



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THE IMPLICIT LEADER PROTOTYPE IN THE LEBANESE  
CONTEXT

By  
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fulfillment of the requirement  
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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

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## AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT OF

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Even though extensive exploration on implicit leader prototype and its categorization has received increased consideration in the western management literature over the years, however minimal study has focused on its relevancy in the Lebanese context particularly. This research studied transformational, authentic, and servant leadership as perceived by the Lebanese society with respect to its relation with attributes, gender, ethics, religion and cultural context. In-depth interviews with professionals (N=12) working in Lebanese based-companies, non-governmental organizations, and universities were conducted. The findings in this qualitative study propose that the Lebanese people's implicit viewpoint of a good leader is harmonious with the transformational, authentic, and servant leadership magnitudes recognized in leadership research based in the West. The personality traits, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of a similar leader, in different work settings and across genders, were all approximately associated to the designated attributes of transformational, authentic and servant leaders identified in Western contexts. Moreover, the Lebanese sample also encompassed the degree to which women can make effective leaders given that cultural principles and traditions prevented women's attempts in achieving and reaching higher leadership roles in this part of the world, in spite of acquiring similar characteristics and strong abilities of their male counterparts. Finally, this study adds value to better comprehend the relevance of implicit leader prototype across different frameworks and cultures.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Human resources are considered the most extensive factor and contributor to effectiveness and efficiency in social systems such as organizations or institutions. For organizations to prosper, they should maintain effective leaders and inspire employees to achieve their objectives. In today's dynamic and complex global working environment, organizations are seeking to assess the preferred leadership approach and its significance on their followers. Such a changing environment requires a tremendous amount of effort and change in their management expertise.

To sustain organizations' competitiveness in the marketplace, they should recognize and focus on the significance of a leader-follower relationship. Especially in Lebanese companies, transformational, authentic, and servant leadership approaches are of preeminent influence in evolving a resilient followership, to increase the efficiency of the organization, and objectify the missions. An attempt to define transformational leadership states that it fully utilizes employee potential and focuses on providing integrity and equality, increasing expectations, setting objectives, and providing appreciation and the needed provision. In turn, this would motivate the employees to reach their maximum potential through setting future goals and looking beyond self-interest (Bass, 1985). While authentic leadership combines both being responsible for one's own knowledge and taking the role in agreement with one's real identity (Gardner et al., 2005; Leroy, Palanski & Simons, 2012). As for servant leadership theory, it foresees that administrative leaders who follow certain criteria of leader actions will affect the individuals'

understanding and consequent behavior through the development of social exchange (Andersen, 2009; Liden et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2004; Walumba et al., 2010). Therefore, servant leadership is introduced with the actions of a leader and is directly conveyed by followers reciprocating the leader's actions (Van Dierendonck, 2011; Walumba et al., 2010).

The question is what is the implicit leadership “theory” adopted by Lebanese participants? Do people in Lebanon adopt one of the mainstream leadership perspectives, or do they have their own preferred leadership prototype? What are the gender implications in the conception of leadership in the Lebanese context?

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE

#### A. Definition of Leadership

Esteemed scholars attempted to define leadership in various ways throughout four decades in different areas of human activity, including business, government, religion etc. After a review of the literature, definitions of leadership comprises of the below:

- *“Leadership is the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement”.* (Rauch & Behling, 1984: 46)
- *"Leadership requires using power to influence the thoughts and actions of other people".* (Zaleznik, 1992)
- *“Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of members. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group. Any member of the group can exhibit some amount of leadership”.* (Bass, 1990:19-20)
- *“Leadership is the art of influencing others to their maximum performance to accomplish any task, objective or project”.* (Cohen, 1990: 9)
- *“Leadership is an attempt at influencing the activities of followers through the communication process and toward the attainment of some goal or goals”.* (Donnelly, Ivancevich & Gibson, 1985: 362)

- *“Leadership is a process of giving purpose (meaningful direction) to collective effort, and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve purpose”. (Jacobs & Jaques, 1990: 281)*
- *“Human communication which modifies the attitudes and behaviors of others in order to meet shared group goals and needs” (Hackman and Johnson, 2000: 36).*

The above definitions of leadership differ in many ways, and these differences are a result of several academics whose main interest is studying the various elements of leadership.

The different definitions can help us recognize the immense aspects that affects leadership, as well as various prospect to view it. Nevertheless, these definitions combine one common element that circulates around the notion that leadership is the method which a leader synchronizes the determination and effort of a team to achieve an anticipated objective.

Indeed, according to Bass (1990), leadership is a method of communication between individuals and groups that involves an organized or reorganized situation, member’s anticipations and understandings. Leadership can be described as the capability of an individual to obtain power that aims on how to create guidelines by adopting forces (Go et al., 1996). From an organizational point of view, Schermerhorn (1999) stated that leading is a continuous development method to encourage and to inspire others to work hard in order to understand and support organizational objectives; on the other hand, Hersey et al. (2001) considered that leadership influences people’s actions according to the organizational objectives. Additionally, it has been noted by Robbins (2001) that leadership is the capacity of an individual to have an impact on a group of people in order to reach organizational objectives.

Even though developing research on transformational leadership has been explored in the Lebanese context however, minimal studies have been conducted on the preferred approach of leadership. Leadership and multicultural impacts have rarely been studied in the Middle East and especially in Lebanon (Abdalla and Al-Homoud, 2001; Ayranci and Semercioz, 2011; Butler, 2009; Pellegrini and Scandura, 2006; Resick et al., 2006). In other words, various types of leadership are practiced more in the western organizations rather than eastern organizations due to cultural differences. It has been argued by Gerstner and Day (1994, p.123, cited in Hallinger and Heck, 2003, p.228) that “because leadership is a cultural phenomenon, inextricably linked to the values and customs of a group of people thus; it should be linked to dimensions of national culture”.

The main fundamentals linked to the national culture include power and authority, socialism and individualism, masculinity versus femininity, and so on. The findings of the GLOBE project (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) shaped by House (2012), illustrate that the leader effectiveness is contextual and is fixed in the societal norms and values of the individuals being led. On the other hand, Gelfand et al. (2007) declare that there are discrepancies in cross-cultural practices of leadership. Kabasakal and Dastmalchian (2001) were able to focus their work on Arab countries through the GLOBE project and identify that by their large power distance, collectivism and strong uncertainty avoidance. These Arab countries consists of Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Kuwait and Qatar, Kabasakal and Bodur (2002) determined that this particular region is distinguished by “high-group orientation, masculine dominance, and low future orientation”.

### ***1.1 Religion, culture and geographical context***



Studies have shown there is a significant influence of religion on leadership practice. (Fernando and Jackson, 2006; Hodgetts et al., 2006; Hofstede, 1980; Modaff et al., 2012). Employees from different cultures face challenges in the workplace through activities like mergers and acquisitions that might lead to conflicting outlooks between organizational leaders with respect to implementing various leadership practices (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2007; Hausknecht and Trevor, 2011). A study conducted by Fernando and Jackson (2006) stated that religion had a compelling result to alter the analytical thinking and managerial practices of business leaders. Some business leaders might suppress or prefer employees who share similar religious views as those leaders (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2007). Frequently, the application and significance of leadership literature at a global scale is widespread; and leadership methods that might be applicable in Russia or Spain might be not successful in Beirut or Hong Kong (Hodgetts et al., 2006; Sidani and Thornberry, 2010; Yukl, 2010). Therefore, this aspect is not necessarily due to the geographical context, but might be due to the different cultures and backgrounds, particularly as characterized by their superior religious standards.

Hofstede (1980) indicated that culture has significant collective characteristics that influence the response of a group of individuals to its setting. It has been indicated that national culture influences leadership and behavioral actions by employees. Thus, the state culture reflects a crucial aspect in determining and analyzing the leadership across institutions in Lebanon. Organizational learning is directly influenced by the overall culture of an institution, which consists of principles and beliefs that forms social norms by people's collaboration, formation and organizational structures (Nadeeri Khorshidi, 2002). Diverse scholars have explored the link between organizational learning and organizational culture (Schein 1993).

