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IRANIAN LEADERSHIP IDEALS:
A CULTURALLY-BASED LEADERSHIP APPROACH

by

Azadeh Davari

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2018

Dissertation Committee

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University of San Diego

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University of San Diego
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TITLE OF DISSERTATION: IRANIAN LEADERSHIP IDEALS: A
CULTURALLY-BASED LEADERSHIP APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

In light of many current financial and ethical crises, scholars have called for looking beyond our existing Western-based approaches for innovative leadership practices. Recent research about the success and unique management practices of Indian corporations (Cappelli et al., 2010) shows a unique style based on both people and profit and one that blends capitalist profit-based structures with caring for people and community. That research has been the basis for suggestions for the existence of a distinct Indo-European leadership (IEL) style (Nahavandi, 2012a; Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017) with philosophical roots in Iran and India and provides impetus for looking beyond Western models of leadership.

The Iranian culture, a member of the Indo-European family, has developed over the past 25 hundred years. Contacts with many nations and cultures, continuous interactions with Western societies and the influences of Zoroastrianism and Islam have resulted in significant cultural transformation and diversity in the country. However, many cultural elements have survived in spite of profound social challenges and changes and a distinct culture has evolved with unique ideals of leadership which are clearly reflected in Iran's rich literary traditions.

This study, which is part of a long-term research agenda, relies on that literary tradition along with recent research that suggests ideals of Iranian and Indo-European leadership to explore the existence and practice of ideals of Iranian leadership (ILI). Through document analysis, and a two-phase mixed-methods design that included 6 pilot interviews with Iranian leaders from different disciplines and a survey of 335 Iranian leaders who reside both in Iran and elsewhere in the world, the purpose was to identify

what Iranian leaders endorse as culturally-based ILIs, and the extent to which they practice culturally-based ILIs in their organizations. Results indicate distinct ILIs and differences between endorsed and practiced culturally-based ILIs. The factors that impact ILIs and their practice were further explored. The application of ILI to other cultural settings and limitations of this study are also presented.

DEDICATION

To the pursuit of a more globally conscious and connected leadership, to the discovery of
our roots and what shapes the soul that lives within us.

And to my parents who with love, planted seeds of integrity, wisdom, compassion, and
freedom in my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have always believed that somehow magically, I have been given a lot in my life. For all that I am humbled and grateful, and I too must give back to the world. Looking back at my life journey, from where it all began, to where it has unfolded itself so far, from beautiful little town by Caspian Sea in Iran to the shores of Pacific Ocean in San Diego, there are many people, experiences, and moments I am thankful for. I would not be who or where I am without them. However, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for people who have supported this part of my journey, my education, and this research.

For their invaluable guidance, I express deep gratitude to my dissertation committee: Dr. Afsaneh Nahavandi, Dr. Zachary Gabriel Green, Dr. Touraj Daryaei, and Dr. Kaveh Abhari. To my dissertation chair, Dr. Afsaneh Nahavandi, you have been an inspiration to me. Your wisdom, dedication to work, care, compassion, and positivity created a strong personal and professional foundation in me. Thank you for everything that you have done for me in the last four years. Dr. Zachary Green, thank you for believing in me and for seeing parts of me that I yet have to discover. I am grateful for how you continue to challenge me, inspire me, and empower me to do the deeper purposeful work and for helping me expand beyond self to community and to the world. Dr. Touraj Daryaei, thank you for your invaluable insights and guidance that led me to better understand the historical roots of my country and culture. Dr. Kaveh Abhari, thank you for your ongoing support, guidance, and invaluable gift of friendship. You reinforced my curiosity to comprehend and interpret findings of my study.

For the gift of true friendship, I thank Dr. Arash Rashidi. Arash, you stood by me as a friend, mentor, and teacher in every step of the way. Thanks for having faith in me. I could have never created leadership programs in Iran and the Middle East without your continuous support and partnership. I am forever grateful for what you have done for me to reach this milestone. I also thank the late Dr. Hossein Ghassemi; you left us too soon but you are always remembered and admired by me for all your encouragements and powerful vision through the toughest stages of my growth. I thank you Ted Bartmaans for your continuous support and friendship. I remember when we first talked about this research long before I started my PhD program. With you, I started the path to be a trainer and coach and expanded my global perspective.

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Additionally, I want to thank the faculty and staff of School of Education and Leadership Sciences at University of San Diego (2013-2018) who have had a profound influence in my learning. I also appreciate Nonprofit Institute for offering me a valuable experience during my study. My classmates and colleagues, Kim, Crystal, Michelle, Jodi, Juan Carlos, Elissa, John, Mariko, Ebtessam, and Dave, we have reflected, studied, prepared, grown, and went through ups and downs through this journey together. I am thankful for each and every one of you and what you have taught me.

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

“What you seek, is seeking you”

– Rumi

The Persian culture is the dynamic functioning collective system that has emerged from complex interactions between people, environment and many events that have occurred in the last 25 centuries on the Iranian Plateau. It seems, however, that despite diverse range of inputs, the dynamic system has retained a number of basic and constant elements and characteristics throughout all these centuries. Those elements are manifested in different aspects of the Persian culture, such as individual and societal values, traditions and practices, and language and literature. Moreover, it is expected that those elements influence the way effective and outstanding leadership is seen and defined within the Persian cultural context.

This study focuses on key aspects of Persian culture including language and literature, presents literature on the relationship between culture and leadership in general, and culturally contingent leadership attributes in Persian culture specifically.

Statement of the Problem

Modern organizations have faced considerable challenges in recent years. Ethical scandals, decreased performance, calls for social responsibility, and increasing employee dissatisfaction and disengagement have given rise to calls for innovative leadership of organizations. Similar challenges in the 1970s and 1980s focused attention on successful Japanese and Far Eastern practices and introduced practices such as team-based management and quality control to Western organizations. Additionally, with the growth

of non-Western economies, concerns over the applicability of Western, mostly North American, leadership theories and recommendations in all cultural contexts have led many scholars to emphasize the need for exploration of other non-Western approaches (Chin et al., in print; Chin & Trimble, 2015; Dastmalchian et al., 2001; Dickson et al., 2012; Gerstner & Day, 1994; House et al., 2002; Javidan et al., 2006; Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003; Jogulu, 2010; Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017). While there are some universal leadership attributes between different cultures (Dorfman et al., 1997), House et al. (2002) argue, “Throughout mankind’s history, geography, ethnicity, and political boundaries have helped create distinctions and differences among different people. Over time, societies have evolved into groups of people with distinguishable characteristics that set them apart from other human communities” (p. 3). Therefore, it would not be surprising if different cultures have different perceptions, expectations and definitions for leadership ideals in their organizations. As Gerstner and Day (1994) suggest, “Leadership perceptions are an important consideration because one must first be perceived as a leader to be allowed the necessary discretion and influence to perform effectively” (p. 121-122). Perceptions of leadership are culturally informed, the notion which has been mentioned since the mid-20th century literature (Gerstner & Day, 1994).

Exploring leadership approaches from other non-Western cultures would help bridge the knowledge gap mentioned above regarding the influence of culture on how effective and outstanding leadership is perceived in a society and organization. It may also provide innovative solutions to the challenges that modern organizations face. Interaction between people in an organization or a society is rooted in their assumptions, judgments, and understanding of one another. Exploring core cultural values can deepen

our understanding of different groups of people who we interact with. This research will show what are most common Iranian leadership ideals (ILIs), and to what extent Iranian leaders from different industries inside and outside Iran endorse and practice those Iranian Leadership Ideals.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The present study was based on cross-cultural studies about leadership (e.g., Hofstede, 2011; House et al., 2002) and recent research that has identified distinct Indian (Cappelli et al., 2010a, 2010b, 2015), Iranian (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009; Nahavandi, 2009, 2012a), and Indo-European (Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017) leadership and management styles. Such alternative non-Western leadership approaches may provide answers to some of the challenges that today's organizations face.

The purpose of this study was to explore the most common ILIs and examine to what extent Iranian leaders from different professional backgrounds who live and work both inside and outside Iran would endorse and practice those ideals. This study provides new in-depth knowledge about Iranian core cultural values that shape understanding and practice of leadership in different organizations. The overall goal of the research is to explore the key culturally-based ILIs. To that end, specific research questions are:

1. To what extent do Iranian leaders endorse culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals?
2. To what extent do Iranian leaders apply culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals in their organizations?

Once the ILIs are established, the key issue then becomes whether they can be applied to other countries and cultural contexts.

Significance and Contributions

This study is based on cross-cultural studies about leadership (e.g., Hofstede, 2011; House et al., 2002) and recent research that has identified distinct Indian (Cappelli et al., 2010a, 2010b, 2015), Iranian (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009; Nahavandi, 2009, 2012a), and Indo-European (Nahavandi & Krishnan, in print) leadership and management styles. While the majority of the studies on leadership have been based on the Western perspective of leadership, this study explores and examines alternative non-Western leadership approaches that focus not just on profit but people and their values as the core of any organization. The cultural perspective in this study may provide answers to some of the challenges that today's organizations face. It may also shed light on the contemporary Iranian leadership style while looking at both ancient wisdom and current cultural values practiced by Iranian leaders and managers.

Iran with old civilization, history, language and culture from one hand, and special geopolitical and geo-economical position in the Middle East region and in the world from the other hand calls for a deeper understanding of its nation. In the last few decades, the perception of the people around the world has been influenced by a limited picture and voice have been offered by the media. Therefore characteristics, beliefs, and behavior of the Iranians from different societal and professional backgrounds have gone almost entirely unnoticed and unexplored. With emergence globalization as a result of a faster pace of information exchange and people's movement, Iranians and the rest of the world are currently more connected than ever. This study offers an inside out perspective of Iranian cultural values and what they consider as ILIs. The result of this study can be

helpful for people and organizations that are in interaction with Iranians and can facilitate effective intercultural communication.

The population of Iranian diaspora living outside of Iran currently estimated to be between 4 to 5 million people. They mostly live in North America, European countries, Australia, and some of the neighboring countries in the region, such as Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. According to U.S. Census data, approximately 1 million people with Iranian heritage live in the United States. The immigrants and the second-generation Iranian-Americans are known to be one of the most successful diaspora in United States. This study offers a deeper inquiry of how they perceive their identity and their leadership ideals as they re-rooted themselves in their new home countries. The exploration of this study can shed a light on some aspects of cultural sensitivity when dealing with Iranian community outside of Iran.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The Iranian culture is the collective system that has emerged from dynamic and complex interactions between people, environment and many events that have occurred in at least the last 25 centuries on the Iranian Plateau. It seems, however, that despite diverse range of inputs, the dynamic system has integrated a number of basic and constant elements and characteristics throughout all these centuries. Those elements are manifested in different aspects of the Iranian culture, such as individual and societal values, traditions and rituals, language, and literature and art. Moreover, it is expected that those elements influence the way effective and outstanding leadership is seen at different levels (individual, team, organization and society), and defined within the Iranian cultural context.

The following review summarizes some key aspects of the Iranian culture, presents literature on the relationship between culture and leadership in general, and hypothesized culturally contingent leadership attributes in the Iranian culture specifically.

Land of Iran

Similar to all other ancient Empires, the Iranian land has continuously, and sometimes dramatically, expanded or shrunk throughout its long history. As shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**, the Empire had once stretched from Indus River and Pakistan in the East to the Mediterranean region and Egypt in the West (Daryae, 2012). Such a geographical expansion turned Persia into the unique East-West corridor, creating the renowned passage, the Silk Road, as the main historic trade route. Needless

to say, in this capacity, Persia was also the interface of West and East cultures, their dialogues, and their disputes.



Figure 1. Ancient Persia (550-330 BCE). Adapted from *The Oxford Handbook of Iranian History*, by T. Daryae, 2012, p.xii.

The Modern Iran (see Figure 2), with a geographical territory of approximately 635,000 square miles (1.650.000 km²), is located in Western Asia and the so-called Middle East region, and is the product of governance by many dynasties and rulers over the last 2.5 millennia. However, as will be discussed, it is important to note that despite its location in the Western Asia, and Middle East regions, and for historical reasons, the cultural dimensions of Iran are not similar to a typical Arab Middle Eastern nation (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003).



Figure 2. The modern Iran. Adapted from *The Oxford Handbook of Iranian History*, by T. Daryaee, 2012, p. xv.

A Touch on the Iranian History

According to Young (1967), “The Iranians entered written history when they collided with the Assyrian Empire as it and they expanded into the Zagros mountains, an encounter first recorded in the Royal Annals of Shalmaneser III” (p. 11). He further adds:

The following two centuries witnessed an increasing struggle between the Iranians, the indigenous Zagros peoples, and the Assyrians for control of western Iranian plateau. In time, with the founding of the Median Kingdom and its successor state, the Achaemenid Empire, the Iranians triumphed. (Young, 1967, p. 11)

For this reason, the history of Iran (known to the world as Persia until the 12th century), as a nation, is very tied to the establishment of the Achaemenid Empire by Cyrus the Great, in mid-500s BCE; Cyrus, as described by Daryaee (2012), “changed the map of the world and brought the Afro-Asiatic world together for the first time in history.”

Cyrus united several local and immigrant tribes as well as already established civilized communities (e.g., the Medes, Assyrians, Babylonians and Chaldeans) that had settled the Iranian Plateau and its vast neighboring regions. Cyrus’s ancestors had migrated from the Pontic-Caspian Steppes of the Northern Black Sea, as one of the multiple branches of Iranians, around four to five centuries earlier; the definite dates, stages and routes of the mass immigration or diffusion from the Northwestern and Northeastern routes into the Plateau, however, still need to be investigated (Mallory, 1991; Young 1967). We know, however, very well that they had entered and gradually settled in the areas where was in political and socioeconomic transactions with the strong civilized or indigenous inhabitants of those days, such as Assyria, Babylon and Elamites, for long time. In fact, settlement of indigenous people in some parts of the Western and South-Western Iran (e.g., Elamites) was going back to thousands of years earlier (Abdi, 2012; Dan Potts, 1999).

The development of Iranian history, as well as much of the present Western civilizations, is now considered to be part of the bigger process of world-wide journey made by Indo-Europeans (Mallory, 1991). The Median tribes were among main migrant groups who gradually started to enter the Iranian Plateau since around the first millennium BCE. It took four to five centuries that, in coalition with Babylonians, the Median conquerors eventually defeated the powerful Assyrian Empire in 614/612 BCE,

and became one of the main ruling power of the ancient history. The Median Empire itself did not survive for long, and fell within half a century, when Cyrus the Great, from another migrant branch of Iranians, who was also connected to the Median dynasty through his mother, captured the whole territories of the Babylonian and the Median Empires in mid-500 BCE, establishing the Persian Empire. It was the first greatest world Empire, before its defeat by Alexander the Great in 330 BCE (Briant, 2002).

The Achaemenid Empire was followed by several Iranian and non-Iranian dynasties and rulers in the next 24 centuries of the Iranian history; some of them were affiliated with the foreign conquerors, such as Arabs, Turks, and Mongols, who brought their cultures in, but at the same time, were being transformed by the Iranian identity. Undoubtedly, the Arab conquest in the mid-seventh century, emergence of the Islamic era, settlement of large numbers of Arab fighters and migrants on the Iranian Plateau, and presence of the many Muslim rulers are important inter-linked events in the Iranian history; they gradually deviated the national religion and traditions from Zoroastrianism toward Islam, and introduced some elements of the Arabic and Islamic cultures into the Iranian cultural traditions and products such as ceremonies, language, literature, art, and philosophy. However, Islam and the Arab world have also been dramatically influenced by the Iranian culture throughout the past 13 centuries of interactions (Yarshater, 1998).

Shi'ism in Iran is another milestone, which was first announced by the Buyids (945-1055 CE), and later on, forcefully by the Safavids (1501-1736); it has been sustained throughout the centuries and has been reinforced again since the Islamic revolution in 1978. We may also mention Sufism, as an Iranian version of Islamic philosophy and practice (Yarshater, 1998), which can be regarded as a cultural and

religious milestone in Iranian history. **Error! Reference source not found.** presents a schematic sequence of some key historical events in governance and culture in Iran. The top layer shows the appearance of some key Iranian poets, who have strongly reflected and influenced the Iranian cultural elements in their poems. Yarshater (1998) argues that:

as to the Iranian world, poetry reached a high point in the 10th and 11th centuries, with poets like Firdausi (d. 1021) and Farrokhi (d. 1038), and continued to reach summit after summit until the 14th century when it reached its highest point in the work of Hafiz (d. 1389).

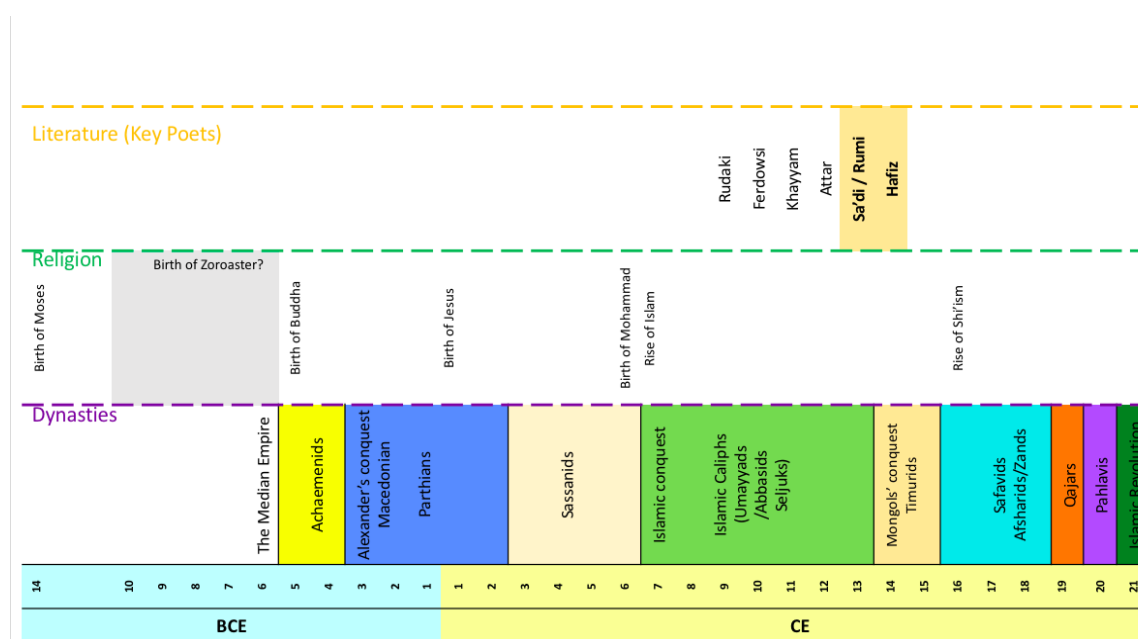


Figure 3. Schematic presentation of some key events in the Iranian history.

Obviously, we should not limit the Iranian artistic and intellectual forms only to poems. Different branches of art (e.g., prose, painting, calligraphy, carpet weaving, tiling, music, and singing), philosophy, and science have all been among attractive cultural forms to Iranians in different eras. However, the period of accomplishments in these fields, do not necessarily follow the trends in Persian poems. According to Yarshater (1998):

Persian painting, on the other hand, began to show real creativity only after the 12th century and reached a peak in the 14th and 15th centuries, a period marked by much turbulence, bloodshed, and destruction. Calligraphy, a major Persian art form, revealed its true dimensions in the 15th and 16th centuries and even later, with the development of the elegant *nasta'lig* style. The *Shikasteh* (broken or cursive) style of Persian penmanship characterized by lyrical curves, dancing lines, and fascinating twists and turns, appeared only in the 18th century. (p. 79)

Religions, Thoughts, and Practices, in Iran

Religions, with the beliefs and moral values they carry and promote, have been the major shapers of the Iranian culture throughout both its ancient and modern histories. In its long history, and in spite of considerable ethnic diversity and the presence of many religious groups, Iran has been dominated by three religions: Zoroastrianism (brought by the Prophet Zoroaster), Manichaeism (brought by the Prophet Mani) and Islam (brought by the Prophet Mohammad).

Zoroastrianism was the first “official” state religion of the Iranian land. It is among the world oldest religions, with roots in the second millennium BCE and primordial ties to the Iranian land and history (Stausberg, 2012). According to Stausberg (2012):

[Zoroastrianism, as] the dominant religion backed up by the Sasanian kings (224-651), has a history going back far beyond the Sasanian period, to the earliest times of the emergence of Iranian ethnogenesis, in the sense that the ancient Zoroastrian texts, collectively known as the Avesta, at the same time provide the earliest evidence of Iranian languages and cultural concepts. (p. 173)

He further adds:

Nonetheless, it is clear that not all Iranian territories were “Zoroastrianized” in the sense of exclusive religious adherence, and there is plenty of evidence of religious forms of expression that cannot be classified as Zoroastrian (in a wider or a narrower sense). It is only with the early Sasanians that one finds kings who actively and exclusively sponsored Zoroastrian religious institutions, apparently as part of their project to create a unified empire. Already half a millennium earlier, Achaemenian kings had invoked Zoroastrian deities, most prominently

Ahura Mazdā, and other elements of the Zoroastrian religion in their attempt to legitimate the creation and perpetuation of their empire (Lincoln 2007). Yet, it is the Sasanian kings who in their official proclamations not only recurred to the protection and support of (Zoroastrian) deities, but even explicitly professed their adherence to Zoroastrianism as a religion. (Stausberg, 2012, p. 173)

According to the Zoroastrian thoughts, life is about balancing between two main forces: Ahura Mazda, as the Wise Lord and God of all goods and light, and Ahriman, as the Evil Spirit, darkness, and death. To be in the service of Ahura Mazda in the lifelong struggle against Ahriman, Zoroaster's followers are supposed to observe three key things: To have good thoughts, words and deeds (Rose, 2011; Stausberg, 2012). The metaphor of light and shadow has been extensively discussed in contemporary leadership and ethics literature to distinguish moral and immoral leaders (Johnson, 2005).

Zoroastrianism remained the dominant religion in Iran, until the mid-seventh century, when the Arab Islamic conquest occurred, and Arab migrants started to move and settle in the Iranian Plateau (Morony, 2012; Stausberg, 2012). Arabs ruled the Iranian territory for three centuries. The imported new religion as well as the Arabic language have had profound impact on Iranian culture. That has happened through intercultural dialogue as well as forceful propaganda made by some rulers over the last 13 centuries. Based on the historical perspective and analyses presented by Yarshater (1998), several key events and factors have synergistically led to the adoption and customization of Islam in Iran; the Iranian version of Islam has resulted from the following interactions:

- Preservation of the Persian voice and practices through inevitable adoption of the Sassanian administrative, revenue collection, and military expertise and systems by the Arab rulers,

- Continuation of many Iranian cultural traits and artistic motifs in the captive Persian territories upon Arab invasion,
- Settlement and “Persianization” of the initial Arab fighters and their merge into the Iranian communities,
- Contribution of Iranians to the Abbasid revolution, and the power shift from the Islamic headquarter in the West (Syria) to the East (Iraq),
- Birth of “The Golden age of Islam” (i.e., the first two centuries of the Abbasid period), as well as later centuries (between the 10th and 14th centuries), which coincide the birth of different schools of thoughts and transformation in art, theology and philosophy, and natural sciences in Iran. These “products” of the Islamic era are now among the Iranian heritage and reputation,
- Creation of “Sufism,” as a Persian derivative of Islamic thought and practice.

