4.1	4.26	0.16*	ME
(40) Pre-reading materials provided	4.18	4.34	0.16*	LE

Table 27 (cont'd)

(38) Materials provided in Arabic language	3.8	3.96	0.16*	HO
(8) Role playing exercises	4.14	4.29	0.15*	LA
(44) Ability to serve as a role model	4.1	4.25	0.15*	LC
(69) Perception about training	4.01	4.16	0.15*	BP
(31) Instructor is the same gender as me	3.9	4.03	0.13*	HO
(55) Opportunity to network	4.16	4.29	0.13*	ME
(71) Cultural hurdles for females	3.69	3.82	0.13	BP
(23) Instructor is famous as a business leader	4.05	4.18	0.13*	IC
(27) Instructor is from the same country	3.63	3.76	0.13*	HO
(25) Instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience	4.1	4.22	0.12	IC
(7) Use of simulation tools	4.12	4.23	0.11*	LA
(65) Instructor from a different Arab country	3.65	3.76	0.11	HO
(36) Lecture handouts and readings saved on a flash disk	3.99	4.1	0.11	LE
(45) Effective analysis of work situations	4.1	4.2	0.1	LC
(24) More opportunities for talk, and less reading material	4.11	4.21	0.1	LA
(46) Effective management during periods of crisis	4.18	4.27	0.09	LC
(28) Instructor is Arab	3.74	3.83	0.09	HO
(37) Book relevant to current best practices and written by experts/ top thinkers	3.93	4.02	0.09	LE
(61) Need to update or learn new skills or competencies (personal development)	4.2	4.28	0.08	ME
(12) Facilities available to relax	4.01	4.09	0.08	LE

Table 27 (cont'd)

(20) Participants are from the same gender as me	3.79	3.87	0.08	HO
(39) Notebook allowing an opportunity for writing individual reflections and practical ways to implement	3.7	3.78	0.08	LE
(57) Desire to go beyond just following orders	4.08	4.15	0.07	ME
(26) Instruction is attuned to the Arab culture, not Western culture	3.9	3.97	0.07	HO
(67) Poor reputation of the companies who conduct the training	4.55	4.6	0.05	BP
(70) Too much content used in the training	3.95	4	0.05	BP
(72) Location of the training too far away from home	3.97	4.02	0.05	BP
(58) Relevance and quality of the programme syllabus	4.18	4.22	0.04	ME
(62) Extent to which training will contribute to participant's company	4.18	4.22	0.04	ME
(73) Language of the program (Native Language)	3.86	3.85	-0.01	HO

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Appendix F

Comparing Experts Across Educational Backgrounds

Table 28: Selected Mann Whitney U Results for Education Backgrounds

Item Number and Description	Arab HS	Non-Full Arab HS	MEAN DIFF (Non-Full - Arab)	Construct
(25) Instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience	4.12	4.41	0.29**	IC
(55) Opportunity to network	4.19	4.46	0.27**	ME
(10) Large, well-equipped place like university or high end comfortable training rooms such as in hotel	4.15	4.41	0.26**	LE
(13) Facilities with access to wireless network and library	3.97	4.22	0.25**	LE
(24) More opportunities for talk, and less reading material	4.13	4.37	0.24**	LA
(61) Need to update or learn new skills or competencies (personal development)	4.21	4.44	0.23**	ME
(70) Too much content used in the training	3.94	4.17	0.23*	BP
(40) Pre-reading materials provided	4.24	4.47	0.23**	LE
(46) Effective management during periods of crisis	4.2	4.42	0.22**	LC
(58) Relevance and quality of the programme syllabus	4.17	4.39	0.22**	ME
(68) The corporate culture	4.08	4.3	0.22**	BP
(37) Book relevant to current best practices and written by experts/ top thinkers	3.95	4.17	0.22*	LE

Table 28 (cont'd)

(30) The instructor is from a well-known university	4.11	4.33	0.22**	IC
(6) Inviting key speakers /practitioners from the business community	4.13	4.34	0.21*	LA
(56) Clarity of the objectives	4.2	4.41	0.21**	ME
(4) Icebreaker activities	4.1	4.3	0.2**	LA
(1) Case studies	4.2	4.39	0.19*	LA
(35) Materials accessible on the Web (virtual learning environment)	4.08	4.27	0.19*	LE
(45) Effective analysis of work situations	4.13	4.31	0.18*	LC
(60) Practicality of the content offered	4.2	4.38	0.18*	ME
(23) Instructor is famous as a business leader	4.09	4.27	0.18*	IC
(43) Problem solving ability	4.27	4.44	0.17*	LC
(7) Use of simulation tools	4.16	4.33	0.17*	LA
(44) Ability to serve as a role model	4.16	4.33	0.17*	LC
(57) Desire to go beyond just following orders	4.09	4.26	0.17*	ME
(62) Extent to which training will contribute to participant s company	4.18	4.35	0.17*	ME
(12) Facilities available to relax	4.03	4.19	0.16*	LE
(34) Content with summary page	4.26	4.42	0.16*	LE
(2) Interacting with other participants	4.23	4.39	0.16*	LA
(49) Presentation skills	4.36	4.51	0.15*	LC
(22) Instructor is able to explain the meaning and illustration of the content, and use real examples,	4.32	4.47	0.15*	IC