## **B. Transformational Leadership**

Motivation and inspiration are two elements derived from the idea of transformational leadership. A solid leader with a vision and personality can stimulate followers to adjust their outlooks, observations and drive to achieve mutual goals. A transformational leadership occurs once a director and his staff member empower one another to more advanced levels of confidence and inclination towards achieving the ultimate goal of the organization (Nemanich & Keller 2007). Thus, followers get motivated to share their thoughts, goals and opinions from an objective perspective that enable them to attain organizational activities when this mutual collaboration occurs (Bass, 1999; Bycio et al., 1995). A transformational leader gives extra efforts by focusing on improving the employees' confidence through expanding and enriching the followers' interests and requirements. Hence, the individuals will be more pleased with their leaders and with their job as a whole in contrast with Laissez-faire leaders (Bass, 1985).

Supporting Bass' framework, transformative leaders show four important attributes or behaviors: 1) "Idealized influence", 2) "Inspirational motivation", 3) "Intellectual stimulation", and 4) "Individual consideration".

**"Idealized influence"** are leaders that are recognized as role models and inspirational figures by their followers. Idealized leaders have charismatic approach and the power to lead their team members all the way (Bass, 2003). They develop self-esteem, integrity and morale in their people and they develop a common strategy and goal that are accepted and aligned with their followers. This perspective has two dimensions, which are the idealized influence attributes and idealized influence behavior. Leaders with idealized influence attributes act as role models and the subordinates seek to be like them.

Leaders with idealized influence behavior are able to exhibit and develop follower's behavior. Furthermore, leaders practicing this element are prepared to take challenges, are great decision makers and pursue the ethical and moral procedures.

**“Inspirational motivation”** is another factor of transformational leadership whereby leaders talk optimistically with their followers about the future. Yukl and Van Fleet (1982) defined the inspirational leader as one who “stimulate enthusiasm among subordinates for the work of the group and says things to build their confidence in their ability to successfully perform assignments and attain group objectives” (p. 90). These leaders inspire and drive their followers forward by giving them meaning and providing them with a clear vision of their work. Thus, creating a strong and enthusiastic team spirit.

**“Intellectual Stimulation”** are leaders who motivate their follower's to be pioneers and original by searching, analyzing problems, and dealing with critical situations from a different perspective. In other words, these leaders have the capability to intellectually challenge their subordinates to be creative and visionary in resolving work problems and be active decision makers in their organization. Thus, encourage followers to solve problems and find solutions in an innovative and creative approach.

**“Individual consideration”**, are leaders who concentrate on the needs of achievement and growth of each subordinate by coaching and mentoring them. In order to attain individualized consideration, a leader must carry out certain duties and responsibilities for his/her followers such as overseeing and supporting the designated responsibilities, providing a different direction when required, being aware of their personal development. Furthermore, leaders must demonstrate and recognize their

followers' differences and act as coaches to provide them with constructive feedback (Bass et al., 2003; Gill, 2006; Sadler, 2003).

Kuhnert and Lewis (1987), stated that transformational leaders try to find solutions to the issues they face based on their personal morals and then act upon their ideologies such as honesty and self-esteem. Hence, these leaders depend on established principles and are autonomous in their decision making, which can easily transform the follower's opinions and thoughts into their own.

According to the mentioned models above, there are shared characteristics of a transformational leader that includes shaping a vision, supporting and motivating individuals and stimulating intellectual actions. Avolio's and Bass (2004) proposed this model and it has been commonly used as a platform that is precise and thorough in defining the characteristics of transformational leadership.

### **C. Authentic Leadership**

Authentic leadership models acquired strong attention subsequent to the transformational leadership literature that developed a differentiation between pseudo and authentic transformational leaders. (Avolio et al., 2009; Luthans and Avolio, 2003; Price, 2003). Transformational leaders create a mutual vision, lead by example, take risks, encourage trust and cooperation, and incentivize others based on their achievements (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). As for authentic transformational leadership, it is a method

that changes both the leader and the followers in an ethically and inspiring way. Pseudo-transformational leaders are unwilling to encourage independent understanding through their subordinates.

The development of authentic leadership form was diversely presented and expanded till at least certain areas of agreement emerged. Currently, it is mostly agreed that authenticity and self are the fundamentals of authentic leadership form (Gardner et al., 2011). Authenticity is a self-based form that attributes to a convenient agreement between what an individual is and what an individual does (Luthans and Avolio, 2003). Self-awareness plays an essential part in attaining such agreement. It is commonly recognized that individuals exhibit degrees of authenticity and no one is thoroughly authentic or inauthentic (Gardner et al., 2005, 2011). Authentic and Authenticity Leadership are developing, evolving abilities, and repetitive forms of behaviors.

Authentic leadership is a superlative form consisting of four sub-forms: self-awareness, balanced processing of information, relational transparency, and internalized moral perspective (Gardner et al., 2005; Kernis, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Self-awareness denotes the deep awareness of the methods that contribute to diverse self-definitions and their possible impact on others. Authentic leaders are profoundly conscious of their principles, emotions, objectives, strengths and weaknesses. In other words, their optimal morale helps them to be clear and trustworthy in relationships, i.e. attain relational transparency. They prefer to pursue self-improvement information and accordingly develop a process for this information in a structured way. Additionally, they practice self-discipline through internalized guidelines and use to recognize them. Thus, leaders are contemplated as authentic to the degree they involve with these four behaviors.

In this research, we aim to recognize authentic leadership from an ethical perspective to examine how supervisors lead authentically while trying to maintain an equivalent line with the cultural aspect of leading individuals in Lebanon.

#### **D. Servant Leadership**

In various organizations and institutions today, leadership approaches that focus on the well-being of their employees rather than praising of the leader are increasingly appreciated (Van Dierendonck, 2011). The term servant leadership was initially coined in an article written by Robert Greenleaf (1977), shedding light on the leader's role as a servant. Servant leadership is associated to morality, integrity and ethics (Irving and Longbotham, 2007). It focuses on guidance, empathy, listening, modesty and sensibility, as well as contributing to a stronger sense of interactional justice, positive mindset and commitment to change (Choudhary et al., 2013; Kool and van Dierendonck, 2012). In addition, servant leadership highlights a leader's simplification of follower achievement and growth (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006; Farling et al., 1999; Liden et al., 2008; Van Dierendonck, 2011). This leadership approach can take place directly through leader advising, encouraging followers and engaging them to take trainings, or indirectly by showing their support and concern as well as an ethical and clear understanding of the working environment (Liden et al., 2008; Patterson, 2003). This combination exhibited from the person-oriented approach, develops a sense of security and strong association within an organization (Andersen, 2009; Van Dierendonck, 2011). Accordingly, many organizations from the non-profit, private or governmental institutions have taken into consideration and awareness about developing servant leadership within their structure.

Servant leadership practiced in organizations may face ambiguous challenges (Andersen, 2009; Showkier, 2002). For instance, more established methods to organization and management are more likely to consolidate power in the hands of certain entities and anticipate compliance from the rest of the employees. Within this framework, transformational and charismatic leader practices focus on uplifting and engaging followers to achieve and maintain organizational strategic objectives largely by linking such objectives to the follower's own motivations and goals (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Additionally, Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) stated that transformational leadership could be influential, but is not scheming or immoral in exercise or intent. Likewise, leaders practicing servant leadership perform in the most effective significance of the followers, and do not participate in any manipulative, egoistic conducts (Andersen, 2009; Van Dierendonck, 2011), but on the contrary, according to Bass (2000) is that while transformational leaders concentrate on the welfare of the institutions, servant leaders concentrate on the welfare of the employees.