As has been described by Mackey (1996), the appearance of and disputes between the main two sects of Islam (i.e., Sunnism and Shi’ism) relates to the selection process and outcome of the designated successor of the Prophet Muhammad, as the leader of the Muslim community after his death. The history tells us that the important task was accomplished by the Prophet’s closest associates within the heartlands of Islam (i.e., Mecca and Medina) through a consultation and consensus process. The group did not choose Ali, The Prophet’s cousin and son-in-law, despite his competencies, religious credentials and strong family ties. Instead, Abu Bakr, the Prophet’s closest confidant became Khalifa (Caliph), as the leader of Muslims. While this decision did not bring about Ali’s protest, it provided the foundation of the deviation by his disciples and

supporters later on, a group of people who named themselves Shi'a Ali – the followers of Ali. This group claimed that the Prophet Muhammad had named Ali as the successor, in his last pilgrimage and before his death. They also believed that the khalifa should come out from the Prophet's house and to possess the knowledge and wisdom of the Prophet, rather than through a consensus process. Moreover, Shi'ias believed that ruling the Muslim community ought to be based on heritage, by 12 Imams (all of whom are related to the Prophet through blood or marriage), as successors of the Prophet. In contradiction, the mainstream Sunnis, which means people of tradition, believed that consensus among the Prophet Muhammad's early converts would determine the khalifa from among any men within the Meccan aristocracy. The conflict between the Islamic main stream, led by the Ummayyeds, and the Shi'a group flared up when the ruler of the time, Yazid, murdered Ali's son, Hussein, together with his immediate family and followers (Mackey, 1996). That has become a very important milestone in the history of Shi'ism, and the issue of martyrdom. As Stanley (2006) writes:

In 680, Ali's son, Hussein, led an impossibly small group of family and followers into battle at Karbala against Umayyad army and were slaughtered. This sacrifice in the name of rightful succession [extending from Prophet Muhammad through Ali and his family, rather than the chosen Khalifas] is a central event in the development of Shi'ism as a distinct branch of Islam. The Shi'a reverence for martyrdom comes from reference to Hussein's death and the desire of the faithful to atone for the failure of the faithful (Shia who were not with the party at Karbala) to stand with Hussein and die. (p. 8)

It seems that the hereditary nature of leadership in Shi'ism, which happens to mirror the Persian monarchic tradition, as well as the Persians' contribution toward the Abbasid revolution and anti-Iranian claims of the Ummayyad rulers, supported the settlement and integration of Shi'ism in Iran.

The following five centuries, from the mid-11th to the 16th centuries, are dominated by emergence of new foreign rulers, including Turks and Mongols, and a number of power shifts between Sunni and Shi'a rulers. The key religious process in Iran, which has extended to the present time, was in the early 16th century when the powerful kings from the Safavid dynasty not only expanded the country's geographical territories, but also forcefully promoted the transformation of the formal faith into the faction of Shi'ism throughout the country. It took through the 18th century before the slowly shrinking the Safavid territory became predominantly Shi'a. Shi'ism has been reinforced every now and then in the contemporary Iran, with significant dominance in all aspects of the Iranian society since 1979 Islamic revolution. According to Yavari (2012):

While certain Iranian cities, such as Qum and Ray, were Shi'i strongholds from early on, the vast majority of Iranian lands, and especially the important province of Khorasan in the northeast, remained bastions of Sunni orthodoxy. The conversion of Iran to Shi'ism in the 16th and 17th centuries entailed a protracted transformation, not just of the country's religious and social history but also of the Shi'i creed and dogma. That Iran and post-16th century Shi'ism was confined to demarcated political borders, while Sunnism and Arabs were dispersed across several national boundaries, had dramatic consequences for the development of (both religious and secular) political thought and institutions in Iran, most notably demonstrated in the Iranian revolution of 1979. In the past 500 years, Iran and Shi'ism have been shaped by a convergence of influences and trends that emerged in earlier centuries.

The long centuries of Zoroastrianism and later deviation to Shi'ism by Iranians has coincided with the emergence of various forms of Islamic radicalism. Iranians have always been tied to Zoroastrianism (Majooses) and Shi'ism to the memory of the Arab world. That link seems to have provided a historical barrier to establishment of a productive dialogue between the presently Shi'a Iranians and the Sunni Arab world, as the dominant culture in the Middle East region. This fact justifies why Iranian cultural

dimensions are not similar to what is in a typical Middle Eastern Arab country. In fact, based on the cultural dimensions, Iran is very similar to the Southern Asian cluster (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). That can be traced back to its shared Indo-European cultural root (Mallory, 1989; Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017).

While Iran is presently known by its Shi'a population, and in spite of strong state religions, Iran has always been home to many religious minorities, including Jews and Christians. A small community of Zoroastrians, as well as Christians and Jews have continued to live in Iran; they are acknowledged in the constitution. We have also had peaceful settlement and interaction of Shi'a and Sunni followers in a number of provinces in Iran for many centuries. Such a coexistence among followers to different religions and sects in Iran emphasizes on high levels of moderation and tolerance in the Persian culture; this fact has been highlighted as a common cultural value in India and Iran, the two sister Indo-European nations (Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017). However, political pressures have compromised the practice of this core cultural value in some periods throughout the Iranian history.

Persian Language and Literature

Persian or Farsi is presently the official language in Iran. There are however other languages and dialects spoken in the country (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). The shared Iranian identity as a sense of nationalism has brought tolerance among diverse groups of people who speak in different languages and have different sub-cultures within Iranian borders. That has already been mentioned regarding coexistence of different religions throughout the Persian history.

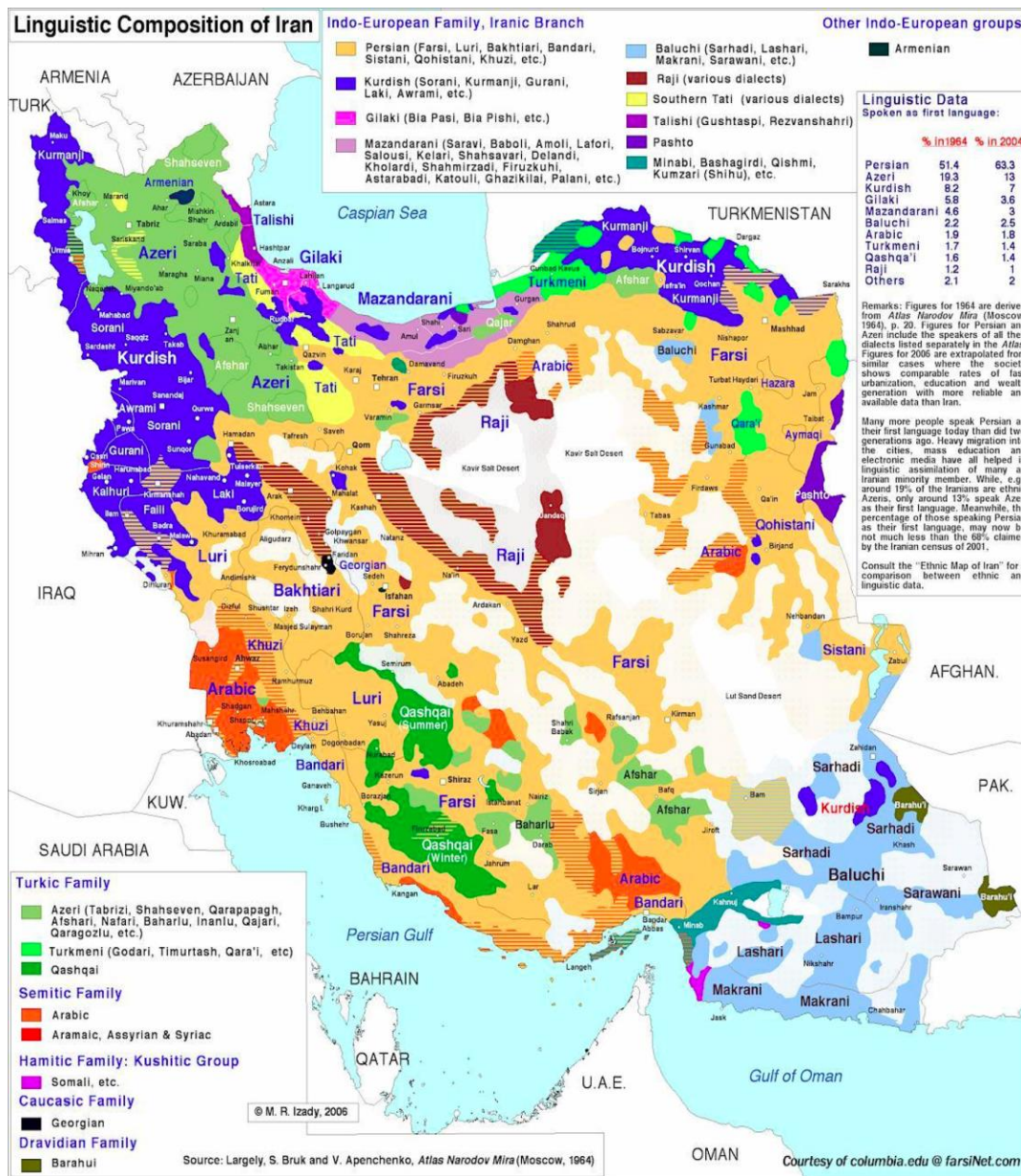


Figure 4. Language portfolio in Iran. Retrieved from http://www.farsinet.com/farsi/linguistic_composition_of_iran.html

Old Persian language of the Achaemenian Empire was an Indo-European tongue closely related to Sanskrit and Avestan, the language of the Zoroastrian texts and the Indian ancient body of writings of Vedas. The fact was first noticed by in the Chief

Justice of India and founder of the Royal Asiatic Society, Sir William Jones, who was a scholar in linguistics as well (Mallory, 1989).

Jones presented his discourse with regard to the Indian culture in 1796 and made his famous pronouncement on the affinity of Sanskrit (India), Gothic and Celtic (the majority of Europe), and the Persian (Iran) languages. As Mallory (1989) quotes Jones:

The Sanskrit language, whatever may be its antiquity, is of wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either; yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could have been produced by accident; so strong that no philologist could examine all the three without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists. There is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothic and Celtic, though blended with a different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanskrit; and the old Persian might be added to the same family.

Different language branching models, e.g. August Schleicher's, Francesco Adrados's, Tomas Gamkrelidze's and Johannes Schmidt's models, are available to reflect on the development process and relationship between different Indo-European family languages (Mallory, 1989). While there are limitations with each model, the basis, which is the Indo-European hypothesis, is constant; this is the only convincing explanation for why approximately half of the world's population speaks in languages (

) clearly connected to each other (Mallory, 1989).



Figure 5. The early historical distribution of the major Indo-European linguistic groups. Adapted from *In Search of Indo-Europeans* by J. P. Mallory (1989). London: Thames and Hudson.

After the fall of the Achaemenians, the ancient tongue developed into Middle Persian or Pahlavi (derived from Parthavi - that is, Parthian). Pahlavi was used throughout the 4 centuries of Sassanid period. However, little now remains of what must once have been a considerable literature. About a hundred Pahlavi texts, mostly on religion, and all in prose have survived. Pahlavi collections of romances provided much of the material for the influential Iranian poet Abolghassem Firdowsi who composed “Shahnameh” (the book of kings) in the early 11th century, as one of the most important classical Persian literature (Iran Chamber Society, 2016).

Farsi, like other languages, has been shaped by different cultural and sociopolitical factors throughout a long historical process, and therefore, shows a number of recognizable features. An important characteristic of Farsi language is the small extent to which it has changed over more than 2 thousand years of its existence as a literary

language. For instance, the poems of Roudaki, the first Persian poet of note who lived in the 9th and 10th centuries, are completely understandable by today's readers (Iran Chamber Society, 2016). Another important feature of the Persian language is its formality and the high degree to which people are careful about what they say and how they say it. Persian language is full of nuances. This has interesting potential cultural implications that will be discussed later (Javidan and Dastmalchian, 2003). A close look at the variety of common address terms, restrictions in the use of first names, and tendency to use general and occupational titles and honorifics shows the sensitivity of Persian language to sociocultural and political situations (Aliakbari & Toni, 2008).

Persian literature, like the language, has its noteworthy characteristics, the most striking of which is the exceptional prominence of poetry. Until recently, there were practically no plays, and no novels. Manuscripts written in prose were mostly confined to history, geography, philosophy, religion, ethics and politics, and it was poetry that formed the chief outlet for artistic expression. Classical Persian literature was produced almost entirely under royal patronage. An influence of at least equal strength was religion, and in particular Sufism, which inspired the remarkably high proportion of mystical poetry (Iran Chamber Society, 2016). Besides aesthetic aspects of Persian literature and language, it carries core values of the Persian culture and society. These values determine the way Persian culture defines effective management and leadership. In the next section, I elaborate the relationship between culture and perception of effective leadership in general, and the effective leadership from Persian cultural perspective in specific.

Persian Cultural Values and Leadership

Research on Cultural Values

Culture has been defined in many ways. Hofstede (2011), in his shorthand definition, says: “Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others.” (Hofstede, 2011). Cultures can be characterized based on their dimensions. According to Hofstede (2001), “a dimension is an aspect of a culture that can be measured relative to other cultures.” According to one of the earliest works, done by US sociologists Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils (1951), five pattern variables were assumed to determine all human actions: (a) affectivity versus affective neutrality; (b) self-orientation versus collectivity-orientation; (c) universalism versus particularism; (d) ascription versus achievement; and (e) specificity versus diffuseness. The scholars claimed that the choices could operate at all levels, i.e., individual, social system (group or organization), and culture (normative); this claim was challenged by Hofstede; he has argued that different variables could operate at different aggregation level (Hofstede, 2011).

In 1952, US anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn argued that there should be universal categories of culture. He said: “All cultures constitute so many somewhat distinct answers to essentially the same questions posed by human biology and by the generalities of the human situation.” (Hofstede, 2011). American anthropologists Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strodbeck did a research in 5 geographically-close small communities in Southwestern US, i.e., Mormons, Hispanics, Texans, Navajo Indians, and Zuni Indians. These communities were distinguished on the following value orientations:

- Human nature (evil, mixed, good)

- Natural environment (subjugation, harmony, mastery)
- Time (toward past, present, future)
- Activity (being, being in becoming, doing)
- Relationships (linearity, collaterality, individualism)

While many researchers have used Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's classification for different social comparisons, the geographical and aggregation level limitations as well as lack of empirical support have raised serious concern regarding the appropriateness of the dimensions (Hofstede, 2011).

In the second half of the 20th century, many scholars started to hypothesize the nature of basic problems, which would present distinct dimensions of culture. In this regard, the most talked about dimension has been modernity and economic development (i.e., traditional vs modern societies), compatible to the dominant belief in progress (Hofstede, 2011). Geert Hofstede (2011), in his review on dimensionalizing cultures, discusses how he used data from IBM employees working in local subsidiaries in over 50 countries in the 1970s, and data from his follow-up study in 400 non-IBM management trainees from some 30 countries in an international program to develop his first model of four cultural dimensions -at societal level- through factor analysis. Later on, he added two more dimensions to the first model based on studies of Canadian psychologist Bond (1980s) and Bulgarian scholar Minkov (2000s). Presently, Hofstede model has six dimensions of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, long-term versus short-term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint (Hofstede, 2011).

Culture and Leadership – The GLOBE Project

Concern over applicability of Western, mostly American, leadership theories and recommendations in all cultural contexts have been explicitly or implicitly expressed by many scholars in the field of leadership (Dastmalchian et al., 2001; Dickson et al., 2012; Gerstner and Day, 1994; House et al., 2002; Javidan and Dastmalchian, 2003; Javidan et al., 2006; Jogulu, 2010; Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017). It does not mean however that there are no universal leadership attributes between different cultures (Dorfman et al., 1997). House et al. (2002) argued, “Throughout mankind’s history, geography, ethnicity, and political boundaries have helped create distinctions and differences among different people. Over time, societies have evolved into group of people with distinguishable characteristics that set them apart from other human communities” (p. 3). Therefore, it would not be surprising if different cultures have different perceptions, expectations, and definitions for effective and outstanding leadership in organizations. As Gerstner and Day (1994) suggest “leadership perceptions are an important consideration because one must first be perceived as a leader to be allowed the necessary discretion and influence to perform effectively.” The notion however can easily be traced back to the mid-20th century literature (Gerstner & Day, 1994).

Bridging the knowledge gap mentioned above, many researchers have designed cross-cultural studies that explore the cultural values and practices in different countries, and have identified their impact on organizational practices and leadership attributes. Without a doubt, the GLOBE (the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) project has been the most comprehensive research that has specifically examined the interrelationships between societal culture, organizational culture, and

organizational leadership (Dickson et al., 2012; House et al., 2002; Javidan et al., 2006). The cross-cultural research endeavor has not been limited to organizational leadership. For instance, there have been efforts to find cultural contingency of self-leadership (Alvez et al., 2006).

GLOBE is a long-term, multi-method, multi-phase, cross-cultural study of leadership and culture implemented on 17300 middle managers from 951 organizations in 62 societies, which had already been distributed into 10 cultural clusters (i.e., Anglo, Latin Europe, Nordic Europe, Germanic Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East, Southern Asia and Confucian Asia clusters). The clusters were created based on societal cultural practices (as is) scores. The GLOBE project has been developed based on the implicit leadership theory (ILT), which says individuals have certain types of beliefs about the kind of attributes, skills and behaviors that facilitate or impede outstanding leadership. The study has investigated the effective leadership attributes within each cluster in terms of 21 leadership attributes, rated on a 7-point Likert scale. It also defines nine cultural dimensions (i.e., performance orientation, assertiveness, future orientation, humane orientation, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, gender egalitarianism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance), to be measured as societal practices-what “is/are”- and societal values-what “should be.” Most of the dimensions are based on the Hofstede model (Dickson et al., 2012; House et al., 2002; Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009; Javidan et al., 2006). Hofstede (2011), however, argues that GLOBE has maintained the labels power distance and uncertainty avoidance, but not necessarily their meanings. The Hofstede collectivism has been split into institutional and in-group collectivism. The masculinity-femininity has been turned into

two dimensions of assertiveness and gender egalitarianism. Long-term by orientation has become future orientation. And finally, two more dimensions of human orientation and performance orientation have been added. Hofstede made an evaluation of the GLOBE project in 2006, through re-factor analysis, and claimed that “in spite of very different approach, the massive body of GLOBE data still reflected the structure of the original Hofstede model.” (Hofstede, 2011). Hofstede also argues that human orientation and performance orientation, both “as is” and “should be” cannot be meaningfully validated at all (Hofstede, 2011).

The GLOBE project has shown that there are some universally positive leadership attributes. There are also a number of universally unacceptable attributes and behaviors related to leadership effectiveness in all societies. Importantly, and as one of the main findings of the GLOBE so far, a number of leadership attributes are also contingent upon cultures. GLOBE has further shown that culturally sensitive attributes of leadership can be seen in those industries which are highly culture dependent, say food and telecommunication companies; the finance sector has not shown such a clear relation (Dickson et al., 2012; House et al., 2002; Javidan et al., 2006).

While the GLOBE project is the largest cross-cultural research focused on leadership, there are some challenges and limitations in its design *and* extrapolation of the findings. GLOBE basically defines societal cultures within geographical borders of 61 countries. There are just some few exemptions to this general fact, such as dividing South Africa, Switzerland and Germany into two parts each. The fact, however, is that we cannot limit a culture (as a social concept) within a geographical zone. The migration of cultural values, especially after telecommunication revolution, is far from and beyond

politically determined borders as countries. In addition, there are other important sectors than just private manufacturing or service industries in a society, e.g. academe, nonprofits or governmental service organizations, which need to be evaluated in terms of the relationship between leadership and culture. Furthermore, middle and top managerial executives in companies do not necessarily represent the whole human asset of a company; they may possess a third/hybrid-culture, depending on their cultural exposures, or influence by the Western leadership and management theories during their higher educations. That significantly limits them to be true representatives of the cultural characteristics of their homelands. Moreover, cultural practices in a company, as expressed by executives, are not just a product of national culture, but the business environment and organizational strategies also influence the cultural practices. Big differences in cultural practices, and values, may exist between a governmental, a private and a multinational company (Namazi and Frame, 2007).

In the case of Iran, there is some evidence reported from Iranian organizations that the impact of national culture on organizational culture is mediated by the firm size (Nazarian et al. 2014). In fact, the GLOBE findings might be limited to some extent to big industries. Lastly, a number of researchers have criticized Hofstede's approach, as the base for cultural dimensions in the GLOBE project, as being culturally biased, because the instrument was based exclusively on Western values (Gerstner and Day, 1994). Such a critique would be valid in all other sporadic cross-cultural studies, which have limited cultural values to the same dimensions.

In the next section, I will review research on Iranian executives based on GLOBE and a number of non-GLOBE studies.

Iranian Cultural Values

GLOBE

The GLOBE project has resulted in many conceptual and original articles. In this section, I focus on few papers that have used Iran's data on societal practices and values as well as leadership attributes. Two articles (Dastmalchian et al., 2001; Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003) address analysis and discussion of Iran's data. Two other articles (e.g., Gupta et al., 2002; Kabasakal et al., 2012) compare data from Iran and the cluster and regional matched countries.

Gupta and his colleagues (2002) analyze the GLOBE data on Iran within its original cluster, i.e., South Asian cluster, and compare the results with other member countries, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines and Thailand. The cluster was inhabited a sum of 1.5 billion of the world's population at the time of data collection. The main features of the region as a whole are its high power distance, group and family collectivism, and humane orientation scores coupled with its low score on gender egalitarianism. These results are confirmed by studies of Javidan and Dastmalchian (2003) and Kabasakal et al. (2012), which are discussed in detail below. Here, a brief comparison is made between cultural practices and values scores obtained from Iran and other cluster members.

In short, this comparison shows that while Iran is included into the South Asian cluster, it actually does not fully fit, as it reveals a number of important differences with its "cluster-mates," in terms of both societal practices and values. In other words, while the cluster scores reflect the overall picture, they do mask individual cultural differences. According to the results, Iran shows the lowest scores in institutional collectivism,

uncertainty avoidance and future orientation, and the second lowest gender egalitarianism compared to other group countries. In fact, Iran does not seem on the same track to a country like the Philippines in terms of dimensions of institutional collectivism and gender egalitarianism. Additionally, Iranians show highest level of assertiveness among the cohort. According to GLOBE, Iran is very close to India regarding societal practices scores on gender egalitarianism, group and family collectivism, and power distance; very close to the Philippines in terms of power distance, assertiveness and performance orientation; somewhat similar to Thailand for the institutional collectivism scores; close to Malaysia regarding group and family collectivism; and shows some similarities for assertiveness score with Indonesia. Similar differences are evident in the societal value scores (“should be”s). Iranian executives have highest aspiration for institutional collectivism, humane orientation and uncertainty avoidance in comparison to their cluster members (Gupta et al., 2002). Linkages between some of the aforementioned findings and the Persian culture have been made below, when reviewing Javidan and Dastmalchian’s (2003) article.

