In the name of *Allah*, the most benevolent and the most merciful.

Leadership and Culture in Pakistan: An Interpretive Study

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A Thesis submitted to the University of the West of England (UWE) for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Business and Law, Bristol, UK

November 2014

Dedication

The work produced here is solely

dedicated to

my

Ammi Jan & Abbu Jan

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List of Abbreviations

A-MNC	American Multinational Corporations
ASM	Area Sales Manager
B-MNC	British Multinational Corporations
BOD	Board of Directors
CA	Chartered Accountant
CD	Customer Development
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEU	Chief Engineer Utilities
CMA	Cost & Management Accountant
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
ED	Executive Director
EDF	Executive Director Finance
EDS	Executive Director Supply Chain
FMCGs	Fast Moving Consumer Goods
GM	General Manager
GMH	General Manager Human Resources
GMI	General Manager Information Technology
GMM	General Manager Marketing
GMP	General Manager Plant
GMR	General Manager Refinery
GMT	General Manager Textile
GOME	Government of Middle East
GOP	Government of Pakistan
HR	Human Resources
IBA	Institute of Business Administration
JD	Job Description
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators

LLCs	Large Local Corporations
LUMS	Lahore University of Management Sciences
MBA	Master of Business Administration
M-CON	Management Consultant
MD	Managing Director
MNA	Member National Assembly
MNCs	Multinational Corporations
MPA	Member Provincial Assembly
NSM	National Sales Manager
PML (N)	Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz League)
PML (Q)	Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam League)
PSCs	Public Sector Corporations
ROM	Regional Operational Manager
RSM	Regional Sales Manager
SBU	Strategic Business Unit
SMG	Senior Manager
TM	Territory Manager
VP	Vice President

Abstract

This thesis provides an account of an empirically-based research project on the nature of leadership and culture in the corporate context of Pakistan. An interpretive approach is adopted in the exploration of the following themes: organization politics, identity and leadership practices. I also examine the ontological issues associated with culture and leadership in an organizational context, and its interpretation through such constructs as social practices, politics and identity (chapter 2). Moreover, I explain my dissatisfaction with the existing body of knowledge because of its methodological weaknesses, inadequacies and philosophical flaws. My concern is to develop more appropriate methodological strategies and a framework for conducting research in a non-western context. Hence, the study stresses the need to maintain an etic–emic distinction and epistemic consideration of the location of practice, especially when the research subject is situated in an Asiatic or non-western context (chapter 3).

Leaders were interviewed on-site in three organizational domains: Public Sector Corporations (PSCs), Multinational Corporations (MNCs) and Large Local Corporations (LLCs). The nature of the research is inductive and my methodology focuses on ethnographic, polyphonic and emic aspects of interviewing. Thematic analysis techniques were applied to focus on indigenous terms, to locate local meanings of western terms, through elaboration of similarities and differences between local and western terms, metaphors and linguistic expressions used by informants (chapter 4).

Prominent issues that emerged out of the data analysis are discussed at length in the subsequent chapters. These are leadership practices, politics in organization and organizational identity.

Leaders' practices in organization seem to represent a combination of two streams of values, dialectically opposed to each other: social and organizational. What constitutes the social can be considered as the combination of informal, personal, political and cultural as against organizational values that emanate from hierarchy, structure and system (legal-bureaucratic) dynamics. Three prominent attributes of leadership: structural informality, personalismo and *geo-cultural* orientations, are observed across modern-western and local-national organizations with varying intensities (chapter 5).

Politics is practiced in our daily routines and is considered an essential ingredient of social and organizational lives. Though the common denominator of self-interest is found amongst leaders in all three types of organization, leaders in modern-western and local-national organizations are observed to experience, give recognition to and articulate the phenomenon of politics in organization somewhat differently. Moreover, leaders in all

three types of organization are observed to formulate different political strategies to manage their organizations (chapter 6).

Perhaps the most interesting finding was that while identity practices in MNCs seemed to involve denial of their foreign identity, paradoxically high-performing PSCs and LLCs tend to deny local or national identity at a collective level. Moreover, this study shows that the status of national identity in Pakistani organizations or corporate life is a much contested one. It is also competing with social identification in the sense that local or national social identity is deemed inappropriate for corporate and business imagery. This is expressed, with different intensities, in the rhetoric and discourse of leadership in all three types of organization (chapter 7).

The concept of identity is no longer considered static, stable and fixed over time and space. Empirical evidence presented here, leads me to argue that the identity-creation process in the corporate sector of Pakistan is something that can be described as *geo-cultural*. This concept retains and gives recognition to the simultaneous existence of multiple identities, be they modern or traditional, global organizational or local-cultural or national. It is something associated with historical and collective conditioning of individuals, communities and societies entrenched in a particular local identity (geographically-based) which generates its own specific interpretation and meanings. As such, *geo-cultural* identity-construction is an amalgam of personal, familial, linguistic, religious and other local cultural features deeply ingrained with the historical conditions of the geographical region. In other words, leaders' identity stems from locality, leaders' politics revolve around locality and leaders' social modes of practices concern locality. Hence, the nature of social practices, the structure of leaders' political orientation and their identity responses, are all predisposed to confirm the existence and centrality of local-cultural leadership. Put simply, leadership emanates from, and tends to be heavily influenced by, *geo-cultural* attributes.

Declaration

The work referred to in this thesis has not been submitted elsewhere in order to seek another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

> We develop leaders. And we develop countries. So we believe. We also believe that we develop countries by developing leaders. Perhaps we need to develop our thinking.
> [Mintzberg[1] 2007: 1]

1.1 Introduction

'Is there any?' was, more often than not, the spontaneous reply I received from practitioner corporate leaders in Pakistan when I posed the question, 'How would you describe leadership or management in Pakistan?'. Or when I asked what Pakistani leadership or management is. Or when I told them I was undertaking research on leadership in Pakistani organizations. This three-word reply was often accompanied by behaviour expressing satire, irony or bewilderment and hence became a fascinating provocation for the subject matter of my PhD research.

Given practitioners' disavowal, I turned the focus of my inquiry to literature on leadership and organization research. I observed that the research available on organizations in Pakistan was meagre, and that whatever is available was biased in its treatment of knowledge generation. For instance, here I just refer to two popular research texts to show how they were received and treated differently in the academic world of Pakistan. Burrell & Morgan published *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis* in 1979, and a year later, in 1980, Hofstede's book *Culture's Consequences: International differences in work-related values* appeared. Hofstede's (1980) framework of cultural analyses turned out to be extremely popular all across the world and in Pakistani business text books and corporate training, while Burrell & Morgan goes virtually un-noticed. This was missing even from the work of scholars from Pakistan who did research abroad in the West, and particularly those published in the UK and USA like Khilji (1999) and Islam (2004), let alone scholars from universities and academia within Pakistan. Even after more than thirty years I have yet to see the appearance of any meaningful scholarly research from the alternative or competing perspective. What might be a plausible explanation for this absence? Politics: local, state or the politics of higher education and research in Pakistan, or even perhaps politics at a much higher international level, which has been identified by Redding (1994) as imperialism of knowledge or knowledge production in postcolonial settings (Said 1978, Bhabha 1995, Sen 2002, Banerjee & Linstead 2004). Perhaps an answer to this question can be sought through an exclusive doctoral level piece of research. Nonetheless, as is evident from the above practitioners' discourse, I felt immensely the absence of local cultural content or nation-specific expression of knowledge from the

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[1] This commentary was originally written in 2006 and posted on the web in June of 2007.

mainstream theoretical literature on organization and leadership. Zaidi (2003) made a good attempt to narrate and analyze this issue in his study 'The Dismal State of the Social Sciences in Pakistan[2].' Zaidi (2003: 283), by raising the plight of the state of social sciences, even posed a more specific question to the community of social scientists in Pakistan: 'Has any Pakistani social scientist, in any of their fields in the last three decades, developed, reconstructed, reformulated, expanded upon, disputed or rejected any theory or theoretical formulation, qualified theory, or even in the specific context of Pakistan?' His subsequent answer was 'no' or not more than a handful amongst thousands of studies produced across the diverse disciplines. Moreover, Pakistani social scientists continue to apply theoretical arguments and constructs to Pakistani conditions, without questioning, debating or commenting on the theory itself. For Inayatullah (2003), this is primarily because Pakistani social scientists have a superficial and mistaken understanding of western sciences in both the natural and social domains of knowledge, and for them abstracted empiricism is equated with what science is all about. This tendency is 'compounded by *xenophobia* (fancy for new and foreign) emerging from Pakistani society's cultural integration [or linkage] with the Anglo-Saxon intellectual and cultural tradition' (Inayatullah, 2003: 9). Consequently, what happens is that local data or knowledge is seen and interpreted through the borrowed or imported western theory, and mainly from a dominant functionalist paradigm, without critical examination, evaluation and criticism. Since theory coming from the west stands as an ideal, local data, knowledge and conditions were, in turn, critically examined and deplored. Therefore there is an obvious need to formulate theories based on what is suggested by the data and by alternative ways of interpreting data. This was one aspect of the state of knowledge creation or production in Pakistan.

Before going further it is important to introduce Pakistan here. On August, 14, 1947 Pakistan got independence from British rule. Its population in 2009 is about 174.58 million with an area of 340, 499 sq mi (Shah & Amjad 2011). The main religion of the people of Pakistan is Islam with 95 percent of the population being Muslim (Shah & Amjad 2011: 331-332). Urdu is the common national language though other local and provincial languages have very strong presence. Administratively the country is divided into four provinces: Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Baluchistan with Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar and Quetta as their provincial capitals. The city of Islamabad is federal capital. According to Heritage Online (2010) major ethno-linguistic groups are Punjabis 44.15%, Pushtoons are 15.42%, Sindhis are 14.1%, Seraikis are 10.53%, Muhajirs-Urdu

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[2] The longer version of this article had been published simultaneously in *Economic and Political Weekly*, 37 (35), 2002 and as Monograph No. 2 by the Council of Social Sciences, Islamabad 2002.

speaking are 7.57% Baluchis are 3.57% and Others 4.66% (cited in Shah & Amjad 2011: 331-332). For further insight on Pakistan's political economy and its business and economic development see Ali (2004) and Zaidi (1999).

In general, Pakistan is considered a developing country or economy in transition. Important for us is to know how it is treated in Western social science literature. Here, too, the literature presents a more miserable picture than actually is the case. For instance, discussing from an economic perspective, Todaro (1994) and Todaro & Smith (2003), though acknowledging the diversity and structural differences of developing countries, nevertheless imposed an etic framework to evaluate all developing countries in the same way. To Todaro, developing countries share a common set of economic, social and political goals, have a common set of problems and dilemmas and have recourse to a common set of solutions too. Common characteristics of developing countries are: low levels of living, income, health and education, inequality, low levels of productivity, high levels of population growth and dependency burden, high levels of unemployment and under employment, dependence on agricultural production, and dependence in international relations (Todaro 1994: 38).

Todaro's thinking constitutes a classic text and is taught in the curriculum of developing countries. This is a typical approach prevalent amongst social science scholars for dealing with economies and societies of developing countries, as has been referred in the Mintzberg quotation cited above. This type of thinking was described by Kenny & William as the problem of epistemological and ontological universalism, meaning thereby that 'all economies are in some way the same, and hence that economies and economic processes are comparable' (Kenny & William 2001 quoted by Leftwich 2005: 574) and 'thus give rise to the presumption of laws that operate across all economies in space and time, irrespective of the wider sociopolitical context' (Leftwich 2005: 574). These epistemological and ontological issues are further discussed within the specific disciplinary context of Organization Studies in chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis. The point here is to bring to the fore the problems of a social scientific approach associated with problems of development, be it nation- or organization- specific, especially in the context of emerging economies. Such an ontology and epistemology leads to grave consequences as it culminates in what is known as the seriously flawed ideology of globalization (Mintzberg 2007):

> Globalization does not build on a country's unique strengths, does not respect its social traditions, [and] does not allow the autonomy necessary to grow indigenous leaders and enterprises. All too often, it is forced development, imposed against the natural inclinations and even will of the people (Mintzberg 2007: 18).

1.2 Where to look for evidence?

The above scenario demonstrates that what is there at the theoretical level (in the claims of corporate leaders and business educational institutions) just does not exist in practice, and this also seems to be valid *vice versa* as practices do not match the expounded theories in literature. Therefore, I believe what might constitute evidence of distinct indigenous leadership must lie in an examination of actual leadership and organizational practices, in the economy, rather than fallacious theoretical claims either in Western literature or local rhetoric as demonstrated above. The evidence for indigenous models of leadership can be investigated in the following three indicators: economy in practice, national or local language and literature, and new thinking and recent trends in western social sciences.

1.2.1 Economy in practice

For instance, while looking at the KSE 100 index[3] of high-performing firms, I found only 20-22% of firms to have foreign ownership (MNCs)[4]. This means local institutions and organizations constitute around 80%. Second, a great majority of high-performing organizations are never registered on the stock market (and I refer to this point in the methodology chapter) because of historical distrust and the adversarial relations between entrepreneurs (owner-leaders) and government and regulatory bodies following an Anglo-Saxon model of corporate governance (Mumtaz 2003). Mumtaz's empirical study suggests that stock markets in Pakistan display shallowness owing to the corporate sector being heavily influenced by cultural underpinning, and this makes its corporate context unique and markedly different from that of developed countries (Mumtaz 2003).

The presence and size of the informal economy also implies and refers to the existence of distinct organizing and, in turn, the leadership orientation of practitioners and entrepreneurs. However, estimates of the size of the informal business sector in Pakistan are tentative, as 'it varies from 32 per cent of the mainstream documented economy said to be around $160 billion. A few estimate it at 80 percent of the economy and there are people who say informal sector is twice the size of formal economy' (Ghausi 2008: 9). I am not interested in going further into the informal economy; the sole point here is that its significant size indicates that western models and philosophies of organizing economies and organization, and hence of organizational leadership, are just not enough to capture, at the macro-level, the vibrancy and fluidity of local organizing and economy. For instance, at the practice level this gets manifested in the cognition and discourse of one of the

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[3] KSE stands for Karachi Stock Exchange which is considered the most developed amongst all stock markets in Pakistan.

