

## FACTORS AFFECTING MANAGERIAL EFFECTIVENESS AT THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR IN SAUDI ARABIA

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### ABSTRACT

*There are several studies that have addressed the impact of various types of factors on managerial effectiveness including leadership styles. However this study will be different from other studies; the specific idea of this study is that leaders affect their efficiency within their organisations and influence the performance of employees and the organisations as well. Most studies have focused on the demographic and leadership context attributes such as age, education, experience, skills, etc. But the leaders in Saudi Arabia particularly in the military services like the Ministry of Interior sector have specific characteristics which may hinder their efficiency in leading the organisation on one hand and achieving its performance on the other hand.*

**Keywords:** *Managerial effectiveness and efficiency, leadership styles*

### Background of the Study

The essential nature of managerial work is given by many analysts and researchers as a process common to all other functions carried out within the organisation. Management, as Brech (1975) refers to, is a social process entailing responsibility for the effective and economic planning and regulation of the operations of the firm. Brech (1975) has identified four elements of management: Planning, Control, Coordination and Motivation. However, there are other roles that a manager can do such as that of a leader. Therefore, managers can be judged by their efficiency, effectiveness, and the results achieved by their subordinate staff. The managers' effectiveness may be assessed in part, therefore, by the strength of motivation and the morale of the staff, the success of their training and development and the creation of an organisational environment in which the staff works effectively.

Managerial effectiveness has been of interest for many hundreds of years, from early Greek philosophers such as Plato and Socrates to the Plethora of managerial and leadership positions. However, has the need for effective leadership been changed more strongly than before? It is argued that in this changing, global environment, leadership holds the answer not only to the success of individuals and organisations, but also to sectors, regions and nations. Gallie, (1955 Cited in Grint, 2004: 1) said leadership appears to be, like power, an “essentially contested concept. According to DfES (2002, Grint, 2004: 2):

“Our productivity as a nation is already lagging behind our competitors in North America and Europe. By tackling our management and leadership deficit with real vigour, we will unlock the doors to increased productivity, maximise the benefits of innovation, gain advantages from technological change and create the conditions for a radical transformation of public services.

In the last three decades, there has been a growing interest in leadership and managerial effectiveness (Gallie, (1955 Cited in Grint, 2004: 1), Scutt, (2004), Pomsuwan, (2008), Northouse, P. (2001). These studies examined the impact of leadership styles on managerial effectiveness in managing their departments and staff. There are various types of leadership styles that managers may follow. Transformational leadership is thought to be more productive than transactional leadership. For instance, transformational leadership with its emphasis upon expression and power to move appears to engender a highly positive reaction amongst employees whereas the impact of transactional leadership is more neutral. To be more specific although both styles of leadership correlate positively with satisfaction with supervision, intrinsic work motivation, and perceived leader effectiveness, and negatively with job related tension, the magnitude of correlations has proved consistently higher for transformational than transactional leadership (Bass,1985b, Bass and Avolio, (1990).

Unfortunately as yet, there have been only a few studies for developing countries that have addressed the issue of managerial effectiveness and directing practices. One such study by Labbaf (1996) on managerial effectiveness in the steel sector in Iran found that the interviewed managers revealed a high level of commitment to the importance of management development training and gaining managerial skills, both of which are considered important routes to increase their managerial effectiveness. The managers in the study were found to be aware of their managerial responsibilities and the factors that were affecting

their effectiveness at work such as communication, time management, decision making, solving problems at work and leading and motivating their subordinates. The study also indicated that personal factors such as improving one's own performance and developing one's own potential were found to be very important attributes for effective managers. These managers have also concentrated on planning, with the ability to set goals and objectives for their department/organisations, as well as to forecast and evaluate.

Additionally, the specific attributes of leaders affect their efficiency within their organisations and influence the performance of employees and the organisations as well. Most studies have focused on the demographic and leadership context attributes such as age, education, experience, skills, etc. But the leaders in Saudi Arabia, particularly in the military services, like the Ministry of Interior sector, have specific characteristics, which may hinder their efficiency in leading the organisation on one hand and achieving its performance on the other hand. For example, the Saudi government has been struggling to succeed in the Saudisation process because of the lack of professional people who can lead in the public sector organisations.

