

The moderation role of organizational culture between leadership styles and service quality in oil and gas companies in United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

This study is motivated by several issues within the UAE oil and gas industry. It includes the low service quality addressed within the sector, as well as the sudden transformation within the oil and gas sector due to the by appointment of new leaders. Despite their effort of adopting new strategies to lower the product cost, it leads to low satisfaction among the customers. Following the review of the previous literature, this study nominated three leadership styles that are related to the area of leadership styles, service quality, and organizational culture. The sample size for the current research was 384 respondents for the population which is represented by the employees hired by oil and gas providers. The finding of this study showed a significant moderation of the organizational culture between transformational, transactional leadership styles and the service quality, while there was no evident of significant moderation role found between authentic leadership style and service quality.

Keywords: leadership styles, organizational culture, service quality, oil and gas, The United Arab Emirates.

INTRODUCTION

There are several leadership styles that can be defined according to its characteristics. In this regard, selecting an optimal leadership style to be adopted by an organization relies on the leader characteristics needed. Transactional leadership is one of the leadership styles that is based on transactions made by employees and the leaders. This is prominent in the exchange of benefits and information given hierarchically by the organization, where employees receive certain types of benefits according to their job performance and the leaders are benefited thanks to the involvement and motivation generated towards them. In transformational leadership, leaders often lead to motivate their followers to do more than expected. It encourages people to have personal fulfilment and incorporate catalytic and inspiring functions. This enables the leaders to perform for their collaborators and thus achieve more goals of greater scope according to the given

situation. Such transformative leaders are prone towards changes and capable of modifying the ideas, motivation, aspiration, and values of their subordinates. Hence, the two leadership styles are preferred for the situation of the UAE oil and gas industry. Furthermore, the sharp declining of the oil and gas industry performance globally has affected the UAE oil and gas industry respectively. Secondly, the full replacement of the prior leadership of the UAE oil and gas industry by a new leadership team on 2016. Thirdly, leadership has embraced various forms in its studies over time, hence positing the necessity to determine certain redundancies that show a higher or lower value than the definition of leadership in organizational activities.

The content of leadership has been investigated by scholars and propose different approaches and principles that meet organizational objectives. In the case of the oil and gas industry in the UAE, researches like Aga, Noorderhaven, and Vallejo (2016) found that transformational

leadership style is preferred for the case of transformation change. Meanwhile, Mgeni and Nayak (2016) proposed that transactional leadership style is optimal for the case of industry that suffers from a slowdown performance as it works to motivate individuals within an organization. For McAuliffe, Bostain, and Witchel (2019), authentic leadership integrates properly within developing countries as its individuals are tied more to their national culture.

Literature review

One of the keys to leadership is to perceive that everybody has blessings and gifts. In this regard, a decent leader will figure out how to assemble those blessings towards a similar objective. It is essential to assess the leadership styles that are utilized inside associations. This is done to decide whether the utilized leadership styles are as per the culture of the organization in order for it to be beneficial for the associates and ensure the viability of the organization. In this regard, having a suitable leadership style within an organization is significant since it will enable the leaders to rouse the partners, lead the organization during great and terrible minutes, and make a higher fulfilment in the work environment (Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014).

A review of the literature on the relationship between leadership and service quality found that there is a large gap in the lack of attention to the impact of organizational culture on leadership (Ogbonna & Harris, 2000; Pawirosumarto, Sarjana Purwanto, & Gunawan, 2017). The cultural context conditions our actions, our widely accepted beliefs and values. Just as the leadership process is not divorced from the larger situational context in which leadership takes place (Northouse, 2018), unless the culture supports the leaders; leadership based on common values is impossible. Culture determines a large part of what leaders do and how they do it. After closely examining culture and leadership, Schein (2010) concludes that organizational culture and leadership are two sides of the same coin. Neither of the two can really be understood by themselves. During the organizational formation process, the founder of a company creates an organization, which reflects his values and beliefs. In this sense, the founder creates and models the cultural traits of