Whilst there has been considerable indication of research on transformational leadership in diverse cultural settings, little research has recognized the implicit leader prototype in the Lebanese context.

### **E. Gender and Leadership**

There has been considerable importance of exploring gender and leadership behavior as current studies and statistics show that females are reaching higher managerial roles across different industries and sectors. Prior studies concentrating on gender and leadership have disclosed questionable results. Although many researchers have addressed the link between achieving successful leadership positions and gender,

however, no apparent set of attributes of the “conventional” male or female leader has been recognized. Few studies indicate that women generally characterized by the ability to lead in a rather more self-governing/autonomous style, while male leaders are distinguished by their authoritarian/ directive approach (Eagly and Johnson 1990), other research verified alternatively (Kabacoff 1998), as males recorded more on cooperative work.

In terms of organizational and leadership skills, both males and females do not differ as opposed to the stereotypes in the community. On the contrary, both are entitled with an interactive and job-oriented styles (Eagly and Johnson 1990). Although women focus more on developing and maintaining the interactive/interpersonal relations and task achievements compared to men, they are able to lead their teams in a more autonomous approach, and less authoritative approach compared to men, which is linked to the earlier adopted stereotypes (Eagly and Johnson 1990). Also, Tlaiss and Kauser (2011) describe the patriarchal structure that is established in the Arab community and that the view point of women have been culturally mixed to assume specific behaviors and characteristics that enable them to realize predetermined roles such as their duties with social responsibilities, quitting their managerial roles to be employed by men (Cleveland et al., 2000). Therefore, these women living in the Middle Eastern countries, lack the skills to fulfill esteemed professional roles and substantially recognized as second rate to men, and thus ineligible for management roles (Al-Lamki, 1999).

In another study conducted by Sidani (2015) consisting of male and female participants consisting of managers, MBA and BBA students in Lebanon, it was found that the normative established efforts in Lebanon related to women leadership



opportunities include principles and standards to how leaders should perform in order to be competent and efficient in the business sector. Additionally, the study showed that females and males have equal characteristics correlated with effective leadership. Sidani also goes on claiming that:

*“One possible explanation for this finding is that Lebanon, as an Arab society, is only moderately masculine in its culture, such that feminine behaviors of emotional support, cooperation, and caring are valued.” (Hofstede, 2001: 1)*

Also, Metcalfe (2008) claims that:

*“Gender, work and social relations are governed by a traditional patriarchal structure in the Middle East (ME) (Al-Lamki, 2000; Walby, 1990; World Bank, 2003a). This attributes a higher value to job roles and abilities to dominant masculinities (Acker, 1992). Women’s most important role, according to the society, is as a homemaker and mother, while the man’s responsibility is to support and protect the wife and the family. The man is considered the head of the household even in cases where the woman makes large contributions to the family’s income. Hence, women enjoy limited, if any, recognition, for their contribution to the family, and are often seen as legally, financially and socially dependent on men (World Bank, 2003b, p. 9).”*

The above findings of both Metcalfe (2008) and Sidani (2015) can be considered as an example of how cultural and/or sectarian principles might affect women’s eagerness to reach higher positions especially managerial roles. Therefore, we will be determining the role of female leadership as perceived and adopted by the Lebanese sample, in addition to leadership characteristics describing females in the Middle East and Lebanon.

## **F. Research Questions**

To justify and achieve this research question specific research propositions are tailored to justify the study. The below are the suggested questions:

- 1- What is the implicit leadership “theory” adopted by Lebanese participants? Do people in Lebanon adopt one of the mainstream leadership perspectives, or do they have their own preferred leadership prototype?
- 2- What is the preferred leadership approach in the Lebanese context?
- 3- How do the Lebanese define “good” leadership? To what extent does it overlap with effective and/or ethical leadership?
- 4- What are the gender implications in the conception of leadership in the Lebanese context?

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to identify the implicit leadership “theory” and gender implications adopted by a sample of Lebanese Professionals. A qualitative research approach was utilized in conducting the data collection and analysis. In-depth interviews are good tools to make people talk about their experiences, their points of view, and share the knowledge they have, because they are considered the expert in the conversation, and the interviewer is the receiver (Milena & Dainora, 2008). According

to Sofaer, qualitative methods help with providing a “better description of the phenomena of interest” which is in our case, leader prototype (Sofaer, 1998; Milena & Dainora, 2008). Since the research question explores people’s perceptions and opinions, grounded theory is the most appropriate method for it will help us understand how participants interact and give meaning to their own experiences (Goulding, 1998) concerning leadership perspectives. Face-to-face 30 minutes’ interviews were conducted and taped with the participants where questions take the form of demographic, closed and open-ended. The aim is to generate a limited set of responses for the closed ended questions. As for the open-ended the aim is to access deeper level of understanding of opinions, experiences and knowledge that emerge from the dialogue (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006) and unbiased to avoid leading the participants to a certain direction, with the addition of probes between questions when needed to elaborate more on certain points. The interview guide attached in Appendix A and B. Additionally, all interviews were conducted anonymously to make sure that the study is not harmful towards any of the participants and that it will not impact negatively by any mean their professional and personal lives.

A purposive sampling approach consisted of 12 professionals from three different sectors operating in different industries (Universities, NGO’s and Lebanese-based Companies). Interview participants, who are aged between 30 and 45, were selected from various geographical areas across Lebanon, 6 living outside Beirut and 6 living within Beirut; both males and females were personally approached, informed about the research topic and its aim. Interviews were only conducted with those interested, in their offices where the conversations could not be overheard by third parties after having provided them with the consent form. The participants were asked

the intended research questions in a face-to-face interview setting. It should be noted that participants were chosen from my relations with several professionals and through my colleagues at the American University of Beirut. Additionally, this study was particularly designed to include a triangulation process, in order to get the implicit leadership prototype from three different outlooks. The companies (4) each operate in a different industry, namely: construction, wholesaling (leading promotional items), informational technology services and financial services. The universities (4) selected, namely: The American University of Beirut, The Lebanese American University, Modern University of Business and science (Damour Campus) and The Lebanese University (Saida Campus). As for the non-governmental organizations (4) selected, namely: The Lebanese Red Cross, Mercy Corps, World Food Program and Teach for Lebanon. The below table shows an overview of the professionals interviewed.

Table 3.1 Overview of Professional Participants

Industry	Role	Code
1- Construction	Financial Director	FD-M
2- Financial Services	Chief Accountant	CA-M
3- IT Services	Operations Director	OD-M
4- Wholesaling	Regional Sales Manager	RSM-M

The following pie charts also portray other demographic data with respect to the total sample:

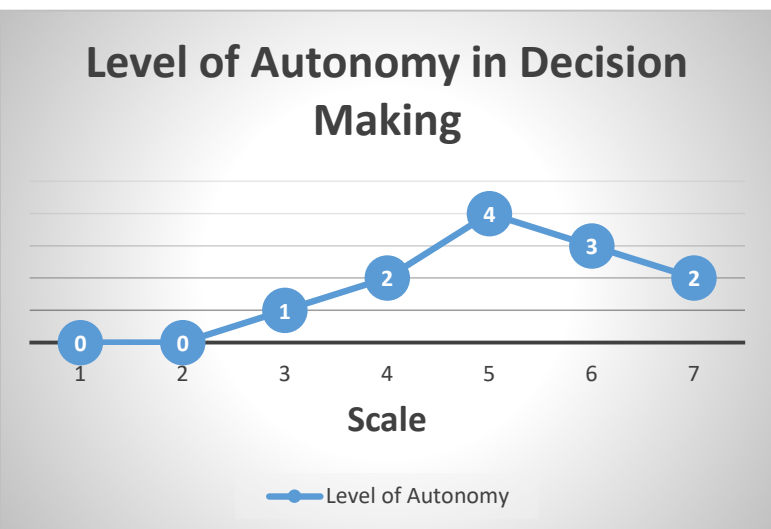
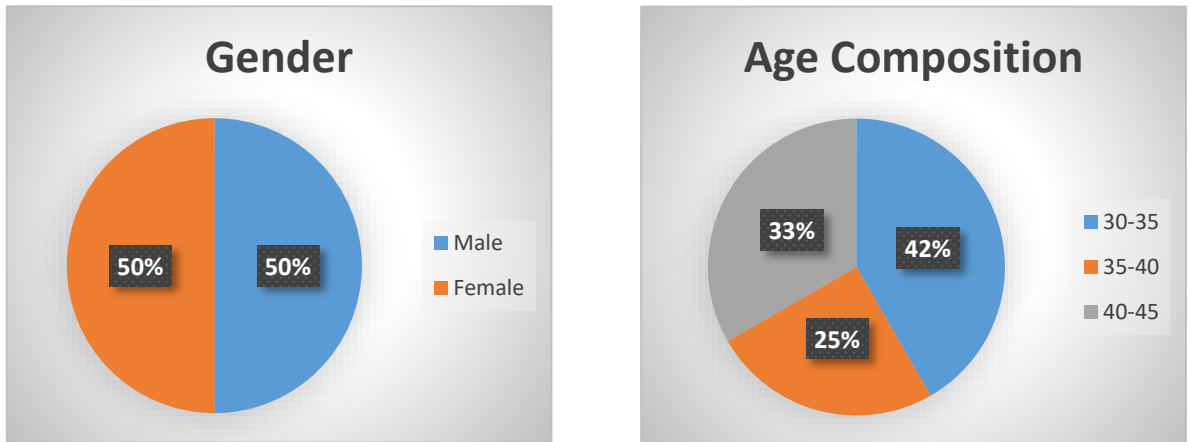


Fig. 2.1 Demographic Configuration of Participants

Before starting the implementation of this research, a proposal was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the American University of Beirut in order to get the approval on conducting the study. This process took one month and a half, after which

data collection was conducted. The participants were recruited on voluntary basis; they were given a free choice to participate in the study after I introduced myself and clearly explained the reason behind interviewing them. They were also allowed to choose the place and time for the interview in order to avoid any effect on their social settings and to ensure privacy. In each interview, I made sure to respect the participant's autonomy as they were given the right to voluntarily participate, the right to stop the interview at any time, the right to refuse to answer any question, and the right to refuse tape recording the interview or using their quotes in the final report. I clearly explained that the aim of the interview only serves university research purpose. I also clarified the issues related to the confidentiality and privacy, the interview process and how the data was used. It should be noted also that interviewees were given the option to be recorded, whereby 83% of participants agreed on this process. After getting the participant's approval to participate, tape record, and/or use quotes from their interview, the informed consent was signed and a copy was handed to the participants.

During the interview and throughout the study, I made sure to disregard any personal assumptions. Thus, I ensured reflexivity by giving the participants the lead and allowing them to answer freely. I also made sure to maintain openness and build trust and rapport by respecting the participant's context and his/her point of view throughout the whole interview. I also used open-ended questions and I was very conscious that participants understood the questions and ensured not to transmit any verbal or nonverbal cues that influence the interview. To respect anonymity, I did not mention the participant's name during the interview and analysis process. At the end of the interview all researchers thanked the participants for their quality time.

Interviews were conducted upon their approval in their offices whereby the conversations could not be overheard by a third party. The participants were contacted via E-mail, which contained information about the study itself and the letter of consent mentioned in the appendix for the reference. The letter of consent will serve to ensure that I have received the informed consent of all participants involved in the study. It is worth mentioning that at the beginning of the interviews, all participants were reminded that the interviews are being undertaken are not mandatory and the interviewees can withdraw from the study at any time.

Data analysis was done by transcribing the interviews precisely, coding them and analyzing the results according to themes. The data analysis was done after collecting the data from the 12 interviewees. Thematic analysis was used for the analysis of the data whereby the tape-recorded interviews was transcribed and coded according to passage means. After that, the 12 interviews were gathered to be formulated into themes and sub-themes based on the noted codes, especially the frequent ones. Then each code was listed under the appropriate theme or sub-theme to highlight the findings. During report writing and presentation of findings, I used pseudonyms and little descriptive information such as gender and age to ensure anonymity. I used simple language in the analysis in order to make sure that it is easily communicated and comprehended to respect all audiences. I also made sure to document the process of the interview to leave a trail for further investigations in the future.

## CHAPTER V

### FINDINGS

## A. Main Themes

### 1. Defining Leadership

At the beginning of each interview, the participants were asked to define in their opinion and based on their experiences as mid and senior managers the perception of a leader or leadership. Most of the responses pointed out that Leadership is the ability to influence and foster teamwork between staff members. From this point, and with respect to the participants' standpoint, a leader is someone who has a vision in mind and able to inspire his/her followers to achieve a common goal. Accordingly, a leader must be knowledgeable about his employees' capabilities and abilities to perform their duties. In order to achieve that, the leader must be visionary, and ensure that perspective is being realized in different ways.

Table 5.1. Key Examples of Interviewee Created Definitions of Leader and Leadership

A leader is characterized by his/her ability to support and lead his team by example
A leader should be knowledgeable about his employees' capabilities and abilities to perform their duties
A leader is a person who motivates his team and empower them to reach together the company's aim and strategic goals.
Leadership is the ability to influence and foster teamwork between staff members

Successively, they were also asked what determines a person in their own terms to be considered a good leader (behaviors, knowledge, personality traits and attitudes, etc.). Frequent themes and features were identified. With respect to the behavioral



aspect, the leader must be result-oriented to achieve his goals, must be an effective planner, must be a good listener and maintain motivational support for his/her followers. As for the personality traits, a good leader must be charismatic, caring and characterized by his loyalty. In addition, respondents described such leader as a genuine person that is respectful and empathetic. As for the knowledge aspect, a good leader must have solid knowledge and understanding about his/her field of interest in order to give his team proper directions. Moreover, it is essential for leader to handle any job related task and deliver on time. Finally, with respect to attitude, a good leader must be able to comprehend and assess the weight for each employees' potential within the organization. Additionally, he must possess positive attitude, professionalism, transparency, flexibility and excellent communication skills with his/her followers.

Table 5.2. Pattern for Interviewee Generated characteristics of a Good Leader

<b>BROAD THEME</b>	<b>SUB-THEMES</b>	<b>CODE</b>
<b>Characteristics of a Good Leader</b>	<b>Behaviors</b>	Planner
		Result-Oriented
		Good Listener
		Motivational
		Team Player
	<b>Knowledge</b>	Business acumen
	<b>Personality Traits</b>	Caring
		Charismatic
		Loyal
		Respectful
		Empathetic
		Genuine
		Self-Confidence
	<b>Attitude</b>	Comprehend and empathize with individuals
		Positive Attitude
		Assertive

		Professional
		Honest
		Transparent
		Customer-Service Oriented

When asked to tell a story about a leader who had a significant impact on their followers, most participants did not specify particular individuals but rather identified actions and behaviors these leaders have fulfilled during their journey. According to their answers, such leaders were distinguished by their ability to take problems as opportunities, to make an impact and strengthen communities through sharing their expertise and to establish a support system for their followers when in crises. Furthermore, (7 out of 13) mentioned a leader from a business or a corporate setting, while the most would refer to political leaders who are male figures. Prominent examples of political leaders such as Barak Obama (Former President of the United States of America), Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister of Canada), Riad Salemeh (Governor of the Lebanese Central Bank), and Nelson Mandela (Former South African anti-apartheid revolutionary leader and President). As for corporate leaders, Warren Buffet (American Business Tycoon; chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway), Bill Gates (Founder of Microsoft) and Mark Zuckerberg (Founder of Facebook). Moreover, few participants acknowledged their supervisors whom they have worked with on daily basis. Based on the answers, such leaders are visionary, influential, and able to understand the processes and implications of decision making. They are characterized by their determination, reliability, in addition to their loyalty and virtue. Furthermore, these leaders are mission driven, and possess strong communication skills that enables them to reach out to their followers and achieve their objectives. One notable response to this question, pertaining to a top leader in banking:

*“He is one of the most brilliant and respected leaders that Lebanon has witnessed for two decades. He was able to maintain and stabilize the Lebanese currency during the world financial crises in 2008, was able to assure and comfort the Lebanese population in various ways because they trusted him with their money. I think he is intelligent, assertive and believes in principles that he acts upon no matter how the difficult the situation is”.*

Participants were also asked to describe leaders that had influenced their lives. It is noted that most of the respondents (70%) referred to their direct supervisors or father they have worked with previously or currently working with. One respondent precisely replied as such:

*“My superior once gave me a lesson while planning and organizing for an event and while I was under pressure to deliver my utmost. He quoted that if someone told you that life is perfect, believe me that life is not perfect”; you make it perfect, you set your own rules and regulations to achieve what you want. You need to be smart enough to know how to manage challenges and downfalls in your life. Most importantly is to keep your professionalism and humbleness”.*

A key trait that was recognized to these individuals is particularly perseverance (i.e. ability to handle stressful situations and rise up to the challenge) which leads to excellent outcomes. Additionally, such individuals are modest, and recognized as pillars for their followers (direct employees) to look up to as role models. Such individuals dedicate their full support and push their followers to perform their utmost with the eagerness to bring the best in them. One of the participants described her mother by claiming she is

*“Persistent to fulfill her dream of becoming a doctor one day. After several failure attempts during her university years to complete her med school years with honors, she was able to achieve her target. She is now the symbol and idol of inspiration to teach her children how to commit and believe in yourself to reach unique places”.*

## **2. The Characteristics of an Inspirational Leader**

Respondents were also asked about a leader that inspires them through telling a story of their leadership and motivations that are reflected in the workplace. It should be noted that (75%) of the participants stated that there is no specific name of a leader whom they aspire to be however, they stated examples of behavioral actions to support their ideas. One respondent pointed out clearly, *“I give a huge margin for my subordinates while maintaining control, monitor their results, for them to give their maximum and add value to the job that they are doing”*. Another notable participant stated, *“I Teach my employees to face things and not disregard situations; It is not about winning the war it’s about how you defended your argument.”* Subsequently, followers were motivated and inspired by a combination of characteristics these leaders strongly possess such as their honesty, empowerment, self-awareness, commitment and emotional intelligence.

As for the rest of the respondents (25%), they denoted their replies to either their directors or their fathers as the aspired image of a leader. One of the respondents stressed on the behavioral aspect of her director by stating the following:

*“ I’m influenced by my director a lot because I see myself he taught me that the more you are close to your team members, the higher the positivity reflection will be on the organization and on their productivity as well. Thus, in return I make sure to stay close to my team member. I treat them as close friends more than a team leader. If any of them has a certain weakness, I make sure to work on it with him/her. And if he/she has a certain strength, I also shed light on it first, to raise his/her self-confidence and second, to make this strength reflect positively on his or her job; which will ultimately be reflected positively of the organization as well”*.

Thus, such leaders are able to lead their followers by examples and share their vision in order to achieve their objectives.

## **3. Gender Aspect of Leadership**

All respondents (100%) agreed that women can make great leaders.

Table 5.3. Template for Interviewee Generated Replies Pertaining to Women in Leadership

<b>BROAD THEME</b>	<b>SUB-THEMES</b>	<b>Examples</b>			
<b>Women in Leadership</b>	Maintain a work-life balance	Able to balance professional and personal life			
		have more capabilities than men as she can be business woman, a wife, a mother and a student,			
		Manage and multitask between their work and their house duties			
	Specific Personality Traits, skills and attributes	Especially the Lebanese women, their personality and knowledge are much higher than women leaders in the region.	Women that have strong personality and high education are able to work in any organization		
			Tend to achieve higher results than men		
			Proactive and eager to improve policies and procedures in line with the companies strategies		
			Self-confidence and communications skills		
			Higher emotional intelligence	Cares about the team and their well-being, which includes their performance at work	Understands what is required from her
					Have gentle approach when it comes to communicating sensitive topics with her employees

Accordingly, when asked why they think women can make great leaders, three main themes emerged: ability to maintain a work-life balance, Specific Personality

Traits, and emotional intelligence. Certainly, respondents stressed on the strong personality that women have which enables them to reach higher positions, and their ability to balance between their professional and personal life. It is one of the main reasons, as women are able to multitask between being a businesswoman and managing to deliver on time, being a wife, being a mother and raising children, in addition to continuing her education and being a student.

Another main reason that makes women great leaders is that they possess strong persistence and eagerness to improve in their roles, and of course, their emotional intelligence, whereby they are able to focus and care on their employees' needs and well-being. In addition to maintaining a smooth approach when it comes to communicating sensitive topics with her employees. Furthermore, respondents consider women as being proactive, self-confident and great decision makers.

Participants were also asked to describe great and bad women leaders. It should be noted that most of the participants referred to Lebanese female leaders in the business, political and social sector as great leaders, a clear indication that female leadership is rising in the Arab countries and especially in Lebanon. One of the respondents referred to the founder of the Little Engineer as one of the most noticeable woman entrepreneurs in Lebanon,

*“While working as a part timer at the American University of Beirut (AUB), she noticed that many of her students didn't have practical skills. To combat this, she set up The Little Engineer (TLE), an after-school club that gives children exposure to the field of engineering. Wanting to focus on the skill sets required for an increasingly automated and sustainable world, she has focused her courses for the children on the fields of robotics, renewable energy, and the environment. She currently applied for elections too and I hope she reflects her positive impact she has on people who work with her on our country and other politicians to be”.*

Moreover, (3 out of 13) participants mentioned distinguished female leaders such as Emily Nasrallah (Lebanese writer and women's rights activist), Leila Al Solh (Vice President of Al Waleed bin Talal humanitarian foundation) and Zoya Rouhana (Founder of KAFA non-governmental organization). According to their answers, those leaders are characterized by their ability to multifunction, be determined and patient.

Rosa Parks (Civil rights movement and Activist) and Angela Merkel (Prime Minister of Germany) are well-known figures of women leaders. It was recognized that such leaders are eminent by their vision and mission that they want to achieve for their community and be the ideal role models for their followers. On the other hand, respondents referred to few bad female leaders; they were either their former supervisors or well-known political figures. Indeed, Condoleezza Rice (Political Diplomat in the United States), played a negative role in the death of innocent kids and dealt with the issue in an inhumane way especially in the Arab region. Elizabeth Holmes (Chair and CEO of Theranos), guilty of false claims and unethical behavior, in addition to not being honest with her consumers. Examples of former supervisors who were recognized by the lack of motivation and support for their followers, lack of respect and lack of team management. A great example one of the respondents mentions,

*“My former director had continuous negative energy and wanted to fire several people because we were not able to receive proper funds. Therefore, we had funding problems and it affected everyone. Instead of motivating everyone, he wanted to quit because they were not proper security and everyone was scared”.*

Participants provided two essential reasons contributing to female leaders attaining higher leadership roles. While most of the participants claimed that female leaders

achieved their positions through hard work and persistence on attaining a goal with affirmation, others also claimed that favoritism (Wasta) plays a major role. As one of the participants mentions clearly, *“The majority of women that I know have reached higher positions in the public sector and universities in Lebanon based on favoritism (Wasta) because they are either politically supported or from family acquaintances, and not based on merit”*. Moreover, it is significant to note that some participants pointed out that women in organizations must double their effort in order to reach higher positions and prove themselves. This is mainly due to the culture that plays a role in the Arab countries and in Lebanon in particular (might seem to be a general opinion).