### **Research Problem**

Many analysts and researchers have documented the importance of leadership styles in shaping managerial performance (Berch, (1992: 19), Drucker, (1977: 28), Summers, (1994: 18-19).

There are several studies that have addressed the impact of various types of factors on managerial effectiveness including leadership styles. For instance, Leslie et al (2002) stated that theories of leadership can be integrated with managerial effectiveness. However, the link between these two entities depends upon the leadership skills and qualities. Hambrick and Mason (1984) argue that demographic variables of managers can be used as predictors of strategic and performance levels. Therefore, it can be true to suppose that various demographic attributes of middle managers will influence their behaviours and performance as well as effectiveness.

Several studies have shown that leadership styles have interacted with gender and affected the ratings of managerial effectiveness. For instance, Eagly et al (1992) conducted a study and found that when leadership styles are divided into autocratic and democratic, female leaders were evaluated more harshly than males for using the autocratic style. Some

other studies focused on educational levels of managers. For example, Bantel and Jackson (1989) believe that middle managers with more years of education can foster their ability and capabilities for subordinates' management. Moreover, they can reduce the power of top management.

On the Arab level, the sensitivity of cultural values and norms is important. There have been few studies conducted on the Arab level and Saudi Arabia. In this regard, Ali (1995) stated that studying the business and organisation culture in the Arab world is difficult and complex because these are rooted strongly in the tribe, family, religion and desert.

Moreover, literature review indicates that the vast majority of studies focused on personal characteristics and organisational factors (Dadfar, 1993). Therefore, the impact of socio-cultural characteristics on managers is that they rely on their familial relationships and friendship in performing things in the organisation and the society. Managers also depend heavily upon personal and informal methods in organisation management. The manager in Arab organisations views himself and is viewed by others as a manager of a family. Therefore, the manager is expected to play an important role and is obliged to help employees in a human way, and obliged to help his extended family, friends and governmental officers (Dadfar 1984).

Few studies have also addressed the issue of managerial effectiveness in both public and private sectors in Saudi Arabia. However, this study will distinguish itself from other studies on leadership styles, cultural values and norms and their impact on managerial effectiveness from managers' and subordinates' perspectives.

It is clear from reviewing literature on the international and Saudi levels that this area of research lacks empirical work. In other words, there is still a gap in knowledge on the influence of national culture on managerial practices and leadership.

Management plays a critical role in the implementation of different projects, policies and strategies both in developed or developing countries. This role is enhanced by involving human and logistic tools such as administrative law. All these tools are involved in the issuance process of law, regulations, etc. for the sake of people and the efficient implementation process on the ground. It is worth emphasising that human beings are the dynamic players in the process of management and leadership who can set up the mechanisms of implementation. Therefore, all various levels of development rely on what people have, what people do and how they perform.

The current research is stemmed from studies conducted about leaders and their characteristics on the regional and international levels. It is worth mentioning that the Saudi government has always believed that the people are considered as the greatest asset in the country. Therefore, the government has dedicated and afforded the required resources for developing people in all sectors (Alsahlawi et al 2004). According to Alsahlawi eta (2004) the Saudi government has worked on sponsoring students to do both graduate and postgraduate programs in the best universities in the world. The purpose of this investment has been to promote, motivate and retain employees in the public sector institutions.

### **Research Objectives and Questions**

This study aims to:

- identify the main factors influencing managerial effectiveness such as age, gender, educational attainment and years of experience;
- identify the impact of leadership styles on managerial effectiveness;
- explain the impact of managerial cultural background on the managers' effectiveness

This study endeavours to address the issues of human resources represented in the investigation of the effectiveness of the Saudi middle managers in the Ministry of Interior. Specifically, it seeks an answer to the following question: To what extent are the Ministry of Interior middle managers effective in directing their departments and staff? Furthermore, the main focus of this study is the investigation of the relationship between leadership styles and managerial effectiveness in the Ministry of Interior in Saudi Arabia. Specifically, this study will try to answer the following questions:

### **Research Questions**

- What is the impact of background characteristics of middle managers on their effectiveness in directing their departments and staff?
- What is the impact of various leadership styles on managerial effectiveness?
- What is the impact of cultural values and norms of managerial effectiveness?