his organizations. In contrast, as an organization develops and time passes, the created culture of organizations exerts an influence on the leader and the forms of actions and the style of the leader. The leader, therefore, creates and is, in turn, shaped by the organizational culture (Schein, 2010). Fairholm (1994) reflects Schein's (2010) argument by postulating that leadership is a consequence of organizational culture and that culture is the result of leadership. Seen this way, leadership and organizational culture are intertwined. One requires the other. Cultural norms define how a particular nation or organization will define leadership, who will be promoted, who will receive the attention of the followers. The culture created defines success and appropriate behaviors (Fairholm, 1994). On the other hand, leaders interact with the culture to determine what to pay attention to, how to react to members' behavior, and what to communicate to followers. Therefore, it can be argued that a leader is only important, because they create and manage the culture. The unique talent of leaders is their ability to understand and work with culture; it is an ultimate act of the leader to destroy the culture when it is viewed as dysfunctional (Schein, 2010). In short, the leader is limited by the culture created. Avolio and Bass (1995) state that what constitutes an individualized consideration for one person may appear to be interference or paternalism to another person. The perception depends on the work environment (the situation) or the culture that he has experienced (Avolio & Bass, 1995). For example, if the person works in a very controlled environment, a simple friendly response from the leader can be interpreted as individual consideration. However, a person who has experience with an organization that focuses on individual development is more likely to have a higher threshold for individual consideration if they are to move into a position of control over a work environment (Avolio & Bass, 1995).

Thus, the cultural beliefs, norms and values that it have experienced in the previous work life impact how it feel about the leader's behavior. In other words, the culture defines the characteristics of the followers that are attributable. Furthermore, organizational leadership and leader decision patterns are described as cultural artifacts. Leaders, leadership styles and practices, and decision

patterns are believed to be created and shaped more by organizational culture than by the leaders themselves. Consequently, it is observed that the organizational culture has an impact on the effectiveness of leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1995). Howell and Avolio (1993) hypothesized that leaders in an organization with a high level of support for innovation (characterized as open to creative suggestions, innovations, and risk taking) would have higher levels of performance. The results of their study suggest that transformational leaders perform better in environments that followers describe as innovative. Bass and Avolio (1993) postulate that "A strong organizational culture, with internal values and guidelines for greater autonomy at lower levels, can prevent top management from increasing its personal power at the expense of mid-level management. At a higher level specific, culture can influence how decisions are made regarding areas such as recruitment, selection and placement with the organization "(p. 113) Consequently, leaders must be aware of conservatism that is reflected in beliefs, Values, assumptions, rites, and ceremonies embedded in the culture can hamper efforts to change the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Leaders should modify key aspects of the culture, where possible, to accommodate the new directions desired by the organization's leadership and membership In a supportive culture, the leader listens to the opinions of subordinates and takes them into account. Pheysy (1993) suggested that, in a culture of power, the leader tells others what to do. In the culture of achievement, the leader gives direction and encourages participation. In role culture, the leader does what he or she is authorized to do. Burke and Litwin (1992) propose a causal model of organizational performance and change that suggests how leadership and organizational culture influence each other, to affect the final performance of organizations and individuals. Borrowing from Burns' (1978) leadership theory, this model posits that leaders respond to external conditions and, in turn, become transformational agents within their organization, using the vehicles of mission and strategy and organizational culture to affect changes in organizational and individual performance.

Rather, culture is an enduring aspect of the organization, capable of influencing policies and procedures that are considered important to the

continued success of a business. Although it is recognized that culture can influence leadership, Burke and Litwin (1992) suggest that the reverse is a much stronger causal link. The leadership category exists where strategy and culture come together in the beliefs and actions of the leader of an organization to ultimately affect changes in organizational and individual performance. The study by Ogbonna and Harris (2000) provides some empirical evidence on the joint effect of organizational culture and leadership on organizational performance. They found that supportive and participatory leadership was indirectly and positively linked to performance through innovative and competitive cultures, while instrumental (task-oriented) leadership had an indirect negative effect on performance. Furthermore, their findings support the proposition that the connection between leadership styles and performance is mediated by the nature and form of the organizational culture that exists. Similarly, Lim (1995) proposes that culture can be the filter through which other important variables, such as leadership, influence organizational performance. In summary, the connection between organizational culture and leadership has been made by many researchers (Avolio & Bass, 1995). From the literature review, it can be seen that leaders influence organizations and that cultures represent the vehicle through which a leader's beliefs, values, and actions are transformed into organizational realities. The effectiveness of a leader is seen as the product of her ability to create a culture that supports a wide range of adaptive, stabilizing, and strategic activities. The leader who lacks cultural vision is supposed to be unable to lead effectively. Despite this implicit and explicit linking of leadership and organizational culture in much of organization theory, little research or critical attention has been devoted to understanding the links between the two concepts and the impact such an association might have on service quality. For these reasons, the current study maintains that there must be an impact of organizational culture on the relationship between leadership and service quality.