Javidan and Dastmalchian (2003) analyze the cultural and leadership data of Iran collected from 300 middle managers working in over 60 organizations in three industries (banking, telecommunication and food processing), as part of GLOBE. As explained earlier, it is important to note that while Iran is geographically located in the Middle-East region, but has been categorized under South Asian cluster in terms of its culture. The authors claim that the data are almost entirely obtained from Persian respondents, and not other ethnic groups in the country. According to the GLOBE methodology, the Iranian subjects were asked about their perceptions of current practices and ideal values in

relation to the 9 societal and organizational cultural dimensions. They were also asked to identify attributes that contribute to or inhibit outstanding leadership.

The study results show that Iran, compared to the median GLOBE scores, is high in in-group (and family) collectivism, as the most distinguishable feature of Iranian culture, while the institutional collectivism is quite low. The authors observed cultural characteristics such as priority of and loyalty toward family and close circle of friends compared to organizational commitments. They interpreted Iranian society as being high in-group collectiveness and family importance, factors that are important features for the historical development of Iranian culture by many historians and biographers (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). There are religious and cultural anecdotes and proverbs to strongly support the importance of family ties and service to the family in Iranian culture (e.g., “That light, which is needed at home, shall not be taken to the mosque” or “if you’re a shoveler, do the shoveling for your door front first.”). This in-group collectivism may, in turn, have consequences such as lowered levels of creativity, as well as relationship-based decision-making, complex mode of communication, and reduced radius of trust. Meanwhile, Iranian managers reported a very high “should be” score for the institutional collectivism dimension.

Javidan and Dastmalchian (2003) study’s further shows high levels of power distance in Iranian organizations, a factor that has direct negative impact on assertiveness. While assertiveness score for Iranian executives is around the GLOBE median, the respondents call for much more assertive culture along with lower levels of power distance (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). It seems that having authority figures from early ages at home (usually a father), at educational system (as school teacher or

principal), and then at the societal level (a king and or a religious authority which has been strongly promoted *in Shi'ism* as *Vali-ye-faghih* (i.e., the politically knowledgeable cleric who is elected by an official supreme council to lead the Islamic nation) and *Marja-e-taghlid* (i.e., the knowledgeable certified cleric who should be obeyed as a religious mentor and guru), as opposed to democratic relations with lower power distance, has been a functioning cultural feature in Iran throughout its 2,500-year history. Iran's practice score on uncertainty avoidance dimension is low, and managers express their desire for much more uncertainty avoidance. Regarding other cultural dimensions, the Iranian managers in the 2003 study show some degrees of humane and caring orientation, very high levels of male domination, and a performance-oriented culture with short time horizon. It is interesting that despite very low levels of gender egalitarianism, the Iranian executives do not seem concerned to correct it. This might be related to the higher proportion of male respondents in the study sample, which is not mentioned in the article. It would be interesting to compare Hofstede and GLOBE on this. With regard to leadership attributes, the GLOBE data supported preference for charismatic/transformational and team-oriented leadership among Iranian managers. They also showed strong preference for visionary and high integrity leaders who could be regarded as being inspirational, performance-oriented, decisive, team-oriented, generous, and compassionate who were willing to make personal sacrifice. Interestingly, Iranian executives do not put much value on participative leadership (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). Delegating all decisions to an authority figure, who acts at the parental capacity, is a consistent observation in Iranian culture. Throughout the Persian history, many scholars have advised the authority figures to be kind, fair and supportive of their people.

Recently, Kabasakal et al. (2012) have analyzed the GLOBE data collected from country members of the combined the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). In this study, the total participants in the MENA region are 1216 middle managers working in one of the 3 different industrial sectors (food, finance and telecommunication). Seven countries, dispersed in three separate clusters of Middle-eastern (Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Turkey and Qatar), Southern Asia (Iran) and Latin Europe (Israel), have been included in the analysis. Basic features of the Middle-Eastern cluster include societal practices that embody in-group orientation, masculinity, and tolerance of ambiguity and limited emphasis on planning. The Southern Asia cluster, as reflected in Iran, is very highly in-group collectivist; the Latin Europe cluster, represented by Israel in the MENA region, is very high in performance orientation.

The study shows that the overall MENA region's societal practices are rated high on in-group collectivism and power distance. The region has the lowest ratings on gender egalitarianism. Regarding the societal values, the region is high on performance orientation, future orientation and in-group collectivism. According to the results, the significant demands for the region are clearly expressed by middle managers as more future orientation and performance orientation, and less power distance.

On the one hand, the attributes that have commonly contributed to outstanding leadership across the MENA region, are integrity, being inspirational, visionary, administratively competent, performance-oriented, team integrator, diplomatic, collaborative and decisive. On the other hand, middle-managers express that attributes of autonomous, face-saver, autocratic, self-centered and malevolent would hinder outstanding leadership. When divided into sub-clusters, different societies show different

preferred leadership prototypes. Kabasakal et al. (2012) conclude that cultural contexts form the basis for the outstanding leadership preferences, in line with the general proposition that both cultural practices and values explain the difference between outstanding leadership attributes in the MENA region. The authors also consider a number of managerial implications regarding the research findings (Kabasakal et al., 2012).

The Non-GLOBE Research About Iran and India

Measuring the scores on different cultural dimensions of the Hofstede model was among the initial research efforts made during 1970s, which ranked Iranian executives among the IBM employees in 30 countries. The Hofstede's findings are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Cultural Dimension Scores Among Iranian Employees Based on the Hofstede's Model

Dimension	Description	Iran's score	Meaning
Power Distance	The extent to which less powerful members of institutions within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally	58	Iran is a hierarchical society. Centralization is popular. Subordinates expect to be told what to do and the ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat
Individualism/Collectivism	The degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members	41	Iran is considered a collectivist society. It manifests in a close long-term commitment to the member 'group,' be that a family, extended family, or extended relationships. Loyalty is important and over-rides most other societal rules and regulations. Offence leads to shame and loss of face. Employer/employee relationships are perceived in moral terms (like a family link). Management is the management of groups.

Masculinity/ Femininity	Masculine society is the one which is driven by competition, achievement and winning and success. Feminine society is the one which is driven by caring for others and quality in life	43	Iran is considered a relatively feminine society. The focus is on “working in order to live.” Managers strive for consensus. People value equality, solidarity and quality in their working lives. Conflicts are resolved by compromise and negotiation. Incentives such as free time and flexibility are favored. Focus is on well-being
Uncertainty Avoidance	The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid these	59	Iran has a high preference for avoiding uncertainty. It maintains rigid codes of belief and behavior and is intolerant of unorthodox behavior and ideas. There is an emotional need for rules (even if the rules never seem to work). Time is money. People have an inner urge to be busy and work hard. Precision and punctuality are the norms. Innovation may be resisted and security is an important element in individual motivation.
Long-term Orientation	How every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future	14	Iran has a strongly normative cultural orientation. Iranians have a strong concern with establishing the absolute truth. They’re normative in their thinking. They exhibit great respect for traditions, a relatively small propensity to save for the future, and focus on achieving quick results
Indulgence/ Restraint	Indulgence is the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses	40	Iran has a culture of restraint. It has a tendency to cynicism and pessimism. It does not put much emphasis on leisure time and control the gratification of desires. People have the perception that their actions are restrained by social norms and feel that indulging themselves is somewhat wrong.

Retrieved from <http://geert-hofstede.com/iran.html>

Recently, Nahavandi and Krishnan (2017) proposed an Indo-European leadership (IEL) concept mainly based on shared Indian and Persian cultures and wisdom. They link the principles of IEL with the two ancient philosophies of Hinduism and Zoroastrianism in India and Iran, respectively. The authors argue that the dominant Western leadership and management theories and models, flavored with some wisdom and practices from

Far-Eastern cultures, are not “fit for all” recipes as shown in recent cross-cultural studies such as the GLOBE. These theories also do not necessarily justify all success aspects observed in some local and international companies, for example a number of Indian firms; these firms have been able to simultaneously integrate their sociocultural elements into their Westernized businesses practices. Moreover, the authors argue that the individualistic and capitalism-based organizations and companies have not brought financial progress together with human dignity, justice, love, care, and true happiness and satisfaction for all stakeholders, including employees. In accordance with the recent classification of historical philosophies as Hellenistic, China and India, the authors have suggested that leadership studies should also follow the same rationale, with Indo-European tradition as the least explored source of knowledge and wisdom.

Nahavandi and Krishnan (2017) claim that IEL is based on six main themes of integrity, moderation, action, accountability, kindness and compassion, and humility. The important point is that all six are essential and must be present in balance and practiced together to lead to outstanding leadership. As authors show, there are strong linkages between the above themes and some of the popular contemporary leadership school of thoughts and theories such as charismatic leadership, authentic leadership, servant leadership and spiritual leadership. The authors emphasize that the totality of above elements and the strong emphasis on kindness and caring, moderation, and humility while still focusing on action, are unique and offer a novel perspective on leadership, the complementary elements that are highly missing in today’s world (Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017).

Their research provides a number of advantages. It is unique and pioneering as it recalls attention to one of the ancient, richest and at the same time neglected cultural legacy in human history and civilization. The concept of IEL has a lot to add to the contemporary knowledge of leadership. However, due to the dominance of Western and Far-Eastern economies and politics, and their underlying philosophies, it has not seriously taken into account. Moreover, the authors with their vast cultural and leadership research experience have been able to name a number of key social and cultural resources and historic events as well as leading business and nonprofit organizations to back up their discussion. However, their approach is far from complete. There is a need to enrich and broaden their perspective with a study of further Persian literature available in the forms of prose and poem. There is also a need to test the propositions of IEL in Iran by reviewing some Persian best practices (both companies and political and social leaders), and analyzing industrial and nonprofit cases from other societies with Indo-European background. Such research has been undertaken with Indian leadership by reflecting on successful Indian leaders but has not been done with Iranian leaders in different sectors.

Cappeli et al. (2010) in their book *The India Way* share the results of their extensive interviews with over 100 senior executives from 150 top listed Indian companies who played major role in India's rapid development. It has been claimed that in India the distinctive business leadership have helped the nation's economy thrive in the past few decades. In all success stories, they claimed that there is a distinctive Indian way of leading the business that is different from the Western methods of leadership. They discuss how in many ways Indian business leaders and their American counterparts have different "similarities." The interviews with Indian corporate leaders comprehended four

main leadership capacities including: holistic engagement with employees, improvisation and adaptability, creative value proposition, and board mission and purpose. These principles create a unique model of leadership that emphasizes on social purpose and transcendent mission unlike American style that is mainly centered around shareholder value. (Cappelli et al. 2010)

One of the examples is the CEO of Indian IT services giant HCL who leads the company with establishing “transparency” and “empowerment” and “accountability” with regard to employees. The company’s motto is: “Employee first, customer second.” Almost without exception, other Indian leaders also said the source of their success lay in the people who work in the companies, not the top-level managers’ cleverness. Their bottom up approach and investment in culture and human capital development was presented as a main Indian way of leadership.

Both IEL and The India Way studies show that there are culturally related leadership capacities in non-Western societies that are worth paying attention to. In case of Iranian style of leadership and values being practiced by leaders with Iranian cultural background the research has been far from adequate.

A Case for Unique Iranian Leadership Style

In such an effort, the “practical definition” of Persian identity and culture, and its interface with different religious inputs, mainly Zoroastrianism and Islam, needs to be determined as the first step. For example, some of the resources mentioned in the article, such as Saadi, is more influenced by the Islamic thoughts, than Zoroastrianism. In fact, with exception of very few poets of the 9th and 10th centuries, mainly Roudaki and Ferdowsi, other Persian poetry giants such as Attar, Hafez, Rumi and Nezami, strongly

share the same Islamic element as Saadi. Interestingly, they are all influenced by the Sunnism sect of Islam, and not the present Shi'a identity of contemporary Iranians.

In the meantime, Shi'ism has echoed some Islamic values, which were practiced by Muslim Persians since the 7th century afterwards. For instance, the Karbala massacre of Hussein and his followers has raised "martyrdom" as a core religious value among Shi'a Muslim Iranians; a core value which its fulfillment will be praised by Heaven. It is important to note that the value of "being sacrificed for the sake of God (Allah)" is simultaneously a kind of "obedience" toward Allah and affiliated religious authority figures. Obedience in Iranian culture, being facilitated by high power distance, has been practiced through millennia toward kings or clerics at societal level. It seems that the social process of creating such a high-power authority relation among Iranians starts from early stages in life, at household level and through respecting authoritative parents, mostly fathers (Mackey, 1996).

A value like martyrdom among Iranians, on the other hand, may also reflect the dream value of ultimate assertiveness and opposition to a wrongful authority. As it has been described above, in the GLOBE project, Iranian executives in industries have expressed their desire to practice much higher levels of assertiveness than current societal and organizational norms (Dastmalchian et al., 2001; Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003).

The landmark study by Cappeli et al. (2010a) discovered how India's top leaders are revolutionizing management. Through the exemplar stories of several Indian fast-growing companies, authors attribute their success to a unique way Indian executive managers lead their team. The authors interviewed 130 executive leaders from top Indian companies that made the country one of the most fast-growing economy in the world in

the last two decades. The interviews covered questions like what leadership qualities are most vital to their success, what owners and board of directors bring to the table, divergence from or convergence with their western counterparts, methods of recruiting talent, and what will be their lasting legacy, among other questions to substantiate the findings. Four fundamental managerial principles were defined as “the India way: Holistic engagement with employees, Improvisation and adaptability, Creative value proposition, and broad mission and purpose. Interestingly, these principles do not match the Western practices, which are mainly focused on maximizing the investment returns. “Indi Way” is offering a more holistic and collective approach and multi stakeholder benefit consideration for leaders to be able to adapt and compete in a constantly changing business world.

Iran with its long history of civilization was one of the world’s greatest empires and has dominated its region and played a key role for long periods of time (Nahavandi, 2012a). History shows many great leaders, philosophers, scientists, poets, and artists have had an immanent footprint in building Persian culture and heritage. Over centuries, the country and its people have survived invasions and dramatic social, religious, economical, and political transformations. Given the ancient history, religious and philosophical teachings from the literature, with no doubt there are specific leadership lessons to be learned from Persian culture.

All the above examples raise one important issue: The importance and need for further qualitative and quantitative research on the Persian culture and how it may impact leadership attributes and ideals. A review of the literature on leadership in Iranian organizations further amplifies this need, as the linkage between leadership practice and

its attributes from one side, and dimensions of Persian culture from the other side are missing. Bridging the knowledge gap mentioned above, many researchers have designed cross-cultural studies that explore the cultural values and practices in different countries, and have identified their impact on organizational practices and leadership attributes. However, studies on the relationship between Persian culture and leadership perception is far less than adequate. This can cause misunderstandings with regard to organizational behaviors and function in Iran, as well as some malpractices of leadership by foreign managers who lead different processes in the international company subsidiaries in the country.

The overall goal of the research is to explore the key culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals (ILI). Specific research questions are:

1. To what extent do Iranian leaders endorse culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals?
2. To what extent do Iranian leaders apply culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals in their organizations?

Once the ILI are established, the key issue then becomes whether they can be applied to other countries and cultural contexts.

CHAPTER THREE:

METHODOLOGY

Overview of Research Methods

The purpose of this study was to explore culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals (ILI) and their application to today's organizations. To achieve the project's objectives, I used a three-phase mixed- methods research design (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The research design is summarized in **Error! Reference source not found.** First, Iranian ideals of leadership were derived based on existing current research findings, a pilot qualitative study of Iranian leaders, and analysis of literary documents. In the second phase a quantitative survey of Iranian leaders to assess their agreement and application of those ideals was conducted. This two-phase approach was applied to address the complexity of cultural understanding and interpretation. With a mix method research design, this study employed various sources of information such as Iranian leaders in different sectors in different parts of the world, related studies, and some of the classic Persian literature to expand the study's horizon of how culture may define leadership definition and application for Iranians.

Bhattacharjee (2012) suggests a, "unit of analysis refers to the person, collective, or object that is the target of the investigation." This study is exploratory and tries to find generalizable Ideal leadership characteristics and behaviors associated with and influenced by Iranian culture. The unit of analysis in this study is the person and his/her perception of Iranian Leadership Ideals.

Bhattacharjee (2012) defines a 'construct' as "an abstract concept that is specifically chosen (or "created") to explain a given phenomenon." In this study, ILI is a

multidimensional construct that consists of multiple underlying concepts such as Identification with Persian culture and its values, Persian language and literature, national heritage and history.

Table 2

Summary of the Methodology

Phase	Procedure	End Product
Document Analysis, Pilot interviews, and Survey Development	Document review and analysis, in-depth interviews with Iranian leaders, employ thematic findings to write survey questions, translate and back translate from English to Persian.	Thematic findings used to identify culturally-based Iranian leadership ideals and develop a survey to assess ILI
Survey	Electronic based survey of Iranian leaders	Test of endorsement and application of culturally-based Iranian leadership ideals within Iranian Leaders, Test of differences between endorsement and practices of ILIs

Phase One: Pilot Interviews and Document Analysis

The first phase of the study consisted of a small pilot study through interviews with 6 Iranians with over 10 years of leadership experience in different fields. The goal was to explore how they perceived Iranian culture, core cultural values, and the presence of Iranian Leadership Ideals.

Rationale for Phase One

A qualitative research design was chosen for phase one of this study to discover elements of Iranian culture from within. As Merriam (2009) indicates a qualitative design as the best way to conduct “research focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspective of those being studied” (p.1). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) state

“interviews are well suited for studying people’s understanding of the meanings in their lived world, describing their experiences and self-understanding, and clarifying and elaborating their own perspective on their lived world” (p.116). I intended to listen to my participants understanding of their culture, their life experiences and stories, and their perception and interpretation of how their cultural background influenced the way they lead. These pilot in-depth interviews answered the following questions using follow up and reflective inquiries:

1. What values and characteristics are considered culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals?
2. To what extent do Iranian leaders endorse culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals?
3. To what extent do Iranian leaders apply culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals in their organizations?
4. How do they apply ILIs in working with people from other countries and cultural contexts?

Pilot Study Participants

The participants in this study represent a sample of convenience. They included people I have been acquainted with through my previous professional interactions in Iran, or was introduced to through a mutual connection. I interviewed senior Iranian professionals who have been at a leadership role for over 10 years in the United State or Iran. Participants were 5 males and 1 female with Iranian origins within 35 to 70+ age range. Participants were chosen from different industries, businesses and academia in United States or in Iran, which they hold a senior leading position. They were fluent in

speaking and writing in Persian language and identified with the Persian culture as their primary cultural influence to meet the qualification of the current study.

Pilot Study Procedure

Semi-structured interviews with 6 Iranian leaders were used to explore themes of Iranian Leadership Ideals to deepen my understanding of Iranian leaders' perceptions of their culture and how it influences their leadership style as a pilot study. To maximize a systematic and comprehensive discussion, data was collected following the qualitative general interview guide approach. Patton (2002) claims that this data collection method allows researcher to center the discussion on the research topic, demarcating the subjects to be investigated but also allowing interviewees to have spontaneous responses. Therefore, a semi-structured interview guide was used as an outline to explore research questions, while giving freedom to interviewees to share any unforeseen ideas that might come up in this study (see Appendix A). Kvale and Brinkman (2012) notes that semi-structured interview guide is the ideal method to access to the most in-depth information from the interviewees. An email was sent to potential interview participants asking if they would be willing to participate in an interview about their cultural background and leadership style. The email (Appendix B) explained the purpose of the interview and the intended use of the data.

The interviews lasted approximately 60-90 minutes and were recorded using an audio recorder. Whenever possible, the interviews took place in person, but for participants who resided out of California and the country, they also occurred over Skype or FaceTime. The interviews were transcribed verbatim from the recordings. During the initial interviews, I also recruited additional participants through a snowball sampling

technique constructed from the suggestions from the initial group of interviewees. Each interview started with a brief personal connection to the interviewee's work and life experiences. This process of engagement created an environment of trust and openness (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) which helped them to freely express their ideas and share beliefs, motivations, and memories. It also served me to capture information in a comfortable and respectful setting. Although I used an interview guide, I was fully aware of uniqueness of every individual's perspective and the fact that interview is "literally an inter view, an inter-change of views between two persons conversing about a theme" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.2). Therefore, the discussions in every interview were shaped and continued based on each interviewee's perspectives and life and work experiences. This approach allowed participants to use their definition of culture. To ensure the accuracy of the findings, during the interview, based on recommendation of Kvale and Brinkmann (2012) techniques such as repeating back an answer for clarification was used.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Shortly after each interviewed I kept a journal of my own reflections, impressions and any perception about the interview and the participant. I used the memos and personal reflections to better understand the data and some of the common themes and significant differences in stories of the interviewees. The initial notes were used to develop an analytical lens as well as some probing questions for the following interviews. Charmaz (2006) emphasizes on:

Writing extended notes, called memos, on telling codes helps you to develop your idea. Memos form the core of your analysis and record how you arrived at it. Memos provide ways to compare data, to explore ideas about the codes, and to direct further data gathering" (p.12).

Document Analysis

A further exploration cultural values and ideals that outlived through Persian poems and literature for generations over the years complemented the interviews in the first phase. Poetry seemed to be strongly rooted within Iranian culture and their definition of right and wrong doing.

The focus was on the works for two prominent Persian poet/philosophers, Rumi and Sa'di, both known as key cultural heritage and social and spiritual guides for Iranians. Jalaladdin Muhammad Rumi, also known as *Mawlana* (our master) in Persian. Rumi in the Western world, was a 13th century Persian Sufi mystic poet who has continued to influence people in Iran and elsewhere in the world for over the last seven centuries. I reviewed a number of his popular quotes and poems taken from *Masnavi-ye Ma'navi*, which is Rumi's masterwork and known as "Spiritual Verses" for the purposes of extracting core cultural values and principles being thought in classical Persian literature. "Spiritual Verses" consists of 64,000 couplets, and is considered the Rumi's most personal work of spiritual teachings. Rumi described this book as "the roots of the roots of the roots of the (Islamic) religion," and some Sufis regard the content of his poems as the holy book of the Persian language.

In his introduction to an English edition of "Spiritual Verses," the translator Alan Williams wrote, "Rumi is both a poet and a mystic, but he is a teacher first, trying to communicate what he knows to his audience. Like all good teachers, he trusts that ultimately, when the means to go any further fail him and his voice falls silent, his students will have learnt to understand on their own." The other literary sources that were reviewed and analyzed were *Golestan* (meaning "flower field" in the form of prose) and

Boostan (meaning “aroma field” in the form of poem) written by Saadi, the Persian poet and social reformist lived in the 13th century in Shiraz, the capital of Iran at that time. Saadi is known in Iran for his moral and intellectual advices and recommendations directed toward creating and experiencing a desirable personal life within a fair society. Nahavandi (2009, 2012b) has already used Saadi’s *Golestan* as part of the basis of her development of Iranian leadership ideals and the idea of Indo-European leadership. Reviewing the most commonly used poems from these two poets intended to further explore and confirm the thematic findings of the interviews. The result of screening the literature also helped deepening the understanding and interpretation of the findings of survey data.

Phase Two: Survey of Iranian Leaders

The second phase of this study assessed the presence and application of culturally-based ILIs through the use of quantitative survey administered to Iranian leaders. Fowler (2014) suggests a quantitative approach makes sense when a researcher is seeking to determine the differences between groups and establish statistical relatedness between factors that other research suggests are likely to be representative of an entire population (Fowler, 2014). Additionally, he claims that surveys are an excellent tool for self-reporting personal feelings and attitudes, while avoiding interviewer-induced bias. Surveys allow for anonymity of respondents in reporting their attitudes and other personal information, which can motivate them to respond with honesty (Dillman, 2014). Conducting survey further allows for better generalization of the findings as well as understanding characteristics of different demographic group. The survey for this study measured the ILI attributes and how much they are being practiced in Iranian’s leadership

style in today's organization and representation of demographic groups (i.e., age, gender, education, role in organization, sector, years of experience, country of residence, religion) of Iranian leaders.