#### ***4. Coping with change in different work settings***

Participants were asked if they were exposed to different work setting other than the one they already live in. Most of the participants (85%) confirmed working in various settings and in different countries, such as the gulf (GCC), United States, Canada or Europe. It should be noted that respondents referred to these work settings as challenges in terms of culture and values, whereby each work setting has its benefits and challenges. Some of the participants stated that the benefits of working in different work setting are the diversity in nationalities and cultures, greater knowledge of the local market and fast learning curves. Others mentioned that the challenges were misleading cultural stereotypes within teams, misinterpreting communication and difficulty in understanding various attitudes. As one respondent clearly explains:

*“While working at a multinational in Muscat Oman, I felt that I was just a number that can be replaced and my manager was very static to an extent that he wouldn’t provide me with any feedback to improve in my job due to his poor way of commutation”*. Another example, *“While working in a fast pace environment outside Lebanon, I noticed that the harmony among the team was ecstatic and non-judgmental*



*which made it easier for me to apply any changes and get approvals on them due to the strong team spirit”.*

Participants noticed the change in certain characteristics of leaders when they changed work setting; this affected their experience as a whole. Furthermore, participants noted that sometimes-limited decision-making within a specific field or industry, for example in banks where there is a lot of bureaucracy, might cause limitation to growth and improvement; thus, they leave their jobs.

### ***5. Practices for better motivated employees***

Subsequently, participants were asked to share the best practices they apply in order to keep their followers motivated and influenced in their jobs.

Table 5.4 Template for Interviewee Generated Practices for Employee Motivation

<b>BROAD THEME</b>	<b>SUB-THEMES</b>	<b>CODE</b>
<b>Development of others</b>	Empowerment of Employees	Huge margins for contribution
		Opportunities for self-development
		Continuous communication
		Provide constructive feedback
		Transparency
		Foster teamwork
	Maximizing Employee Engagement	Team building
		Engagement activities
		Educational support
		Conduct Trainings (In-house and out-house)
		Field missions
		Staff retreats
	Workforce Development Tools	Performance appraisal
		Career development
		Succession planning
		Financial Rewards

		Grading System
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Confirming the literature, leaders who motivate and inspire their followers are more likely to reach advanced levels of assurance to reach the objective of the organization. The first theme is the empowerment provided by the leaders to enable employees to develop their self-confidence and enrich their knowledge and capabilities. As a result, followers are more satisfied and fulfilled with their leaders and with their job.

As one respondent clearly states, *“I always make sure to block my employees’ calendar once every month in order to sit and listen to them, understand their concerns, encourage smooth communication and in return provide them with constructive feedback for better improvement”*.

Another participant mentions, *“I give my employees huge margins to contribute their ideas, share their thoughts and opinions about a specific project that they believe it will add value to the job and to the organization; So that on a later stage the team gathers all ideas and select the best one to start planning”*.

A second theme that emerged is the various employee engagement activities that around (75%) of the participants apply with their followers. These activities include, team-building activities, supporting continuing education and conducting trainings customized based on needs. Thus, followers develop a strong relationship and sense of belonging with the organizations, which enables them to achieve better results and engage more in reaching successful results.

One notable participant mentions, *“Usually when we do out-house training, we make sure that this training will help our employees achieve their objectives whereby sometimes they get to choose a course that is informative and enjoyable at the same time. This enables them to feel that it’s not only about learning new information but rather getting the best out of this experience of meeting diverse people and cultures”*.

In addition, when employees recognize that their organizations are acknowledging their efforts and are willing to invest in them, it creates a sense of commitment, loyalty to the organization, which gives a tremendous impact on the follower's satisfaction, improves their morale, and ultimately results in retention of employees. Therefore, leaders who frequently recognize and encourage new approaches with their followers to grow are giving them the choice and support they need to reach their objectives.

As for the third theme that emerged is the workforce development tools that approximately (66%) of the participants apply with their followers. These valuable tools reveal what areas employees are thriving in and what areas are suggested for improvement. Additionally, one of the participants stressed on the importance of having a performance appraisal system for junior staff to identify if there is a need for further developing teamwork skills or for senior staff to indicate if there is a weakness in leadership skills so that development of activities be directed towards strengthening the staff's leadership skills. Another participant indicates,

*“We show our employees that there is always room for improvement and equal chances for everyone in the organization, and by that they are entitled to receive financial rewards such as bonuses, increases and/or promotions that gives them an incentive to work smarter”.*

## **6. Role of Religion**

Furthermore, participants were asked whether they believe religion plays a role in leadership practices in Lebanon. Some of the participants (8 out of 12) emphasized that religion does not play a major role in our days as much as it did one or two decades ago, but rather they believe that politics and external factors sometimes interfere in

leadership decision making based on the industry and on the area designated. As one respondent describes,

*“I believe that the concept of religion is fading away specifically that our president believes that we employ all types of people, from different backgrounds and religious affiliations. We believe in freedom of speech and action for everyone and we forbid religious discussions in the office”.*

It should be noted that in the Capital of Lebanon “Beirut”, almost all organizations employ individuals from various sects and backgrounds. On the other hand, in cities outside Beirut, employment is based on the dominant sect living in this particular area. One male participant from Saida city mentions,

*“I think religion plays a role in different ways and especially in Lebanon since as part of our constitution there is the culture of sects in different areas”.*

A female participant states that,

*“When it comes to recruiting people to the organization we don’t look at their appearance whether they are wearing a veil or not, their political background or their religion. Rather we focus on their education, experience and value they will bring to the role and to the organization”.*

On the contrary, 34% of the participants agreed that religion does play a role in leadership decision making specially participants working in areas such as Saida, Bekaa and north. It should be noted that few participants preferred not to give a clear explanation with respect to this particular areas because they believed that politics and culture within the organization plays a role. A male participant from the north mentions,

*“I worked in both types of companies in Lebanon, one that hired based on religion and the one that did not. I could not stay in the organization that hired based on a specific sect for a long period, as I noticed that this company allowed political parties to take charge in employing candidates that they want”.*

Another male respondent from Bekaa area mentions,

*“Although I believe that religion plays a role, however we encourage and foster non-religious and non-political culture within the organization”.*

## **7. Ethics in Leadership**

Most participants that were asked about their opinion with respect to good leaders supporting any action that might not be acceptable to others or illegal to protect their constituencies were absolutely against it. One noticeable participant from Beirut mentions,

*“Good leaders should always find a way to manage work without having to use illegal or unethical ways, even if that means that they take part of the blame. Certain things will always be unacceptable to others, but a leader is the person who has to take the right decision at the right time and do the best to serve the mission of the company”.*

A female participant working in a university mentions,

*“I believe that protocol and discipline play a role in leadership and especially in such situations that every employee should abide by and in certain times a good leader must be strict in his actions and decisions for the benefit of the whole”.*

Leaders should be mentors and consider themselves as examples (since they are following certain guidelines and aligning them with the organization and society as a whole). Additionally, they should allow their followers to learn from their ethical ways and apply them in their workplace. One male respondent working at a Lebanese based company states,

*“I do not believe in anything illegal, we have to take decisions that not all constituencies approve them. A good manager is the one who is able to provide plan B from Murphy’s Law, never break the rules unless you can bend them always for the best of the company. Never do something that is illegal for the company and minimize the risk”.*

Therefore, good leaders in such situations are considered risk takers and intuitive to make these types of decisions. This also indicates the extent to which these leaders are self-aware when dealing with complex challenges.