Studies on the leadership and culture of organizations began in the mid-1980s when a large number of books and articles were published claiming that there is a relationship between leadership, values, and organizational cultures (Sackmann, 1991; Schein, 1992; Deal

& Kennedy, 1982). In recent years, publications have focused on analysing the impact that national and organizational cultures have on the level of effectiveness of leaders' actions (Byrne & Bradley, 2007). There are two research trends regarding the influence of culture on leaders. Some authors consider that cultural practices and organizational context do not affect leadership skills since the attributes of leaders are mostly universal (ethical) and the actions that make it effective transcend the context (Adler, Doctor & Redding, 1986; Child & Tayeb, 1983; Levitt, 1983; Yavas, 1995). Another alternative affirms that a leader is effective if he is recognised as such and this is in close relation with the values, cultural traditions, and ideologies of the followers (House, Wright & Aditya, 1997). However, this raises the question whether the context is capable to influence leadership behaviours in an organization along with the need to determine the relationship between the culture of the organization, the beliefs of the followers, and the values of the leader in effectiveness at work (Avolio, Sosik, Jung & Berson, 2003). Triandis (1993) affirms that it is necessary to have leadership theories that take into account the contextual variables in order to know which actions of the leaders that most conform to the cultural guidelines enforced in an organization. The theories and models of leadership are extremely general and characterise the actions of leadership independently of the context, be it the organizational or broader cultural (House, Javidan & Dorfman, 2001; Yukl, 2002). In this sense, value is one of the essential components of culture (Schein, 1992) where Byrne and Bradley (2007) posited on the necessity to study the values preferences shown by leaders as well as their cultural baggage to decipher the potential of each leader for an organization.

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Methodology

This study aims to identify the role of organizational culture moderation between the leadership styles (Transformational, Transactional, and Authentic) and the service quality of oil and gas in the UAE. The quantitative approach uses in the study, the questionnaire technique as an instrument in collecting the data from the samples of oil and gas in the UAE. In this regard, adopted questionnaires' items will be used as measurement for the current study. Transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, and authentic leadership style items were adopted from (Northouse, 2015), while the service quality items were adopted from (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985), and the organizational culture items were

adopted from the study of (Sashkin & Rosenbach, 2013).

The sample size for the current research was 384 respondents for the population which is represented by the employees hired by oil and gas providers. The questionnaire was distributed to the employees of the oil and gas companies and to the sub-agents and distributors of the products produced by these companies. The questionnaire was in the form of a formal questioning paper sheet. Such instrument collected the primary data required to answer the research questions. Simple random sampling technique was used in this study. Such technique is commonly used in social science studies such as (Alkahtani, 2015; Amer, 2017; M. H. Anderson & Sun, 2017). It gave equal opportunity to everyone within the population to be selected as the sample of this study. This type of selection works to lower the bias resulted compared to other techniques (S. F. K. Anderson, Ken Maxwell, Scott E, 2017). For the purpose of conducting this technique of sample collection, the random number generator software is used. Each generator number was selected was based on a list provided by the headquarters of ADNOC. These lists consist of the both target samples, the employees and the sub-agent and distributors of these companies' products.