Survey Instrument

The development of survey questions took place after reviewing the literature related to Persian culture and leadership and completion of the phase one of the study in two stages: (a) analysis of pilot interviews and extraction the common themes in ILIs, and (b) analysis of some of the most commonly known Persian poems that informs part of the culture.

First a comprehensive literature review including different aspects of Persian culture, history, and heritage and what may have influence Iranian culture as well as other related cultural studies such as GLOBE, Hofstede cultural dimensions, Indo-European Leadership Model was conducted. Then pilot interviews were administered with 6 Iranian leaders in different industries in Iran and United State. Themes and patterns on Iranian Leadership Ideals were extracted. At this stage, a review of some of the most commonly known poems from two nationally and internationally praised poets, Maulana (Rumi) and Saadi were reviewed and ethical leadership messages were evoked. For survey question, a total number of 17 items were used to build the primary construct of this framework (see Appendix D)

The survey is comprised of five main segments (see Appendix D). The first part asked five questions related to work background information. The second part was focused on the cultural perspective and intended to explore the participants' perspective on the existence and endorsement of culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals concepts

(17 items) through five-point Likert-scale questions (1= Not at all important, 2= Slightly important, 3= Moderately important, 4= Very important, 5= Extremely important). The third part was focused on participants' leadership style and they were inquired about the extent to which participants practice culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals (17 items) in their own leadership and organizations. A five-point Likert scale (1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4= Often, 5=Always) was used for each item.

The fourth section required participants to rate 14 statements representing main four constructs of family, language, cultural identification, and cross-cultural communication.

These questions were developed based on the existing literature, the results of the pilot interviews, and the document analysis.

The last part was focused on demographics that was comprised of personal and professional background questions and statements (see Appendix D).

Site and Participant Selection

Snowball sampling technique was used to recruit participants. An uncounted number of Iranian leaders was invited through personal connections, peer referral, and professional groups, networks, and associations. Most of the invitations to participate was sent through LinkedIn. Criteria for participants' recruitment included:

1. Iranian cultural background
2. Both male and female participants
3. A minimum of 5 years of formal or informal leadership experience
4. Individuals from all sectors including for-profit, education, government and non-profit

5. Fluency in speaking Persian
6. Living in either Iran or outside of Iran

A total number of 335 people participated in this survey and 249 of the respondents completed the survey to the end. They came from different sectors and educational backgrounds. Detailed information about respondents' demographics is presented in Chapter Four.

Procedure

The survey was administered electronically through Qualtrics. I sent the invitation to potential participants who matched the selection criteria mentioned above via email, and social media outlets such as Facebook and LinkedIn. I asked all my contacts to forward the survey to eligible people in their professional network. The invitation was open to Iranian leaders from different sectors and industries, various level of experience, and countries of residence. As discussed in chapter two, Iranians may hold diverse subcultures, personal and social identities, and consequently show different behaviors. Given the last decades' political, social, and economic transformations, I could also expect generational differences in terms of values and leadership practices. Therefore, my intention in data collection was to be open to inquire a diverse population of Iranian leaders. Using web-based surveys lessens the potential for interview bias that an in-person or telephone survey may provide (Dillman, 2014). I also reached out to professional networks and associations in Iran, US, and other countries with the highest number of Iranian immigrants like Australia and Canada to distribute the survey to their members.

Data Analysis of Phase One

I employed grounded theory approach to discover emerging patterns in the data from the interviews. A grounded theory approach enables researchers to observe and document specific instances of these thoughts, behaviors, and interactions. Through inductive reasoning researchers can then identify patterns and themes from this data to form a conceptual basis for subsequent development of constructs, measures, and theory. Grounded theory is a systematic approach to new concept development and designed to bring “qualitative rigor” to the conduct and presentation of inductive research (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012).

After each interview, I initially developed a series of what Polkinghorne (1995) calls narrative analysis. During this part of analysis, I tried to use the participants own words and what they shared from their experiences and perspectives of cultural values and leadership. Although I used participants’ description of the research topic, I discerned that narrative analysis is meant to describe a pattern and be a means of making sense of the narratives and showing the significance of them in the context of my research questions. I attempted to reflect and make sense of the narratives shared by participants and categorize them by interpretation of what they said and perhaps why are the underlying reasons of what they said.

To do the narrative analysis, after transcribing the interviews, I read the text several times. It gave me more insights into the conversations, the dynamics of the interviews, and some initial interpretation of what has been said. I extracted some key themes and ideas as initial codes that could be important in answering the research questions. As Emden (1998) suggested, by deleting parts of the text distracting the key

ideas, and making sense of what is left, I identified plots that gives me a coherent understanding of the concepts discussed in the interviews. Finally, I attempted to make sense of the data and how they answer my research questions in regard to Persian culture and its relationship with leadership Ideals.

Along with existing research about Iranian and Indo-European Leadership (Nahavandi, 2012a; Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017), review of several key documents from Iranian literature was used to develop the themes of ILI. Ancient leadership lessons from Iranian Mystical Leadership (Nahavandi, 2012) using Saadi Shirazi, Ferdowsi, and other mystic Persian poets introduces ideals of Persian leadership. Zoroastrian teachings, as discussed in chapter two, is reflected in most of the moral values. A great amount of leadership ideals seems to have relatively unchanged. The leadership themes from Nahavandi's Ancient Leadership Lessons was used to triangulate the findings of the present study. The reason I chose to look closer into Persian classic literature was because in almost every pilot interview the importance of language and literature in Iranian culture, especially in the form of poem and classic music was mentioned by the interviewees. They all mentioned how they remember reading poems from early childhood or how they used lines of poems in daily life in their family or at work. It was mentioned that some of the well-known literature is used as ancient wisdom proverbs, ethical advice, or philosophical sayings.

Analysis of the first phase for both the document review and pilot interviews was through coding schemes with themes, connections, and meanings emerging from the data (Saldana, 2016). Grounded theory approach to use open data coding was employed to generate new understanding of the data and discovering the meanings that emerges from

it. These codes and their emerging patterns was analyzed to create categories, themes and ultimately theoretical explanations. Grounded theory “provides a procedure for developing categories of information (open coding), interconnecting the categories (axial coding), building a “story” that connects the categories (selective coding), and ending with a discursive set of theoretical propositions” (Strauss, & Corbin, 1990). The document texts and interview transcripts was read multiple times to allow the initial categories to emerge using open coding. MAXQDA qualitative software was also used to allow the verbiage from the interviewees to help guide the categories and themes that emerge (Saldana, 2013). Codes will be created for each key point identified in the interview transcripts and documents. The themes extracted from both document analysis and pilot interview informed crafting ILI question for the survey

Information from the two classical Persian literature scholars helped me to deepen my understanding of the values that have been embedded in the Persian culture for centuries. I chose commonly used lines of poems and coded them based on different semantic themes. The extracted themes represented Persian leadership wisdom and advice based on moral values and principles from the reviewed literature.

The results of the pilot interviews and the document analysis provided insight into the culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals and development of a survey to assess the presence and application of culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals. In addition to providing a rich source of information to address the research questions, the document review and pilot interviews also served as a way to triangulate data. Triangulation seeks to collect data from various data sources and via multiple methods so as to increase the validity of the findings (Mathison, 1988). Looking for commonly known literature and

analyzing them strengthened the reliability of the results of what I repeatedly heard in the interviews.

Data Analyses of Phase Two

Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software was used to clean, format, and analyze quantitative data derived from the survey. Correlations, exploratory factor analyses (EFA) and partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) were used to explore the research question, assess the existence of ILI, and explore potential difference in endorsement and practice of ILI in various conditions. Table 2 shows the type of analysis for each research question.

The primary objective of the initial data collection and analysis was item reduction to factors that reliably explored and represented the ILIs. Following data cleaning and preliminary tests for data quality, factorability of the data examined. Then exploratory factor analysis (EFA), which mathematically explored which measured items correlate, or load, with others in the data (Costello and Osborne, 2005). The goal of EFA in this study was to find the latent themes of the data by uncovering common factors for ILI endorsement, practice, and cultural identity. The detailed description of EFA and factors explored for ILI endorsement, practice, and cultural identity factors are extensively discussed in chapter 4.

Table 2

Type of analysis for research questions

Research question	Items in the survey	Interview questions	Analysis
What are key culturally-based Iranian leadership ideals?	Items developed based on pilot interviews and document analysis (Appendix D, items developed for cultural endorsement, leadership practice, and cultural identity)	Appendix A Questions D 1-6	Factor analysis
To what extent do Iranian leaders endorse culturally-based Iranian leadership ideals?	Appendix D, questions B 1-18	Appendix A, question B 1-4	Frequency and analysis of means on survey items B 1-18, Factor Analysis
To what extent do Iranian leaders apply culturally-based Iranian leadership ideals in their organizations?	Appendix D, questions C, 1-18	Appendix A, questions C, 1-10	Frequency and analysis of means on survey items C 1-18, Factor Analysis

Differences Between Endorsed (EILI) and Practiced (PILI)

A series of paired samples *t*-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to explore the differences between endorsed and practice in regard to ILI as well as factors that may impact those differences respectively. The factors considered that may have influenced the ILI endorsement and practice differences were country of residence, gender, and age. The results of these analysis are extensively discussed in Chapter Four.

The Relationships Between ILIs and Cultural Factors

To explore further if there is any potential relationship between cultural identity factors with endorsed and practiced ILIs factors, Partial Least Squares modeling (PLS) was used. PLS is a method for constructing predictive models when the factors are many and highly collinear (Tobias, 2016). PLS-SEM estimates the parameters of a set of equations in a structural equation model by combining principal components analysis with regression-based path analysis (Mateos-Aparicio. 2011). The main reason for choosing this method was because it allows the researcher to estimate and explore further a complex phenomenon such as culture and behavior, with many constructs and indicator variables. The result of the significant relationship between factors are presented with a structural model in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

This chapter presents data collected from six pilot interviews, and thematic findings of the interview transcripts in the first phase and findings of the survey analysis in the second phase.

In the first phase, I interviewed six Iranian leaders from different backgrounds and sectors who lived either in Iran or in United States. The purpose of the pilot interviews was to gain deeper understanding of how Iranian leaders perceive their culture, its values, and how those values influence their leadership style. An overview of the population interviewed, followed by in depth exploration of personal culturally related leadership experiences is provided in this chapter. As described in chapter three, the findings from phase one, informed me to create the survey for the second phase. A description of survey participants, followed by exploratory findings of data is also presented in the second part of this chapter.

Pilot Interview Themes

Six leaders from different fields, sector, level of experiences, who live in Iran and the United States participated in the pilot interviews. The age range of the pilot interview participants varied from mid-30s to around 70 years old. They were five men and one woman, coming from different fields and industries including business, start up organization, academia, computer and IT, and venture capital. They all identified with Iranian culture and were fluent in Persian language. Participants were highly educated and 5 out of 6 held a master's degree. Only one, held a bachelor's degree, two held two master's degrees, and the other three held Ph.D. or doctorate degrees.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, participants took about 60-90 minutes talking about their culture, family background, what shaped their moral and ethical values, and how it may be related to the way they lead in their organizations. The exploratory nature of this study led to using semi-structured interview protocol to let my participant share their stories, ideas, and experiences. It also allowed participants to use their own definition and perception of Iranian culture.

These pilot in-depth interviews answered the following research questions:

1. What values and characteristics are considered culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals?
2. To what extent do Iranian leaders endorse culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals?
3. To what extent do Iranian leaders apply culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals in their organizations?

Pilot interview questions were mainly focused on exploring interviewee's cultural identification, values, roots, leadership style, and how they apply culturally related leadership attributes in working with non-Iranians. After the first two interviews, I added a question about how they see women's role in their family, culture, and community. The following themes were found in the interviews.

Strong Family Connection

Family bond and connectedness was identified as one of the most influential factors in shaping cultural understanding and identification for participants. All the interviewees mentioned how family structure and influence have been crucial in modeling core values in their lives. The embedded connections among family members

and their loving support for one another emphasized the role of elder members of the family and how trust and respect are the key foundations of this relationships. In-group connections and trust seemed to be a pattern in the way they expressed loyalty in their close family relationship. When participants were asked what has informed their cultural values, they all mentioned ‘family’ without any hesitation. However, this level of closeness and trust seems to belong only to a close and trusted group of family and relatives. One gentleman said:

Family influence is for sure number one! A lot of values that I currently carry with me come from my family. I think I can even learn from some elements that are not working in my family or generally in Iran like not having openness and acceptance towards others, generalizing, and being prejudice.

Family was mentioned as providing a sense of community and belonging to that community. Even when as a consequence of increasing Iranian immigration to other parts of the world in the last few decade, members of a family are physically dispersed around the globe, they still feel they are connected and they belong to something that unites them in core. One of the interviewees explained:

Having close net of family relationship, respect to the elderly, being in touch with people that we were connected growing up means being tied to your community of people. The sense of belonging that you are part of this community is important for me and my family.

Maternal Power and Respect

The role of a strong mother figure, either a strong mother or grandmother who is a leader in the family was mentioned in different stories. Almost all the examples of ‘women leadership’ came from somebody in the family rather than workplace experiences. Mothers commonly were mentioned as the ones who are providing a safe space, nourishing with love and kindness, and yet strongly protect and support family

members in their endeavors. Interviewees often shared stories of their mothers and/or grandmothers who not only had a powerful role and authority in managing their own family issues, but also often served the larger community. One of the interviewees who belongs to a large upper-class family, named her grandmother as a great role model in her childhood and said:

“She was a very strong woman, she ran and she ruled in our household. She was a very powerful figure, she had businesses and she was on top of running things and she ordered people around but also had a lot of caring, she was involved in a lot of cultural events and charity donation. She built a school which was in her name.

Respect for tradition seemed to be vital in holding the boundaries of the family structure. The family structure and connections were extended beyond immediate family and included a larger number of members as well as those who are related by marriage.

One of the interviewees explained respect for tradition as:

The way I grew up in Iran, understanding hierarchy and respect for elders in family or teachers in school was very important. You had to have respect for everybody and I think that part of culture was in grind in everybody. you weren't supposed to use casual language with older people. We had that layer of respect with everybody.

Persian Language and Literature

All interviewees emphasized the importance of language and literature as the key elements of their cultural identity and how they have significantly shaped their perspective. One of the interviewees strongly emphasized, “I value Persian language and literature a lot and I don't want to give that up.”

Some mentioned that they remember their parents and grandparents reading Persian classic poems to them to teach a lesson like helping others or working hard to realize goals and dreams. Connecting to classical Persian literature, as part of the identity

and a way to learn and practice spiritual and moral values seem to be important to my respondents. Those respondents who lived outside of Iran for many years, often emphasized how using Persian language is connecting them to their core essence and how some of their feelings and reflections are more authentic in their mother tongue. Persian language and literature give them access to a deeper part of their cultural identity and connect them with ancient morals and values. When I asked what aspects of culture he identifies with, one gentleman responded, “Family background, Persian literature especially poems and proses with spiritual essence (mainly Attar and Rumi), trying to find out my “Persian identity” especially given the fact that the imposed Arabic/Islamic culture after revolution cannot fulfill me.”

In describing different factors that informed and influenced their cultural values, one of the interviewees said:

That whole upbringing is a mix of how not only the family but also the schooling had a big added note to our development as a child. The way you study, how you read poetry, and other books. We had to know poetry. To great stand poetry had role in our lives. We used to read Rumi, Saadi, Hafiz and in our house, we had poems written in Persian calligraphy.

Knowing and reading poetry, as a way of learning has been a generational phenomenon. They often shared how they remember their parents or grandparents would read them poetry or make them memorize poems to pass the cultural wisdom from old times. Even if as a child, they couldn't fully understand the meanings of poems, the moral message is ingrained in them. A respondent in her fifties who left Iran as a teenager said:

About the poetry, growing up, I realized our prior generation were more connected with poetry than my generation. Some people that I know at my parent's age who knew so much poetry. Any time my mom wanted to tell us something important, or praise us, her saying was always followed by a line of poetry: “*giram pedare to bood fazel az fazle pedar to ra che hasel*” (which

translates into: ‘Never mind if you had a wise father, [tell me] what you have from his wisdom?’) As a kid I remember asking what it means and ways I could interpret them.

As an example of Persian literature teachings, one of the interviewees mentioned being present and enjoying that moment. He said:

“I think primarily a lot of what Persian poet, Omar Khayam says: “Be happy for this moment. This moment is your life.” and remind myself constantly to live in present and trying to be a good person, not only to my family and friends but to the bigger circle in the society and trying to be a good citizen of the world. I think that comes from my Persian cultural connection.”

Cultural Values Influencing Leadership

As the conversations continued with interviewees, they reflected on main cultural values that are the most vital to the way they interact with other people and influence their leadership style in organization and community. One of the interviewees said:

“What makes you, impacts who you are. I think who we become and who we are is defined by that cultural perspective that we grew up with. A lot of my past had influenced my way of leading.” Review and analysis of interview transcripts revealed some main themes in regard to values and attributes that are most critical in Iranian culture and interviewees perceived them as key element in their leadership practice.

Care and Kindness

As a leader, being kind, supportive and taking care of the subordinates seem to be very important. Although I realized my interviewees have different personalities, they all in different ways emphasized on how important “caring for employees” and “empowering others” are in their practice of leading people. There is also a strong connection between values being practiced in leadership and the Zoroastrian teachings and main values of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds that indicate how core

beliefs and morals should be reflected in interacting with others. As one of the participants stated:

I feel a strong relationship as Persian culture has put strong emphasis on humans, and good deeds towards them.” Another gentleman, referring to connecting his values to Zoroastrian roots mentioned, “I like the Zoroastrian roots that Iran has, so I value do well and the way you like others to do with you. Even though I am not very religious, but I believe in doing good and being good.

Some of the interviewees thought that they inherited value of ‘care and kindness’ from the powerful mother figure in their life. One of them mentioned her powerful grandmother and stated:

She empowered me to empower others. I learnt the importance of showing extra care for others. That formed a lot of my duties that I have to give people (even at work) extra care and attention. . . . At work, I am very pragmatic, factual and data driven but I try to keep humanistic approach into consideration. I believe I can be task oriented, but still care for others.

They commonly mentioned having care for employees means empowering them to be better in what they do. One the gentleman confirmed a strong relationship between his cultural background and the ways he leads because “Persian culture has put strong emphasis on humans.” The discussion about value for human emerged “empathy” as next theme.

Empathy

Empathy means understanding of people’s emotions, which results in better understanding and respecting others, and synchronizing our emotions and feelings with them. Two interviewees emphasized empathy as one of the fundamentals in their interactions with others and their practice of leadership. One of them said that he identifies empathy as his most critical capacity in exercising leadership. He believed that empathy results in connection, motivation and loyalty of staff. It seems that empathy is

strongly related to the cultural teachings of love and kindness. It has also been a key emphasis of Rumi's perspective of knowing self and others. Interviewees' ideas about caring for employees, being kind with others, and not using a language or behavior to hurt others' feelings showed a strong correlation between empathy and their communication style. One interviewee stated, "It's hard for me to hurt people's emotions if it's not a very important issue."

Further conversations revealed that the style of communication in interaction with others can be modest and more reserved compare to many Western cultures where individual abilities to show distinction is valued.

Modesty and Humility

Being concerned about others and being modest in their personal and professional work were mentioned several times by respondents as a major theme when describing their cultural characteristics. Sometimes it is manifested as politeness and respect for others. Some may consider that Iranians have a tendency to downgrade or somehow deny their own abilities and qualities, and to compromise. From an Iranian perspective, however, it is considered being humble and using both verbal and nonverbal languages to communicate a self-lowering and respectful language and expression for others. Interviewees often described language and behaviors that indicated that they privileged being humble, self-lowering, and that is how they recognize others. In fact, humility is a key personal and societal value among Iranians. As one interviewee emphasized the importance of not being bossy and said, "I use "we" not "I" all the time. I don't want to give a sense of being a boss but we as a team are making a decision. I don't undermine or undervalue people."

It was stated that being immodest and pompous interprets as being overbearing and egocentric and it is not valued and respected. Further discussion about styles of communication revealed that at core what matters the most in every relationship is “trust” and “honesty.”

Trust and Honesty

Honesty, truthfulness and trust came up several times in all interviews. They are identified as a critical element of Iranian culture and moral and ethical code. Participants often mentioned how currently there is mistrust within the system in the country and for different reasons, including “self-protection,” trust has been compromised. The interviewees commonly emphasized that they establish a strong foundation of trust in their teams to be aligned with their personal and cultural values. One of the participants said, “I know myself as a staff-oriented person. My staff’s work satisfaction and comfort are of prime importance to me; unless I feel (s)he is not true and authentic in his/her claims and acts.” Another interviewee who runs a big firm in California but has been in touch with Iranians inside and outside Iran mentioned:

Unfortunately, especially in the last 20 years or so, I have the impression that some of the people in Iran in general don’t trust each other. It is like you are guilty before you prove your innocent and it’s like a barrier in communication. If you are not referred to somebody by someone, it is not possible to trust or build a close relationship.

In a discussion around openness, one of the interviewees mentioned that he is not willing to share personal matters at work. It may relate to part of the culture that Iranians usually keep what they truly believe to themselves. For several reasons, social structure in Iranian culture consists of layers that protect its core. Historically, Iranians had to cope with adverse situations and survive over the centuries, and in the last few decades, they

have continued to protect themselves in uncertain social, economic, and political unexpected conversions. That is how one of the interviewees mention even though honesty and truthfulness is an Iranian core value, some people are not completely honest in the way they do business. It seems like a high level of trust is bounded in “inner circles” and “close in-groups” and not expanded to larger society.

One of the interviewees discussed how by creating a family like environment in the workplace, he intends to build trust and connect people to one another. He shared that he started his company in the US about 35 years ago with his brother and their dad was their mentor and coach to build an organization based on trust and empowerment. He said:

Although there are over 100 employees in this firm, only 10 of them are Iranian-American and the rest are from different sub-cultures in the US, they all think that our organization has a family-like feeling. I think I created that culture inside here.

He believed that their secret to success was strongly related to have trust in employees and give them confidence and empower them to thrive and maximize their potentials. He added, “There is an internal derive in leadership that we embrace and nurture, and it’s the fact that you can have ordinary people do extraordinary things.” Deeper inquiry on ways of communication and management styles, revealed some aspects of generational differences and how “power distance” play a role in ILIs.

Generational Differences and Authority

It became clear that all interviewees had opinions regarding dealing with the power flow in the organization and different systems with which they are involved. They commonly used a respectful demeanor when talking about their superiors. One

interviewee mentioned that there has to be a power structure to realize the vision of any organization. However, the same interviewee talked about how he keeps the distance short with his followers. It seems that although accepting power distance in Persian culture is relatively high, some Persian leaders avoid hierarchical behavior due to modesty and humility as discussed before. There appears to be a difference in how some leaders think about power structure and how they exercise their power. One of the interviewees who leads a team in a U.S. company said, "I think in an organization, authority should exist and somebody's vision should go through. People tell me I speak softly with a big stick in my hand. I avoid conflicts and I respect others' boundaries." When I asked how he would use his own power and authority in his leadership style, his response was, "I try to keep the distance short and don't want to sound like a boss, try to always be accountable for whatever team does, don't let the team be alone if something happens (a problem occurs)."