[4] www.dawn.com.pk Last accessed September 14, 2008. The figure may at the most be 22% as some foreign or MNCs are in joint venture with local firms and I have counted them on the MNC side.

leading former presidents of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, who heads a business enterprise that does not depend on bank credit at all, yet does not consider himself an informal businessman:

> It is purely on religious considerations that I avoid bank credit. I maintain a corporate entity and pay all due taxes. I maintain a current account in bank on which I do not get any return but the bank earns from 16-17 percent interest (Ghausi 2008: 9).

The above quotation reveals two features: first, a leader's orientation and personal belief in running an organization free from interest in the interest-driven economy. Second, this challenges the prevailing western notion of informal economy as a product of a corrupt tax and administrative system, and demands revisions in its concept by suggesting that what is identified and categorized as informal economy is contingent upon the cultural context of a society. Moreover, within the context of organizing, though Pakistan is a country where wages are too low and there is no social security net, yet there are many instances of the practice of making ex-gratia payments to employees in time of accidents, sickness or any distress, either in lieu of leaders' religious obligation or out of personal generosity (Ghausi 2008). Giving personal charity was found to be the one big component of the dominant belief structure of Pakistanis, as reported in a study conducted ten years ago, where the size of personal charity was estimated to be around Rs. 700 billion (Subohi 2008). Hence, practice in the economy suggests something different exists, though, in general, the economy of Pakistan is formally and officially modelled on the Anglo-Saxon model.

1.2.2 National or local language and literature

Similarly, local literature produced in local languages generates a different imagery and presents a different picture altogether than what is produced in English-language literature. For instance, one such mundane and worldly practice would be to make observation and comparison on any single event given coverage by both Urdu and English newspapers. The expectation would be that each would express and communicate this from differing perspectives: the former anchored in mass psyche and driven by national local or cultural contents and representation, while the latter was dipped in an elitist, modern and global outlook and expression. Hence, local language is constitutive of the evidence. This aspect has been witnessed and confirmed by Ramiz Allahwala, one of the leading management trainers and consultants both in the public and corporate sectors operating in Karachi, Far East and Hawaii:

> Pakistani managers daily confront employees and bosses who not only avoid practicing these crucial western values [accountability, assertiveness, reactivity, dignity and openness] but also replace them with peculiar Pakistani values. *Sabar* (patience), *layhaaz* (preserving others' sentiments), *ghairat* (honour), *sula joey* (keeping peace and harmony), *burkhurdari* (respect for authority [elders]) and

farmaburdari (obedience [submission] to authority) often contradict and conflict with values underlying Western corporate models (Allahwala 2009: 1).

Furthermore, for Ramiz these values are culturally embedded in the national language of Pakistan identified as Urdu which, according to him, generates a 'deep appreciation of life's multiplicity and diversity' (Allahwala 2009: 2) at one level, while at another level 'creates vague and imprecise meanings that tend to lack clarity and closure' (Allahwala 2009: 2).

1.2.3 New thinking and recent trends in western social sciences

Recent literature is trying to capture what is happening with organizing and leadership on the Asian or non-western research front and takes us much closer to appreciating and evaluating data and concepts of societies in transition (Westwood *et al.* 2004). Scholars in the west now realize that:

> Central issues in organizational leadership like meanings of motivation, commitment, loyalty, logics of action and decision making, stability and change can also be considered a central issue of identity (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003: 1163).

This is important because it defines the limits and extent of theorization on organization and leadership, and considers it to be a local-national or regional phenomenon flowing out of a socio-cultural entity or local identity, rather than being a transcendental or global phenomenon. The same is now being witnessed even in the west in the wake of recent on-going research that, in its observation and interpretation of leadership and organizing, is moving away from a traditionally tight, narrower, systemic and rational analytical orderly framework. For instance Karl Weick observes:

> …efforts to maintain the illusion that organizations are rational and orderly in the interest of legitimacy are costly and futile. They consume enormous energy and undermine self acceptance when managers hold themselves to standards of prescience that are unattainable (Weick 2001: xi).

Extending the above logic one cannot straight away dismiss leadership and organization in local-national settings of economies in transition, like that of Pakistan, as disorderly, disorganized or irrational from a modern-western perspective.

Similarly, for psychoanalysts like Sievers *et al* (2006), behind the apparent logic of rationality, competition and justice in organizations, contained and embedded in their socio-political and economic contexts, lie the roots of a behaviour which is inherently aggressive and exhibits annihilation-irrational tendencies. It is, therefore, imperative that leadership and organization in Asiatic and societies in transition like the one in Pakistan must not be examined and evaluated according to what constitutes a rational and orderly framework in the traditional western perspective of organization and organizing.

The evidence above, which is plausible and suggestive, has encouraged me to research what may be discovered at the emic and practice level of organizational conduct. Therefore, capturing the leadership and organizing in large local-national organizations, and comparing it with modern-western types of organization, constitutes the principal component of my research design. This is in order to see what is there in terms of 'economy/organizing in practice'. Secondly, the research was conducted in a bi-lingual mode, in Urdu and/or English as appropriate for the respondents, so that any emergence of local-cultural leadership concepts in particular could be observed. Finally, theoretical justification is sought in the Western literature on organization and leadership from competing or interpretive paradigms.

1.3 Why leadership and culture?

This concern has been aptly raised by Mintzberg as for him 'it is time for indigenous development, of countries and leaders alike' (Mintzberg 2007: 5). This suggests that leadership is situated in the cultural context of a country or nation. As such one may find that leadership cannot be studied in isolation as the narrative is closely linked with the culture and national context of a society. Though the concept of leadership is a thoroughly western one, situated in the history and linguistics of western societies (Grace 2003, Nienaber 2010, Case *et al* 2011), nonetheless here this research is directed to observe how an overly western concept and experience generates local context and meanings. Hence, the study of leadership necessitates the study of the culture of a country in which organization exists, along with its language (Politzer 1956). Therefore, here in this study I discuss and focus more on leaders and leadership processes within a Pakistan-specific cultural context.

This makes my study distinct from previous research on Pakistan in the way it approaches and inquires into meanings of leadership and organizing from within. It is primarily concerned with an exploration and description of how leadership is constructed, cultivated and embedded within the national corporate context of organizing. Thus, here an emic perspective, that is, cultural and contextual interpretations from within, forms important lines of analysis for the study of leadership. Shotter ascribed to this mode of inquiry the label 'withness-thinking' or 'thinking-from-within' (2006: 585). In his words, 'if we are to rethink appropriate styles of empirical research, then we need a different form of engaged, responsive thinking, acting, and talking, that allows us to affect the flow of processes from within our living involvement with them (Shotter 2006: 585).

1.4 Research aims

This study aims firstly to contribute to the knowledge of leadership and culture through cross-cultural and critical management inquiry perspectives. It does this by exploring the linkage and relationship between organizational leadership and society in the context of a country in transition. Secondly, the study takes into consideration a caveat in the existing methodological treatment of the study of organizations by highlighting the lacunae and inadequacies within existing epistemological and ontological predilections of leadership, organization and cross-cultural research. Moreover, I attempt to develop a relevant body of leadership, organizational and cross-cultural knowledge from an emic perspective. While rare, such an approach is direly needed given the nature of enhanced interaction and communication in today's world of international business. Earlier literature is written mainly from strongly etic frameworks that lead to sweeping generalisations and universal typologies. The constructs and variables used are, typically, highly abstract and rigour is only achieved through convoluted statistical manipulation of quantitative data. Therefore this study seeks to be distinctive in its methodology and aspires to develop a thick description of leadership practices (Geertz 1973). This is intended to give more comprehensive understanding of complex organizational and leadership dynamics in cultural settings. This, I contend, is more relevant, representative, ingrained and aligned within the historical and socio-political context of Pakistani society.

1.5 Significance and scope of the study

This thesis also attempts to develop an understanding of self and identity at multiple levels: at the individual leadership level, at organizational level, and at national and international levels. That is, to consider how each entity or identity should view itself, in order to lead, manage or organize both self and others. The study focuses more on the missing, under-represented and marginalized voices emerging from local leadership practices and identities. As such, it highlights the dilemmas associated with modernization or the extent of modernization and identity maintenance at multiple levels.

Moreover, given the international context of globalization, the subject under research seems an important one for multinational corporations (MNCs) and transnational organizations to increase their understanding of emerging economies and societies in transition like that of Pakistan. The study will have immense practical relevance and implications for US- and UK- based subsidiaries in Pakistan, and is expected to have equal utility for local-national organizations carrying out business internationally. For instance, better understanding of local and multinational types of organization carries wide implications for MNCs in whatever form of involvement they have with local

organizations, be it acquisition, joint venture, alliances, wholly-owned subsidiary, franchising, licensing, contract manufacturing or outsourcing.

Last but not least, my findings also have relevance for Western organization in understanding organizing and leadership from an alternative perspective. More specifically, the knowledge generated through this study may have enormous significance and application for the corporate sector as it seeks to design appropriate leadership and management development programs, formulate better HR practices and understand leadership contours within the context of societies in transition. It may also have some ramifications for public policy formulation, albeit indirectly, in developing understanding and appreciation of the socio-psychological disposition and behavioural dynamics of the Pakistani diaspora in the UK.

1.6 Key research questions and narratives of study

What do leaders do in the societal and organizational context of Pakistan? Does a Pakistani leadership or management model exist? Do leaders or managers in Pakistan have a distinct cultural identity of their own? The purpose of this study is to elicit, understand and interpret the identity construction of individuals at leadership levels in three corporate segments of Pakistan. Is there any distinct leadership or managerial style of Pakistani individuals rooted in their culture and history or that can be identified as *geo-cultural*[5] leadership as distinct from that of modern-western organizational leaders? If so what pattern and structure of leadership behaviour do Pakistani leaders exhibit? And what are the implications of this distinction? How do these local Pakistani and modern-western leadership orientations manifest, reside and situate themselves within the context of three corporate segments of Pakistan? What is the local cultural organizing context and how does this interact and influence modern-western organizational character? Or, in other words, how does leadership process is influenced by culture and finds its practical expression in Pakistani workplaces?

In order to answer the questions raised above, and after going through data generation, I was faced with the problem of how to organize and generate a coherent, representative and composite framework in order to communicate and present my research effectively. For me, these questions can be answered through three primary narratives: first, leadership practice; second, how leadership practice is located and embedded in the identity of the individual and organization; and finally, the overall realization of the primacy of politics in leadership practice and organizing process.

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[5] I explain my use of the term *geo-cultural* on p.23-25 and in the section 2.6

The rationale and selection of these narratives was well-supported by primary and secondary data, as will be explained later in chapters 2 and 3. The three narratives that emerged were suggested by grounded data. These patterns were also justified because of the thematic concurrence between earlier literature on developing countries (functionalist perspective) and interpretive perspectives of Organizational Studies.

Identity construction can also be considered as a political process. Szeto (2006) has talked about identity politics within the realm of postcolonial conditions, and organization in this respect can be considered an arena of production of cultural practices and politics, where identity is contested, and politics of organizing are intertwined with, and situated in, leadership practices. Therefore, if leadership practice appears and is manifest at the surface level of organization then such practice can be considered to reside and be deeply rooted in identity and hence to shape the construction of political identity of leaders and leadership process.

Moreover, Ford (2010) also advocates that new critical approaches need to be developed incorporating individual experiences, social practices, identities and power relations and inter-subjectivities in understanding leadership as social process expressed within a cultural context. To interpret Ong: culture, of organization and nation alike, can be defined as the politics of experiencing reality and changes in identity (Brannen & Salk 2000). This again explains the primacy and pervasiveness of politics and its connection with experience of reality, which to me lies in practice and hence in the identity-enactment of a leader; an on-going and living phenomenon.

Likewise based on my empirical observations the thesis culminates with the introduction of a new term, *geo-cultural*, which is synthesizing and unifying concept used to encapsulate narratives of identity, politics and the practices of organizing and leadership. In simple words, leadership emanates from *geo-cultural* attributes. The notion of *geo-culturality* should be conceived in terms of what constitutes a locality or what is it that a geographical region or place holds? What is the impact of geographical place or locality on the nature of organizing and leadership, and hence on the formation of leadership practices and construction of identity? Further discussions on *geo-culturality* follow in sections 5.4 (5.4.1, 5.4.2 & 5.4.3, 5.5) and 7.4 (7.4.1, 7.4.2 & 7.4.3) in particular.

One aspect of *geo-culturality* is locality; a notion which has been debated at some length in the field of anthropology. Barth, for example, conceived locality as an 'area' which significantly retains form and within which culture is distributed (Barth 1956). While Geertz (1973) advocates that culture is contained in a location. Appadurai refers to locality as 'spatial incarceration' (Appadurai 1988). From an epistemic perspective, Foucault also

suggests that local knowledges and their organizing pattern must be studied in their historical and geographical context. For him the notion of 'local knowledge' is critical and signifies the existence of 'concrete, independent and contextual knowledge' (Jorgensen 1999: 1). Giddens also focuses on the role of knowledgeability or local cultural knowledge. According to him, 'knowledgeability is locally and temporally situated, rooted in practices in a particular context, people are challenged when they move into alien contexts' (Giddens 1984: 91).

My data also suggest that the nature of organizing and leadership is *geo-cultural*. I have used the term *geo-cultural* to describe the significance of local-cultural production of human organizing processes, and the *geo-cultural* narrative brings and holds together emic, epistemic and practice based local ontologies. The notion of the *geo-cultural*[6] is primarily anchored in my data on indigenous LLCs, however, the presence of *geo-cultural* leadership attributes are significantly observed across all three sectors (MNCs, PSCs & LLCs) under study.

Geo-culturality and emic-epistemic-practice connect

The term *geo-cultural* connotes a geographical place or space that holds multiple epistemic flows simultaneously, as has been identified in section 3.3. At a very broad level one can observe that there are two competing epistemic cultures operating when organizations are analyzed comparatively. The amalgam of epistemic flows 1 and 2, can be described as 'modernist' or 'Western', while the epistemic flows 3 and 4 can be identified as predominantly *geo-cultural*. Therefore, *geo-culturality* is primarily anchored in an emic perspective on culture; one which necessitates the understanding of language and locality. Nonetheless, *geo-culturality* should not be viewed as static, stable, unitary or a purely emic concept free from etic influences; rather it is in a state of transformation and flux, especially given the issues of deterritorialization and reterritorialization in the contemporary world (Gupta & Ferguson 1992). However, emic realities are considered relatively stable despite the onslaught of globalization. For Ibarra-Colado, 'even if globalization seems to mean the elimination of differences, there is evidence everywhere that indicates that these differences remain and multiply' (Ibarra-Colado 2006: 466). Moreover, micro-sociological processes and practices also have a propensity to germinate from *geo-culturality*.