Findings

Table 1 contains information about the profile of the respondents. The respondents were categorised into two groups, namely the employee's respondents and the customers respondents. For the employee's respondents' group, 74.4 percent from a total of 384 respondents were male and 25.6 percent of the respondents were female. In terms of age, 54 percent of respondents were 36 years old and above while 43 percent respondents were below 36 years old. In terms of educational level, the majority of respondents hold a bachelor degree with 64.5 percent followed by diploma degree with 22.4 percent and master degree with 13.2 percent. It can be noted here that the respondents generally have good education level. In terms of income, 85.5 percent of the respondents earn more than USD 3000 while 14.4 percent of the respondents have an income of less than USD 3000. There is almost an equal number of respondents in the experience category where 40.1 percent of the respondents have 4 to 6 years of experience and 45.4 percent of respondents have 7 to 9 years of experience in the oil and gas business, and 14.5% with experience less than 3 years. It can be noted here that the respondents are generally customers with a good experience in the oil and gas sector.

Table 1: *Respondents' profile*

Category	Frequency	%	Category	Frequency	%
Gender			Education level		
Male	286	74.4	Diploma	86	22.4
Female	98	25.6	Bachelor	247	64.5
Age			Master	51	13.2
17-25 yrs	39	10.2	Income level		
26-30 yrs	61	15.8	1000 - 2000	15	3.9
31- 35 yrs	66	17.1	2000- 3000	41	10.5
36- 40 yrs	93	24.3	3000 and above	328	85.5
> 40 years	125	32.2	Experience (Yr)		
			1 to 3	56	14.5
			4 to 6	154	40.1
			7 to 9	174	45.4

According to Hair et al. (2010), reliability indicates the internal consistency among the variables where the indicators of the scale should be highly intercorrelated and all be measuring the same construct. Meanwhile, validity indicates the extent to which a scale or measure accurately reflects the theoretical construct that it intends to measure (Hair et al., 2010). The evaluation of convergent validity and discriminant validity can be used to check the validity of a scale.

It is necessary to examine the measurement model to assess the reliability and validity of the proposed variables before analysing the causal model and hypotheses (structural model). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using the maximum likelihood method was conducted in this study to assess the validity of the remaining scale items for all latent constructs. A measurement model in this study was designed to examine the relationships that exist between the five constructs, namely Transformational Leadership (TRF), Transactional Leadership (TRS), Authentic Leadership (ALS), Organizational Culture (OC), and Service Quality (SQ) as well as the indicators to assess their reliabilities and validities before testing the structural model. The reliability and overall goodness of fit of the measurement model have been measured for all observed variables and the underlying constructs that the variables are presumed to measure. Further details are presented in the next sections.

The data gathered in the study served as the base for interpreting the validity of the measure. Hair et al. (2017) suggested that a sample size of more than 100 would be preferable for the factor analysis procedure. Thus, this study assumed that 384 from leaders that were collected are sufficient to enable the employing factor analysis technique. This study assessed convergent validity by investigating the

magnitudes of scales correlate with other measures that were designed to measure similar constructs (Hair et al., 2010). The study certified that construct indicators are strongly associated with each other, but on other hand they do not correlate with dissimilar measures.

The factor loadings and their respective t-values and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of constructs were examined to assess the convergent validity. As shown in Table 2, the factor loadings for all items of all constructs are larger than 0.60 and thus statistically significant ($C.R. > 0.6$). Furthermore, the AVEs values of all constructs for the model is above 0.05 as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Therefore, it can be concluded that the convergent validity for all scales in this study is supported.

Table 2: *Convergent Validity*

Constructs	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Transformational leadership	0.61
Transactional leadership	0.541
Authentic leadership	0.532
Service quality	0.534
Organizational culture	0.734

The items reported out of the accepted factor loading were deleted. This comprised four items for authentic leadership styles (ALS1, ALS2, ALS3, ALS4), six items for organizational culture (OC1, OC2, OC3, OC4, OC5, OC6), despite only two items left, but according to Hair et al (2017) the latent factor can be measured by at least two items. For service quality, 14 items were deleted namely SQ1, SQ2, SQ3, SQ7, SQ9, SQ10, SQ11, SQ12, SQ17, SQ18, SQ19, SQ20, SQ21, and SQ22. For transformational leadership style, five items were deleted namely TRF1, TRF2, TRF3, TRF4, and TRF5.