Table 28 (cont'd)

(71) Cultural hurdles for females	3.74	3.88	0.14*	BP
(8) Role playing exercises	4.21	4.32	0.11*	LA
(67) Poor reputation of the companies who conduct the training	4.58	4.57	-0.01	BP
(73) Language of the program (Native Language)	3.86	3.81	-0.05	HO
(26) Instruction is attuned to the Arab culture, not Western culture	3.95	3.89	-0.06	HO
(27) Instructor is from the same country	3.71	3.64	-0.07	HO
(31) Instructor is the same gender as me	3.99	3.91	-0.08	HO
(51) Family connections or interpersonal connections	4.07	3.93	-0.14	HO
(65) Instructor from a different Arab country	3.76	3.46	-0.3*	HO
(28) Instructor is Arab	3.84	3.53	-0.31**	HO
(18) Participants are all Arabs	3.77	3.34	-0.43**	HO
(38) Materials provided in Arabic language	3.97	3.49	-0.48**	HO

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Appendix G

Comparing Executives Across Sectors

Table 29: Selected Mann Whitney U Results for Sector

Item Number and Description	Public/N GO	Private	MEAN DIFF (Private - Public/N GO)	Construct
(53) Opportunity to realign (refresh thinking with timely best practices)	4.05	4.35	0.3**	ME
(34) Content with summary page	4.04	4.34	0.3**	LE
(2) Interacting with other participants	4.03	4.3	0.27**	LA
(43) Problem solving ability	4.07	4.34	0.27**	LC
(41) Ability to build and lead teams	4.22	4.48	0.26**	LC
(40) Pre-reading materials provided	4.06	4.32	0.26**	LE
(42) Ability meet targets or goals	4.09	4.35	0.26**	LC
(60) Practicality of the content offered	4.01	4.27	0.26**	ME
(22) Instructor is able to explain the meaning and illustration of the content, and use real examples,	4.13	4.39	0.26**	IC
(4) Icebreaker activities	3.93	4.18	0.25**	LA
(7) Use of simulation tools	3.99	4.22	0.23**	LA
(46) Effective management during periods of crisis	4.04	4.27	0.23*	LC
(55) Opportunity to network	4.04	4.27	0.23**	ME
(61) Need to update or learn new skills or competencies (personal development)	4.06	4.28	0.22**	ME
(68) The corporate culture	3.93	4.15	0.22*	BP

Table 29 (cont'd)

(1) Case studies	4.05	4.27	0.22**	LA
(10) Large, well-equipped place like university or high end comfortable training rooms such as in hotel	4	4.22	0.22*	LE
(56) Clarity of the objectives	4.06	4.27	0.21*	ME
(59) Requirements of the organization	4.01	4.22	0.21*	ME
(25) Instructor is a good facilitator and works well with the audience	3.99	4.2	0.21*	IC
(6) Inviting key speakers /practitioners from the business community	4	4.2	0.2*	LA
(45) Effective analysis of work situations	3.99	4.19	0.2*	LC
(66) Timing of the programme	4.18	4.38	0.2**	BP
(33) Materials illustrated with diagrams and graphics	4.09	4.29	0.2**	LE
(69) Perception about training	3.93	4.13	0.2*	BP
(11) Outside the normal work environment	3.98	4.18	0.2*	LE
(12) Facilities available to relax	3.89	4.09	0.2*	LE
(5) Interacting with the instructor	4.08	4.27	0.19*	LA
(8) Role playing exercises	4.07	4.26	0.19*	LA
(48) Democratic decision-making processes	4.16	4.35	0.19*	LC
(3) Collaborative problem solving of non-work problems, like building a plane.	4.06	4.24	0.18*	LA
(62) Extent to which training will contribute to participant s company	4.05	4.23	0.18*	ME
(47) Charisma	4.09	4.27	0.18*	LC
(21) Instructor has experience as a business leader	4.17	4.35	0.18**	IC

Table 29 (cont'd)