Further discussions unfolded regarding how generations can have a crucial role in understanding respect and implying power distance in Iranian Leadership Ideals and practices. As mentioned earlier respect for tradition and using proper respectful language when talking to elders and people with more experiences are important even in a child's upbringing in the family. It became clearer to me when hearing their stories about their parents, grandparents, teachers, mentors, role models. The ultimate level of respect to a higher authority, embodied in the form of having faith in God as the creator in some of the interviews.

Identification with the Iranian culture, literature, and tradition, as well as a sense of cultural pride seemed to be a pattern especially in conversations with more senior participants.

Findings From Survey

Survey Participants

A total of 335 Iranians around the world attempted to respond to the survey, however 249 respondents fully completed the questions. Table 3 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The majority of respondents lived in Iran with 45% female and 55% were male and the largest percentage having a master's degree, with 53.5% of respondents having their degree from Iran. Ninety-eight percent of the respondents said they speak Persian language, with the majority (62%) identifying as Muslim.

Table 3

The Key Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

	Percentage	Number
COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE		
Iran	55%	136
USA	25%	63
Canada	8%	20
EU & other	12%	30
GENDER		
Male	55%	138
Female	45%	111
HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL		
High school	1%	2
Associate degree	1%	3
Bachelor	24%	59
Masters	44%	110
PhD/Doctorate	30%	75

COUNTRY OF HIGHEST DEGREE		
Iran	53.5%	133
USA	22.5%	56
EU	7%	17
UK	6%	15
Canada	6%	15
Australia and NZ	2%	4
Other	3%	9

PERSIAN LANGUAGE SPEAKING		
Yes	98%	244
No	2%	5

RELIGION		
Muslim	62%	153
Christian	1%	3
Zoroastrian	0.4%	1
Jewish	0 %	0
Baha'i	0.4%	1
Buddhist	0.4%	1
None	20%	49
Prefer not to say/ other	16%	39

AGE		
Under 30	10%	26
30-39	40%	100
40-49	31%	78
50-59	14%	35
60-69	3%	8
70-79	1%	2

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE		
Less than 1 year	2%	6
More than 1 but less than 5 years	14%	35
More than 5 but less than 10 years	18%	44
More than 10 but less than 20 years	39%	96
More than 20 years	27%	68

Total n = 249

Table 4 presents general background information about the participants. As can be seen, the majority of respondents (53%) worked in a for profit organization with 76% indicating that they held a formal leadership position.

Table 4

Type of Organizations Where Respondents Work

Type of Organization	Percentage	Number
For-Profit/Corporation/Business	53%	171
Education/Academia	15%	47
Nonprofit	5%	16
Healthcare/Hospital	8%	26
Government/public sector	7%	22
Student	3%	10
Not Currently Employed	3%	10
Other *	6%	19
Total	100%	321

* Respondent to other identified as business owner, self-employed, and affiliated with international organizations like United Nation.

Table 5

Roles of Respondents in their Current Organizations

Position in the Organization	Percentage	Number
Staff member	9 %	32
Middle manager	21%	71
Engineer/scientist	12 %	42
Healthcare provider/medical doctor/nurse	6 %	19
Educator/teacher/professor	10 %	35
Business owner/CEO/Executive level director	32 %	108
Other*	10 %	33
Total	100%	340

*Those responded as “other” identified with various leadership roles such as different managerial positions, president, advisor, consultant, and doctoral and postdoctoral students.

Table 6

Respondents' Years of Experience

Years of Experience	Percentage	Number
Less than a year	10%	30
1-5 years	44%	126
6-10 years	19%	54
11-20 years	19%	56

More than 20 years	8%	23
Total	100%	289

Overall Data Summary and Survey Reliability

Table 7 presents the quantitative results of descriptive statistics that were applied to the data of this study.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics of Survey Data

Survey item	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Honesty and truthfulness endorsement	266	1	5	4.46	0.737
Modesty endorsement	264	1	5	3.59	0.979
Empathy endorsement	264	1	5	4.03	0.933
Trust endorsement	267	1	5	4.58	0.616
Integration endorsement	263	1	5	4.14	0.899
Goodwill endorsement	268	1	5	4.21	0.85
Respect for elders and more experienced endorsement	266	1	5	3.85	0.944
Care and compassion endorsement	266	1	5	3.89	0.933
Kindness endorsement	269	1	5	3.61	0.947
Hard work endorsement	266	1	5	4.34	0.855
Patience endorsement	270	1	5	4.37	0.802
Wisdom endorsement	265	1	5	4.49	0.734
Fairness endorsement	268	1	5	4.35	0.785
Generosity endorsement	266	1	5	3.51	1.047
Accountability endorsement	266	1	5	4.51	0.707
Faith in God endorsement	247	1	5	2.45	1.458
Having a role model endorsement	257	1	5	3.35	1.213
Honesty and truthfulness practice	236	2	5	4.56	0.627
Modesty practice	235	2	5	4.05	0.813
Empathy practice	235	2	5	4.18	0.802
Trust practice	234	2	5	4.43	0.691
Integration practice	231	2	5	4.23	0.795
Goodwill practice	232	2	5	4.41	0.678
Respect for elders and more experienced practice	233	2	5	4.31	0.776
Care and compassion practice	234	2	5	4.25	0.796
Kindness practice	236	2	5	4.22	0.784

Survey item	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hard work practice	234	2	5	4.59	0.63
Patience practice	234	1	5	4.1	0.841
Wisdom practice	231	2	5	4.31	0.721
Fairness practice	234	2	5	4.33	0.681
Generosity practice	234	1	5	3.97	0.895
Accountability practice	235	2	5	4.52	0.718
Faith in God practice	214	1	5	3.21	1.6
Having a role model practice	230	1	5	3.52	1.097
I identify with Persian culture	247	1	5	3.88	0.929
My culture impacts my values	248	1	5	3.75	0.935
My culture impacts my behavior	248	1	5	3.9	0.842
I think my leadership style is influenced by my Persian cultural background	248	1	5	3.29	1.112
The Farsi Language is an important element of my culture	247	1	5	3.81	1.097
Family connections are important to me	248	1	5	4.19	0.976
I create a family-like environment at my workplace	247	1	5	3.66	1.035
I know/read Persian literature (for example, Hafiz, Rumi, Saadi, Ferdosi)	243	1	5	3.81	1.087
I think Persian literature influenced my understanding of Persian culture	244	1	5	3.84	1.008
I enjoy telling people from other countries about my culture	247	1	5	4.09	0.888
I know about Persian cultural traditions	247	2	5	4.15	0.651
I practice some of my cultural values when dealing with people from other countries	247	1	5	3.91	0.904
I maintain my Persian cultural values even when interacting with non-Iranians	247	1	5	3.62	0.985
I believe that my culture has made positive contributions to the world	247	1	5	3.78	1.052

Before any data analyses were undertaken, the survey's reliability was established. The purpose of a reliability analysis is to determine how well a set of items go together into a single scale. The reliability of a survey depends on the consistency, stability, and dependability of the scores (McMillan, 2007). The internal consistency was tested using the commonly used statistical reliability analysis, Cronbach's alpha

coefficient. This coefficient has a maximum value of 1.0. Generally speaking, if the alpha value is higher than 0.9, the internal consistency is excellent, and if it is at least higher than 0.7, the internal consistency is considered to be reliable (Blunch, 2008). The Cronbach's alpha for Indorsed and practiced ILIs were 0.842 and 0.839 respectively.

Addressing the Research Questions: Factor Analysis Results

The design of this study was exploratory by nature. The most appropriate way to explore the data to answer the research questions was to employ exploratory factor analysis (EFA). As mentioned in Chapter 3, the overall goal of this research was to explore the key culturally-based ILIs. To that end, specific research questions were:

1. To what extent do Iranian leaders endorse culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals?
2. To what extent do Iranian leaders apply culturally-based Iranian leadership ideals in their organizations?

This study did not aim to test any hypothesis or theories, and therefore did not employ inferential statistics. EFA is a complex, multi-step process and commonly applied statistical technique in the social sciences. It is suggested that factor analysis is preferable to principal components analysis (Costello & Osborne, 2005). In EFA, a number of measured variables are put into the analysis and are separated into separate factors based on statistical measures. This method explores which measured items correlate, or load, with others in the data. The goal of EFA in this study was to find the latent themes of the data by uncovering common factors.

Initially the data was screened to identify univariate outliers such as administrative errors and record them as missing data. Boomsma (1982) recommended a

minimum sample size of 200 to achieve reliable results in factor analysis. After cleaning the data, the sample size of $n = 221$, which was higher than the minimum amount of data for factor analysis was used.

Extraction method. SPSS offers six-factor analysis extraction methods including: unweighted least squares, generalized least squares, maximum likelihood, principal axis factoring, alpha factoring, and image factoring (Costello & Osborne, 2005). In this study, given the normal distribution of the data, I used maximum likelihood. Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, and Strahan (1999) recommend that if data are relatively normally distributed, maximum likelihood is the best choice because “it allows for the computation of a wide range of indexes of the goodness of fit of the model [and] permits statistical significance testing of factor loadings and correlations among factors and the computation of confidence intervals” (p. 277).

Rotation method. Employing a rotation method gets factors that are as different from each other as possible, and helps the researcher interpret the factors by putting each variable primarily on one of the factors. In this study, I used varimax with Kaiser normalization rotation method to maximize the sum of the variances of the squared loadings. The factor solution was determined based on the numbers of eigenvalue that were greater than one (Kaiser, 1960).

Factor loadings. Velicer and Fava (1998) suggest that item communalities are considered “high” if they are all .8 or greater, however this is unlikely to occur in real data. More common magnitudes in the social sciences are low to moderate communalities of .40 to .70. For this study, the cutoff value greater than .40 was used. After the initial factor loading and putting extracted factors together, a meaningful name for each factor

was proposed. Neill (1994) suggests, “A well labeled factor provides an accurate, useful description of the underlying construct and helps to facilitate the clarity of the report” (p. 1).

Factor analysis results. To answer the first research question and assess the extent to which Iranian leaders endorse culturally-based Leadership Ideals, their answers regarding the importance of 17 cultural values were examined through an EFA. The statements about culture were extracted from pilot interviews in the phase one. Several commonly accepted criteria for the factorability of a correlation were employed (Neil, 1994); each will be presented below. The results showed that 15 of the 17 cultural statements loaded on four factors. Two items that did not load on any factor were eliminated (see Table 8).

Table 8

*Endorsed Cultural Ideals**

Factor 1: Care and Kindness (EC)	1	2	3	4
Care and Compassion for others	0.76			
Kindness	0.706			
Generosity	0.69			
Respect for elders and people with more experience	0.442			
Factor 2: Trustworthiness (ET)				
Trust		0.643		
Honesty and Truthfulness		0.635		
Empathy		0.532		
Goodwill		0.467		
Modesty		0.444		
Factor 3: Wisdom and accountability (EWA)				
Wisdom			0.633	
Accountability			0.567	
Fairness			0.556	
Patience			0.448	
Factor 4: Higher authority (EHA)				
Faith in God				0.822
Having a role model				0.489

*Two items did not load on any factor and were eliminated: integration and hard work

Each factor was labeled based on the items in the factor and the literature related to Persian values and leadership ideals resulting in the following Endorsed ILI (EILI) factors:

1. Endorsed Care and kindness (EC) – composed of care and compassion for others, kindness, generosity, and respect for elders.
2. Endorsed Trust (ET) – composed of honesty, empathy, goodwill, and modesty.

3. Endorsed Wisdom and Accountability (EWA) – composed of accountability, fairness, and patience.
4. Endorsed Higher Authority (EHA) – composed of faith in god and having a role model.

To answer the second research question of the extent to which Iranian leaders apply culturally-based ideals in their organizations a second EFA was used to analyze the participants responses on the same 17 items (see Table 9). The Cronbach's alpha of this test, was 0.839 and $n = 199$. As shown in table 10, four factors emerged. These practiced ideals (PILI) were labeled as follows:

1. Practiced Empathy and Compassion (PEC) – composed of care and compassion, generosity, kindness, modesty, and fairness
2. Practiced Accountability and Honesty (PAH) – composed of honesty, accountability, hard-work, goodwill, patience, and trust
3. Practiced Higher Authority (PHA) – composed of faith in god and respect for elders
4. Practiced Wisdom (PW) – with only one items, wisdom

Table 9

*Practiced Cultural Ideals**

Factor 1: Empathy and compassion (PEC)	1	2	3	
Empathy	0.728			
Care and Compassion for others	0.696			
Generosity	0.614			
Kindness	0.61			
Modesty	0.442			
Fairness	0.442			

Factor 2: Accountability and Honesty (PAH)				
Honesty and Truthfulness		0.653		
Accountability		0.585		
Hard Work		0.502		
Goodwill		0.497		
Patience		0.468		
Trust		0.427		

Factor 3: Higher Authority (PHA)				
Faith in God			0.596	
Respect for elders and people with more experience			0.498	
Factor 4: Wisdom (PW)				
Wisdom				0.946

*Two items did not load on any factor and were eliminated: Integration, Having a role model

The two EFAs allowed for identification of Iranian leadership ideals with a focus on care and kindness, accountability, and looking up to higher authority. While clear factors emerged both in regard to ideals and practice and while the factors share some themes, there are some differences between what the Iranian leaders consider ideals and what they practice. Further exploration of how ideals and practice differ, will be discussed later in this chapter.

Result of EFA for Other Key Variables

Fourteen questions explored participants' cultural identity and the factors that related to their identity. Following the same methodology described in the previous section, a EFA was conducted to identify the themes. Table y presents the results of the EFA. Two questions that did not load on any factor were eliminated resulting in four factors (see

Table 10). The four factors were labeled as follows:

1. Cultural identity and values (CIV) – composed of practicing Persian cultural values when dealing with people from other countries; enjoying telling people from other countries about my culture; and believing that my culture has made positive contributions to the world.
2. Cultural Impact (CI) – composed of belief that my culture impacts my behavior and values; believing that personal leadership style is influenced by Persian culture; and identification with Persian culture.
3. Persian Language and Literature (PLL) – composed of familiarity with Persian literature and influence of literature on culture.
4. Family Connection (FC) – composed of importance of family connection and family-like climate at work.

Table 10

*Cultural Identity Factors**

Factors	1	2	3	4
Factor 1: Cultural Identity and values (CIV)				
I practice Persian cultural values when dealing with people from other countries	0.808			
I maintain Persian values interacting with non-Iranians	0.758			
I enjoy telling people from other countries about my culture	0.564			
I believe that my culture has made positive contributions to the world	0.532			
Factor 2: Cultural Impact (CI)				
My culture impacts my behavior		0.818		
My culture impacts my values		0.783		
I think my leadership style is influenced by my Persian cultural background		0.561		
I identify with Persian culture		0.443		
Factor 3: Persian Language and Literature (PLL)				
I know/read Persian literature (for example, Hafiz, Rumi, Saadi, Ferdowsi)			0.764	
I think Persian literature influenced my understanding of Persian culture			0.763	
Factor 4: Family Connections (FC)				
Family connections are important to me				0.754
I create a family-like environment at my workplace				0.511

Two questions that did not load on any factor and were eliminated are: “I know about Persian cultural traditions” and “Persian language is an important element of my culture.”

Differences Between Endorsed (EILI) and Practiced (PILI)

A series of paired samples *t*-test and ANOVAs were conducted to explore the differences between endorsed and practice in regard to ILI. The results of the *t*-test, presented in Table 11, show significant differences in the scores for level of endorsement and level of practice in 11 out of 17 items. For some of the ILI items, including trust, patience, and wisdom, the level of endorsement for ideals was significantly higher than what leaders reported they practice, indicating that while leaders consider these important they do not practice them to the same level. However, for modesty, respect for elders, care and compassion for others, kindness, hard work, generosity, faith in god, and having a role model the level of self-reported practice was significantly higher than endorsement of those values.

Error! Reference source not found. exhibits the difference between endorsed and practiced ILI. The characteristics that are shown with “*” present those ILIs that have significance differences in endorsement and practice by Iranian leaders.

Table 11

Paired Samples t-Test of Endorsement and Practice

Higher Endorsement Than Practice	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig (2tailed)
Endorsed/Practiced				
Trust	0.208	0.718	3.861	0
Patience	0.264	0.891	3.953	0
Wisdom	0.225	0.84	3.567	0
Fairness	0.011	0.781	0.192	0.848
Accountability	0.051	0.622	1.084	0.28
Higher Practice than Endorsement				
Modesty	-0.416	0.854	-6.491	0

Respect for elders	-0.382	0.877	-5.814	0
Care and Compassion	-0.348	0.871	-5.333	0
Kindness	-0.596	0.911	-8.722	0
Generosity	-0.5	1.004	-6.643	0
Faith in God	-0.713	1.048	-9.083	0
Having Role Model	-0.197	0.877	-2.991	0.003
Hard work	-0.135	0.784	-2.295	0.023
Honesty-truthfulness	-0.011	0.736	-0.204	0.839
Empathy	-0.034	0.795	-0.566	0.572
Integration	-0.022	0.902	-0.332	0.74
Goodwill	-0.079	0.806	-1.302	0.194

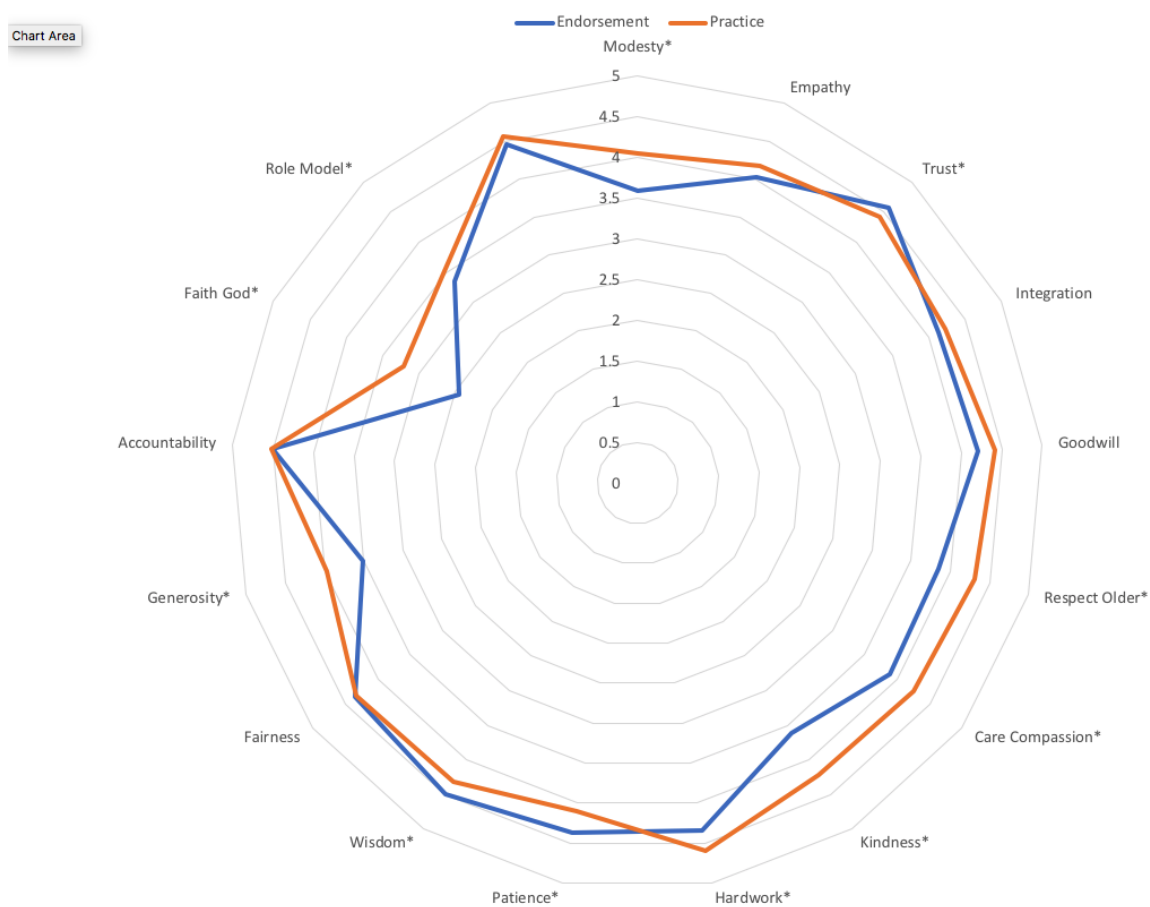


Figure 6. Difference between endorsed and practiced ILIs.

*indicates significant differences

Exploring the ILI Differences for Country of Residence, Gender, and Age

A series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to further explore the factors that may impact the differences between endorsement and practice. Specifically, country of residence, gender, and age were used with the EILI and PILI. There were no significant main effects for gender for either EILI or PILI. However, there was a main effect for country of residence on Endorsed Care at the $p < .05$ levels of three conditions [EC, $F(1, 197) = 11.189, p = .001$], where those living outside of Iran endorsed care and compassion to a higher extent than those living in Iran; and for both Endorsed and Practiced Higher Authority (EHA, PHA) at the $p < .05$ level of three conditions [EHA, $F(1, 197) = 49.486, p = .000$] and [PHA, $F(1, 197) = 8.911, p = .003$], where those living inside Iran indicated higher endorsement and practice of higher authority than those outside of Iran. There was also a significant effect of country of residency and Cultural Impact at the $p < .05$ level of the three conditions [CI, $F(1, 236) = 10.303, p = .002$], where those who live outside Iran reported less effect for cultural impact.

A one-way between-subjects ANOVA was also conducted to compare the effect of age on ILI related factors. There was no significant effect of reported EILI and PILI for those who were younger than 40 years old and those who were 40 and older. However, there was a significant effect of age on Cultural Identity and Values (CIV) and Family Connections (FC) at the $p < .05$ level of three conditions [CIV, $F(1, 236) = 13.07, p = .000$], and [FC, $F(1, 236) = 8.525, p = .004$] (see Table 14, Appendix E) where, as expected older Iranian leaders identified more with their culture and placed more value on family than younger ones.

The Relationships Between ILIs and Cultural Factors

To find any potential relationship between CV, CI, PLL, or FC with endorsed or practiced different ILIs, partial least squares (PLS) modeling was used. PLS is a method for constructing predictive models when the factors are many and highly collinear (Tobias, 2016). Esposito et al. (2010) suggest PLS is a soft-modeling approach which is insensitive to data non-normality, with no parameter identification problem, and has relatively small sample size requirement. PLS is often considered by researchers to be a good alternative to traditional covariance-based approach in structural equation modeling (SEM). Each ILI and cultural factor represent a construct in structural model of the PLS. Moreover, assumptions for the causal relationships between factors are considered (Hair, 2017).

Partial least squares structural equation modeling was used to explore any further relationship between variables of this study. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) has become a popular method for estimating (complex) path models with latent variables and their relationships (Sarstedt et al., 2017). PLS-SEM estimates the parameters of a set of equations in a structural equation model by combining principal components analysis with regression-based path analysis (Mateos-Aparicio, 2011). The main reason for choosing this method was because it allows the researcher to estimate and explore further a complex phenomenon such as culture and behavior, with many constructs and indicator variables. Furthermore, PLS-SEM generally allows for data requirements flexibility and the specification of relationships between constructs and indicator variables.