Table 3: *Factor Loading*

	Authentic	Organizational culture	Service quality	Transactional	Transformational
ALS5	0.612				
ALS6	0.627				
ALS7	0.878				

	Authentic	Organizational culture	Service quality	Transactional	Transformational
ALS8	0.769				
OC7		0.879			
OC8		0.834			
SQ13			0.749		
SQ14			0.743		
SQ15			0.721		
SQ16			0.833		
SQ4			0.660		
SQ5			0.668		
SQ6			0.655		
SQ8			0.797		
TRF6					0.606
TRF7					0.832
TRF8					0.878
TRS1				0.665	
TRS2				0.654	
TRS3				0.727	
TRS4				0.872	
TRS5				0.739	

To assess discriminant validity, the square roots of AVEs should be higher than the correlations between constructs to certify the discriminant validity of scales employed in the study. Discriminant validity was assessed in this study by comparing the square root of the AVEs with the correlation between that construct and the other constructs. As shown in Table 4 the square root of the AVEs exceeds the highest correlation between each construct with itself and the other constructs, hence supporting discriminant validity (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Furthermore, discriminant validity was assessed using Fornell and Larcker's criterion which suggests that the AVEs values of all constructs should be above 0.05 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 4 shows that the AVEs values of all constructs are above 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the discriminant validity of the constructs is supported.

Table 4: Results of Discriminant Validity

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Authentic	0.73				
Organizational culture	-0.044	0.857			
Service quality	-0.047	0.619	0.731		
Transactional	0.297	0.126	0.002	0.736	
Transformational	0.268	-0.045	-0.059	0.495	0.781

Table 4.5 shows the result of the moderation effect of organizational culture between the three leadership styles (i.e. transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and authentic leadership) with service quality for the leaders' respondents' model. As reported in

Table 5, organizational culture moderates the influence of transformational leadership style and service quality ($\beta=0.171$, $t= 8.143$, $p=0.000$), transactional leadership style, and service quality ($\beta= 0.216$, $t=3.484$, $p=0.000$). Meanwhile, no moderation effect is found for the relationship between authentic leadership style and service quality.

Table 5: Moderation test estimations

	Estimation	SD	T-value	P Value
Mod transformational -> Service quality	0.171	0.021	8.143	0.000
Mod transactional -> Service quality	0.216	0.062	3.484	0.000
Mod Authentic -> Service quality	0.122	0.083	1.469	0.084

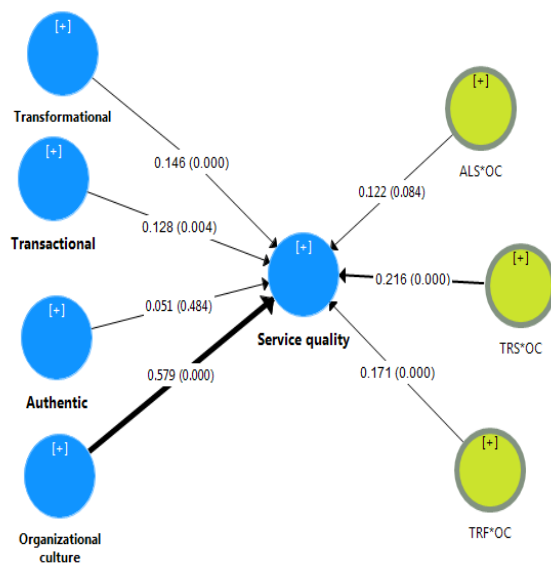


Figure 1: Structural model – moderation analysis

Discussion

Based on the model, this casual effect portrays from different perspectives of respondents which is demonstrates leaders' and customers' perspectives. According to the analysis, the perspective of leaders shows organizational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership style and service quality. The analysis illustrates that every one-

unit increase of organizational culture would increase 17.71% of service quality, whereby the service quality only increased 13.99% with the absence of organizational culture as moderator. Thus, organizational culture contributed a 3.72% improvement in service quality. Transformational leaders awaken and stimulate their workforce without micromanaging where they rely on prepared representatives to take decision leadership in their appointed positions. It is a management style that is intended to give reps more room to be innovative, look to the future, and find new answers to old problems. Workers on the leadership path will also prepare to become transformative leaders themselves through mentoring and preparation.