On another note, few considered bending the rules is acceptable to protect their followers. As one male participant mentions,

*“We bend the rules in the company, if a process is slower than expected and there are roadblocks coming in our way to submit our projects on time, then I will have to take other measures that might affect my team but I’m willing to take the responsibility for it”.*

## **B. Discussion**

To answer the research question about the implicit leadership “theory” adopted by the Lebanese sample of professional participants which focuses on the impact of behavioral actions of leadership through analyzing the social and cognitive development of a leader; show to be consistent with the western literature. That is, a leader as

described by the sample encompasses a combination of the transformational, authentic, and servant leadership styles recognized in the west. All characteristics including the behaviors, personality traits, knowledge and attitudes presented by the Lebanese sample were in harmony with research findings in other contexts

Indeed, the notions of leading by example, bringing people together to achieve a common goal and motivating to enrich the development of employees (Bass, 2003; Fry, 2003; Barron, 2012) as well as shaping a vision (Bass and Avalio, 2004) continue to be an essential approach of the implicit leader in this cultural context. Furthermore, key aspects appearing in the collected data such as having solid knowledge, positive attitude, transparent and empathetic to his/her followers to improve their potential within the organization (Choudhary et al., 2013; Kool and van Dierendonck, 2012), characterizing the implicit leadership.

Generally, the anticipated characteristics of a good leader and the consequent examples presented by the respondents overlap with the common characteristics of transformational, authentic and servant leadership. Characteristics such as charisma, good team player, empathetic, ethical, positive mindset and motivation were identified by (Bass, 1990, 2003; Liden et al., 2008; Patterson, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Choudhary, 2013; Kool and van Dierendonck, 2012) as well as by our sample. Moreover, in the current sample, important significance was focused on leaders' ability to motivate and influence followers through excellent communication skills, and supporting their progress to achieve ultimate goals of the organization.

Respondents provided examples of leaders who had significant impact on them. Such leaders were able to foresee problems as opportunities, make an impact and

strengthen communities and establish a support system for their followers. Accordingly, followers would look up to their leaders as role models consequent to their behaviors and would be motivated to share their objectives and thoughts with them. This is similar to Bass' (2003) framework "Idealized Influence" as one of the key important attributes of a transformational leader which claims that leaders with idealized influence have the ability to exhibit and develop follower's behavior by being their role models. Another model "Servant Leadership" developed by (Van Dierendonck, 2011), denotes that this type of leadership is introduced with the actions of a leader that is directly conveyed by the followers retaliating their leader's actions. This was mainly indicated in the respondents' examples of leaders such as Barak Obama and Nelson Mandela being able to recognize and cherish their followers while concentrating on achieving their goals, which revolved around sustainability, equality and freedom, etc..

Furthermore, respondents stressed on the importance of the leader being assertive and perseverant (able to handle stressful situations and rise up to the challenge), and understanding of the follower's capabilities to push their performance with the eagerness to bring the best in them, while emphasizing on their communication and people skills. This recognized element is also in line with our earlier findings, as it is matching to Gardner's (2011) Authentic Leadership through evolving abilities of their followers, and Liden's (2008) and Patterson's (2003) Servant Leadership to engage followers to take trainings, or indirectly by showing their support with a clear understanding of the working environment.

The above information were mainly demonstrated by political, male figures who lead and introduce major changes in communities and nations, in addition to respondents' supervisors and fathers. These viewpoints particularly mirror the Lebanese



community in terms of continuous change in the economic and political setting. Additionally, there were participants who did not specify names of leaders they aspire to. However, they referred to a mixture of characteristics such as honesty, self-awareness, commitment and emotional intelligence that inspired and motivated them the most.

Moreover, the sample's description of a good leader with respect to ethics emphasizes Kuhnert and Lewis's (1987) claims that transformational leaders try to find solutions to the issues they face based on their individual morals and then act upon their ideologies such as honesty and self-esteem. Hence, these leaders depend on established principles and values, which can easily transform the follower's opinions and thoughts into their own. This is in line with the authentic leadership theory developed by (Gardner et al., 2005; Kernis et al., 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2008), that their optimal morale helps them to be clear and trustworthy in relationships, i.e. attain relational transparency. Hence, the difference between authentic and ethical leadership is the degree to which leaders have relational transparency with their followers. The above findings might suggest that authentic leaders can be very ethical but not transparent with their followers due to external factors such as corruption, nepotism or due to other reasons such as unwillingness to disclose. This would also suggest that the degree of lack of ethicality could emerge at any point. Additionally, the Lebanese sample interviewed mentioned "bending the rules" in certain situations to protect their constituencies. Hence, this reinforces my point earlier that authentic leadership is not dominant in Lebanese leadership.

On another note, the findings of Andersen *et al.* (2009) and Van Dierendonck *et al.* (2011) mentioned that leaders practicing servant leadership perform in the most

effective significance of the followers, and do not participate in any manipulative, egoistic conducts. The good leader, as perceived by the Lebanese sample, must have a protocol and a disciplinary checklist that he/she follows and abides by. Additionally, servant leaders must be mentors with considerable value based on ethics (since they are following certain guidelines and aligning them with the organization and society as a whole) and provide moral and ethical solutions that allow followers to learn from and apply in the workplace.

The perception of the Lebanese sample respondents shows that three areas are salient for aspiring female leaders: maintaining work-life balance, having strong personality traits, and high emotional intelligence. Participants also described in their opinion women leaders as multitaskers, persistent, great decision-makers, confident to handle higher positions, and achieve success within their organizations. Additionally, women encompass features such as being proactive and eager to improve good communication skills and compassionate with their followers' needs. However, these findings might suggest that such characteristics are rather a combination of an ideal figure of a women leader; their opinions might not be often applicable because of the male oriented and patriarchal culture in Lebanon (Metcalf, 2008). In other words, the description above is that of a perfect women leader in an ideal world. In reality, I highly doubt that all of these professionals interviewed have encountered such a female leader and/or found such characteristics in one specific woman leader. Additionally, women are able to lead their teams in a more autonomous and less authoritative approach than men (Eagly et al, and et al., 1990). This is in line with the findings of the Lebanese sample that women leaders are able to focus and care on their employees' needs and wellbeing, in addition, to empowering them and acknowledging their performance.

The above description shows what an ideal leader should be regardless of their gender. However, there seems to be one attribute that differentiates a women leader from that of a man leader, which is the capability of women to be compassionate and empathetic with her followers or team members. This might be due to the Lebanese culture which reinforces that women should be softhearted; thus, it is frowned upon that women be authoritative in their leadership. Hence, I believe that women were given more compassionate attributes than men, which makes them less preferable than men. In other words, women lead by emotions and not by objectivity as opposed to men. This could also be linked to the stereotypical and cultural norms in Lebanon specific to men leaders and their ability to lead by default.

The role of religion as perceived by the majority of the interviewees showed that religion does not play a role in leadership, which was inconsistent with earlier studies (Fernando and Jackson, 2006; Hodgetts et al., 2006; Hofstede, 1980; Modaff et al., 2012). There are three probable explanations for this surprising finding. First, religion is a delicate matter in Lebanon, and the respondents may have not shared their opinions and the reality because they were not familiar or acquainted with the person who was interviewing them. Second, in religious communities (Christians and Muslims), the perception of women leaders reaching higher positions is in the developing stages and not yet fully accepted by individuals specially in the Arab region; whereby men are dominant and authoritative in their nature. Hence, women leaders aiming to attain leadership roles is linked to cultural norms within each area. Third, interviewees might have agreed that religion does not play a role in order to encourage openness and change in the way organizations or institutions recruit individuals. Therefore, based on their educational achievement and professional experience. This would be in

congruence to similar contextual studies stating that culture has a significant impact and collective attributes that might influence a group of individuals to its setting. As for the minority of the interviewees (34%) of them believed that religion does play a role in leadership, specifically in areas such as Saida, Bekaa and the North. One of the professionals who works in Saida best explains this: “I think religion plays a role in different ways and especially in Lebanon since as part of our constitution there is the culture of sects in different areas”.