Geo-culturality and identity construction

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[6] The *geo-cultural* narrative should by no means be considered akin to a grand or meta-narrative, but rather to depict the local construction and culture-specific orientation of multiple narratives. Similarly, the *geo-cultural* should not be conflated with any notion of national or religious culture.

Based on the evidence coming from my field research I theorize identity construction in organizations as *geo-cultural* in nature. *Geo-culturality* can be conceived as the container of individual, familial, linguistic, ethnic, religious and organizational identities. Therefore, *geo-culturality* as suggested by my data, is something associated with historical and collective conditioning of individuals, communities and societies entrenched in a particular local identity (geographically based) which generates its own language, specific interpretations and meanings. As such, it is observed that *geo-cultural* identity-construction is an amalgam of personal, familial, linguistic, religious and other local cultural features deeply ingrained with the historical conditions of the geographical locality. In addition, the existence of '*geo-cultural* identity' means that individuals retain and express multiple identities deriving from religious, linguistic, regional, familial, as well as modern, professional and job- or industry-related affiliations across time and space. This is confirmed by Willmott (2006) for whom there is no single identity-construction that can encompass holistically what the person is. Therefore, the nature of social practices, the structure of leaders' political orientation and their identity responses, are all predisposed to confirm the existence and centrality of *geo-cultural* leadership. In simple words leadership emanates from, and tends to be heavily influenced by, *geo-cultural* attributes.

1.7 How this thesis will proceed

In order to respond and answer the interrelated queries identified above, the thesis unfolds as follows. In chapter 2, relevant literature on leadership and organization is reviewed with the intention of examining the problems and issues associated with research conducted through a dominant functionalist paradigm. This sheds light on how knowledge creation within the realm of the dominant research paradigm tends to become insufficient, inadequate and irrelevant within the context of societies and economies in transition like Pakistan. Moreover, it is anticipated through the review of literature that, within the disciplinary context of Organizational Studies, merely following *etic* theorization is not enough to give sufficient and meaningful coverage to the phenomenon of organization research on countries in transition. Rather, it is imperative to generate meanings of leadership and organizing from within through *emic* constructions based on an understanding of historically and linguistically rich local cultural contexts.

Existing research approaches are debated critically in chapter 3 and from this critical discussion I develop and explain my own ontological, epistemological and methodological allegiances. I make an attempt to develop a rationale for my methodological choices with respect to leadership and organization research. This entails examining: how leadership is practised, what its episteme is, and finally what is entailed in developing an emic construction of leadership in the cultural context of society and organization in Pakistan.

This chapter will also set out my research design and methods, including details of sample selection, data access and strategies of the research.

In chapter 4 I discuss the rationale of the formulation and execution of my research design, stipulating data collection methods, sampling rationale, research techniques and tools used, writing and analysis approaches, ethical considerations and practical constraints faced in conducting this research.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 contain discussions of empirical data and analyses of themes: leadership practices, politics and identity. Chapter 5 analyses and reports on various themes of leadership practices observed amongst three cultural segments of organizations. The point of distinction raised here is how leaders' operating practices, actions and cognition in the Pakistani corporate context differentiate them from their counterparts in a typical western type of organization. As such three themes will be used to probe, identify and differentiate practice orientation of leaders in local-national and modern-western organizations. These are: structural informality, *personalismo* and *geo-cultural* orientation.

In chapter 6, political practices of organizational leaders in modern-western (multinational and public sector corporations, MNC and PSC, respectively) and local-national (large local corporations, LLC) are identified, discussed and analysed in a critical and comparative way. This section also tries to locate the primacy and pervasiveness of politics in the construction of leadership across the three types of organization. The chapter addresses three areas of politics in organization: the extent of the recognition given to the phenomenon of politics in the organizational setting by respondent leaders; the nature or composition of politics as perceived and interpreted by leaders and members of higher organizational echelons; and, finally, how leaders exercise or manage politics in their organizations. Overall, the chapter discloses meanings of politics that emerged from the data, concluding that a theme such as professionalism is a misnomer, and that all organizational processes are, by and large, political whether or not this is explicitly admitted by organizational members.

Chapter 7 looks into various identity dimensions of respondent leaders in three types of organization. Leadership practice is found to be inherently embedded within respondents' identity, be it surface or deep. Identity is found to be omnipresent either at the organizational and/or social levels of analyses. I argue here that the social basis of identity seems to have a much deeper and inalienable impact on the identity creation of leaders than that of identity creation by modern-western organizational interventions. Identity patterns of leaders, in three types of organizations, their discourse, cognition and practices,

are explored and explained with themes of identity-espousal, denial and the resurgence of deep identity.

In chapter 8, concluding observations and a summary of findings are presented. Keeping in view strong empirical evidence it is argued here that the nature of organizing and leadership is *geo-cultural*. The chapter also highlights the limitations of the study. Like all studies, this one has been constrained by some structural, temporal and spatial limitations. The chapter concludes by presenting some potential research implications of my study and findings.

Chapter 2 - Researching Leadership from an Emic Perspective

'…And this is simply because only the historical contents allow us to rediscover the ruptural effects of struggle that the order imposed by functionalist or systematising thought is designed to mask. Subjugated knowledges are thus those blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematising theory....'

[Foucault, 1976: 81-82]

2.1 Introduction

The modern concept of leadership is predominantly considered a Western phenomenon as it is embedded in the institutional and organizational history and culture of a western society (Grace 2003, Nienaber 2010). At the same time, leadership and organization literature on societies in transition in general is very sparse, and country-specific literature is practically non-existent. Hence it is quite challenging to look for and review what is appropriate within the overarching Western literature as being closer and more relevant to the situation of societies in transition, albeit at an abstract level.

The review of literature on leadership and organization suggests that there are two fundamental approaches to studying leadership: a positivist-functionalist and an interpretive one. While the dominant approach to research on leadership has been what was traditionally known as the administrative or behavioural sciences approach (now identified as a functional positivist or post-positivist paradigm of knowing) yet it is argued here an interpretive paradigm is more meaningful as it gives us a better understanding for studying leadership in organization embedded in a national social and cultural context. As such, an interpretive paradigm perspective is found to be more inclined to Mode 2 (Gibbons *et al* 1994) and an emic consideration of research. Therefore, it is these concerns which stand out predominantly and have a bearing on the research subject included in the review of literature which I undertake here.

My first concern is an attempt to define leadership and culture from an interpretive paradigm perspective. I limit myself to the study of emic constructs and theorization of culture and leadership. In other words, leadership in organization is probed as a question of local-cultural expression. It is examined as a matter of emic sense-making and interpretation of concepts likes leadership and organization, etc., which are thoroughly etic-oriented. Second, the review extends coverage and builds a rationale as to why an emic perspective of organization research is crucial for the study of leadership in a culture-specific context. Finally, this will also entail discussion on some broader parameters of what constitutes emic theorization. Let us see how these broader emic considerations of research on organizational leadership can be defined and studied meaningfully through an

interpretive mode of inquiry, and will facilitate us in discussion and analysis in subsequent chapters.

2.2 Leadership and culture

Leadership and culture, though in general considered distinct phenomena within the context of organization research, in terms of their definition and methodological treatment, yet the two constructs overlap and are so similar to each other in substance that one can be replaced with the other (Alvesson & Deetz 2000). Nonetheless, here I attempt to define them in a distinct way, and argue that leadership can be meaningfully studied within the domain of a culture-specific context. Moreover, defining concepts in social and organizational research is one of the basic problems, particularly when authors or researchers try to fix and standardize meanings, especially like those of structure, leadership and culture, etc. According to Alvesson & Deetz, 'no simple one-to-one relationship between the word and a distinct part of social reality can be established across a wide variety of social and organizational context' (2000: 55). Therefore, in the light of this citation I endeavour to define the two constructs in a much broader perspective.

2.2.1 Defining leadership

As expounded by Taylor (1911) and Weber (1947), leadership in organization was historically concerned with the provision of leaders, management and administration with control, certainty and stability, through the imposition of structure and standard operating procedures in an organization (Barker 2001: 485). This assumes leadership to be of a nature which in substance is mechanistic, linear, predictable and subject to definition through numeric constants. Therefore, it appears as if the terms leadership, management and administration are quite similar in their concepts, content and meaning. What in an earlier period, say in the 1960s, was considered as administration, was, in the 1980s, considered as management and now, in the 2000s, is interpreted as leadership. For that reason, even scholars like Gary Yukl & David Van Fleet assume leadership is 'all about influencing people to perform tasks and to implement strategies…' (Barker 2001: 481), hence believe that leadership and management are the same thing.

However, there are scholars who differ markedly from this approach. For instance, according to Ford,

> A more critical and reflexive approach to the study of leadership is needed giving more attention to situations, events, institutions, ideas, social practices and processes. However, understanding leadership calls not only for the consideration of social processes and cultural context. The perpetuation of a single model of univocal and patriarchal leadership behaviours and the ever-continuing drive to create leaders in contemporary organizations promote a model that is exclusionary and privileged and which constructs a homogeneous and almost superhuman model of leaders and

leadership. The development of more critical approaches needs not only to adopt a culturally sensitive and locally based interpretative approach, that takes account of individual's experiences, identities, power relations and inter-subjectivities, but also one that allows for the presence of a [diverse] range of both 'masculine' and 'feminine' workplace behaviours (Ford 2010: 48).

In the above quote, the focus is on extracting local patterns and meanings of leadership embedded in specific identity construction and power politics related subjectivities rather than to look for abstract, standardized and universal connotations and meanings of leadership.

Similarly, Barker also stressed the need to distinguish leadership from other forms of social organization, such as management, owing to its experiential, phenomenological and metaphysical nature rather than quantitative. This remains as the main problem with Bass's massive work on leadership (Barker 2001). For him, the broad dimensions for studying leadership are as follows:

Leadership is a function of individual wills and of individual needs, and the result of the dynamics of collective will organized to meet those various needs. Second, leadership is a process of adaptation and of evolution; it is a process of dynamic exchange and the interchanges of value. Leadership is deviation from convention. Third, leadership is a process of energy, not structure. In this way, leadership is different from management – managers pursue stability, while leadership is all about change. Leadership, then, can be defined as a process of transformative change where the ethics of individuals are integrated into the mores of a community as a means of evolutionary social development (Barker 2001: 491).

The focal point of the above citation is the word 'process' and, according to Hosking, to understand leadership, it is fundamental to change our focus 'from leaders, as persons, to leadership as processes' (1988: 147), as leadership skills (of a person) are embedded in the complex social, political and decision-making processes – where such processes – 'are viewed as fundamental to the creation and maintenance of social order [reality] within and between groups' (Hosking 1988: 147). Moreover, taking cognizance of the above definition implies leadership in organization cannot simply be considered in an isolated way, just concerned with boundary or performative parameters of the organization functionally, rather it is something embedded within the social process or community's cultural context. The process stays omnipresent even though methodologically leadership is associated with a person with a top-position in hierarchy (Barker 2001), or considered as superior-subordinate relation in formal ways (Alvesson & Deetz 2000).

If leadership is embedded in culture and the two are interdependent then we need to define what culture is, and look for an appropriate approach for studying this phenomenon.

2.2.2 Defining culture

Defining culture is much more intricate as it is considered as one of the complicated words in the English Language (Parker 1999). However, like leadership, culture can be studied with two approaches: positivist accounts of culture as a 'variable' within organizational functions, and interpretive studies that apply different variants of social constructionism (see Case (2008) for the debate on these two approaches). Pursuing leadership and culture research within the realm of social constructionism seems more relevant and related to the scope of this study as, according to Schumacher, the constructivist approach has greater explanatory power (1997).

The fundamental ontology in constructivism is that 'each person categorises their experience and in doing so creates their own subjective reality shared with other through language' (Schumacher 1997: 110). This suggests that culture must be continually built through communication that renegotiates the categories for, and interpretation of, shared experience (Schumacher 1997). Hence there is a subjectivist epistemological focus toward research which is labelled by Geertz (1973) 'thick description'. For Sackmann, the discovery of cultural knowledge is associated with the perceived role of research. In her view, 'the role of research here is to discover the shared cultural knowledge, both explicit and implicit, that reflects the way members of a cultural knowledge are inferred from the doing and saying' (Sackmann 1997: 26). Hence, the researcher's main concern seems to be inference from the *saying* and *doing* of the research subject. Czarniawska described this problem as the 'problem of intentionality of human action' (Czarniawska 2004: 7) which can be resolved through a narrative mode of knowing. Similarly, for Mir & Watson, social constructivists are anti-essentialist and believe that realities are essentially products of different contexts, perspectives and sense-making processes (Mir & Watson 2000: 1171-1172). Hence for all these reasons I consider leadership and culture can be aptly studied through a constructivist mode of research.

Almost all leading anthropologists agree that 'culture is the basic and central concept of their science' (White 1959: 227). It is perhaps Clifford Geertz who was considered as the ardent advocate of studying culture in a constructivist [interpretive] mode of research, that is, in a non-reductionist, non-causal and non-evaluative mode of thick description, and sensitized researchers to the interpretations and meanings of symbolic practices (LaCapra 1988). For him, culture is 'an entire way of life mediated in symbols' (LaCapra 1988: 377). He was critical of functionalist notions, in particular notions of sociological reductionism, as earlier, most anthropologists approached cultural studies from the functionalist's theoretical orientation following the methodological traditions of Malinowsky and Radcliffe-Brown (Chilcott 1987).

Consequently, it is argued here that if leadership is located and situated in culture and context, then the ontological position of scholars like Geertz (1973) and Giddens (1984) seems more applicable as they articulate culture as sets of symbols, meanings and practices that are created and reproduced through the interactions of group members (Brannen & Salk 2000). For instance, Ong defined culture as a

> … historically situated and emergent, shifting and incomplete meanings and practices generated in webs of agency and power. Culture change is not understood as unfolding according to some predetermined logic (of development, modernization or capitalism) but as the disrupted, contradictory and differential outcomes which involve changes in identity, relations of struggle and dependence, including the experience of reality itself … in situations wherein groups and classes struggle to produce and interpret culture within the industrializing milieu (Ong 1987: 2–3).