Based on the model, this casual effect portrays from different perspectives of respondents which is demonstrates leaders' and customers' perspectives. According to the analysis, the perspective of leaders shows organizational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership style and service quality. The analysis illustrates that every one-unit increase of organizational culture would increase 21.6% of service quality, whereby the service quality only increased 8.6% with the absence of organizational culture as moderator. Thus, the organizational culture contributed 13% improvement in service quality. From a leaders' perspective, organizational culture does not influence the relationship between authentic leadership style and service quality. The analysis illustrates that every one-unit increase of organizational culture would increase 13.7% of service quality, whereby the service quality only increased 12.3% with the absence of organizational culture as moderator. Thus, the organizational culture contributed 1.4% improvement in service quality.

Various dimensions of leadership were analysed including colleagues, leaders, salary, possibilities of promotion, and the tasks that are carried out (Locke, 1984). There are two organizations of thought with respect to the concept of leadership where the first focuses on emotions as the main axis while the second emphasises work behaviours and attitudes (Bravo, Peiro & Rodriguez, 2002). At present, organizations focus on making their employees proactive and have decision-making power over the activities entrusted to them and thus commit themselves to achieve the objectives (Salanova,

Martinez & Lorens (2004). Since the 1930s, interests have been directed to the analysis of indices of leadership with which indices have been created to record the behaviour of employees within the work environment (Chiang, Méndez & Sanchez, 2010). According to Sáenz (1999), it encompasses both attitudes and emotions and considers that the attitude is composed of affective, cognitive, and behavioural elements that vary according to their magnitude, can be obtained from different sources, and fulfil different functions for the collaborator. This defines labour satisfaction as a set of emotions and attitudes that individuals experience in their work life. Ruizalba, Fernando, and Jiménez (2013) suggested that leadership is a variable for each individual since it depends on individual criteria, how he can assimilate it, and depends on expectations or how it perceives things in a certain situation. Being a subjective element, it comprises several components which are cognitive, emotional, affective, and behavioural.

Ahmed, Rafiq, and Saad (2003) posit that for an organization to have an impact on leadership, they must implement practices such as good internal communication, induction systems, coordination training in departments, and the application of incentives. It is important to emphasise that individuals who feel motivated with their work and with the work environment tend to increase their production and the quality of their work (Robles et al., 2005). Authors such as Garcia, Ranchal, Biedma, and Rosal (2008) expressed that leadership not only influences daily work and the quality of services but also determines customer satisfaction. In the changing world in which individuals develop due to the constant changes in knowledge, technology, and economy, organizations must adapt to these continuous changes so that employees who feel satisfied tend to be more adaptable and willing to face these changes. This will denote an advantage for the organization (Martinez, Lara & Lopez, 2016).

Conclusion

This study is motivated by several issues within the UAE oil and gas industry. It includes the low service quality addressed within the sector, as well as the sudden transformation within the oil and gas sector due to the by appointment of new

leaders. Despite their effort of adopting new strategies to lower the product cost, it leads to low satisfaction among the customers. Following the review of the previous literature, this study nominated three leadership styles that are related to the area of leadership styles, service quality, and organizational culture. Transformational leaders awaken and stimulate their workforce without micromanaging where they rely on prepared representatives to take decision leadership in their appointed positions. It is a management style that is intended to give reps more room to be innovative, look to the future, and find new answers to old problems. Workers on the leadership path will also prepare to become transformative leaders themselves through mentoring and preparation. The results of this research have important implications for the development of theories and future research in the oil and gas industry. In principle, it is found that leadership is a phenomenon that is perceived in the oil and gas industry and it is not solely exclusive to the service sector. Officials perceive and identify leadership styles in their managers and consider some to be more effective than others. The transformational and transactional leadership theory by Burns (1978) and Bass and Avolio (1994) debate on the direct effects to the overall performance of organizations. Nevertheless, there is scarce debate related to the direct effects of leadership styles on service quality. The findings provide empirical evidence that both service quality can carry mediating effects towards the overall performance, which is considered as a perspective for future studies.

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