The SmartPLS 3 software (Ringle et al., 2015) is used to execute all the PLS analysis in this research. This path model is a diagram that displays all the variable relationships to be estimated in the PLS. The result of the PLS was used to discover and compare interactive ILI constructs with cultural factors as independent variables. Identification of PLS path models only requires that each construct is linked with a significant path to the nomological net of constructs (Henseler et al., 2016).

Measurement Model

The evaluation of the reflective measurement model included the test of factorability, indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discrimination validity (Hair et al., 2013). In addition to EFA discussed earlier, the loadings of the reflective indicators were examined as a confirmatory analysis to assess the indicator reliability. All constructs were found to have good to very good factor loading. Internal consistency reliability (construct reliability) was assessed by examining the composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha of the constructs. Results showed acceptable CR values and Cronbach's alpha values for all the constructs, thus demonstrating acceptable internal consistency reliability for the constructs.

Convergent validity of the model was again assessed using average variance extracted (AVE). The acceptable standard is that the AVE of the constructs should exceed 0.5, which means the items share at least half of their variance with the construct. The AVE values of the reflective measurement model of the research are greater than 0.5. These values provided evidence that the convergent validity was achieved, and indicates that the measures used were robust. The discriminant validity of the model was evaluated by examining the cross loading for each indicator. It was found that the loading of each

indicator with its own construct is all higher than its loading for other constructs.

Discriminant validity was also examined using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The second evidence of discriminant validity, the AVE of each reflective construct, was higher than the construct’s highest squared correlation with any other construct. Therefore, analysis of cross-loadings and Fornell–Larcker criterion showed that discriminant validity was perfectly established.

Structural Model

The significance of the direct effect was tested using bootstrapping procedures computed for each of 5,000 bootstrapped samples. Bootstrap sample is a smaller sample that is “bootstrapped” from the total sample to test the significance. Bootstrapping is a type of resampling where large numbers of smaller samples of the same size are repeatedly drawn, with replacement, from a single original sample. This single sample method can be quite good approximations for population parameters (Ong, 2014).

The result shows the relationship between each ILI factor loading and culturally related factors. There were several significant relationships between items as shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Relationship Between ILI Factor Loading and Culturally Related Factors

Variables	b	T Statistics	P Values
CI -> EC	0.011	0.119	0.905
CI -> EHA	0.146	2.248	0.025
CI -> ET	-0.094	0.897	0.37
CI -> EWA	-0.083	0.865	0.388
CI -> PAH	-0.045	0.433	0.665
CI -> PEC	-0.057	0.596	0.551
CI -> PHA	0.241	3.061	0.002

CI -> PW	-0.167	1.912	0.056
CIV -> EC	0.185	2.043	0.042
CIV -> EHA	0.378	6.023	0
CIV -> ET	0.203	1.655	0.099
CIV -> EWA	0.219	1.444	0.149
CIV -> PAH	0.207	2.162	0.031
CIV -> PEC	0.225	2.585	0.01
CIV -> PHA	0.173	2.005	0.045
CIV -> PW	0.063	0.837	0.403
FC -> EC	0.196	2.994	0.003
FC -> EHA	-0.022	0.302	0.763
FC -> ET	0.176	2.391	0.017
FC -> EWA	0.071	0.897	0.37
FC -> PAH	0.084	1.06	0.29
FC -> PEC	0.111	1.491	0.137
FC -> PHA	0.033	0.331	0.741
FC -> PW	-0.014	0.181	0.857
PLL -> EC	0.006	0.071	0.944
PLL -> EHA	-0.089	1.298	0.195
PLL -> ET	-0.035	0.453	0.651
PLL -> EWA	0.11	1.108	0.268
PLL -> PAH	0.11	1.244	0.214
PLL -> PEC	0.156	2.345	0.019
PLL -> PHA	-0.004	0.061	0.952
PLL -> PW	0.138	1.924	0.055

As shown in Table 12 and **Error! Reference source not found.**, significant relationships between ILIs and culturally related factors are as follow:

- Cultural impact (CI) with endorsed (EHA) and practiced higher authority (PHA)
- Cultural identity and values (CIV) with endorsed care and kindness (EC), endorsed higher authority (EHA), endorsed trust (ET), practice accountability

and honesty (PAH), practiced empathy and compassion (PEC), and practiced higher authority (PHA)

- Family connections (FC) with endorsed care and kindness (EC), and endorsed trust (ET)
- Persian language and literature (PLL) with practiced empathy and compassion (PEC), and practiced wisdom (PW).

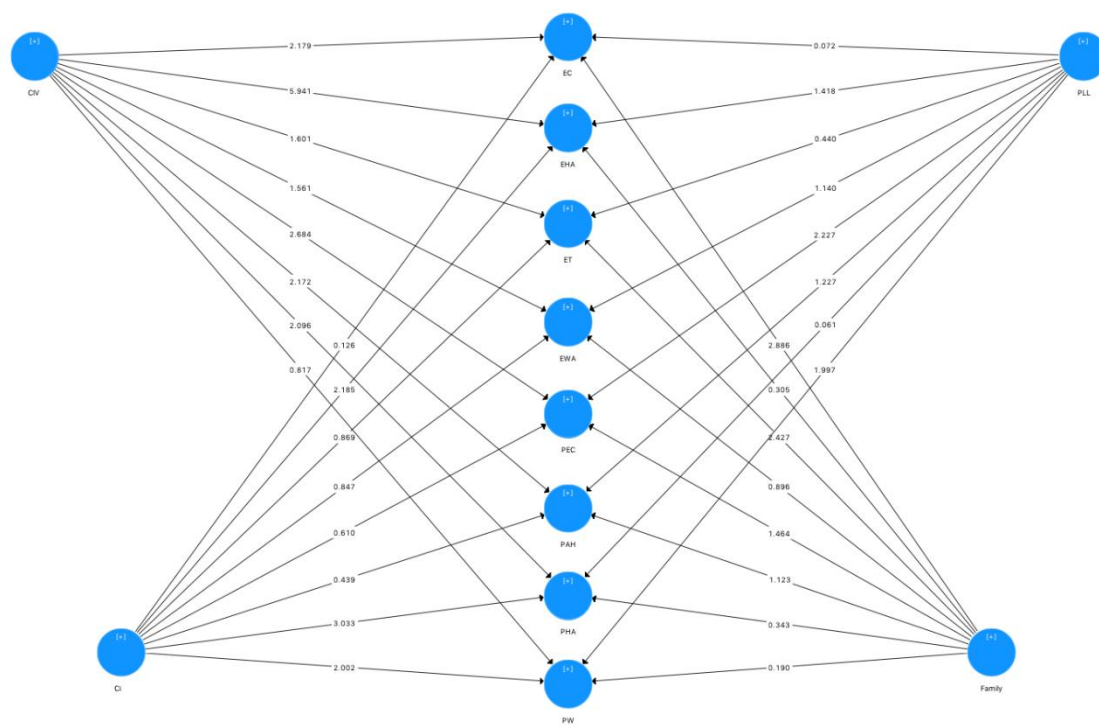


Figure 7. PLS model for relationship between ILI factor loading and culturally related factors. $T > 1.96$ shows significant relationship.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The notion of seeking Ideals of leadership in Iranian culture, is a reminder of the well-known classic allegory in Persian mystical literature called the conference of the birds written by Attar in the 12th century. “The Conference of the Birds” is a sweeping allegorical tale about the soul’s search for meaning (Attar, 2017). It is a long and celebrated Sufi poem of approximately 4500 lines written in Persian. It is the story of our lives when we want to connect to something higher than human personality, an ideal. At the core of the story is the seeker who inquisitively and impatiently asks for who is the ideal king. Conference of the Birds tells the journey of 30 birds in search of their king. The hoopoe, the wisest of them all, suggests that they should find the legendary Simorgh, a mythical immortal Persian bird roughly equivalent to the Western phoenix. The hoopoe leads the birds, each of whom represents a human frailty or weakness that prevents us from attaining enlightenment. The journey to find the Simorgh is long and every bird has his/her excuses for not undertaking it. The hoopoe guides the birds to cross seven valleys where the travelers confront their own individual limitations and fears in order to reach the abode of the mysterious Simorgh (Attar, 1984). This search for ideal leaders is partly what motivated this research.

The purpose of this two-phase mixed-method study was to explore Iranian Leadership Ideals from a cultural perspective. At the core, this study is only the first step into a journey of seeking depth and complexity of an ancient culture and its understanding and practice of leadership. This chapter will review the finding of the

study; however, given the significance of the classic Persian literature in Iranian culture, it will also offer a poetic expression of the finding.

Most research about the Iranian culture and leadership has been from an etic perspective with researchers observing Iranian leadership from the outside. These researchers are often guided by Western schools of thought and the studies are based on pre-existing models used to understand Iranian practices. This study was specifically designed and implemented to take an emic approach and to explore how Iranians inside and outside Iran idealize and practice leadership. The findings of this study expressed voices and reflected on ideas that are not commonly heard or considered in the field of leadership or management.

The study of leadership within the context of Iranian culture is a complex issue. The antiquity, richness and diversity of this culture demands various ways to explore this relationship. It is important to notice that having one specific definition for culture is impossible as many different elements would constitute culture. For Iranians, those elements are mainly included in the country's ancient history and civilization, Persian language and literature, different forms of arts, values and beliefs, religion and spirituality, and social constructions and communications. This study, allowed participants to describe their definition of culture and what they perceive as Iranian culture.

Considering the complexity of this issue, and to further explore and understand how some of these elements would create a mental model of leadership ideals, a two-folded, multi-method study was employed. In-depth interviews, review of the Persian literature and other related research by other scholars in the field, and finally a survey

revealed what are ILIs and how they practice leadership. It is important to note that this study concerns the phenomenon of organizational leadership and culture and not leadership in general. The definition of leadership in this study has been adopted from GLOBE study (House et al. 2002) and is defined as the “ability to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute to success of their organization” (p. 5).

This chapter first presents a summary and discusses the findings of the study. Then, it provides deeper discussions and interpretations of the findings and follows with an analysis of the relationships between Iranian cultural dimensions and leadership ideals. While presuming the limitation of this study, this chapter will conclude with implications and suggestions for future research.

Summary of Findings: Iranian Leadership Ideals

The significant findings derived from interviews, survey result, and document review revealed key values and behaviors that can be identified as unique ILIs. The results of the interviews and surveys indicate that Iranian leaders, inside and outside the country, strongly value their cultural identity, cultural impact, family bond, and Persian language and literature, and that they perceive that these elements influence the way they lead their organizations. The study further identifies care and kindness, empathy, modesty, trust, wisdom and accountability, and higher authority as the main ILIs. Finally, the results indicate a difference between the ILIs they endorse and those they practice. More specifically, the following research questions guided this research study:

1. To what extent do Iranian leaders endorse culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals?

2. To what extent do Iranian leaders apply culturally-based Iranian Leadership Ideals in their organizations?

To answer the first research question, the themes from interviews and document reviews were used to identify 17 leadership characteristics that seem to be ideals in Iranian culture. In the survey, Iranian leaders were asked to rate the importance of those 17 items in regards their culture. As described in Chapter 4, factor analysis of the data revealed four main factors endorsed by Iranian leaders. Each factor was labeled based on the items in the factor loading and resulted the following Endorsed ILI (EILI) factors:

1. Endorsed Care and kindness (EC) – composed of care and compassion for others, kindness, generosity, and respect for elders.
2. Endorsed Trust (ET) – composed of honesty, empathy, goodwill, and modesty
3. Endorsed Wisdom and Accountability (EWA) – composed of accountability, fairness, and patience
4. Endorsed higher authority (EHA) – composed of faith in god and having a role model

These main factors are consonant with thematic findings of interviews at the first phase of this study and what Nahavandi (2017) proposed as Indo European leadership characteristics and Iranian mystical leadership (Nahavandi, 2012a). She indicated that integrity, action orientation, moderation, accountability, kindness, and humility are main themes of Indo European Leadership. In her Iranian mystical leadership (Nahavandi, 2012a), she presented that Iranians idealize their leaders as being courageous, caring, humble, and moderate leader-hero who rises to save the nation against various supernatural, foreign, or domestic evils, while showing unwavering loyalty to country,

king, and family, kindness to the weak and his enemies, and caring for his followers. It seems that characteristics of care and kindness, and accountability intersect with the findings of this study.

A second EFA was used to analyze the participants' responses on the same 17 items to answer the second research question regarding the extent to which Iranian leaders apply culturally-based ideals in their organizations. As presented in Chapter 4, four factors emerged as practiced Iranian ideals (PILI) and were labeled as follows:

1. Practiced empathy and compassion (PEC) – composed of care and compassion, generosity, kindness, modesty, and fairness
2. Practiced accountability and honesty (PAH) – composed of honesty, accountability, hard-work, goodwill, patience, and trust
3. Practiced looking up to higher authority (PHA) – composed of faith in god and respect for elders
4. Practiced wisdom (PW) – with only one items, wisdom

As can be seen, the endorsed and practiced ILIs did not match exactly, although they follow similar themes. Further exploration examined cultural elements that may influence Iranian leadership ideals. Fourteen questions explored participants' cultural identity and the factors that relate to their identity. Following the same methodology described in the previous section, an EFA was conducted to identify the themes. The four factors emerged and were labeled as follows:

1. Cultural identity and values (CIV) – composed of practicing Persian cultural values when dealing with people from other countries; enjoying telling

people from other countries about my culture; and believing that my culture has made positive contributions to the world.

2. Cultural impact (CI) – composed of belief that my culture impacts my behavior and values; believing that personal leadership style is influenced by Persian culture; and identification with Persian culture.
3. Persian language and literature (PLL) – composed of familiarity with Persian literature and influence of literature on culture.
4. Family connection (FC) – composed of importance of family connection and creating family-like climate at work.

These factors were suggested to be culturally related to ILIs by both qualitative and quantitative analyses of this study and will be considered in interpreting the ILIs in this chapter. The results suggest that the basis of cultural leadership is an interlocking of Iranian cultural attributes and indicators such as cultural identity (a shared narrative of the nation's history, traditions and beliefs in the culture that keep people anchored to the core values that the nation has lived with for centuries), cultural impact (cultural values, beliefs, and how cultural identity is formed around the shared values and what is really important), family values (strong bonding and in-group trust and loyalty), and language and literature (language as a shared cognitive carrier to pass on narratives and meanings of culture and literature especially poetry exemplify cultural values and wisdom). They together create a mental model that frames people's perceptions, thoughts, and judgements (Hofstede, 2001; Senge, 1994).

Role of Persian Language and Literature

The findings of this study supported the assertions of previous research about the importance of Persian language as the main spoken language in Iran, and most prominent language of the Middle East and regions beyond (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018).

As discussed in chapter two, Persian language is known to be one of the oldest languages in the world. In addition, for centuries poetry has been encountered the most important form of expressive art in Iran (Avery, 2007), that provide numerous advice and philosophy on leadership (Nahavandi, 2012). There are an estimated 2,500 poets with documented poems, and many other scholars such as Avicenna who wrote their scientific writings in the form of verse. Many of Iranian classic poems have been used as lyrics in Persian classical music, which continues to attract a large number of Iranian audiences in Iran and elsewhere in the world. Interestingly, the language has been remarkably stable; Iranians can read twelfth century literature with relative ease. There is no wonder why most of Iranian memorize, recite, and use lines of poems in their daily life. Accordingly, data from interviews in this research suggest that Iranians recognize ancient poetry as source of wisdom, moral teaching, inspiration, and glorification of their past and present identity. Moreover, there are many proverbs and idioms, often drawn from poetry, that are used in daily spoken language and aim to teach life lessons such as hope, patience, hard work, seeking knowledge, and doing good. It is evident there is a strong identification with the language and literature in Iranian popular culture in today's Iran. The findings of the survey further highlight the fact that Persian language and literature is strongly associated with Iranians' association with their culture and how through moral values they idealize leadership.

In the interviews, almost every interviewee talked about the importance of language. They also emphasized how they learned many of their moral lessons through classic poetry. Some of them remembered stories from their childhood when their mother or father would read them a poem in order to teach them a lesson. It was fascinating that after decades and even after immigrating to a different country where they mostly speak English at work, the leaders in this study still remembered those poems. One of the Iranian-American interviewees who has been in a leadership position in the United States for about a decade said, “I value Persian language and literature a lot and I don’t want to give that up.”

The findings of the survey similarly confirmed the key role of Persian language and literature. It was found to be one of the key cultural variables that influences ILI practice in the organizations. As discussed in chapter four there was a significant relationship between Persian language and literature and practice of empathy and compassion and wisdom in organizational leadership.

Moreover, data from this study, support the notion of Ancient Leadership Wisdom introduced by Nahavandi (2012) based on Saadi’s poetry from 13th century. It was beyond the scope and capacity of this research to study all the poets and their work; however, a deeper probe in some of the most commonly used Iranian poetry added depth and context to the findings of this study. Particularly, this study focused on the 12th and 13th centuries which are known to be the ascendancy of Iranian poetry with highly respected elites such as Attar, Saadi, and Rumi. For this research, I studied over 100 most commonly well-known poems by these poet-philosophers and searched for themes that

could help interpret and express findings of this research regarding Iranian Leadership Ideals in this chapter.

Key Iranian Leadership Ideals Characteristics

The findings of this study suggest that intrinsic values such as care and kindness, compassion, empathy, and modesty are key elements of perceptions of Iranian Leadership Ideals. The endorsement of these values and characteristic is deeply rooted in ancient wisdom inherited from various philosophies, religions and literature over the centuries. Findings of this study confirm that many endorsed leadership themes have remained the same from Zoroastrian teachings dating back 2,500 years ago, through myths presented in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* (Book of Kings) in the tenth century, and Saadi's *Golestan* (The Rose Garden) in the 13th century (Nahavandi, 2012).

In her book, "Ancient Leadership Wisdom" (2012), using teachings of the 13th century Persian mystic philosopher and poet, Saadi, Nahavandi suggests that successful leaders are those who have been guided by some moral principles. These sage principles are based on integrity, kindness, humility, moderation, prudence, consultation, accountability, decisiveness, and astuteness. In his poems, Saadi describes the virtues of various moral values such as generosity, humility, benevolence, prudence. He speaks about humility:

O soul! if thou makest choice of humility,
 The people of the world will be thy friends.
 Humility will augment thy station,
 Just as the moon gets light from the sun.
 Humility is the source of intimacy,
 For exalted will be the dignity of friendship.
 Humility exalteth a man,
 Humility is a decoration to men of position.
 Everyone who is human is humble.

The findings of this study indicate that intrinsic moral values such as these are invaluable in helping leaders move their organizations, communities and countries to stability and prosperity and provide guidelines for daily life and relationships to help all of us succeed through day-to-day life and turbulent times by relying on ancient leadership wisdom.

Unlike most Western business cultures that tend to focus mostly on tasks, results and accomplishments, the desired outcomes for successful leaders in the Iranian way of leadership is much broader. This study provides a deeper inside-out look to how Iranians define and practice their ideal leadership style. The key Iranian Leadership Ideals found in this study are described in the following paragraphs.

Care and Kindness

This study finds that care and kindness are core elements of Iranian leadership ideals. Existing literature also suggested that Iranian ideal leadership is characterized by benevolent paternalism whereby the leader is a kind, warm, powerful, accessible, and a stern father figure (Ayman & Chemers, 1983; Chemers, 1969). In the qualitative part of this study, leaders even those who defined themselves as highly data driven and task oriented leaders, still emphasized elements of care for employees and being kind and compassionate towards others. As discussed in Chapter 2, GLOBE study (House et al., 2004) classifies Iran in the South Asian cluster along with India and Malaysia. The South Asian cluster ranks higher on humane orientation (fairness, altruism, generosity, and caring for others) when compared to other neighboring countries in the Middle East cluster.

In most of the Iranian poetry and mythology, the ideal of a benevolent father who shows kindness and generosity to others especially to the weak, and cares for followers are present. Rumi says, “You know what love is? It is all kindness, and generosity.” Saadi also repeatedly suggests kindness and humanity in his *Advice to Rulers*, where he says, “The kings are fathers for orphans. They must take care of them better than their own father would, because a king who is a father must be better than regular father” (as cited in Nahavandi, 2012, p. 195).

However, it is surprising that this study showed that Iranian leaders who live outside the country endorsed care and kindness to a higher level when compared to those who live in Iran. It is likely that those who immigrated or were exiled tend to over idealize their culture and what they feel deeply connected to their identity. For those who live inside, increasing economic hardship for a large population does not leave rooms for over idealization of care and kindness, although it is still highly valued.

Empathy

Empathy and compassion seems to be a key value in Iranian culture, especially when it comes to idealizing leadership. It is closely related to human capacity to show kindness and be deeply connected to other human beings. This theme has further been suggested as a component of Indo European leadership (IEL) principles by Nahavandi and Krishnan (2018). IEL suggests that Iran and India, because of their shared Indo-European cultural, religious, and philosophical roots, demonstrate a unique leadership approach. This approach believes that leadership is not about things; it is about people. Research about India (Cappelli et al., 2010) also focuses on unique characteristics of Indian successful business leaders and describes how unlike many Western organization

leaders who value getting the task done, they focus more on engaging and connecting with the employees. Satya Nadella, who an Indian immigrant to the United States and current Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Microsoft since 2014 identifies his leadership mantra as empathy. In his new book, “Hit Refresh,” he shares how he deeply appreciates and applies empathy in his life and work. He also talks about how his personal journey, being born and raised in India, and as an immigrant in the United State and leading one of the world’s most iconic companies, his family life and challenges with raising a child with disability, have all shaped and developed his sense of empathy in life (Nadella et al., 2017). He believes human beings are wired to have empathy, and that is essential not only for creating harmony at work but also for making products that will resonate with people. In an interview about his book, he says, “I think of empathy as not just as something nice to have but (it) is core to (the) innovation agenda in the company.” He explained:

One of the things that I’ve come to realize is, if I look at what is Microsoft’s core business, it is about being able to meet the unmet and unarticulated needs of customers and there is just no way we are going to be able to succeed in doing that if we don’t have that deep sense of empathy (Tandon, 2017).

Nadala’s example is aligned with most of the philosophical teachings of Iranian literature and culture that emphasize the heart to heart connection or what it calls in Persian “ham deli.”

In the introduction of his masterpiece, the Rose Garden, Saadi invites human beings to consider themselves as parts of one body. He describes the concept of empathy in a meaningful and artistic sense that if one human being is suffered, it is like that all people in the world will be suffered (Zarrintan et al. 2014). The English translation of his

poem which graces the entrance to the Hall of Nations of United Nations building in New York City says:

“Human beings are members of a whole,
 In creation of one essence and soul.
 If one member is afflicted with pain,
 Other members uneasy will remain.
 If you’ve no sympathy for human pain,
 The name of human you cannot retain!”¹

In this poem, Saadi addresses human beings as “Bani Adam” or children of Adam. This poem is a declaration for peace and empathy.

Modesty

Participants in the current study repeatedly mentioned the importance of modesty and humility. Being overconfident and arrogant is not well respected for a leader in Iranian culture. It is advised that power of a leader should be used to serve the followers. As described in Chapter 4, interviewees participated in this study often described language and behaviors that indicated that they privileged being humble, self-lowering, and that is how they recognize others. In fact, humility is a key personal and societal value among Iranians. As one interviewee emphasized the importance of not being bossy and said:

I use “we” not “I” all the time to be humble in the way I communicate with them. I don’t want to give a sense of being a boss but we as a team are making a decision. I don’t undermine or undervalue people.