Hence, as suggested above, one can find that the process of studying culture is not as neat, clean and simple as might first be thought. Like the problems of culture, a similar set of problems has been identified by Barker for research on leadership. As he writes, 'old theories of leadership, management and administration are contained within the Newtonian language and logical positivism of the old physical sciences that are not consistent with new ideas about the nature of reality and life' (Barker 2001: 491).

If cultural context is considered akin to process, then it is imperative here to study how leadership stays embedded in the social process. Therefore, constructs like leadership and culture are considered as human social constructions undergoing social processes that 'emanate from the rich connections and interdependencies of organization and their members' (Uhl-Bein 2006: 655). The process aspect of leadership has been well emphasized by Wood, in his important article, 'The fallacy of misplaced leadership' as one for whom, 'leadership is best understood as a process rather than a property or thing' (Wood 2005: 1103). The process methodology also seems more relevant in studying leadership in the cultural context of Asiatic societies like that of Pakistan, where this philosophy stands quite distinct from commonly prevailing Western philosophical traditions, in that the nature of reality is 'here, now, immediate and discrete' (Whitehead 1967 quoted by Wood 2005: 1103). The central idea in process ontology is that 'process is the concrete reality of things' (Griffin 1986 quoted by Wood 2005: 1104). Process studies are based on the premise of living, open, changing and progressing human experience, and as such 'life and society are conceived as creative advance' (Wood 2005: 1104) constitutive of many historical events culminating in the present and which in turn have connection with the future. For Chia, the focus of process studies is on 'emergence and becoming' rather than 'sheer existence or being' (Chia 1996). From this perspective, therefore, leadership is not something located in traits or static attributes of the individual social actor or in 'the autonomous, self-determining individual with a secure unitary

identity at the centre of the social universe' (Alvesson & Deetz 2000: 98) rather something underneath it. It is also the same for Robert Cooper, that 'society as process becomes pure action and ongoingness. Structures and objects become secondary to the movement of process. Process requires that we no longer think of the human world in terms of finished forms or completed system'(Cooper 2007: 1547). For Wood, 'concrete things – for example leaders, followers, and organizations - are surface effects. They are simple appearances we employ to give substantiality to our experience, but under whose supposed 'naturalness' the fundamentally processual nature of the real is neglected' (Wood 2005: 1104). It is for this reason the study of cultural context and cultural process is emphasized time and again in my thesis so as to make more relevant meanings, interpretations and inferences in the study of leadership.

The second definition of culture is taken from Clifford, and is as follows:

> A 'culture' is, concretely, an open-ended, creative dialogue of subcultures, of insiders and outsiders, of diverse functions; a 'language' is the interplay and struggle of regional dialects, professional jargons, generic commonplaces, and the speech of different age groups, individuals, and so forth (Clifford quoted by Meyerson 1991: 259).

I consider two constructs in the above citation to be important in the construction and description of culture. First, that culture is composed of subcultures, and second, the role of language in the creation, understanding and meaning making of culture. The concept of subculture for Yinger (1960) stands as more important than culture itself though it has received less attention from sociologists and cultural anthropologists. For Yinger, subculture refers to some 'cultural variants displayed by certain segments of the population'. For him, subcultures are relatively more cohesive and exist within the larger world of national culture. Similarly subculture is defined as follows: 'a society contains numerous subgroups, each with its own characteristic ways of thinking and acting. These cultures within a culture are called subcultures' (Blaine Mercer quoted by Yinger 1960: 625). They are referred to on the basis of class, racial, occupational, residential, value-oriented, linguistic, ethnic, occupational, and regional variations. Sackmann (1992) observed the existence of subcultures in organizations on the basis of professional identity and role, level of hierarchy, management and departmentation.

At this juncture it is relevant to discuss the role of levels of analysis in the study of leadership and culture. Levels of analysis play an important role in seeking clarity in organizational research particularly in conceptualization and appropriateness of theoretical formulations. Research studies can be classified by their focus on levels of analysis; as for example more micro or macro in orientation (Albert *et al* 2000). Micro or lower level of analysis is the individual, group or organization while macro or higher level is the

collective or aggregate level, that is, industry, sector, region or nation. For Corley *et al* there is always considerable difference and discussion over the function of a concept when it is generated at lower or individual level and is applied at higher or collective level (2006).

Most of the time leadership and culture research is focused on single level of analysis, though reality tends to be much more complex and diffused by multiple levels of analysis: individual, group, organization, society, industry and culture etc. In the words of Adler and Kwon:

> Although the mechanics of research are simplified by restricting ourselves to a single level of analysis, the reality of organizations is shaped by the constant interplay of the individual, group, business unit, corporate, and interfirm levels (Adler & Kwon 2002: 35).

Burrell & Morgan observed the divide between the position taken on levels of analysis by functionalist and interpretive research paradigms. For them:

> The major distinction commonly drawn between approaches revolves around the issue of level of analysis: whether the focus in functional analysis is on the part or the whole, on the individual institution or the social system (Burrell & Morgan 1979: 53).

The functionalist research paradigm focuses mostly on the part; micro, individual or organizational levels of analysis whereas the interpretive research traditions attach much significance to macro, holistic, societal or cultural levels of analysis.

What is important to know is what constitute the levels of analysis. In fact level of analysis in Organization Studies is determined more by the level on which key research questions raised and the design of empirical research and analysis rather than level of data collection. Hence, the level of analysis in this research is sectoral as it is more macro, aggregate and collectivistic in nature, and thereby tends to analyse how leadership and organizing is associated with wider cultural patterns. For further details see section 1.6 (Key research questions, p.22) and section 4.2.1 (Research design: three sectors and three domains of leadership, p.81-83). All individual data were aggregated to this level focusing on the emergence of leadership and organizing trends in each sector namely MNCs, PSCs and LLCs. My aim was to undertake a three-sector analysis to observe patterns of leadership and its relationship to the Pakistani cultural context. The empirical level of enquiry used to explore these sectoral patterns was individual, i.e., I interviewed senior executives in leadership positions in the three respective sectors. Given the cultural context leaders in each sector were encouraged to narrate and account for their individual experiences and

practices. Thus, by way of emic interviewing, as has been explained in the section 4.4.3, the focus of my analysis was on the observance of leaders' use of language; local linguistic and indigenous terms; cultural specific meanings of etic terms; elaborating similarities and differences in leadership embedded in unique cultural set-up of the three different domains of the corporate sector in Pakistan.

In the light of the discussion above, my concern 'What is leadership?' is then positioned in understanding cultural dynamics and processes, in which culture is anchored in language. In other words, leadership and culture can only be appropriately understood through linguistic notions, since at times 'language use is metaphorical rather than literal, relies on the repression/denial of alternative meanings, is local and context-related rather than abstract, and so on' (Alvesson & Deetz 2000: 52). Moreover, unlike the view of cognitive scientists, who believe in the commonality and accumulation of human cognition and development, for linguistic anthropologists like Boas, Humboldt, Sapir and Wharf, semantic structures of different languages remain fundamentally different and incommensurable, consequently leading their speakers to think and act differently (Gumperz & Levinson 1991). This reveals how language and culture are intertwined insofar as speakers of different languages have different thought processes that generate different world views, signs and practices. Similarly for Sapir, 'pattern in culture was like pattern in language' (Hill & Mannheim 1992: 382).

These definitions and interpretations significantly demonstrate ontological predilections of a leadership which is found to be embedded in language and culture, influenced by social processes, and whose attributes are holistic, ambiguous and contradictory, living, fluid and emergent, complex and context-specific, with simultaneous occurrence of multiple meanings and interpretations. Perceptibly, such ontology cannot go with positivistic epistemology as there are problems and inadequacies associated with the functionalists' paradigm, described later in the chapter. Hence, leadership and culture is examined here through a social constructionist paradigm. The position I take here brings me closer to a narrative perspective of culture, and what is identified as 'narratology' by Boje (2001), having an ontology of individual and socially-constructed realities with subjectivist epistemology. For Boje, narrative is subjective account reified as objective knowledge, and is also a sense-making phenomenon (2001: 16). Similarly, for Nigel Holden, this seems more appropriate, from a knowledge management approach to cross-cultural management theory, when he suggests that 'the methodology' together with the power of 'narrative' tends to convey multiple strands of knowledge embedded in their specific contexts and the interactive nature of meaning (Holden 2002).

It is very evident from the above discussion that leadership is a cultural construction and inquiry into it inevitably involves the study of culture and language. Hence the challenge in this study is to identify constructs and narratives which are culturally and locally relevant and context-specific. One such way to make my inquiry context-specific is what can be identified as emic way of knowing, as described in the next section.

2.3 The emic perspective

At a much broader level the leading question, I reiterate, is how leadership and organization in a given societal and cultural context can be understood and interpreted. Generally speaking this can be done in two ways: the insider or ethnographer's perspective and the outsider's perspective, someone who describes culture from his own point of view. More simply, the two approaches, respectively, can be stated as emic and etic approaches to the study of leadership and culture.

2.3.1 The relationship between emic and etic perspectives

Researchers who ascribe to the emic perspective claim that the subjects or participants, instead of the researcher, are the final arbiters for determining sufficiency of the research and analysis. Moreover, the acceptance of research results by subjects themselves is the legitimate criteria for evaluating quality of research (Morey & Luthans 1984). For Kay, 'The very provenience of the emic/etic distinction, namely phonology, should make clear that the guiding spirit of an emic approach is to rid oneself of preconceptions about universal structures…' (cited in Feleppa 1986: 244). Emic analysis, in line with Boasian anthropological traditions, is thus concerned with how to avoid inquiry being excessively loaded by preconceived Western notions (Feleppa 1986).

While the advocates of the etic research perspective believe that the inquirer or researcher has the final competence and authority to decide on the adequacy and validity of research and analysis. For them the subject's insight and description is not that significant (Morey & Luthans 1984). Moreover, Adler describes the distinction more in terms of etic-emic dilemma faced by researcher because the choice amongst the two has ramifications for ontology, epistemology and methodology (Peng *et al* 1991).

The two research perspectives defined above entail the following relationship. There are scholars who believe that 'emics should complement etics' or, in other words, 'emic concepts feed the etic kit'. For instance, Morey and Luthans make an attempt to reconcile the two perspectives in the following words: 'organizational research should include more emic (subjectivist/idiographic/qualitative/insider) perspectives, but these then would generally be translated into etic (objectivist/quantitative/nomothetic/outsider) terms' (Morey & Luthans 1984: 30). This approach is supported by comparativists, whose

primary interest lies in building, unifying and converging emic concepts into comprehensive and systematic theoretical notions (Feleppa 1986). While there are those who believe that emics and etics are innately conflicting or mutually exclusive, and hence prefer to develop descriptions of culturally specific and context driven phenomenon (Feleppa 1986). In the words of Pike and Harris, 'although, of course, the emic/etic contrast is, in practice, a continuum, this dichotomy has played a central role in the metatheory debates in many social science disciplines' (Morris *et al* 1999: 782). Hence, emics and etics can be considered as ends of a *continuum* rather than opposed alternatives. It has been observed that the emic approach is more suitable for single or unicultural research while the etic approach is preferred by researchers for undertaking comparative or cross-cultural research (Peng *et al* 1991).

I take emics and etics to co-reside in the research process since seeking pure emic phenomenon or trying to get rid of all forms of imposition of structure seems impractical (Feleppa 1986). For instance, emic concepts are generally considered as untranslatable as they contain unique cultural experiences and linguistic structures; therefore, translation in the language of the inquirer makes the concept etic. Secondly, a researcher's language also carries an implicit imposition of structure if it is different from that of the subject.

The above discussion reveals that though etic influences are there in the conduct of research yet emic persists and holds significant explanatory power within the cultural context of leadership research on societies in transition like that of Pakistan. In this study I have demonstrated that through the employment of emic approach the accounts of leaders' practices are elicited from their own narratives of leadership. Hence understanding leaders' practices have profound connection with their use of local language as practices are known and articulated through language. For instance, glossary of Urdu terms attached here as Appendix-A reveals the relationship between leadership practices and linguistic-cultural descriptions brought to the fore through emic mode of inquiry.

At the same time emic research orientation also entails the inevitable connect with epistemic culture and practice considerations – as has been described in details (section 3.5, p.69-78). To reiterate my methodology here, leadership can be better studied by way of knowing leaders' practices – an epistemology of practice; second, such practices are located and situated in local episteme and discourse; and third, sensitivity to emic-etic distinction must be maintained while undertaking research in a non-western context. Moreover, in the review of literature I have demonstrated that merely following *etic* theorization is not enough to give sufficient and meaningful coverage to the phenomenon of organization research on countries like Pakistan. Previous literature is written mainly from strongly etic frameworks that lead to sweeping generalisations and universal

typologies (sections 3.4.1 & 3.4.2). Therefore it is imperative to generate meanings of leadership and organizing from within and through *emic* construction of knowledge based on an understanding of historically and linguistically rich local cultural contexts.

It has been observed that emic mode of inquiry bears greater proximity to the epistemology of Mode 2 research which suggest employment of inductive research strategies that prompts the researcher to go out in the field, to observe at first hand and extract a practical account of 'what is out there' in the field. Consequently, such an epistemology sensitizes the researcher's subjectivity in the research process owing to constant involvement in data gathering and analysis, in the knowing process and in knowing unique aspects of reality. Hence data gathering and analysis contains an 'imbedded emicism' in which native viewpoints, meanings, and interpretations are given significant importance for understanding behaviour (Morey & Luthans 1984).

I have described my strategy of data gathering through interviews as emic interviewing (section 4.4.3, p.88-89). I deliberately conducted interviews in bi-lingual mode (Urdu and English) so that the respondents could effectively communicate and the emergence of leadership concepts and pattern could be observed. Hence, my analysis suggests that I have inductively incorporated many emic and local linguistic terms which were not conceived by me in the beginning of this study. Moreover, inclusion of vignettes in the discussion chapters demonstrates my inductive movement and learning from the field data.

It is therefore apparent that by way of employing emic mode of inquiry and analysis this study contributes to the missing aspects, under-represented and marginalized voices of leadership that tend to emanate and emerge from leaders' practices and identities with in the cultural context of Pakistan. For instance, practices and voices coming out through emic analysis lead me to coin the term *geo-culturality* that represents how leadership is situated and embedded in local-cultural context. The theory is based on context-sensitive methodologically – that rests on emic-epistemic-practice connect. As such the presence and influence of *geo-culturality* in leadership is observed to be more profound and robust in indigenous LLCs (see section 7.4 & 7.5, p.156-167 for details) but has significant spread over to modern-western MNCs and PSCs (see section 5.4 & 5.5, p.108-118 for further).