(24) More opportunities for talk, and less reading material	4.03	4.2	0.17*	LA
(54) Desire to broaden horizon and see the big picture	4.17	4.34	0.17*	ME
(50) Personality qualities	4.25	4.39	0.14*	LC
(37) Book relevant to current best practices and written by experts/ top thinkers	3.99	3.98	-0.01	LE
(20) Participants are from the same gender as me	3.89	3.83	-0.06	HO
(73) Language of the program (Native Language)	3.91	3.84	-0.07	HO
(27) Instructor is from the same country	3.77	3.69	-0.08	HO
(28) Instructor is Arab	3.87	3.78	-0.09	HO
(52) Job-related competencies	4.5	4.4	-0.1*	LC
(65) Instructor from a different Arab country	3.83	3.69	-0.14	HO
(31) Instructor is the same gender as me	4.11	3.95	-0.16	HO
(74) Level of difficulty of the training (either above or below your level)	3.9	3.73	-0.17	BP
(71) Cultural hurdles for females	3.96	3.73	-0.23	BP
(51) Family connections or interpersonal connections	4.25	4.01	-0.24	HO

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Appendix H

Comparing Executives Across Age Groups

Table 30: Kruskal-Wallis H Statistically Significant Results for Age

Item Number and Description	Millennials	Generation X	Veterans	Chi-Square Statistic	Asymp. Sig.	Construct
(52) Job-related competencies	4.34	4.41	4.7	19.84**	<0.001	LC
(37) Book relevant to current best practices and written by experts/ top thinkers	4.02	4.02	3.67	9.52**	0.009	LE
(35) Materials accessible on the Web (virtual learning environment)	4.13	4.17	3.74	8.17*	0.017	LE

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Appendix I

Comparing Executives Across Gender

Table 31: Mann Whitney U Statistically Significant Results for Gender

Item Number and Description	Male	Female	MEAN DIFF (Female - Male)	Construct
(28) Instructor is Arab	3.75	4.08	0.33**	HO
(51) Family connections or interpersonal connections	4.01	4.32	0.31**	HO
(71) Cultural hurdles for females	3.73	4.01	0.28*	BP
(11) Outside the normal work environment	4.11	4.37	0.26**	LE
(65) Instructor from a different Arab country	3.68	3.91	0.23*	HO
(34) Content with summary page	4.26	4.47	0.21*	LE
(27) Instructor is from the same country	3.67	3.88	0.21*	HO
(2) Interacting with other participants	4.23	4.41	0.18*	LA
(7) Use of simulation tools	4.16	4.34	0.18*	LA
(22) Instructor is able to explain the meaning and illustration of the content, and use real examples,	4.32	4.48	0.16*	IC
(20) Participants are from the same gender as me	3.82	3.97	0.15*	HO
(67) Poor reputation of the companies who conduct the training	4.56	4.69	0.13*	BP

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

Appendix J

HLM Methodology

To examine the clustered data using the HLM, I first detected the extent of clustering by running an unconditional model (Table 32), which only includes the dependent variable. No predictors are added. Clustering is present if the level-two variance component is statistically significant. As illustrated in Table 33 under the unconditional model, the level-two variance components are statistically significant (e.g., for LA 0.01801 with $p < 0.001$) across all six dependent variables; thus, clustering will be accounted for in the computations, using an HLM modeling approach.

The simplest form of an HLM is composed of two levels, a within- and a between-unit model. The outcome variable for individual i in nation j is a function of the error for both levels, which are accounted for in the model. The following formula represents the unconditional model, showing that the outcome variable is the sum of the intercept, the level two error for group j and individual error for person i in group j .

$$\text{CONSTRUCT}_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j} + r_{ij}$$

The variances of the aforementioned errors are referred to as the *variance components*, and they are used to calculate the intraclass correlation (ICC). The variance component of all individual errors r_{ij} is denoted as σ^2 and τ_{00} is the variance component of the group/nation errors (u_{0j}). The variance components are also used to calculate the ICC, which is the degree of data dependence or the proportion of variation in the outcome that exists between groups (nations). Calculating the intra-class correlation (ICC) shows the amount of variability between countries (second level), versus the amount of variability among individuals (first level). For learning activities, 4.1% of the total variance is between countries. The within nationalities (or between

individuals) variance accounts for 95.9% of the total variance in learning activities. Thus, the majority of the variation is between individuals.