¹ Saadi, Bani Adam (translation by M. Aryanpour)

In one of his poems Rumi uses the metaphor of mother earth for being humble and modest and want us to be like the earth:

Be like the sun for grace and mercy. Be like the night to cover others' faults.
Be like running water for generosity. Be like death for rage and anger.
Be like the earth for modesty. Appear as you are. Be as you appear.

As discussed earlier, in practicing ILIs, modesty is composed of care and compassion, kindness, and fairness. Hofstede (1992) identified Iran as a collective culture where bragging about one's power and accomplishment may not be appreciated. This belief influences the ways in which people communicate. Unlike most of Western cultures that personal gratification brings credibility and power, in Iranian culture it can be perceived as a sign of arrogance and self-importance.

Trust

The findings of this study suggested that trust is a key characteristic in ILIs. However, some of the comments in the interviews and the survey indicate the lack of trust in Iranian social structure. For example, one of the interviewees who had led a company in United States for over 35 years mentioned:

Unfortunately, in the last few years I have a bad impression of some of the people in Iran that in general they don't trust each other. It seems like you are guilty before you prove your innocent and it is like a barrier and if you are not referred to somebody by someone it is not possible to trust or build a close relationship.

This brings about the question of whether or not the Iranian culture is as a high trust system. Hofstede (1980, 1992), in his study, scored Iran as a collectivistic society, one which maintains a close long-term commitment to the member "group," be that a family, extended family, or extended relationships. In such a culture, loyalty seems to be paramount, and overrides most other societal rules and regulations. GLOBE study (House

et al., 2004) classified Iranian culture as having high in-group collectivism and being out-group individualistic where members aim to succeed and accomplish at the personal level. The most distinguishing feature of the Iranian culture is its family and in-group orientation, which suggests loyalty and cohesiveness towards small groups such as family and close friends (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). This would bring the fact that for Iranians, there is always a dilemma of who belongs to their circle of trust and who does not. The result might be a low trust status for anyone considered as out-group, but high trust for members of the in-group. In today's Iran, there is a level of duality in people's private and public behavior to match and survive the societal boundaries, which could result in indirect communication and appears as dishonesty and lack of trust. For Iranians who live outside their country, however, unless they feel deeply connected to their newly formed community, there seems to be a lack of trust of the out-groups. This study, confirms that there is a high level of endorsement for trust and honesty as ILI, but there is also a need for a closer look into how trust can be established in groups and organization within the culture.

It indicates that although trust is one of the key elements of Iranian Leadership Ideals, people do not practice it as much as they believe they should.

Wisdom and Accountability

The importance of wisdom for Iranians goes back to Zoroastrian philosophy and its values: good thoughts, good deeds, and good speech. Being wise is known as a life-time goal towards human completeness. This study shows that wisdom is connected with accountability, fairness, patience, and good will. There are many teachings from Sufism, and mystical Iranian literature that suggest ways to attain wisdom. Looking inside with

reflective eyes would be one of them. As Rumi says, “Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself.”

This study shows that there is a higher level of endorsement of wisdom for ILI than its practice. The reason for this difference might be that while people do not claim to be wise since it is known as a life-long journey, they still consider it important to leadership. In other words, they idealize it for a leader but cannot claim to be a wise person, a factor that further shows the value placed on modesty and humility.

Higher Authority

This study indicates how strongly Iranian leaders idealize the role of a higher power and authority. This has been shown in different aspects of communication such as respect for older people, tone of the speaking with others, and having hierarchy in most systems. Ultimately, believing in God or a power higher than themselves proves that Iranian tend to look up to higher authority and in case of a leader a hero. GLOBE similarly suggests that Iranian managers show high levels of power distance in their organizations and consequently lower level of assertiveness (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). As discussed in Chapter 2, Iranians historically have valued having an authority figure, such as a powerful father or mother figure in family, a teacher or principal at school, and a king or religious or political leader in the society. This study shows that Iranian leaders who live inside Iran significantly endorse and practice looking up to higher authority compared to those who live outside the country. Adopting Western culture with less power distance and higher level of personal assertiveness can be the reason for this difference. Regarding leadership attributes, the GLOBE data shows that Iranians have a preference for charismatic/transformational and team-oriented leadership

(Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2003). Iranian Mystical leadership also suggests that Iranians idealize their leaders to be courageous, caring, humble, and moderate leader-hero who rises to save the nation against various supernatural, foreign, or domestic evils.

Nahavandi (2012) mentions Persian culture emphasizes the critical role of leadership; leaders are indispensable and crucial to the success of any action. Followers matter, but they cannot accomplish much without an efficient leader (Nahavandi, 2012). The high level of respect and belief in higher authority as one of the key Iranian Leadership Ideals shows how Iranian give excessive privilege and status to the people in positions of power and authority. They tend to look up to somebody higher than themselves as a leader. It is reflected in many ancient stories in the Persian literature like the 'conference of the birds' by Attar where all the birds were looking for the mysterious Simorgh to be their king. (Attar, 1984)

All the elements that was found in this research as ILIs are known as important intrinsic values, being frequently advised by the literature. It is worthy to inquire if they are being practiced in current organizations lead by Iranian leaders.

Differences Between Endorsed Ideals and Practice

Further exploration of the intrinsic values that shape Iranian Leadership Ideals in this study, brought this question to the surface: Do Iranian leaders practice what they believe?

As discussed in Chapter 4, additional analysis revealed the significant differences between endorsed ILIs and what is being practices. Seventeen leadership characteristics were examined, and 11 showed significant differences. Those characteristics that found

to be endorsed more than practiced in the organizations were: trust, patience, and wisdom.

Probing the differences between endorsed and practiced leadership Ideals, recalls the notion of Espoused values and Enacted values introduced by Schein (2004) in his book, "Organizational Culture and Leadership." Values are a deeper level of culture, and they reflect underlying concepts or beliefs. Values pertain desirable and ideal states, transcend situations, guide selection of behaviors and actions and operate at different levels. Values can be espoused or enacted. An espoused value is what an organization or society says it values, like ethical and moral practices. However, the enacted values are those that are actually being acted out by the members of the organization or a society. They are the "reality" of the society. Findings of this study suggest that although Iranians would idealize some of the values as their leadership ideals, but in the current social, political, and economy environment, they are not being practiced as much. On the other hand, there are other characteristics that are more often practiced than endorsed. They are modesty, respect for elders, care and compassion, kindness, generosity, faith in god, having a role model, and hard work. Participants reported than they practice these characteristics in their organizational leadership role more than what they endorse it for a leader in general.

Masculinity and Femininity in Iranian Leadership

Iranian culture is known as patriarchal where legally and culturally, males have more rights and privileges than females. Centuries of gender discrimination and segregation based on gender has created distinct roles and codes of behavior for both men and women and many are still practiced today. Particularly, during the past few decades

the number of women college graduates in Iran has been higher than men while numbers of official roles for them, especially in the government such as seats in the parliament is very low. However, history shows that female emperors ruled over the many dynasties or had significant roles in the pre-Islamic Persian Empire. Many ancient Persian cities and states were ruled by women and had their army totally under control of female commanders (Encyclopedia Iranica, 2018).

Given the contemporary gender inequality, surprisingly, findings of this studies showed there were no significant gender differences regarding Iranian Leadership Ideals. Different factors such as high level of education, being at some level of leadership positions, professional maturity, and living in a western country may explain this finding. Interestingly personal responses from few men in Iran to the researcher, highlight issues of gender and hierarchy. Specifically, some participants sent requests for romantic dates, shared pictures of themselves and offered personal comments that would be perceived as sexual harassment in most Western countries. In the context of this study which was of a formal study of culture and leadership, such behaviors indicate a continued culture of male hegemony particularly in Iran. In spite of such incidents, even with such actions, there were not gender differences in endorsed or practiced ILIs either for leaders inside or those outside of Iran.

Deeper Consideration of Cultural Approach to ILI

A deeper inquiry about Iranian Leadership Ideals was needed. Exploring ILI characteristics, culturally related variables, and all the relationships between them, and connecting these findings with some well-known Persian literature brought some deeper interpretations to the surface. Three main pillars found to be the core philosophical

guiding principles of ILIs: (a) leading from the inside-out, (b) loving kindness, and (c) sense of unity and oneness. There are powerful contributions of mystical classic literature such as Attar, Rumi, and Saadi's poetry to these principles. Poetic expressions of these principles take us to a journey into the core beliefs of the Persian history and civilization. As discussed earlier, given the socioeconomic situation of today's Iran, there might be many situations that people do not practice these key principles in their daily practice of leadership. However, history shows that Persian cultural values have been transcended many social, political, and economical transitions throughout the centuries. Nahavandi (2010) states that Iran, during its long history of over 3000 years, has been subject to numerous invasions including those of Alexander the Great in 300 BC, and the Arab invasion in the seventh century AD, which brought Islam to the country. Iranians experienced cultural battles and their 'Indo-European identity has survived through many conflicts, sometimes going underground, with adjustments and adaptation to the situations (Nahavandi, 2010). The following section will further explore the three main principles with poetic expression of Persian mythology.

Leading From the Inside-Out

Self-discovery and knowing that the whole world starts from within every human being are key teachings of Rumi. He asks us to listen to the whisper of our hearts as the main source of spiritual realization:

You were born with potential. You were born with goodness and trust. You were born with ideals and dreams. You were born with greatness. You were born with wings. You are not meant for crawling, so don't. You have wings. Learn to use them and fly.

The notion of leading from inside-out is clearly related to the power of intention and self-awareness of a leader. In his book, “Leading From the Inside Out,” Cashman (2008) states, “Our ability to grow as a leader is based on our ability to grow as a person” (p. 35).

It may also be related to acquiring wisdom through developing leader’s intuition and sense of what is right or not. There is some evidence in Iranian cultural teachings that emphasizes these concepts. Rumi says, “Everything in the universe is within you. Ask all from yourself.”

In another poem, “The Guest House,” he honors introspection and acknowledgement of both bright and dark side of self. There’s a duality within all the emotions and feelings that human being experience and they need to be recognized and welcomed. For a leader, being mindful and conscious of what triggers their emotions, decisions, and reactions upon different issues and incidents require a high level of self-awareness. It is related to how Daniel Goleman (2005) defined emotional intelligence: the capacity of individuals to recognize and manage their own and other’s emotions (Goleman, 2005). Rumi profoundly invites us to welcome each emotion and be with them and even it feels unpleasant at times they are there to guide and direct us to a new beginning. He suggests that connecting to one’s true emotion can be the inner guide to integrity, peace, and authenticity:

This being human is a guest house.
 Every morning a new arrival.
 A joy, a depression, a meanness,
 some momentary awareness comes
 as an unexpected visitor.
 Welcome and entertain them all!
 Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,

who violently sweep your house
 empty of its furniture,
 still, treat each guest honorably.
 He may be clearing you out
 for some new delight.
 The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
 meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.
 Be grateful for whatever comes.
 because each has been sent
 as a guide from beyond.

There seems to be a strong connection between the power of self-awareness and wisdom in Rumi's teachings where he talks about the human journey from being clever to become wise. There is a need to become a better person or a more complete human being in mystical literature. He says, "Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself."

The ultimate becoming, however for Rumi is captured by love and he often uses that as a source of transformation.

What's Love Got to Do with Leadership?

As discussed before, the findings of this study showed the importance of care, compassion, empathy, and kindness in Iranian Leadership Ideals. It is suggested that ancient Persian philosophy presents the ideal leader to be decisive, but exceedingly kind, and compassionate (Nahavandi, 2012). It also brings the concept of 'love and leadership' to mind, where the focus is more on the people and engaging with them. As described in India way (2010), holistic engagement with employee and considering them as key asset in the organizations helped the business to thrive. The holistic approach is beyond just getting the tasks done; it is about showing care and connecting human heart, body, and mind as a whole.

In Persian mystical philosophy, Rumi's ideas of love as a divine attribute became universal (Schimmel, 1992). People around the globe recite his lines of love poems to express their true feelings. For Rumi, love is the essence. It is the reason for being and ultimate becoming in life. It is beyond prodigious and ego and guides rejoining the soul to its source of being in order to transform to a better self. He says:

I was dead,
 I came alive.
 I was tears,
 I became laughter.
 All because of love,
 when it arrived
 my temporal life
 from then on changed to eternal.

He repeatedly describes love as the essence of transformation and invites everyone to be in love in what they do to experience the magical power of this essence:

Love makes the bitter sweet,
 love turns copper to gold,
 Love makes dregs into pure wine,
 love turns pain into healing.
 Love brings the dead to life,
 love makes the king a slave.
 But this love results from knowledge.
 When did a fool ever sit on this throne?
 How can faulty knowledge give birth to love?
 It gives birth to love, but love for a dead thing,
 When it sees its objects' color in the thing,
 it hears the beloved's voice in a decoy.
 Faulty knowledge has no discrimination-
 it thinks that lightning is the sun.
 (Mathnawi II 1529-35)

This study found that Iranians idealize and practice characteristics related to love. It seems the key to leadership is to lead with love and compassion. Leading with love means knowing and caring about what inspires and empowers others. John Hope Bryant

(2009), in his book “Love Leadership: The New Way to Lead in a Fear-Based World,” talks about two main force in the world: love and fear. He says, “What you don’t love you fear” (Bryant, 2009, p. 7). Leading with fear has a focus on me and not we, what do I get, and when do I get it, and a focus on “money” as product, versus the power of the idea (with money as the byproduct). In a world obsessed with “what do I get,” we must begin to ask a new question, which is “what do I have to give” (Bryant, 2009). It is extremely relevant for today’s organizational climate that deals with uncertainty and ambiguity and fear-based leadership cannot thrive.

The notion of “giving to others” brings up the concept of servant leadership introduced by Greenleaf where he defines a servant-leader as one who focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. While traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the “top of the pyramid,” servant leadership is different. The servant-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible (Greenleaf, 1998). This concept has also been introduced in Rumi’s poem of love:

love said
you are a teacher
you are a head
and for everyone
you are a leader
I am no more
not a teacher
not a leader
just a servant
to your wishes.

Sense of Unity and Oneness or Uniqueness

Most of Iranian cultural teachings give special prominence to human wholeness and unity. Having a sense of being one with others regardless of race, religion, and socioeconomic class is being advised. The evidence of that can be found in Rumi's poems. He describes all different religions as more or less equally beautiful because they all sought the divine truth:

I am neither Christian, nor Jewish, nor Muslim
 I am not of the East, nor of the West...
 I have put duality away, I have seen the two worlds as one;
 One I seek, One I know, One I see, One I call.
 (Divan-I Shams-I Tabriz, II)

This poem was also mentioned in a comment by a survey participant in this study. Sense of self, others, and unity in Iranian mystical poetry and specifically Sufism offers a guideline for human development and social interaction (Beer, 2006). Accepting others with respect and humility is at the core of social force. As a majority Muslim nation, where many still practice ancient Zoroastrian traditions and beliefs, there seems to be a level of understanding and accepting of others. The history of religious tolerance in ancient Persian empire goes back to Cyrus the Great's time. His own testament, the Cyrus Cylinder, is special among the records of world conquerors, proclaiming peace and justice among the different ethnic and religious communities under his firm rule (Daryaei, 2011).

As discussed in Chapter 2, while Iran is presently known by its Shi'a population, and in spite of strong state religions, it has always been home to many religious minorities, including Jews and Christians. A small community of Zoroastrians, as well as Christians and Jews, have continued to live in Iran; they are acknowledged in the

constitution. They have also had peaceful settlement and interaction of Shi'a and Sunni followers in a number of provinces in Iran for many centuries (Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017). However, political pressures have compromised the practice of this core cultural value in some periods throughout the Iranian history.

Another evidence of high recognition of unity in Iranian Mystical poetry is Attar's poem that emphasizes on the need for humans to pass from self and others to understand the story of the universe:

there is no difference between you and me and we
 life illusions- maya-'till we see that
 ignorance has caused the world to be
 in its present state
 the journey to achieve is happiness
 which goes only by surrendering the self
 the self that we have built to see us separate from I
 till you reach nothingness you cannot see
 The life you long for in Eternity.
 (Attar, 1984)

The embodiment of social interaction is mostly evident in relationship between leaders and followers or rulers and ruled. Persian Sufi poetry has been a medium to advise moral ideals and practical ethical wisdom to people and their rulers. In describing the human being unity with one another, Rumi expresses an ideal state as:

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing
 There is a field. I'll meet you there.
 A soul who lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk about.
 Ideas, language, even the phrase 'each other' doesn't make any sense.

Knowing the powerful idealization of human unity from one side, and Iranian rich heritage that has been kept over the centuries, brings a paradox into light. This study confirmed that for Iranians culture is the core of their professed and applied leadership ideals. It seems culture truly transcend everything else. One of the survey participants for

example commented, “The richness and gravitas of my Persian culture transcends into my confidence.”

The culture has been preserved through wars, political and governance changes, economical transformations over thousand years. It is evident that keeping a shared narrative of cultural ethos was used to derive Iranians’ behavior and their understanding of themselves, others, and the reality of the world. It is very likely that their cultural identification and pride create a sense of uniqueness and a level of insularity. The advantage of this insularity is that it creates conditions to be able to see and know trusted in-group community and support and respect family ties in Iranian culture. However, it can also create a lack of openness to include others, complex mode of communication, and lower level of trust for people outside their groups or communities. As discussed in Chapter 2, GLOBE also shows a high level of group and family collectivism for Iranian managers. The strong in-group and family connectedness for Iranians, even outside their own home country, may cost a separation with communities outside their culture. This issue is in conceptual contrast to the Sufi teachings on oneness and unity. This study, however, found that leaders above 40 years old are more connected to their family than those who are under 40 years old. This finding indicates how in a constantly changing age of technology and globalization, Iranian younger generations are joining their peers all over the world. Through internet and especially social media, people are now connected to one another and global collective consciousness more than ever.

Saadi in his poem “Bani Adam” emphasizes on practicing empathy and holding the capacity to feel another person’s feeling or metaphorically walking in another person’s shoes. As discussed before, in this poem, Saadi describes the essence of being

human as being connected to one another pain and having sympathy for each other. This connectedness and unity is a principle that can be at the core of organizational leadership.

Applying Iranian Leadership Ideals

Given the clear presence of distinct leadership ideals in the Iranian culture, the question becomes whether they can be applied to other countries and cultural contexts.

First, knowing ILIs will help in any cross-cultural organizational setting where understanding and accepting of the other culture is key to effective communication.

When working with Iranians whether in Iran or as part of the diaspora migrated to other countries in the past few decades, it is essential to recognize their rich culture and history in order to build effective relationship (Nahavandi, 2010). Most Iranians are deeply connected to their deep-rooted values and glorify their culture. Their daily life is very much influenced by the Persian literature from centuries ago and people still would recite lines of poetry to convey their messages. If leading an organization within Iranian cultural context, focusing only on getting the tasks done is not enough. There seems to be a great focus on people and humane characteristics such as care and compassion, kindness, modesty and respect to the authority. For example, one of the survey respondent mentioned:

For us respect and politeness is non-negotiable at workplace. I work in a multinational corporate with inclusivity culture though the other nationalities. I often hear the feedback that we are very polite and we avoid straightforward feedback and fierce conversations.

Second, some of the ILIs such as looking for a heroic leader who is inspiring, fair, kind and caring relate to different modern leadership theories that focus on connecting to followers such as charismatic leadership, transformational leadership, servant leadership,

as well as authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bass, 1990; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Greenleaf, 1998). Therefore, although ILIs may appear removed from Western organizations and leadership theory and practice, many of the principles are akin to modern leadership theory.

Third, ILIs and a leadership education based on them may provide a novel solution to the crisis and malaise that many organizations have faced. As discussed in Chapter 2, the book *The India Way* (2010) is a good example of how successful business leaders in India have used their own leadership style for their organizations to thrive. Some of the ILI principles such as leading from inside-out, leading with lovingkindness, and creating a sense of unity can be adapted to the Western context and applied for leadership education. Moreover, in the current social, political, environmental, and economic climate where we have to deal with volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, we need to resolve issues with a different level of consciousness (Hicks & Townsend, 2002). Applying the teachings of ancient wisdom can offer a new lens to Western leadership models and practices. The ultimate goal of this study is to create awareness, dialogue and understanding between peoples, cultures and organizations in order to develop, enhance and improve human development and communication by integrating ideas and practice.

Study Limitations

As with any study, there are limitations to this research including researcher's positionality, the risk of oversimplifying and essentializing cultural elements, and methodological shortcomings that are inherent in any research including access to respondents, and the limitations of the survey instrument.

One of the limitations that can also serve to contribution of this study is the researcher's positionality. I am an Iranian woman who is involved in designing and delivering leadership programs for a decade. I have served different organization leaders including nonprofit, educational institutions, and for-profit corporations as a leadership consultant, trainer, and coach. Being from the culture, and involved in real life challenges of the organizational leadership, gave me insights and knowledge about the topic of this study. I have been conscious of my biases, judgements, and perceptions. Although, my background might have created researcher positionality, it also proved that this knowledge can benefit the way I can access, and interact with the participants and Persian literature and interpret the finding from within the culture.

Cultural stereotyping and essentialism is the practice of categorizing groups of people within a culture, or from other cultures, according to essential qualities. Considering the view that every culture has a set of attributes that are necessary to its identity and function is known as essentialism and it has been criticized to limit or simplify our understanding of a concept; yet, it is also commonly argued that we cannot avoid at least some kind of essentialism (Phillips, 2010). Particularly for this study, cultural essentialism strongly relates to my positionality as a researcher who identifies as and works with the Iranian culture.

The other limitation of the study is having limited access to participants. For the interviews, I only have the possibility to meet with Iranian-American leaders who reside in United States. However, I have very limited access to people in Iran and for those who agreed to participate in the interview, I had to use Skype or Facetime to communicate with them. If I had the possibility to travel to Iran during the first phase, I could have had

the opportunity to meet with more leaders from different industries. This limitation can be applied for the survey participants as well. Although I have 335 survey responses, I still believe that personal presence would result in more responses from different sectors.

Finally, the survey instrument limitation, was that the questions were not all forced to respond. Although the survey was relatively short, about 100 people did not respond to all the questions. As discussed in Chapter 3, themes from initial interviews and document analysis helped me to come up with survey questions and what may be considered as ILIs. As a result of this research design, the survey respondents were only imposed to certain ideals, limiting their responses which may make me miss some other ideals. Further research may add more dimensions to better understand Iranian cultural perspective of leadership.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study provided relevant information that could enhance the knowledge about cultural approach to leadership with specific focus on Iranian culture. Iranian culture is one of the oldest and most complicated cultures that is influenced by various elements such as language, literature, religion, politics, and social transformations. This study used Persian classic literature to help interpret the findings. Further research can explore other aspects influencing culture.

There has been a high number of Iranian immigrants in other parts of the world in the last few decades, and the Iranian diaspora are known to be economically and educationally well-accomplished. Future studies can explore culturally related behaviors, and leadership style of this population and what is the reason behind their success.

Specifically, a study of Iranian leadership practices both inside and outside of Iran when applied to both Iranian populations and non-Iranians is needed.