The emic perspective of analysis is further defined and elaborated in section 3.5.3 while at this point I am more concerned with what constitutes an emic perspective of leadership and culture at large. At a very broad level emic perspective suggests that we take cognizance of and hold on to the following aspects of defining and interpreting the subject under research.

2.4 Emerging parameters of the emic perspective

What constitutes emic production of research? This is my next concern. In my view the presence of two features make any research an emic one. First is concern for methodology, and second is concern for the contents of the subject under study. To generate emic data, country, culture or local level specifics can aptly be studied through an inductive research strategy as I believe it is the use of an inductive research strategy and data analyses that lead me to arrive at the more prominent contents and themes related to leadership literature. For Salamone, the complexities of socio-cultural life and the holistic nature of reality can better be understood by 'the man on the spot than the expert in his armchair' (1979: 49). Secondly, as for research content: narratives, themes and theorizations in literature should have sufficient orientation and scope to observe the existence of distinct local practices or cultural-specific meanings and interpretations. Hence, the following emerging themes I found, at a much broader level, to be more relevant in carrying out leadership research from the emic perspective:

- Leadership is socially and culturally practised
- Leadership is politically driven
- Leadership is identity based

2.4.1 Leadership is socially and culturally practised

The history of modern organization suggests that the sole purpose for which organization exists is performance and performativity, and in its wake organization tends to operate on the principle of the maintenance of exclusivity. Nonetheless, social and cultural forces do impinge on leading, managing and organizing ideology in a significant way: organization and society are not independent of each other's influence. For Birkinshaw, 'Leadership is a social endeavour…, and leadership is a process of social influence concerned with the traits, styles and behaviours of individuals that cause others to follow them' (2010: 11). The history of management thought reveals that organizational knowledge is influenced by two types of epistemes, which can be identified as social (external) and organizational (internal). The word episteme, in its simple meanings means knowledge – 'a knowledge that facilitates our understanding of the world' (Grint 2007: 238). In Aristotelian sense episteme refers to the universal knowledge that is true by necessity while in classical sense it is often translated into English as of scientific knowledge. However, I am concerned here with the notion of episteme in the foucauldian sense, that is, to consider the existence of knowledge as a social and historical condition, and that knowledge is grounded in a particular historical epoch; representing the co-existence and mutually interaction of multiple epistemes at the same time[7]. Hence, a society or entity is 'organized/disorganized

within the vast historical epistemes that constitute our knowing' (O'Doherty 2007: 850). Similarly for Capra epistemes are themselves culture bound (Lowe *et al* 2007: 244).

For instance, the existence of two epistemes was confirmed by Parker as he observes that 'F. W. Taylor sought to create a single utilitarian culture to minimize employee resistance and maximize productivity and earnings' (cited in Chan & Clegg 2002: 263). Similarly, the foremost influence of the social was studied by Roethlisberger & Dickson in 1939 when they 'realized that the most significant variables governing the output at the Hawthorne Plant appeared not to be physical but social' (Chan & Clegg 2002: 263). Weber (1991), in his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, was revealing unambiguously the type of work sociology and organization, when he found a link between organization and ways of organizing with the 'Protestant work ethic' at the societal level. Ferdinand Tönnies (1957), in his influential work, *Community & Society,* observed the tension between *Gemeinschaft* (a universal sense of solidarity which can only arise from traditional, small-scale, face-to-face communities) and *Gesellschaft* (a sense of social solidarity which is doomed to disappear and to be replaced by a modern, rational, and impersonal society, civic passivity, and self-seeking individualism). Habermas (1987), in his critical theory of studying and analyzing contemporary societies, introduced the distinction between the concepts of lifeworld and system, where system represents economy and states governed by imperatives of money and power, and human lifeworld is governed by norms of communicative action; that is, everyday life is ideally governed by social relationships between people, moral norms and inter-personal communication. What he was concerned about was the colonization of lifeworld by system where the institution of system – state, money, power and economy – dominates the lifeworld. Therefore, borrowing from Habermas one can find the same trend within the domain of organization, that system (bureaucratization and formalization) tends to dominate lifeworld (social relations, ethics and moral politics). Parker identified the same as 'the tension between the formal and the informal, between, structure and culture…' (2000: 126). Schatzki, a practice theorist, shares the same view point: 'individual persons, their actions and their thoughts cannot be understood independently of the social practices in which they are situated' (Deangelis 1996: 225). She continues, 'persons are essentially social entities… there are internal conceptual connections between personal concepts and those relating to the social practices in which persons participate' (Deangelis 1996: 225).

Similarly, Courpasson *et al* (2008) noted while defining the scope of Organization Studies that organizations functioning as communitarian polities of human relationships are marked by morality, virtue, and friendship, whereas 'societal' polities are marked by high degrees of individualism and impersonality, proceeding from 'volition' or sheer 'interest'.

Secondly, organization works as of systems of authority (seeing the different faces of power as the central tenet of organizational dynamics and regimes of governance); and where-in members' status and stratification generation is based on differentiation, exclusivity, hierarchy and formalization. There seems to be a perpetual tension or conflict in organization along the two lines of leading and organizing; social and organizational. Therefore, contrary to what Courpasson observed as organization marked by 'impersonality', 'individualism' and 'formalization', I argue in this thesis that organization in general, and leadership in particular, are characterized by forms of personalization, collectivism and informal ways of accomplishing things.

Therefore, as is apparent from the above, this leads us to the view that there is always a significant existence of a social and cultural episteme distinct from that of an organizational episteme, which is undeniable and inalienable. This creeps in and gets structurally embedded with the organizational episteme, no matter how productive or restrictive and limiting it is in its scope for performativity and economic rationality. Hence, related to the social and cultural aspect of organizing, is the existence and strong presence, at a practice level, of an informal mode of organization and organizing. Therefore, one of my main arguments in this study is that leadership in organization springs from a social and informal context rather than being a formal component or organization processes (legal-bureaucratic) such as communicating, decision-making, objective-setting, motivating or controlling, etc (Gouldner 1955 & Crozier 1964 quoted by Hales 1986).

As a result, it is this aspect of leadership in organization which creates the difference and distinction between the leader and the manager, though as pointed out earlier some scholars treat the two as one and the same thing. For example, for Heifetz & Laurie (1997) there is an important distinction to be drawn between technical work (known problems with known solutions) and adaptive work (unknown or uncertain problems that require a process of creative solutions or problem solving). The former comes within the purview of management while the latter within that of leadership. In other words management is to look for technical, routinised or formalized aspects of organization processes, while leadership forms more of a flexibly creative and non-formal basis of organizational processes. This makes organizational leadership processes inherently fluid, dynamic, immanent and emergent while, by contradistinction, management is relatively deterministic, planned and static in its orientation. My concern here is to point out that it is important to look at organization and its constitutive nature (that is, its context – national cultural or its subcultural, technology, industry, size and stage of development, etc.) from the point of view of leadership choices. If we accept that today's environment is predicated and characterized by chaos, uncertainty, diversity and complexity it follows that we should

look to understand leadership as a social or cultural process driven by emergent, practice-based and immanent concerns.

Similarly, one can also confirm the same from research on identity literature differentiating leader and manager, as prompted by Sveningsson & Alvesson's (2003: 1188) observation that the manager's identity has become a negative or 'anti-identity' or a 'not-me position' (see also Sveningsson & Larsson 2006) while leadership processes present the leader's identity as predominantly idealized, grandiose, rhetorical and elusive (Alvesson & Sveningsson 2003, Barker 2001). In the same way, from a practice point of view, Kotter (1982) argued that leaders and managers operate in the context of 'agenda' and 'networks', which is by and large a reactive, informal and piecemeal approach in order to be efficient and effective in organizing, hence planning is implicit or works in an opportunistic way to achieve results in a short time. To him, 'agenda' means a large quantity of information while 'network' means interaction between a large number of people. According to Kotter (1982: 166), 'the networks allow terse (and very efficient) conversations to happen (i.e. informal); without them such short yet meaningful conversation would be impossible.' Likewise for Dalton (1959), informal practices are the lubricant of operation and the preservative of managerial sanity, while what Gouldner (1955) narrates is the need for informal and indulgent management which ensures trouble-free, if inefficient, work operation. Crozier (1964) illustrates in his work how cliques and informal power struggles distort official organizational goals (quoted by Hales 1986). For that very reason, leadership is considered to reside in a socio-cultural context or episteme while management is de-contextualized and mechanistic in nature. This is why the mainstay of my thesis is that organizing and leadership can better be understood in what is constituted by a local or social cultural episteme which prevails rather at an informal level than by universal or Western notions of formal organizational leadership.

2.4.2 Leadership is political

The primacy and pervasiveness of power and politics has been referred to in chapter 1, and this has been found to have an inordinately connected with the narrative of organizational leadership. Therefore, it is imperative here to observe how political behaviour is constitutive of organizational leadership. For the purpose of this study I do not create a distinction between the notions of power and politics for the simple reason that the two act in unison from a practice point of view (Coopey 1995).

2.4.2.1 Exploring the meanings of politics in organization

The significance of carrying out research on organization power or politics in organization has been given recognition quite late in the literature for Organization Studies. Therefore

one can find that earlier theorizations on organization are almost devoid of considering politics as an integral part of human behaviour. However, the significance of the subject under discussion came to the fore after the mid 1980s and into the 1990s. A review of the literature suggests the emergence of two approaches, the classical, and the interpretive.

2.4.2.2 Classical view of organizing and politics

The classical view of organizing is dominated by what is identified as the Weberian perspective of organizing and the functionalist way of knowing and doing organizational research. From this view point, knowledge can better be accessed and produced through staying neutral, impartial, detached and also politically neutral. However, within the discipline of Organization Studies, taking any field, whether it is leadership, culture or any other aspect of organizing and organization, it cannot be understood while ignoring the political dimension to it. As Yanow says, this is because 'both organizations and its organizing are marked by politics and power, including the power of ideas but also of structures that foster and hinder their articulation' (Yanow 2007: 174). Nonetheless, most of the traditional organizational theorizing is oblivious to this central aspect (Yanow 2007). The classical management view sees organization (Weber's model) as productive if it is essentially non-political, as professionalism and politics are viewed in binary opposition to each other. This view is no longer considered valid, from a critical and interpretive paradigmatic perspective, as what is professional and what constitutes political cannot be easily segregated. Moreover, what is personal also cannot be segregated from the political, from a feminist perspective of Organization Studies (Bakardjieva 2009). Now such studies are carried out even within the domain of functionalist research giving recognition to the pervasiveness of the phenomenon of organization politics. For instance, for scholars like Ferris & Kacmar, politics in organization is strongly influenced by its environment in organization (Kacmar & Ferris 1993, Buchanan 2008). For Laurent national cultures can be studied meaningfully by looking at 'a structure of collective managerial ideologies' (Laurent 1983: 78) rather than looking at individual ways of thinking within a given culture. One of the foremost structures to map differences in national cultural ways of organizing is to study organizations as political systems. Laurent understands this in terms of the political role played by managers in society, the perception of power motivation within the organization, and an assessment of the degree to which organizational structures are held and defined in the minds of the individuals involved (Laurent 1983). Similarly the survey of American firms shows that politics is something very pervasive in organization, and successful executives or organization leaders have equally to be skilled politicians (Buchanan 2008).

Imperative here is to define what constitutes politics. Allen *et al* define politics as 'acts of influence to enhance or protect the self interest of individual or groups' (quoted by Buchanan 2008: 50-51) while for Ferris *et al* 'skilled political actors are those who are able to disguise their self-serving intent' (2002: 111). This is a limited and narrow view of politics because 'if political tactics can generate corporate benefits as well as personal gains, then definitions that regard only overtly self-interested acts as categorically political are unhelpful' (Buchanan 2008: 51). Therefore politics is a much broader concept then merely a vehicle for self-preservation. Hence we can see in general, managers or leaders in today's world of organization can have two types of political responses or behaviour: one considers politics as very relevant, and the other is based on avoidance. Either way, managing organization by managing politics remains essential. The politicized nature of organizing is widely recognised in emerging management literature. For instance, for Kumar & Thibodeaux (1990) political behaviour is necessitated by, and equated with, the organizational change imperatives (quoted by Buchanan 2008). Similarly for Kacmar & Ferris, 'ambiguous circumstances allow individuals to define a situation to fit their own needs and desires, and this redefinition of the situation is often considered political behaviour' (1993: 73). Therefore, it is individuals' or leaders' personal interpretation of organizations' objectives and strategies which constitutes political behaviour.

In general, to get to the idea of politics one can refer to the words of Newfield: 'politics also refers to the social, historical, and psychological contexts in which knowledge is generated and is then little more than an alarmist synonym for human context'(Guillory 2003: 532) which is embedded in human behaviour. Within the discipline of Organization Studies, Gandz & Murray were perhaps the earliest researchers to take notice of the phenomenon of organizational politics, and according to them this has been defined as 'a subjective state in which organizational members perceive themselves or others as intentionally seeking selfish ends in an organizational context when such ends are opposed to those of others' (quoted by Hochwarter *et al* 2010: 741).

The need to study Organization Politics as a separate discipline is emerging. However, like other social science disciplines there seems lack of agreement in the literature on defining what constitutes organizational politics, and hence it is considered quite an intriguing and complex field of study (Drory & Romm 1990). It can also be considered and interpreted on different levels of analysis: individual, organizational, inter-organizational and national or international. I am more interested here in seeking the individual's construction and interpretation of the phenomenon of politics in organization, as the individual is the basic unit of analysis, and because his or her personal and political behaviour and construction is indispensable, and embedded within multiple social, organizational roles and identities.

2.4.2.3 The interpretive perspective

Organizations are no longer considered rational and formal entities for making decisions, allocating resources and attaining objectives in a planned, linear and coherent way (Drory & Romm 1990). An informal component of an organization is always there to cater for leadership and organization politics (Drory & Romm 1990). In other words, there is an intermingling of leadership and politics in organization, and the two phenomena are inseparable. Drory & Romm (1990: 1135) described the Organization Politics framework in terms of outcome, means and situational characteristics, wherein individuals are interested in securing desired outcomes; self-serving, and against the organization, resources distribution, and power attainment.