### **Significance of the Study**

The modern state can carry out the greatest possible amount of services for the citizens, and it is, therefore, a welfare state (Hasan Shahata, 1972). In order to achieve all these aims, the state must be strong and advanced enough so that it can meet the challenges created by the requirements of development. Since the success of the state in attaining developmental objectives is associated to management, this latter should be dynamic, flexible and capable of confronting difficulties. Moreover, it should have leading managers characterized by possessing experience and sense of responsibility when they come to run the administrative machinery of government. In other words, public managers should perform their tasks efficiently and loyally (Fawzi, 1980). In addition to these, it is emphatically necessary that those who undertake the running of public organisations should do more than merely exercise their authority and that the organisations require to be led and not to be merely managed. Broadly speaking, the tasks of managers encompass not only the mere issuing of commands and instructions, but also the implanting of enthusiasm in the minds of members of the organisations. Hence, it is necessary for managers to gain scientific abilities, as well as human and technical skills of leadership in order to be able to lead the staff who work under their supervision, towards achieving the intended objectives.

To sum up from the above illustration, leaders and managers play great roles in developing their civilisations by virtue of their contribution to managing the public affairs of people. If the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is considered as one among the countries striving to achieve sustainable growth, it is absolutely necessary to take an interest in the human factor, especially the managers in public organisations.

A major determinant of the manager's effectiveness is the nature of the environment, both internal and external. Managers have to perform their jobs in the situation in which they work and should respond to the changing opportunities and challenges. In addition, they should face the risks and limitations effectively.

This study will contribute to knowledge by applying different types of leadership theories to Saudi middle managers who are the target of this study. In relation to theories, the study will review all theories such as contingency theory, transactional theory, transformational theory, situational theory, and participative theory.

The study of managers' effectiveness provides a realistic method of identifying the qualities of managers in Saudi Arabia, in the public sector in general and the Ministry of Interior in particular.

The following points indicate the significance of this study from literature review perspective.

1. While most of the previous studies were carried out on the business sector, the present research is conducted on the public sector represented by the Ministry of Interior managed in Saudi Arabia;
2. Majority of the previous studies were conducted in the Western organizations (Luthans et al. (1988), Campbell et al (1970), Labbaf (1996), Hamlin and Servnti (2008). The current research will be carried out in Saudi Arabia using measurement criteria to evaluate manager's effectiveness. This study will be generated from our society with its specific cultural norms.
3. While most of the previous studies have focused on the skills and/or personal factors of managers as a base of measuring their effectiveness, the present research concentrates on multi-factors including managers' attributes (demographic and socio-economic factors), leadership styles and cultural values.

This study will contribute to knowledge through building its theoretical framework which will focus on discussing managerial effectiveness and leadership styles from various views.

In order to ensure the validity of results from managers, this study will interview a sample of subordinates who are working under the target managers. A small number of general managers will also be interviewed using semi-structured interviews.

Furthermore, the advantages of this research are embedded in the following:

- Most organisational resources are scarce and valuable. The valuable resources require effective managers to use and invest effectively to add value to the organisations which they manage.
- An effective manager can make the greatest contribution to the work of the organisation and extend his effort to the whole society by contributing to the development of the society.
- The development and growth of the managers' performance is necessary to deal with employees and to make effective decisions, plans and solve organisational problems that affect organisational performance.

- A manager's job is highly orchestrated, and management is a logical and orderly process in which the manager should be rational in using resources to achieve the organisational goals. In reality, the manager may act emotionally and rely on gut feelings. Therefore, it is important to distinguish effective performance of managers and performance that reflects imperfect behaviours.
- The accelerating pace of technological change, the sophistication of customers, and an increasing emphasis on globalization have created a new approach to management that is called the "learning organisation approach". A learning organisation is one that does well in creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge, and in modifying behaviour to reflect new knowledge. A learning organization represents a new, fundamental way of viewing management. This approach emphasizes the managers' ability to share vision, build teams, challenge the way business is done to solve organizational problems (Garvin, 1993). This approach helps the manager to have a new direction in managing the organisation.

### Definition of Key Terms

This study will use several definitions. However, the main two concepts that will be used are effectiveness and leadership.

**Leadership.** Northouse (2001) says that leadership is a fashionable commodity and is still researched and taught from various perspectives, but Northouse conclude that leadership is an ill-defined phenomenon. He believes that the central of leadership is as follows: it is a process, it involves influence, it occurs within a group and it involves goal attainment. Therefore, Northouse defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group to achieve the goals of the organisation.

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