Table 32: Variance Components

Dependent Variable	Unconditional Model			HLM Model (mixed/after adding the 9 independent variables)		
	τ_{00}	σ^2	ICC	τ_{00}	σ^2	ICC
Learning Activities	0.01801**	0.42161	4.10%	0.00003	0.34497	0.01%
Leadership Competencies	0.02053**	0.36735	5.29%	0.0036	0.30464	1.17%
Motivational Enablers	0.02295**	0.49075	4.47%	0.00212	0.41255	0.51%
Barriers to Participation	0.01992**	0.43681	4.36%	0.00032	0.32654	0.10%
Learning Environment	0.01272**	0.40131	3.07%	0.00118	0.27749	0.42%
Instructor's Characteristics	0.02231**	0.44583	4.77%	0.00033	0.32094	0.10%

* p-value < .05

** p-value < .01

The nine independent variables were then added to the unconditional model. The categorical variables were dummy coded, and the continuous variables were grand mean centered (details on how variables were coded are discussed later in this chapter). As shown in Table 31 under the HLM model, the addition of the independent variable to the model reduces

the variance components or unexplained variance (e.g., for LA from 0.01801 to 0.00003) as a result of the predictive relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable.

When comparing the HLM model variance components with the unconditional model variance components, we are also able to determine how much unexplained variance was reduced due to the independent variable (see Table 33). In our HLM model, the unexplained level-two variance in the learning activities construct was reduced by 99.7% and unexplained level-one variance was reduced by 18.2%.

Table 33: Unexplained Variance Reduction by Independent Variable

Dependent Variable	Level 2 Variance Reduced Overall	Level 1 Variance Reduced Overall
Learning Activities	99.7%	18.2%
Leadership Competencies	82.8%	17.1%
Motivational Enablers	90.8%	15.9%
Barriers to Participation	98.3%	25.2%
Learning Environment	90.3%	30.9%
Instructor's Characteristics	98.2%	28.0%

The mixed model is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{CONSTRUCT}_{ij} = & \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} * \text{REGION}_j + \gamma_{02} * \text{PDI}_j + \gamma_{03} * \text{UAI}_j + \gamma_{10} * \text{MILLENNIALS}_{ij} + \\ & \gamma_{20} * \text{VETERANS}_{ij} + \gamma_{30} * \text{EDBACKGR}_{ij} + \gamma_{40} * \text{GENDER}_{ij} + \gamma_{50} * \text{SECTOR}_{ij} + \gamma_{60} * \text{AVEHOMOG}_{ij} \\ & + u_{0j} + r_{ij} \end{aligned}$$

Table 34 shows γ_{00} , which represents the intercept and reflects the average score for an individual who belongs to the reference group (a male, between the age of 35 and 49 [Generation X], from the Gulf, with a fully Arab education background who works in the public/NGO

sector). The reference group is usually a group of individuals who are expected to score lowest on their HLM dummy coded variables among the population being studied. In this model, I chose a male, public sector, born in the Gulf, from Gen X to constitute the reference group. As for the continuous variables, the reference group is usually chosen based on the grand mean centered (PDI, UAI, and Homogeneity). Based on the reference group, the following codes were included in the model:

Gulf = 0 and Levant = 1.

Public Sector/NGO = 0 and Private Sector = 1.

Male = 0 and Female = 1.

Full Arabic Education = 0 and Western/Mixed Curricula = 1.

Both Millennials and Veterans/Boomers were coded 1 and compared separately to Gen X, which was coded 0. The HLM model requires randomly assigned codes (zero or one) when computing differences between three groups.

As PDI and UAI were continuous variables ranging from 0-100, their grand mean averages were set at PDI = 37.91 and UAI = 21.9.

HO, a continuous variable, was also grand mean centered at 3.85.

For example, the value of the learning activities intercept is 3.87 and represents the estimated learning activities score (which is an average score) for the reference group.

Table 34: Intercept Values

Construct	Constant γ_{00}	Std Error
Learning Activities	3.87**	0.058
Leadership Competencies	3.99**	0.06
Motivational Enablers	3.91**	0.066

Table 34 (cont'd)

Barriers to Participation	3.9**	0.056
Learning Environment	3.84**	0.05
Instructor Characteristics	3.92**	0.056

** p-value < .01

The other γ s are a function of various students' background characteristics (region, PDI, UAI, Millennials, Veterans, education background, gender, sector and homogeneity). They indicate the predicted difference in dependent variables due to an increase or decrease of the IV by one unit.

As with major general linear models, the HLM needs to meet the linearity assumption as well as some other assumptions specific to the hierarchical nature of the nested design. The HLM of this study meets the assumptions of linearity, normality (with the exception of five outliers, which will be discussed), homoscedasticity (homogeneity of variance at both levels), and independence of observations (based on how the participants were selected and included in the sample).

I established a cutoff point for potential outliers at a standardized residual greater than 3.5; this resulted in five potential outliers for the dependent variable barriers to participation. I reran the analysis without the potential outliers; changes in estimate values were minimal and statistical significance results remained the same. Thus, I continue to use and discuss the original analysis, which includes these five potential outliers.

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