Using different words, but with a similar sense, Sievers *et al* (2006) says, '[Within] social (political and economic) contexts, its inherent aggression and annihilation is often hidden behind an apparent logic of rationality, justice, and competition.' For them, almost all types of organizations are deeply affected by significant world events and tend to assimilate them in their 'own problematic internal processes', which can then have strong implications for the economy and for leaders (Sievers *et al* 2006).

At the same time, in the positivist research tradition, according to two of the leading researchers on politics, Kacmar & Ferris (1993), the environment in which individuals interact may have just as strong an influence. For example, if people feel they will be able to secure a valued outcome by engaging in political behaviour, they may be more inclined to do so. Political activity will be high in organizations that reward those who engage in political behaviour.

Similarly, organization behaviour can be political wherever there is competition for resources which can be transactional and immediate rewards, such as bonuses, raises, or budget money, or intangible rewards, such as praise, better assignments, or the ability to interact with powerful people (Kacmar & Ferris 1993). According to Kacmar & Ferris reward, advancement, cliques and co-workers and supervisory behaviour are some factors considered crucial for encouraging politics in organization. Trust or distrust among colleagues and fear of the supervisor is the most effervescent factor for promoting organizational politics (Kacmar & Ferris 1993). Another scholar, Parker, points to how politicians and ethicists are mutually exclusive and mutually incomprehensible discourses:

> What is interesting about these (highly overdrawn) characterizations is that they reflect two seemingly incommensurable traditions of thought. For the ethicist, the world of the politician is merely vulgar power-seeking and it is difficult, if not impossible, to see any merit in political reasoning… For the politician, the ethicist practises a pointless glass bead game with no clear purpose (Parker 2003: 191).

Therefore, politics and being political in the above descriptions are echoed as something inevitable and very practical in the managing and leading of an organization, while noble professionalism, or what Parker terms ethicist practices [position], by the same token is considered impractical and carrying the least utility. It is important to note here that the political behaviour of leaders and members of organizations is not just internal, limited to the organization. It is also directed externally. For instance, leaders aim at developing links with political parties; they are involved in whistle-blowing, lawsuits and leaking information to the media. They make alliances with influential persons and interest groups and mobilize resources outside the boundaries of organizations. All this forms a typical pattern of political behaviour (Farrell & Petersen 1982). According to Farrell & Peterson, 'it seems likely that organizational members progress from internal to external activities as they come to believe that success is possible only if resources outside the organization can be mobilized' (1982: 406).

There are various approaches to studying power and politics and its potential impact on organizational leadership. For instance, leadership is considered as a pervasive political phenomenon, and consequently forms an inalienable, informal part of organizational behaviour and hence of organizational leadership. Drory & Romm (1988) listed three types of organizational behaviour: formal, informal and illegal. The difference between formal and informal is that formal behaviour is organizationally sanctioned while informal is organizationally non-sanctioned behaviour. Informal behaviour in an organization tends to flow out from the discretion of the individual and is volitional. For example, Stewart (1983) termed this informal space as 'political activity' of managers [and leaders] in negotiating informally job boundaries and the dimensions of identical jobs which come into their personal purview (quoted by Hales 1986: 99). Porter *et al* (1983) suggested that political behaviour falls within the informal or discretionary category rather the formal one (Drory & Romm 1988). Hence leadership in organization can be considered principally an informal phenomenon rather than for the use of formal organizational structure and positioning. This leads to a possible inference that a good leader is more likely to emerge in an organization which is less well-organized, bureaucratized or structured than in one which is highly organized, bureaucratized and structured. Conversely, highly-structured organization tends to produce better managers than leaders. Hence it is this more vibrant and vivacious informal aspect of the organizational leadership which can cause organizations either to be more functional and performative or more dysfunctional and to degenerate in terms of performance, and at times this is interpreted as, and closely linked with, politics in organization.

The phenomenon of politics in organization is also well informed and understood by emerging approaches to Organization Studies, such as socio-analytical and psychodynamics. For instance James Krantz in his recent article, 'Leadership, betrayal and adaptation,' arrives at his fundamental proposition that betrayal is an indispensable element of leadership and organizational change (Krantz 2006. See also French *et al* 2009). Using a systems psychodynamic perspective to explore betrayal and leaders' behaviour, his concern was to establish, 'how the exercise of leadership and the capacity for betrayal are intertwined; the dynamic challenges to both leader and follower of having to contain the experience – and potentiality of – betrayal in the collaborative bond; and about the challenges posed to the enterprise by the experience of betrayal' (Sievers *et al* 2006: 172).

Similarly, vengeance is another behavioural phenomenon related to politics and organization. This is a theme picked up by Burkard Sievers & Rose Redding Mersky in their article, 'The economy of vengeance: Some considerations on the aetiology and meaning of the business of revenge' (Sievers & Mersky 2006: 241). They studied vengeance from a socio-analytic perspective, and suggest it is a psychosocial phenomenon and a dynamic of the collective or community (Sievers *et al* 2006). Therefore, for them, behind the apparent logic of rationality, competition and justice in organizations, contained and embedded in their socio-political and economic contexts, lie the roots of a behaviour which is inherently aggressive and exhibits annihilation-irrational tendencies (Sievers *et al* 2006).

In the same way, politics is not just considered an individual level phenomenon. Rather it becomes more pronounced and pervasive and complicatedly situated in large organizations like that of the public sector and MNCs. Geppert *et al* (2002) challenge the over optimistic assumption within the context of MNCs management and leadership model that traditional power tensions and political struggles between functional and geographical subunits can be avoided through the development of shared goals and worldwide learning, but for them, managerial talk, practices, and politics are not just constrained by economic, technological, or institutional structures, but are active processes of making choices and sense by leaders and managers. This process of making sense, choice and decision must then be seen largely as political.

As it is observed that politics and leadership are inseparable, so it is the case with identity and leadership (see below). Therefore it is identity or identity dynamics at work which are manifested in leadership practices, no matter whether the individual stays conscious of his/her identity framework. Therefore I move in the next section to see how identity and the identity-formulation process play their role in the performance and expression of leadership attributes.

2.4.3 Leadership is identity-based

Identity-related research is a recurring theme in contemporary leadership and management literature with. The seminal work of Alvesson & Willmott (2002) conceptualises identity in terms of its regulation by self and others, and what is described as identity work, and 'where identity is continually produced and reproduced' (Sturdy *et al* 2006: 845). Moreover, for Willmott (2006), the concept of an identity is living, partial and incomplete as, to him, 'there is always something which frustrates all efforts to reach an exhaustive representation of the world – whether natural or social' (Glynos & Stavrakakis 2004: 203-4 quoted by Willmott 2006: 4). One can approach this constitutive frustration by speaking of the limits of discourse, often associated with notions like 'incompleteness of identity' as whether it is organization or society can never be described as fit (Willmott 2006: 9). Therefore, within the context of organization and society, any differentiated concept like 'modern' or 'lecturer' remains an inadequate concept limited in its coverage. It inevitably fails to convey fullness of meaning, as 'there is a play of identification animated and sustained by the recurrent frustration of failed attempts to attain stability' (Willmott 2006: 9). For instance, Laclau & Mauffe (2001: 125) demonstrate how a particular identity concept, such as 'lecturer', gets displaced or dislocated, and remains 'overflowed by a plurality of meanings which prevent its being fixed as full positivity' (quoted by Willmott 2006: 13).

Therefore what is imperative is that identity, no matter how specific and particular it is, cannot just operate on fixity, completeness and stability of meaning. Rather it is an on-going, dynamic phenomenon and exists in multiple modes. Hence, identity is conceptualized as constituently composed of multiple discursive and socially-constructed themes, away from essentialist and functionalist perspectives (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003) that intersect in organizations. It is contingent upon conception of organizations, which are considered politicized arenas, and this commends 'an understanding of collective identities as multi-voiced' and `plurivocal' (Brown 2006: 732).

It is further argued and pursued here that identity work is effectively represented by following a dynamic approach and perpetual movement or struggle of identity around creating a sense of self and providing temporal or fluid answers to the question 'who am I' (or who are we?) and what do I (we) stand for (Sturdy *et al* 2006, Albert *et al* 2000)?

What is more important is to note the process of organizational identification and how education, training and functional specialization in the roles performed by the members of an organization impinge on and influence its identity. It comes under my observation that there exists no clear segregation between organizational and social identities as far as the

identity-formation process of a leader is concerned, and the two forms of identity remain fully entwined with and embedded in each other and are manifested simultaneously in leadership's discourse and practices. Identity theorists such as Dutton *et al* (1994) and Elsbach (1999) consider the theme of social identification as 'in the form of perceived overlap between the person's identity and group's or organization's identity' (cited in Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003: 1164) or in other words between that of the theory of social identification and organizational identification. Sveningsson & Alvesson refers to this as identity work which means people (individual or leader) are constantly 'engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising their personal constructions or narratives' (2003: 1165).

For Alvesson & Willmott rational decision-making, or the exercise of discretion (role and position) in organizations, is bounded. Organizational identification, according to them, limits the range of decision and choices, and by default confines to a limited number the alternatives that are considered to be in line and aligned with the identification and identity imposed by the organization itself (Alvesson & Willmott 2002). Therefore, from a managerial viewpoint, 'member identification' presents a less obtrusive, and potentially more effective, means of organizational control than methods that rely upon 'external stimuli' (Alvesson & Willmott 2002: 620). This means social identity-formation (familial, gender, racial, caste, religious, national and social, etc.) runs more often contrary to what organization identity prescribes and hence tends to be of a liberative and emancipative nature for a member of organization in one perspective. Though it is often argued that organizational regulation of an individual's identity is a strong and pervasive phenomenon, yet the role of social or cultural agency is also significantly present in organizational leadership. In the words of Alvesson, it 'is a precarious and often contested process involving active identity work, as is evident in efforts to introduce new discursive practices of "teamwork", "partnership", etc. Organizational members are not reducible to passive consumers of managerially designed and designated identities' (Alvesson & Willmott 2002: 621). Moreover for Alvesson & Willmott (2002) organization should not be considered the only and the most influential institution in identity-defining, regulating and managing processes.

The same has been viewed by Barker (1999) as 'emancipatory practice, and is based upon the politics of identity, such as the membership of a work group or team, is precarious and can result in the substitution of more totalizing, 'concertive' forms of control for bureaucratic and supervisory methods of job regulation' (quoted by Alvesson & Willmott 2002: 624). In 'practice, however, the fluidity and fragmentation [fractious and multiplicity] of identity may render employees more vulnerable to the appeal of corporate

identifications, and less inclined to engage in organized forms of resistance that extends their scope for exercising discretion and/or improves their material and symbolic rewards' (Barker 1999 quoted by Alvesson & Willmott 2002: 624).

Therefore, imperatively and practically in modern organization, its members may consider social or other processes as extraneous to organizational identity-formations, and something less concrete, practical and abstract for reward and material gain. However these remain inalienably, tacitly, and subconsciously attached to and embodied within the notions of organizational identity.

Let us now see how individual leaders' agency plays a role in the formation of an organization's identity. Pratt & Foreman (2000) in their study described the occurrence of multiple identities in organizations. They referred to how, most of the time, the process of identity-construction in an organizational context is analogous to that of identity-construction in individuals. For them, multiple identities manifest themselves in four major types of identity-construction responses amongst organizations and their leaders. These are: compartmentalization, deletion, integration and aggregation. Moreover, while different and multiple identities exist side by side in organizations, leaders and managers make a choice or preference to construct, consciously or unconsciously, an identity (or identities) as the dominant identity while other identities get a subordinated position. For instance, Albert & Whetten (1995) have described this as to "nurture the unchosen" (quoted by Pratt & Foreman 2000: 28):

> Here, a subordinate identity (or identities) is maintained in order to engender internal cooperation and maintain organizational flexibility in case the subordinate identity might be needed for future strategic moves. However, unlike segregation, the subordinated identity is not fully embraced by the organization. Given that the subordinated identity is kept, but in a diminished capacity, subordination would likely fall between compartmentalization and deletion (Pratt & Foreman 2000: 28).

For Pratt & Foreman, organization (leaders) can opt for various strategies of identity-formation. The first category is that of compartmentalization which occurs when the organization and its members choose to preserve all current identities but do not seek to attain any synergy among them. In this way compartmentalization in organizations works in a manner similar to that of individuals: multiple identities are maintained but are separated from each other (Pratt & Foreman 2000).

Deletion, another strategy, occurs when managers actually rid the organization of one or more of its multiple identities. For example, 'the work of Deaux (1991) illustrates how an individual can shed identities – particularly negatively valued ones – either quickly, by utilizing conscious choices, or slowly, by unconsciously allowing identities to atrophy over time' (quoted by Pratt & Foreman 2000: 29). Similarly Reger *et al* (1998) demonstrated

'that multiple-identity organizations can rid themselves of an offending identity by 'chopping it off''. They noted that 'such deletion of an identity may occur via the organization divesting itself of the business unit or division associated with the "offending" identity' (Pratt & Foreman 2000: 29). Thus, the deletion strategy may result when multiple identities in the organization are vying with each other to become the single or dominant identity.

In the third strategy, 'integration occurs when managers attempt to fuse multiple identities into a distinct new whole. Here identities do not remain apart from each other, as in deletion and compartmentalization' (Pratt & Foreman 2000: 30). Multiple identities are aggregated when an organization attempts to retain all of its identities while forging links between them. Unlike compartmentalization, aggregation does not involve buffering the identities or seeking to keep them separate. Rather efforts are made to identify relationships and exploit synergies between or among the identities (Pratt & Foreman 2000: 32). Organizations, like individuals, can aggregate their identities by ordering them in an identity salience hierarchy. 'Salience', as defined by Stryker (1968: 560), 'is the probability, for a given person, of a given identity invoked in a variety of situations. Salience hierarchies involve ordering of identity based on context' (quoted by Pratt & Foreman 2000: 32). Therefore, what is obvious from Pratt's study is that it is the individual leader or manager (agency in leadership) who responds and operates in a particular context to shape up or formulate an appropriate identity response strategy.

While Hatch & Shultz theorize an identity-formation model based on four interrelated processes: mirroring, reflecting, expressing and impressing (2002). They propose that the concept of organization identity and its construction can be understood better through the interaction of an organization's internal identity (culture) and external identity. 'Mirroring', in the proposed model, 'is the process by which identity is mirrored in the images of others, reflecting - the process by which identity is embedded in cultural understandings, expressing - the process by which culture makes itself known through identity claims, and impressing - the process by which expression of identity leave impressions on others' (Hatch & Shultz 2002: 991).