Furthermore, as was done by Capelli et al. (2010) in the study of Indian executives, a series of in-depth interviews with successful business and organizational leaders from different industries can reveal a better understanding of the culture. For example, literature shows that some characteristics like moderation is one of the Iranian ideals (Nahavandi, 2010), and there seems to be a connection of practicing moderation with the notion of nonduality in Iranian classic literature where both light and shadow, the positive and negative, the sorrow and gladness is being seen and acknowledged. Saadi says, “The rose and the thorn and sorrow and gladness are linked together.”

The findings of this study did not reveal that. Further discussion and in-depth analysis will explore more culturally base ideas.

Additionally, with the new generation of highly educated women, who especially in Iran have not had the equal chance to rise in their career and use their voice, a future study on women in Iran would be immensely beneficial.

Finally, further research is needed to determine how, the findings from this study can translate into practice. It can explore specific areas that can be used in educating future leaders to advance their effectiveness nationally and internationally.

In Attar’s Conference of the Birds, only 30 birds, in Persian 30 (si) Bird (morgh), the most steadfast and committed ones, complete the journey and discover that they themselves are the Simorgh they have sought. As with all truly mystical literature, ‘The Conference of Birds’ teaches that the aim of the quest is the discovery of the Divine

within. This research has engaged in a quest and as with any quest, there is an infinite universe left to be discovered.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol

Welcome and Introduction

Hello. Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in this interview today. My name is Azadeh Davari and I am a Ph.D. student in Leadership Studies Program at University of San Diego. I am conducting a research to cultural values that impact how people view leadership. This study aims to find out if there are specific elements from Persian culture that influence how Iranians think about leadership and what they consider effective leadership.

As part of my research, I am having conversations with leaders from different industries with Iranian heritage background about their cultural background and leadership style.

Participation

Participation is voluntary. About 60 minutes, with no break. If you would prefer to excuse yourself from the discussion at this time or at any point after we get started, you are free to do so.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

This means that:

- I will not reveal the names of study participants and no information will be reported that can identify you.
- Your name will never be linked to your answers or to any comments you make during the interview, but the results may be made public and information you give may be quoted in professional journals and meetings.

What you personally say will not be communicated back to anyone at your organization.

Audiotaping

I would like to audiotape this interview if it is okay with you. This allows me to pay better attention and not have to scribble notes the whole time. Is it okay with you if I record this?

Interview Questions

Background

1. Please tell me how long have you lived in US?

2. What culture do you most identify yourself with? Do you identify yourself with Persian culture?
3. Do you read/ write/ speak Farsi?
4. What is your level of education? Have you completed your study in US? If not, where did you study?

Persian Culture

1. How do you define Persian culture?
2. What are some of the Persian cultural values that you know? Or What do you consider to be key Persian cultural values?
3. What are some of your core cultural values? (3-5 most important values) that you connect to your Persian background?
4. What has informed your cultural values with regards Persian culture?

Leadership Style

1. What is your role (leadership role) in your organization?
2. How long have you been in this role?
3. (What is your leadership style) How would you describe your leadership style?
4. What leadership qualities do you see as most vital to your success?
5. Can you identify the two capacities that have been most critical to your exercise of leadership over the past 5 years?
6. Why do you think you developed that style of leadership? Or How did you develop this style?
7. Can you give me an example how you used your leadership style and under what circumstances you used this leadership style?
8. How do you work with your board of directors/ business partners?
9. Please tell me about your methods for recruiting talent and managing teams?
10. Do you have a role model in the way you lead? Who? Example?

Relationship Between Persian Culture and Leadership Style

1. How do you think your cultural background relates to the ways in which you lead/ your leadership style? In other words, how do you think Persian culture has influenced your leadership style?
2. Can you provide specific examples?
3. To what extent do you think your style is influenced by the fact that you live in the United States?
4. Do you have examples of how Persian and U.S. cultural values have been in conflict or have complemented each other in your leadership?
5. If there are other influences, how do those factors influence your leadership?
6. Where do you see a convergence with or divergent from Western practices?

Overall

1. What lasting legacies do you hope to leave behind when you stepped down one day from your role?

APPENDIX B

Email Solicitation

Dear _____,

My name is Azadeh Davari. I am a Ph.D. student in Leadership Studies Program at University of San Diego. I am conducting a research about cultural values that impact how people view leadership. This study aims to find out if there are specific elements from Persian culture that influence how Iranians think about leadership and what they consider effective leadership.

As part of my research, I am having conversations with experienced leaders with Iranian heritage from different industries about their cultural background and leadership style.

I would like to invite you to take part in an in depth, semi-structured interview on (date, time, and location). The interview should last 60 minutes. Your views will be very useful for this study. If you would like to participate in the interview or you have any questions, please feel free to contact me for more information. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

Azadeh Davari, MSc.

Ph.D. Student in Leadership Studies,

School of Leadership & Education Sciences, University of San Diego

██████████

████████████████████

APPENDIX C

Research Participant Consent Form

For the research study entitled:

Iranian Leadership Ideals: A Culturally Based Leadership Approach**Purpose of the research study:**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Azadeh Davari, PhD student in Leadership Studies Program at University of San Diego. This research is about cultural values that impact how people view leadership. It aims to find out if there are specific elements from Persian culture that influence how Iranians think about leadership and what they consider effective leadership.

What you will be asked to do:

If you decide to be in this study, you will participate in an interview. You will be asked to share your opinion about your cultural background, leadership style and if there is a relationship between Persian culture and the way you lead.

Your participation in this interview will take a total of 60 minutes.

Foreseeable risks or discomforts:

This study involves no more risk than the risks you encounter in daily life.

Benefits:

While there may be no direct benefit to you from participating in this interview, the indirect benefit of participating will be knowing that you helped researchers to better understand Persian culture and its related attributes to leadership.

Confidentiality:

Any information provided and/or identifying records will remain confidential and kept in a locked file and/or password-protected computer file in the researcher's office for a minimum of five years. All data collected from you will be coded with a number or pseudonym (fake name). Your full name will not be used. The results of this research project may be made public and information quoted in professional journals and meetings, but information from this study will only be reported as a group, and not individually.

Voluntary nature of this research:

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You do not have to do this, and you can refuse to answer any question or quit at any time. Deciding not to participate or not answering any of the questions will have no effect on any benefits you're entitled to, like your health care, or your employment or grades. **You can withdraw from this study at any time without penalty.**

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this research, you may contact:

Azadeh Davari, MSc.
Email: azadehdavari@sandiego.edu
Phone: (619) 452-8190

I have read and understand this form, and consent to the research it describes to me. I have received a copy of this consent form for my records.

Signature of Participant Date

Name of Participant (**Printed**)

Signature of Investigator Date

APPENDIX D

Research Participant Consent Form

For the research study entitled:

Iranian Leadership Ideals: A Culturally Based Leadership Approach

Purpose of the research study:

You are invited to participate in a dissertation research being conducted by Azadeh Davari, a Ph.D. candidate in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences at the University of San Diego. This research is about cultural values that impact how Iranians view leadership. It aims to find out if there are specific elements from Persian culture that influence how Iranians think about leadership and what they consider effective leadership.

What you will be asked to do:

If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire. This survey will take approximately 15-30 minutes to complete. As a professional with Persian cultural background, your feedback is invaluable in helping the researcher to better understand your cultural values and its related attributes to leadership.

Foreseeable risks or discomforts

This survey involves no more risk than the risks you encounter in daily life.

Benefits

While there may be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study, the indirect benefit of participating will be helping researchers, organizations, and individuals better understand Persian cultural values and its influence on Iranian leadership styles.

Confidentiality

Any information provided and/or identifying records will remain confidential and kept in a locked file and password-protected computer file in the researcher's office for a minimum of five years. The results of this research project will be made public and information quoted in professional journals and conferences. All information will be reported in aggregate and your identity will not be linked to your responses.

Compensation

You will receive no compensation for your participation in the study.

Voluntary Nature of this Research

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary; you do not have to do this, and you can refuse to answer any question or quit at any time. Thank you for your time.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this research, you may contact either:

1. Azadeh Davari, MSc.
Email: azadehdavari@sandiego.edu
Phone: (619) 452-8190
2. Dr. Afsaneh Nahavandi, Dissertation Chair and Professor
Email: anahavandi@sandiego.edu
Phone: (619) 260-4181

Please select one of the following options:

- I have read and understand this form and consent to the research described herein. I may print a copy of this consent form for my records if I choose to.
- I choose not to participate in this research study.

A. Background Information

What type of organization are you working at?

- For-profit/ Corporation/ Business
- Education/ Academia
- Nonprofit
- Healthcare/ Hospital
- Government/public sector
- Student
- Not currently employed
- Other (please specify)

Have you been in a formal leadership position? Yes No

What is your position or role at your organization?

- Staff member
- Middle-manager
- Engineer/scientist
- Healthcare provider/medical doctor/nurse
- Educator/teacher/professor
- Business owner/CEO/ Executive level director
- Other (please specify)

How many years have you been in your current role? (If more than 12 months please round to the nearest full year)

- Less than a year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years

- More than 20 years

How many people are working under your direct supervision?

- None
- 1-4
- 5-10
- 10-50
- More than 50

B. Cultural Perspective

Based on your cultural background, please rate the extent to which you think the following characteristics are important for a leader, using the scale below (from not at all important to very important)

- Honesty and truthfulness
- Modesty
- Empathy
- Trust
- Integration
- Goodwill
- Respect for those who are older or with more experience
- Care and compassion for others
- Kindness
- Hard work
- Patience
- Wisdom
- Fairness
- Generosity
- Accountability
- Faith in god
- Having a role model
- Other please specify

C. Leadership Style

As a leader, please rate how often you practice the following capacities, using the scale below: (From never, rarely, sometimes, often, always, NA)

- Honesty and truthfulness
- Modesty
- Empathy
- Trust
- Integration
- Goodwill
- Respect for those who are older or with more experience
- Care and compassion for others

- Kindness
- Hard work
- Patience
- Wisdom
- Fairness
- Generosity
- Accountability
- Faith in god
- Having a role model
- Other please specify

D. Cultural Identity

Please rank the following statements using the scale below: (from strongly disagree to strongly agree)

- I identify with Persian culture
- My culture impacts my values
- My culture impacts my behavior
- I think my leadership style is influence by my Persian cultural background
- Persian Language is an important element of my culture
- Family connections are important to me
- I create a family like environment at my workplace
- I know/read Persian literature like Hafiz, Rumi, Saadi, Ferdosi, ...
- I think Persian literature influenced my understanding of Persian culture
- I enjoy telling people from other countries about my culture
- I know about Persian cultural traditions
- I practice some of my cultural values when dealing with people from other countries
- I think it's important to keep my cultural value in relation with my non-Iranian colleagues/partners.
- I believe that my culture has positive contribution to the world

Is there anything else regarding your culture and how it influences your behavior at work that you would like to share?

Demographic Questions

You are: Female Male

What is your age?

- Under 30
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59

- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80 and over

How many years of full-time work experience do you have?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- More than 5 but less than 10 years
- More than 10 but less than 20 years
- More than 20 years

What is your highest level of educational? (drop down)

- High school diploma
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctoral/PhD

What country did you get your degree from?

- Iran
- United States
- European Union countries
- United Kingdom
- Australia/New Zealand
- Canada
- Other please specify

Do you speak Persian? Yes No

What is your country of primary residence?

- Iran
- United States
- European Union countries
- United Kingdom
- Australia/New Zealand
- Canada
- Other (please specify)

If you live outside of Iran, what year did you leave Iran to live elsewhere?

What is your religion?

- Muslim
- Christian

- Jewish
- Baha'i
- Zoroastrian
- Buddhist
- None
- Other
- Prefer not to say

What do you consider as your primary cultural identity?

- Primarily Iranian
- Primarily Western
- An equal mix of Iranian and Western
- Other (please specify)

APPENDIX E

Table 13.

One-way between subjects ANOVA analysis between ILI factors and gender

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EC	Between Groups	0.013	1	0.013	0.016	0.898
	Within Groups	156.581	197	0.795		
	Total	156.594	198			
ET	Between Groups	0.102	1	0.102	0.179	0.673
	Within Groups	112.911	197	0.573		
	Total	113.014	198			
EWA	Between Groups	1.555	1	1.555	2.363	0.126
	Within Groups	129.607	197	0.658		
	Total	131.161	198			
EHA	Between Groups	0.288	1	0.288	0.359	0.55
	Within Groups	158.17	197	0.803		
	Total	158.458	198			
PEC	Between Groups	2.771	1	2.771	3.574	0.06
	Within Groups	152.765	197	0.775		
	Total	155.536	198			
PAH	Between Groups	1.934	1	1.934	2.743	0.099
	Within Groups	138.885	197	0.705		
	Total	140.819	198			
PHA	Between Groups	1.315	1	1.315	2.115	0.147
	Within Groups	122.501	197	0.622		
	Total	123.816	198			
PW	Between Groups	0.029	1	0.029	0.028	0.868
	Within Groups	204.851	197	1.04		
	Total	204.879	198			
CIV	Between Groups	1.423	1	1.423	1.804	0.18
	Within Groups	186.059	236	0.788		
	Total	187.481	237			
CI	Between Groups	0.466	1	0.466	0.577	0.448
	Within Groups	190.701	236	0.808		

	Total	191.168	237			
PLL	Between Groups	0.91	1	0.91	1.197	0.275
	Within Groups	179.554	236	0.761		
	Total	180.465	237			
FC	Between Groups	0.153	1	0.153	0.232	0.63
	Within Groups	155.757	236	0.66		
	Total	155.91	237			

Table 15.

One-way between subjects ANOVA analysis between ILI factors and country of residence

Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
EC	1	111	-0.22072	0.856182	0.081265	-2.47327	1.44064
	2	88	0.19335	0.88111	0.093927	-1.8456	1.7516
	Total	199	-0.03761	0.889314	0.063042	-2.47327	1.7516
ET	1	111	0.040086	0.826536	0.078451	-4.38439	1.29246
	2	88	0.13956	0.655484	0.069875	-2.04917	1.04857
	Total	199	0.084074	0.755498	0.053556	-4.38439	1.29246
EWA	1	111	-0.08309	0.876919	0.083233	-4.59411	1.25116
	2	88	0.089624	0.720063	0.076759	-1.87308	1.44517
	Total	199	-0.00671	0.813899	0.057696	-4.59411	1.44517
EHA	1	111	0.393475	0.908074	0.086191	-1.73347	2.20859
	2	88	-0.41158	0.64272	0.068514	-1.38739	1.4218
	Total	199	0.03747	0.89459	0.063416	-1.73347	2.20859
PEC	1	115	-0.04328	0.843223	0.078631	-2.72708	1.57824
	2	84	0.039869	0.945145	0.103124	-2.51623	1.50275
	Total	199	-0.00818	0.886306	0.062829	-2.72708	1.57824
PAH	1	115	-0.09361	0.864003	0.080569	-3.22748	1.35398
	2	84	0.100301	0.805793	0.087919	-3.13342	1.16718
	Total	199	-0.01176	0.84333	0.059782	-3.22748	1.35398
PHA	1	115	0.152522	0.790296	0.073695	-2.15805	1.62162
	2	84	-0.17971	0.754564	0.08233	-2.33658	1.12769
	Total	199	0.012281	0.790782	0.056057	-2.33658	1.62162
PW	1	115	0.010048	1.04284	0.097245	-3.00008	2.09611
	2	84	-0.09596	0.98395	0.107358	-2.2524	1.45796
	Total	199	-0.0347	1.017224	0.072109	-3.00008	2.09611
CIV	1	134	0.079098	0.876999	0.075761	-3.33282	1.72684
	2	104	-0.09136	0.900301	0.088282	-3.03269	1.6166
	Total	238	0.004613	0.889415	0.057652	-3.33282	1.72684
CI	1	134	0.177997	0.838001	0.072392	-2.7026	1.57876
	2	104	-0.19155	0.933584	0.091545	-2.59199	1.61661
	Total	238	0.016517	0.898117	0.058216	-2.7026	1.61661
PLL	1	134	-0.05483	0.851216	0.073534	-2.75485	1.47014

	2	104	0.063036	0.899211	0.088175	-2.57685	1.89663
	Total	238	-0.00332	0.872614	0.056563	-2.75485	1.89663
FC	1	134	-0.04774	0.829604	0.071667	-2.71138	1.13082
	2	104	0.06303	0.78614	0.077087	-2.4105	1.18808
	Total	238	0.000662	0.811079	0.052574	-2.71138	1.18808

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EC	Between Groups	8.416	1	8.416	11.189	0.001
	Within Groups	148.178	197	0.752		
	Total	156.594	198			
ET	Between Groups	0.486	1	0.486	0.85	0.358
	Within Groups	112.528	197	0.571		
	Total	113.014	198			
EWA	Between Groups	1.464	1	1.464	2.224	0.137
	Within Groups	129.697	197	0.658		
	Total	131.161	198			
EHA	Between Groups	31.813	1	31.813	49.486	0
	Within Groups	126.645	197	0.643		
	Total	158.458	198			
PEC	Between Groups	0.336	1	0.336	0.426	0.515
	Within Groups	155.201	197	0.788		
	Total	155.536	198			
PAH	Between Groups	1.825	1	1.825	2.587	0.109
	Within Groups	138.993	197	0.706		
	Total	140.819	198			
PHA	Between Groups	5.358	1	5.358	8.911	0.003
	Within Groups	118.458	197	0.601		
	Total	123.816	198			
PW	Between Groups	0.545	1	0.545	0.526	0.469
	Within Groups	204.334	197	1.037		
	Total	204.879	198			
CIV	Between Groups	1.701	1	1.701	2.161	0.143
	Within Groups	185.78	236	0.787		
	Total	187.481	237			

CI	Between Groups	7.996	1	7.996	10.303	0.002
	Within Groups	183.171	236	0.776		
	Total	191.168	237			
PLL	Between Groups	0.813	1	0.813	1.069	0.302
	Within Groups	179.651	236	0.761		
	Total	180.465	237			
FC	Between Groups	0.718	1	0.718	1.093	0.297
	Within Groups	155.192	236	0.658		
	Total	155.91	237			

Table 16

One-way between subjects ANOVA analysis between ILI factors and age

Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
EC	1	103	-0.11801	0.931192	0.091753	-2.47327	1.7516
	2	108	0.018427	0.859203	0.082677	-2.43712	1.58544
	Total	211	-0.04818	0.89554	0.061652	-2.47327	1.7516
ET	1	103	0.054181	0.728965	0.071827	-3.50473	1.25599
	2	108	0.079471	0.799649	0.076946	-4.38439	1.29246
	Total	211	0.067125	0.764247	0.052613	-4.38439	1.29246
EWA	1	103	-0.04007	0.800547	0.07888	-2.27901	1.44517
	2	108	-0.05321	0.867914	0.083515	-4.59411	1.22343
	Total	211	-0.0468	0.833749	0.057398	-4.59411	1.44517
EHA	1	103	-0.07254	0.909696	0.089635	-1.73347	1.7344
	2	108	0.125571	0.878456	0.084529	-1.15312	2.20859
	Total	211	0.028865	0.897215	0.061767	-1.73347	2.20859
PEC	1	104	-0.08377	0.90918	0.089152	-2.17502	1.57824
	2	95	0.074569	0.8577	0.087998	-2.72708	1.30199
	Total	199	-0.00818	0.886306	0.062829	-2.72708	1.57824
PAH	1	104	-0.03643	0.88408	0.086691	-3.22748	1.11959
	2	95	0.015256	0.800142	0.082093	-3.13342	1.35398
	Total	199	-0.01176	0.84333	0.059782	-3.22748	1.35398
PHA	1	104	-0.07831	0.773924	0.075889	-2.15805	1.43902
	2	95	0.11146	0.801167	0.082198	-2.33658	1.62162
	Total	199	0.012281	0.790782	0.056057	-2.33658	1.62162
PW	1	104	-0.08899	1.048182	0.102783	-3.00008	2.09611
	2	95	0.024743	0.984305	0.100988	-2.62101	1.48132
	Total	199	-0.0347	1.017224	0.072109	-3.00008	2.09611
CIV	1	122	-0.19364	0.990051	0.089635	-3.33282	1.72684
	2	116	0.213121	0.716504	0.066526	-2.55531	1.53193
	Total	238	0.004613	0.889415	0.057652	-3.33282	1.72684
CI	1	122	-0.04414	0.918538	0.083161	-2.59199	1.57876
	2	116	0.08031	0.875549	0.081293	-2.7026	1.61661
	Total	238	0.016517	0.898117	0.058216	-2.7026	1.61661
PLL	1	122	-0.01979	0.94061	0.085159	-2.57685	1.89663

	2	116	0.013993	0.7986	0.074148	-2.75485	1.26771
	Total	238	-0.00332	0.872614	0.056563	-2.75485	1.89663
FC	1	122	-0.1467	0.882881	0.079932	-2.71138	1.18808
	2	116	0.155645	0.698807	0.064883	-2.22841	1.12752
	Total	238	0.000662	0.811079	0.052574	-2.71138	1.18808

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EC	Between Groups	0.981	1	0.981	1.225	0.27
	Within Groups	167.437	209	0.801		
	Total	168.418	210			
ET	Between Groups	0.034	1	0.034	0.057	0.811
	Within Groups	122.622	209	0.587		
	Total	122.655	210			
EWA	Between Groups	0.009	1	0.009	0.013	0.909
	Within Groups	145.97	209	0.698		
	Total	145.979	210			
EHA	Between Groups	2.069	1	2.069	2.59	0.109
	Within Groups	166.98	209	0.799		
	Total	169.049	210			
PEC	Between Groups	1.245	1	1.245	1.589	0.209
	Within Groups	154.292	197	0.783		
	Total	155.536	198			
PAH	Between Groups	0.133	1	0.133	0.186	0.667
	Within Groups	140.686	197	0.714		
	Total	140.819	198			
PHA	Between Groups	1.788	1	1.788	2.887	0.091
	Within Groups	122.028	197	0.619		
	Total	123.816	198			
PW	Between Groups	0.642	1	0.642	0.619	0.432
	Within Groups	204.237	197	1.037		
	Total	204.879	198			
CIV	Between Groups	9.838	1	9.838	13.07	0
	Within Groups	177.643	236	0.753		
	Total	187.481	237			

CI	Between Groups	0.921	1	0.921	1.142	0.286
	Within Groups	190.247	236	0.806		
	Total	191.168	237			
PLL	Between Groups	0.068	1	0.068	0.089	0.766
	Within Groups	180.397	236	0.764		
	Total	180.465	237			
FC	Between Groups	5.435	1	5.435	8.525	0.004
	Within Groups	150.475	236	0.638		
	Total	155.91	237			



Institutional Review Board Project Action Summary

Action Date: November 23, 2016 *Note: Approval expires one year after this date.*

Type: New Full Review New Expedited Review Continuation Review New Exempt Review
 Modification

Action: Approved Approved Pending Modification Not Approved

Project Number: 2016-11-099

Researcher(s): Azadeh Davari Doc SOLES
 Afsaneh Nahavandi, PhD Fac SOLES

Project Title: Iranian Leadership Ideals (ILI): A Culturally-based Leadership Approach

Note: We send IRB correspondence regarding student research to the faculty advisor, who bears the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the research. We request that the faculty advisor share this correspondence with the student researcher.

Modifications Required or Reasons for Non-Approval

None

The next deadline for submitting project proposals to the Provost's Office for full review is N/A. You may submit a project proposal for expedited review at any time.

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