According to my findings, the “Idealistic Leader” in the Lebanese context seem to include attributes of the three above mentioned leadership types in the west. The idealistic Lebanese leader is determined by the combination of charismatic, ethical and intuitive characteristics derived from the transformational, authentic and servant leadership consecutively.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

Even though various empirical studies have been conducted on leadership and its practices in the Middle East and in Lebanon in particular, this study sought to explore the implicit leadership adopted by leaders and its gender implications in the

conception of leadership in Lebanon. The findings in this qualitative study propose that the “Idealistic Leader” in the Lebanese context seem to include attributes of the three identified leadership types in the west. The idealistic Lebanese leader is determined by the combination of charismatic, ethical and intuitive characteristics derived from the transformational, authentic and servant leadership consecutively. The personality traits, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of a similar leader, in different work setting and across genders were all approximately associated to the designated attributes of transformational, authentic and servant leaders as recognized by the Western literature.

This study aimed to highlight on this subject from a different cultural aspect, given the limited research on this issue in the region and in Lebanon in particular. The Lebanese sample has certainly represented most paradigms with respect to the implicit leader prototype and shed light on the need for a combination of transformational, authentic and servant leader traits with more emphasis on idealized leadership behavior and servant leaders. Moreover, the Lebanese sample also encompasses the degree to which women can make great leaders given that cultural principles and traditions prevented women’s attempts in achieving and reaching higher leadership roles in this part of the world, in spite of acquiring similar characteristics and strong abilities than male correspondents. Finally, this study adds value to better comprehend the relevance of implicit leader prototype across different frameworks and cultures.

#### ***A. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS***

Participants who were interviewed noted that there were similar questions however rephrased differently, so they had to repeat some of the answers that was time consuming. The data collection and analysis was done over three weeks where 12

interviews were conducted, transcribed, coded and analyzed. Although I had initially planned to interview a larger sample of candidates from both rural and urban areas in Lebanon, which would have increased the representative Lebanese sample, however this was not feasible due to the lack of time to recruit additional participants, having been so difficult to reach the 12. Perhaps it might have been useful to include multinational companies to the study operating in Lebanon, in addition to more universities from diverse educational backgrounds (English, French and Lebanese). Another limitation is the use of purposive sampling that is not representative of all mid and senior level managers inside Beirut and outside.

Furthermore, future research could be helpful if quantitative research using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) established by Bass and Avalorio (2004) for accuracy and validity is conducted for the types of leadership studied. However, due to time and budget constraints this approach was not applicable. Perhaps a qualitative study with their direct subordinates would have been a more meticulous tool to assure and support their leaders' interview answers.

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Demographics:

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

How many people do you have directly reporting to you?

How many levels of management hierarchy there are in your organization?

How long have you been in your current organizational role in this organization?

How much autonomy do you have to take decisions by yourself within your organization?

Very Little

Great Deal

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

In what geographical area of Lebanon do you currently live?

Qadaa': \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Interview Questions for Managers:**

1. Define, in your own terms, a leader or leadership?
2. In your opinion, what makes a person a good leader?
  - a. What specifically?
  - b. What behaviors (actions or reactions in relation to the surrounding environment)?
  - c. Knowledge?
  - d. Personality traits?
  - e. Attitudes (toward work, people, society, etc)?
3. Can you think of a leader who has had a significant impact on his/her followers?
4. How did he/she manage to do so (can you tell me a story, cite examples)?
5. How would you imagine a good leader should be? Someone who has had a great influence on you, changed you personally?
6. Whom do you aspire as the image of a leader?
7. How is his/her leadership reflected in the workplace?
  - a. Can you tell me a story?
  - b. How did they do this?
  - c. What were their motivations do you think?
8. Can women make great leaders?
  - a. Why or why not?
  - b. Can you tell me a story about a great woman leader?
  - c. Can you tell me a story about a bad woman leader?
  - d. How did they become leaders?
9. Have you been exposed to a different work setting other than the one you currently live in?
10. What are the practices that you follow with your direct reports to influence and motivate them?
11. Do you think that religion plays a role?
12. Do you think good leaders have to do certain things that are not acceptable to others, or even illegal, to protect their constituencies?

## B. LETTER OF CONSENT

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that I am conducting with Dr. Yusuf Sidani as part of my final project in the MHRM program at AUB. This research studies the implicit leader prototype in the Lebanese context focusing on managerial positions in companies, universities and non-for profit organizations. The purpose of this study is to explore the most preferred type of leaders and the extent to which culture affect gender leadership in various work setting. In addition, to identify the indications of transformational, authentic and servant leadership that enhances employee empowerment. As a result, a study will be conducted to examine all the factors that affect this decision.

I am asking you to participate in an interview in which I will ask you about your opinions and practices that you follow with your direct report and earlier influences in the context of understanding the preferred leadership approach in the Lebanese context. This will be done through using a series of questions. Kindly note that your participation in this study is voluntary and you have the right to discontinue participation at any time you wish. The interviews will be recorded and the recordings will stay confidential and will be locked in a folder with a password on the interview's laptop. If the interviewer refused to be tape-recorded, hand written notes will be taken instead. No one will have access to the data collected except the interviewer and the direct PI.

I will be interviewing approximately 12-18 Senior and Middle level Managers participants from different geographical areas across Lebanon, 6- 9 from outside Beirut and 6-9 from inside Beirut City. The confidentiality of the information the participants provide will be maintained throughout the whole study. I will assign a pseudonym to each respondent and will only be using selected quotes in my paper. No information that allows identifying you or any other respondent will be disclosed. Furthermore, all data files will be saved on my personal laptop in a locked folder for the period of three years following study completion and then will be deleted. Data will be published in aggregate with no reference to participants/organizations names, Participation should take approximately 30 minutes. Please note that your participation is not mandatory and you have the right to discontinue participation at any time you wish. Moreover, you can refuse to answer any question if you did not feel like answering it. In addition, we can stop and continue the interview later. Please note that there is no penalty for deciding to stop the participation at any time and that you will receive no compensation or payment for your participation.

You are informed about this research by the recruitment email I sent you and you agreed to participate in this research. Participants of this research were recruited based on the following criteria: Participants should hold a managerial position for at least 2 years (Age between 30 and 45), senior and middle level managers, and should be working in Lebanese based companies, non-governmental organizations (NGO) and universities.

Participation should take around 30 minutes. Please note that your participation is not mandatory and you can discontinue participation at any time without any penalty. There is no more than minimal risk associated with this research. There is no direct benefit for you as a participant but there are benefits associated with understating the impact of a leader on his/her follower and to what extent does the culture affect a leader's decision making in the workplace.

I can give the contact details of the research team to the potential participants who can pass them on to others who may be interested in taking part in the study. Participants, who are interested, can then contact the research team or the research team may contact them if they gave approval to be contacted. "Refusal or withdrawal from the study will involve no loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled nor will it affect your relationship with AUB/AUBMC".

If you have any question or complaint about this research study, you can contact my supervisors or myself on the below email addresses or telephone numbers:

Dr. Yusuf Sidani

Phone: + 961 1 350000 ext.3952

E-mail: [ys01@aub.edu.lb](mailto:ys01@aub.edu.lb)

Ms. Tala Miri

Phone: +961 03044594

E-mail: [tam12@mail.aub.edu](mailto:tam12@mail.aub.edu)

If you have any complain or concern about this research, you can contact the AUB Social & Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board (SBSIRB) at AUB:

Social & Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board

American University of Beirut

Bliss Street, Beirut

Phone: + 961 1 374374 ext.5455

E-mail: [IRB@aub.edu.lb](mailto:IRB@aub.edu.lb)

Data collected will be monitored and audited by the IRB committee to guarantee confidentiality.

The consent form was attached to the email already sent to your end.

**Consent to participate**

Are you interested in participating in this study?

**Consent to Record Interview**

Would you accept me to record your interview?

**Consent to Quote from Interview**

Would you accept me to use some quotes of what you mentioned in your interview?

Researcher's Name: Tala Miri

Date:

Signature:

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