2.5 The linkage between identity, politics and leadership

In the above section the process of identity-formation in the organization has been discussed, as leaders can choose from various strategies described by Pratt & Foreman (2000) and Hatch & Shultz (2002). Brown & Humphreys (2006) also seem to validate this connection between leadership, politics and identity, as for him organizations can be

considered politicized arenas for identities of multivocal and plurivocal nature. Similarly, for Alvesson & Willmott:

> Managerial theory and arrangements supply discourses through which self-identity is constructed and maintained. For example, 'leadership' is 'effective' when it coalesces and regulates identity, de-activating alternative constructions. Indeed, leadership has been conceptualized as the management of meaning (Smircich & Morgan, 1982). As meaning is contingent upon identity, managing meaning is integral to managing identity (2002: 636).

The above quotation suggests that the politics of identity-formation becomes the prerogative of leaders' space of action. For example, Whittington (1989: 298) also notes how managers [leaders] in his study 'were able to synthesize patriotic, paternalistic, professional and religious ideals into local ideologies supporting their private [political] purposes'– purposes that were themselves fashioned from these and other identical resources (quoted by Alvesson & Willmott 2002: 636).

This, for Hogg & Terry, from the member's point of view, is presented as depersonalization of the self. They argued that this depersonalization of the self 'is the process underlying group [organization] phenomena' (quoted by Albert *et al* 2000: 16). Nonetheless, the question remains central: do leaders get some benefit from de-personalization of self? Is de-personalization of self or, imperatively, organizational identity-creation so strong and vibrant that it reduces or removes other forms of identity to zero or a marginal level, and consequently results in higher organizational performance? One view is that 'organizational identification may hinder endorsement of effective leaders,' (Albert *et al* 2000: 130) and a second view is that 'harmonious relations among subgroups… are often best achieved by simultaneous recognition of subgroups and organizational identity' (Albert *et al* 2000: 132). In short, the predominant view is that depersonalization of the self has increasingly been interpreted to have predominantly intriguing implications for a variety of organizational phenomena (Albert *et al* 2000). Therefore, politics in organizations tends to be rather politics of identity as it is predisposed to move around these two voices.

As stated earlier, and elaborated further in chapter 3 of the thesis, my interest is in knowing what leaders actually do. In other words, my research inquiry focuses on organizational leaders in doing or practice mode. This inevitably, therefore, leads us to deal with the identity-construction or identity-formation process of a leader, as identity-construction is something inseparable from 'what one does', manifested in and representative of leaders' practices. For Sturdy *et al*, 'identity is never autonomous, but fundamentally relational in character' (2006: 854); while Weick states very convincingly, 'how can I know who I am until I see what they do?'(1995: 23).

Therefore, one can say, the practices of a leader tend to emanate from the identity of a leader, or the two are intertwined with and embedded in each other. Case *et al* (2011: 702-703) referred to this phenomenon as doing philosophy of leadership. Identity is a multi-construct in its existence (Corley *et al* 2006), and imperatively, here in the thesis, I am concerned in particular with the coexistence of national or local and organizational identity as exhibited in the discourse and practice of leadership in three corporate segments in Pakistan. Or in other words how top-level leaders in the three types of organizations manifest and are coping up with identity issues. It is argued here though the two types of identities are competing and are intrinsically embedded in all three types of organization, yet at the extrinsic level there is more weight and recognition given by organizational leaders to what can be identified as the surface-level identity of being a modern, professional and global or international organization. As such the purpose of the study here is not to examine how identity is located within a single individual leader, but rather to look on how organizational leaders are oriented towards multiple conceptualizations about 'who are we' as an organization (Pratt & Foreman 2000: 34). Similarly for Pratt & Foreman, more often than not an organization tends 'to identify itself most closely with the profession inherent to it' (Pratt & Foreman 2000: 28) as its dominant identity, besides retaining the latent or 'subordinate economic-, political-, or community-based identities' (Pratt & Foreman 2000: 29) deeply embedded in the cultural context. Hence, organizational identity needs to be examined more as a collective attribute in a cultural space of society or nation.

Though identity is primarily produced by national social and cultural forces yet the literature theorizing the relationship between the two form of identities, organizational and national, is somewhat scarce. Literature on identity has typically given predominantly more coverage to the relationship between organizational and individual or the employee's identity (Pratt & Foreman 2000, Alvesson & Willmott 2002, Brown & Humphrey 2006, Corley *et al* 2006). A few scholars like Reade (2001), Herriot & Scott-Jackson (2002) and Tipton (2009) have referred to the growing significance of national, cultural and religious identities in organizations. Similarly Das *et al* (2008) show how national identity can have implications for work outcomes in transnational organizations. Nonetheless, despite the scarcity of literature two views can be found on the relationship between organizational and national identity. One suggests that national identity and organizational identity are increasingly disparate and even disconnected entities. What the other view presents is more complex. It suggests the interconnected nature of the two forms of identities (Jack & Lorbiecki 2007) and that national identity impacts organization in subtle and multiple ways despite modernization and globalization. For instance, this later view can be found in the

empirical work of Ailon-Souday & Kunda who attach relative coherency and fixity to the concept of national identity, and found a close connection between national identity and organizational identity (Ailon-Souday & Kunda 2003). Jack & Lorbiecki (2007) in their empirical study showed the construct of national identity is somewhat problematic, and in a state of flux and dynamism. They studied three British organizations and demonstrated the on-going tension, competition and contestation between national identity ('Britishness') and being global corporate entities in their daily working. Their findings revealed a mixed pattern, that Britishness at the same time means both a disconnection from being global, and also being tightly woven with a global identity. Nevertheless, it is suggested by them that organization researchers cannot just dispense with national identity as a concept. Moreover, national identity is increasingly considered a multi-construct: a living, on-going phenomenon existing at multiple levels, split and fragmented rather than in a single, unitary and coherent mode.

2.6 Conclusion: *Geo-cultural* nature of leadership

As has been discussed earlier (p.23-25), at this juncture it is appropriate for me to synthesize a connecting or unifying narrative encapsulating narratives of identity, politics and the social nature of organizing and leadership within a particular context. I would like to describe this synthesis as '*geo-cultural*'. In simple words, leadership emanates from and tends to be heavily influenced by *geo-cultural* attributes. Detailed discussion on *geo-culturality* will follow in sections 5.4 and 7.4 in particular. As such local practices of identity, political and social structures also tend to reveal the same pattern. In other words, leaders' identity stems from locality, leaders' politics revolve around locality and leaders' social mode of practices concern locality. Within the domain of ecology and culture, Fredrik Barth highlighted the significance of culture-area concept as the form and distribution of cultures (Barth 1956). Nonetheless, in doing so he warns that within the context of the Middle East and Asia it is extremely difficult to profile culture along natural areas owing to its mismatch with the distribution of cultural and ethnic groups. For Coon, society in the Middle East is 'being built on a mosaic principle – many ethnic groups with radically different cultures co-reside in an area in symbiotic relations of variable intimacy' (Coon 1951, quoted by Barth 1956: 1079). This kind of theorizing is verified by Geertz (1973), for whom culture is contained in a location. This also gets closer to Foucault's methodology – a method for studying knowledges and their organizing pattern in their historical and geographical context. The emphasis is caught in the notion of 'local knowledge' which denotes 'concrete, independent and contextual knowledge' (Jorgensen 1999: 1).

Imperatively, whether it is organizing phenomena at a general level or leadership in particular, one cannot stay immune from local or national cultural context. Hence in the next chapter I focus on, debate and review specifically the methodology aspects of literature on Pakistan and its organizational research context.

Chapter 3 - Constructing the Reality of Leadership and Culture

> All research is interpretive; it is guided by the researcher's set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied.
>
> [Denzin & Lincoln 2005: 22]

3.1 Introduction

The methodology segment of the study comprises two sections, with chapter three highlighting ontological and epistemological aspects of methodology and chapter four focussing on the research design and methods. This chapter, in general, highlights my dissatisfaction with the dominant research paradigm, and hence methodological weaknesses, inadequacies and philosophical flaws associated with this are brought to the fore. Related to this is my concern to prescribe more appropriate methodological strategies and frameworks to deal with a non-western research context. The chapter also stresses the need to maintain an etic–emic epistemic distinction, especially when the research subject is located in the non-western context. The following chapter 4 in particular is concerned more with a description of the deployment and operational aspects (research design, collection and analysis of data, etc.) of the methodology explicated in chapter 3.

In this chapter I describe the context of research in opting for particular research methodology, research conventions and methods associated with the study. I feel obligated to narrate philosophical aspects of my research alongside the deployment of research methods. Therefore, I have argued here that the research context demands interpretivist ontology and thick descriptive ways of knowing which resolve the problem of intentionality. Secondly, the ontology of the researcher is not an optional extra; rather it is omnipresent in all phases of research. Therefore, at first, I will try to consciously explicate my ontological assumption and predilections under which this research has been undertaken. The exposition of research ontology is connected with the critique of epistemologies. Thus, a subsequent section of the chapter deals with critical epistemologies of the existing literature on cross-cultural management. In this section I have shown how the construction of ideal and generic types of national values is a flawed methodology. My critique, which stems from multiple perspectives of functionalism and interpretivism, demonstrates how inappropriate an etic framework of cultural analysis in general, (and Hofstede's epistemology in particular) is, for measuring national culture. Thus criticism, from multiple angles, provides the basis for formulating my methodological preferences in conducting this research. These preferences are interrelated: first, leadership can be better studied by way of knowing leaders' organizing practices – an epistemology of practice; second, such practices are located and situated in local episteme and discourse; and third, sensitivity to etic–emic distinction must be maintained while undertaking research in a

non-western context. In other words, one can also say that an emic methodology of inquiry carries significant explanatory power to represent social and organizational epistemic flows and provides information on practice-based knowing. For instance, the emic perspective suggests that social and organizational construction of knowledge comprises four epistemic flows, a blend of Indian, Muslim, English and American epistemes, which in turn can be attributed as epistemology of practice, as has been demonstrated in the discussion chapters as well.

3.2 Situating the research context

It has been mentioned earlier that research on Pakistan has predominantly been carried out with so-called scientific or functionalist notions of knowledge production. I have also expressed, in chapter 2, my dissatisfaction with positivist epistemology and the associated ontology of scientific knowledge. For Brannen & Salk (2000), interpretation of culture necessarily involves and reflects the background and values of the ethnographer or researcher (see also Yeganeh & Su 2006). Hence, research on culture and leadership cannot just be done through explicit static categorization and the objectivist epistemological approach of the researcher. Moreover, at the epistemological level, MacIntyre (2007), for example, argues that a stock of scientific management knowledge does not even exist, and that what is claimed as scientific is, rather, ideologically constrained. Therefore, this study attempts to contemplate on what can be considered as a subjectivist epistemology as identified and labelled by Geertz (1973) as 'thick description' which means in-depth, historically meaningful and linguistically rich reporting of findings. *Imperatively*, by way of thick description, the researcher has to be familiar with the complexities of the historical, social, political or economic institution of the culture before the research design and collection of data (Yeganeh & Su 2006). With these considerations the role of research is to discover and explicate the shared cultural knowledge, both explicit and implicit, that reflects the way respondents are inferred for their *doing* and *saying* (Sackmann *et al* 1997). For this reason a thick descriptive mode of knowing seems more appropriate in the study of culture and leadership, as it is disposed to resolve 'the problem of intentionality of human action' (Czarniawska 2004: 7). However, such concerns as stated above in the field of Organization Studies or cross-cultural studies were seldom raised by researchers coming from a functionalist research paradigm by way of delineating the ontology of their research and associated epistemological concerns. More often than not, the claim for objectivist epistemology is raised by them in order to maintain the authors' false presumption and pretension of eliminating subjectivity. Consequently I feel obliged to consciously explicate the ontological assumptions of my research from the outset.

3.3 Ontological predilections

In this section I identify and highlight my ontological preferences with respect to scientific knowledge, and subsequently try to locate my critique of earlier research on society and organization in Pakistan. This section thus forms the philosophical foundation of the present study. In my view there is a lack of clarity and of appropriate methodological treatment in earlier research, in terms of their ontological and epistemological issues as pointed out below. The ontology of knowledge construction – of what is 'scientific' and the nature of social scientific knowledge – is somewhat closer to Fritjof Capra's (1982) thinking and defining of scientific knowledge. His critical elaboration of the ontology and epistemology of the scientific world is embodied here:

> Matter was thought to be the basis of all existence, and the material world was seen as a multitude of separate objects assembled into a huge machine. Like human made machines, the cosmic machine was thought to consist of elementary parts. Consequently it was believed that complex phenomenon could always be understood by reducing them to their basic building blocks and by look for the mechanisms through which these interacted. This attitude known as reductionism, has so deeply ingrained in our culture that it has been identified with the scientific method… whenever psychologists, sociologists, or economists wanted to be scientific, they naturally turned toward the basic concept of Newtonian physics (Capra 1982: 32).

The scientific concepts and theories have limited range of applicability, and hence 'can never provide a complete and definitive description of reality' (Capra 1982: 33). For Capra, 'scientists do not deal with truth; they deal with limited and approximate descriptions of reality' (Capra 1982: 33). However, recent developments in physics show that scientific thinking does not necessarily have to be reductionist and mechanistic; instead, ecological and holistic views can equally be scientifically sound (Capra 1982). Thus for him, scientism is an attitude of over-reliance on rational thought and scientific methods while ignoring intuitive (or tacit) knowledge which can be just as valid and reliable (Capra 1982: 22). Moving a step further one can now see how tacit knowledge can be scientific. Intuitive knowledge, in my view, manifests itself in the real world as 'practice' or what is today pronounced and known as a gap between theory and practice, knowing and doing, abstract and concrete (Buckley *et al* 1998, Folger & Turillo 1999). This acquires further support from the emerging focus, in Organization Studies in particular, on looking to 'evidence based theory' and 'communities of practice' (Lave 1993, Wenger 1998) in different fields and professions.

At this juncture, I consider it both pertinent and fair to deal explicitly with ontology of scientific knowledge and knowledge creation as it is an intrinsic component of the whole research process. Earlier I have dealt with the problems of scientism or a functionalist perspective of scientific knowledge. Hence, one can observe that there is no knowledge

which can be claimed to be value- or context- free. It is all value-laden (Astley 1985). The persistent claim of the functionalist paradigm to extend the applicability of scientific knowledge development tools within the social domain appears extremely inappropriate and fault-ridden. This study has ontological predilections which take it closer to Capra's (1982) who believes in the existence and recognition of multiple sciences, multiple rationalities, multiple modernities and multiple identities even within the domain of the natural sciences. For obvious reasons, social sciences are an even greater exemplar of the complexity described by Capra. For Westwood & Jack (2009), different societies in different moments in history have evolved their own concepts of scientific knowledge which essentially differ from the today's Western concept of scientific knowledge, thereby extending recognition to 'multiple rationalities' and 'multiple sciences'. Examples would include: Chinese, Indian and Islamic sciences (Westwood & Jack[8] 2009).

It is the pluralistic and discursive view of scientific knowledge in general that is advanced here rather than a single 'hard' objectivist perspective. Similarly, the predominant concern in this study is leadership inquiry based on an anthropological perspective of socially emic organizing and organizations, instead of a perspective that views organization from within the parameters of a closed system of organization theory. Lex Donaldson (1985, 1995) and other functionalists tried to confine the debate, by drawing and restricting the disciplinary boundaries of organization theory to performance and organization issues.

The organization theory and research on leadership and culture conducted with the ontological assumptions stated above lends further weight to the use of the interpretive paradigm. Such a perspective of knowledge creation is quite in line with the arguments advanced by Joanne Martin (1992), who argues vehemently that the 'social scientific perspective is an interpretive framework that is subjectively imposed on the process of collecting and analysing cultural data. A social scientific perspective is not considered here to be an objective description of empirical facts' (Martin 1992: 13).

Another important ontological consideration associated with organizational research and cross-cultural analysis is the issue of making comparison and equivalence. The ontological divide between the two competing paradigms which is highlighted by Burrell & Morgan (1979), becomes more pronounced because of the researcher's inclination or choice for either generalizability or context. As such, the study of cultures through an interpretive paradigm is oriented towards assuming the uniqueness of cultural entity (organizational or national); and hence goes in favour of context (divergence), rather than generalizability (or convergence) anchored in the functionalist paradigm. Consequently, findings through the

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[8] Personal discussions with Prof. Gavin Jack from University of Leicester, in 2006, on his project with Professor Westwood on the idea of multiple sciences in different cultures and civilizations.

social constructivist paradigm of enquiry tend to 'remain subjective and context-bound' (Yeganeh & Su 2006: 363).

Finally, this study is also an attempt to delineate the ontology of practice while examining the phenomenon of leadership and culture. For Yeganeh & Su (2006) positivism or modern functionalism, though commonly and popularly believed to be a more concrete and hard knowledge, yet in reality they carry limited utility and are of questionable practical significance. The whole process of seeking statistical rigour and employing verification techniques 'has rendered culture ahistorical, linguistically naïve and psychologically unaware' (Yeganeh & Su 2006: 362). It is proposed here to follow Denzin's perspective of the conduct of research as one for whom 'standards for assessing quality [of research] are forms of interpretive practice that enact a politics of evidence and truth' (Denzin 2009: 139).

Hence, the present study is concerned with examining leadership in the corporate sector of Pakistan from the underlying contextual and emic perspective, while earlier studies were conducted in the field of cross-cultural management, entailing an etic point of view. My aim in this section is to demonstrate that research in the fields of Organization Studies and cross-cultural management cannot be appropriately and meaningfully carried out by deploying an etic mode of inquiry especially when the differential in context is too great. This seems true particularly in the context of the study of organization and society in Pakistan, where one can find interaction amongst diverse cultural epistemes. This aspect has, I contend, been completely missed out by much of the earlier organization research on Pakistan. Earlier studies were found insufficient and inadequate in terms of clarity in ontological reflections and epistemological prescriptions, as these were primarily associated with what can be described as modernist or functionalist perspectives of knowledge and theory.

It is commonly accepted in research that the philosophical position of a researcher decisively influences the type of knowledge and research findings in general, and the case of cross-cultural research in particular. For Scholte, 'anthropological premises and assumptions generally involve intellectual–historical, philosophical, or "paradigmatic" choices and commitments' (1966: 1192). Therefore, knowledge construction (or knowing reality), I believe, in the case of society and organization in Pakistan can be studied at first by clarifying the ontological view of the study as this is 'the root cause of determining [the] reality' (Ackroyd & Fleetwood 2001: 8), nature and quality of knowledge. It is the complex and dynamic interactions of four fundamental epistemic flows of cultural knowledge within Pakistan, I contend, that provide the supporting socio-political

conditions within which a particular view of organizing emerges. The four epistemic flows are:

1. Post-colonial (American dominance)
2. Colonial (British rule)
3. Muslim Rule (religion & history)
4. Indian (geographical & locale)

It is the interaction amongst them which gives rise to the emergent view of organization and leadership. The inquiry here is conducted with the possible discovery of cultural knowledge along emic–ontological premising. Therefore this study is unique in its attempt to know the emic and contextual view of indigenous organizational leadership of the corporate sector in Pakistan. It is pertinent here to recall that earlier studies were conducted merely along the positivistic epistemological notions without clearly and explicitly pronouncing on its ontology. Nonetheless, such studies implicitly followed the ontology of realism and scientism. For instance, Hofstede's (1980) famous study included the Pakistani managers working at IBM's subsidiary in Pakistan.

Nasir Islam (2004) came forth with, arguably, a futile replication of the Hofstede framework of cultural analysis. Khilji (1999) in her doctoral work at Cambridge University, made a somewhat better attempt than others, through utilizing qualitative–quantitative mixed methodology, but she was far from dealing with ontological issues and their ramifications for the requisite epistemology. Therefore, it is clear all such previous studies were conducted in the wake of presumed scientific objectivity driven by realistic ontology and positivist epistemology with the postulation of deterministic human nature and a preference for nomothetic and reductionist methodology. Khilji (1999, 2004) and Islam (2004), both tried to chart the history of the colonial and post-colonial eras of organization yet were unable to provide meaningful connections to the operational design and analyses of their research. Their research was, by default, etic and conducted within a dualist framework of modern/traditional divide. Thus it tended to look for modern constructs (epistemic flows 1 & 2) while delegitimizing and marginalizing traditional ones (epistemic flows 3 &4).

Therefore we can observe that such research culminates in a problematic treatment of organization theory, particularly in the context of developing countries like Pakistan, as the knowledge creation phenomenon is determined solely by etic–ontological considerations rather than the emic one. This, at the very practical level, means the perpetuation of the incompatibility or incommensurability of data and theory. This is a perennial and persistent problem in Organization Studies because the emic data pattern in indigenous society is

evaluated with the etic theoretical framework. Therefore this thesis represents a humble step towards surmounting the incommensurability problem in the domain of theory and practice of leadership and organization studies. No doubt modernist or classical views of scientific knowledge have had a deep and pervasive impact on the study of the state of knowledge and its application in developing societies. Nevertheless there is little realization of the importance of looking for its compatibility with local, indigenously-prevailing practical knowledge. However, in the West one can witness the significant revision of existing paradigms and hence the emergence of alternate and competing paradigms of what constitutes scientific and practical knowledge.

Likewise, knowledge production within the realm of leadership and Organization Studies can be considered highly Anglo- and Euro-centric, yet it is generally depicted as universal and globalized knowledge (Redding 1994). The phenomenon of knowledge production is understood to be too political. For instance, for Feldman, knowledge is a natural medium for power because knowing is the prerequisite of controlling (Feldman 1999: 230). Similarly for Calás & Smircich (1999) knowledge is not an objective phenomenon but the product of heterogeneous practices of power. The organization knowledge generated and practiced in the West is, according to Calás & Smircich, ontologically geared towards undermining collective behaviour, thinking and practices, and amounts to an 'ethos of individualism' (Calás & Smircich quoted by Feldman 1999: 230). Hence the functionalist ontological approach with positivistic epistemology creates a type of knowledge which is essentially partial, de-contextualized, ahistorical and acultural, and therefore is inappropriate for the production of useful or practical knowledge. The resulting 'epistemic coloniality' refers to the institutionalization of knowledge as scientific knowledge through native elites and education into the dominant ideology of Western modernity (Ibarra-Colado 2006: 464). Therefore at the very broadest level I consider global or Western knowledge of organizational theory to be politically driven and structurally flawed, especially when it comes to its application in context of countries and societies like Pakistan.

However, I will not go further on the politics of global knowledge production but rather will limit the debate and criticisms on leadership literature within the confines of cross-cultural knowledge and analysis. My intentions are to highlight some of the model prescription and attributes of the leading etic framework of cultural analysis. Hofstede (1980) in this respect might be considered the leading guru in developing globalizing knowledge on organization and cross-cultural management. In his book, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values*, he defined and operationalized national culture in terms of four bi-polar dimensions: individualism–

collectivism, masculinity–feminism, power distance (high–low) and uncertainty avoidance (high–low) (Hofstede 1980). This attracted wide criticism of its methodological approach and conclusions. His subsequent revision came in 1991 when he added a fifth dimension, namely 'time', polarized into short-term and long-term orientations (Hofstede 1991). His other publications may be perceived as insisting on and justifying his earlier cross-cultural research, and as reinvigorating and validating his ontological orientation of culture and his epistemological treatment as the most authentic and decisive one. Others joined him. For instance Robert House (2005) of Stanford University came forth with a large scale project, Global Leadership and Organization Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE), and continued in the Hofstede tradition by widening and refining its ontology, becoming more global in outlook. House also sought to include more objectivity thereby enhancing the rigour and carefulness of his study. He tried meticulously not only to validate Hofstede's findings but went a step further to enrich the framework by the addition of more variables to the original model. These additions were: humane orientation and performance orientation. House also attempted to refine further the collectivism dimension by discriminating between institutional collectivism and in-group collectivism. Masculinity-femininity was divided into gender egalitarianism and assertiveness, and long-term orientation became future orientation (House 2005). Some of the other leading large-scale cross-cultural studies include those of Schwartz (1992) and Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1997). Schwartz & Bardi (2001) discussed Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, Self-direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, and Conformity, Security (Schwartz & Bardi 2001) as representing the universal structure of human values across cultures. Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner's (1997) seven values are universalism versus particularism, individualism versus collectivism, neutral versus emotional, specific versus diffuse, and achievement versus ascription, attitude toward time and environment. It is apparent from the above that cross cultural research is replete with etic frameworks of analyses, universalistic typologies and generic models; and the study of values in dichotomized terms was considered central for the study of nations and societies. In general it is claimed that almost all countries of the world can be studied through these models. However, not all models covered managerial values of Pakistani managers for reasons that are not entirely clear. Only Hofstede (1980, 1991), and Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1997) included Pakistan in their analyses to some extent.

The type of theoretical frameworks on cross-cultural organizational research discussed above can be objected to on many theoretical and methodological grounds. For instance at the very outset two inter-related issues invariably occur in comparative and cross-cultural research; one is the issue of conceptual equivalence, and the second is that of language

competence. According to John Child, 'because cross-national research involves many differences including, for example, languages, cultures, social institutions, and legal systems, it confronts a higher level of complexity, thus heightening the challenge of achieving equivalence' (Child 2000: 89). He goes on:

> …the questions that motivate the research, the variables identified for study, the theorized relationships among these variables, and the ways they are operationalized tend to emanate from a single national context, and the extent to which they may be valid in another is problematic. Simply back translating questionnaires does not address these fundamental issues (Child 2000: 90).

Moreover, the problem with the search for scientifically robust global organizational (leadership) knowledge is the excessive emphasis on the universality of concepts and their standardized measurement. Such an approach leads to a methodological problem. Cross-cultural scholars, like Hofstede, who, in their effort to generate generalizable knowledge, end up ignoring complex national or local contextual dimensions altogether. To be fair, this was a problem that Hofstede had himself realized and, in response, revised his work with Bond to uncover and add the fifth dimension of 'Confucian Dynamism' (Child 2000: 38) within the context of Asian societies.

Therefore, one can witness that the literature on cross-cultural management, in general, is developed using typologies intended to 'measure' national culture. This gives a static, atomistic and overly deterministic view of culture, in my view. These typologies, most of the time, adopt bi-polar structures, such as, individualism–collectivism etc., and have limited utility to the extent that countries are force-fitted into distinctive categories. This approach is objectionable on at least two counts. First, in reality the cultural context of a nation is a dynamic phenomenon which cannot be reduced meaningfully to a set of proxy measures. Second, both dimensions of a bi-polar construct can coexist in the context of developing countries like India and Pakistan. Sinha (1984) and Jacob (2005) have argued the irrelevancy of simplistic cultural classification to capturing the diversity of Indian social life. Sinha (1984) also argued how the two dimensions of a bi-polar construct can be co-present in the context of countries like India and Pakistan. Given the nature of cultural diversity in a Pakistani society a more sensitive approach is required if the complexity is to be adequately represented.

3.4 Critical epistemology

3.4.1 Critique on the construction of ideal-type values based studies

Research in the fields of organization and cross-cultural studies is replete with dichotomized values-based typologies. For instance, turning specifically to Hofstede's work on national culture, it can be observed that his work has attracted much criticism

though it was also claimed to have had the highest number of citations in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) (Baskerville 2003). His theoretical formulations and methodologies have been thoroughly criticized not only from interpretive paradigm perspectives like that of critical management and post-colonial but also attracted much criticism from functionalists. McSweeney (2002) and Baskerville (2003), in particular, were amongst the more prominent severe critics. For Baskerville (2003), anthropologists and sociologists are liable to reject Hofstedian methodology and theoretical claims on account of three basic flaws: first, culture cannot be assumed and equated with nation; second, the way Hofstede has quantified his results through indices and matrices; and third, his observer status of being from outside the culture. Other scholars like Bond (1988), Schwartz (1992) and Smith *et al* (1996) also challenged the replicability of his research, as part of their research involved the question: 'Did Hofstede's measures reflect the western values of those who described them?'(Baskerville 2003: 5). This weakness was tacitly accepted by Hofstede when he tried to enhance the legitimacy of his work through follow-up research (1991), by adding Confucian dynamism or long-term orientation. However, this again was dismissed by scholars like Fang (2003, 2006) who approached the subject in detail, through an emic and indigenous perspective, and highlighted how Hofstede's fifth dimension is equally redundant as a means of representing Chinese culture, as it is associated with some inherent philosophical flaws and theoretical weaknesses. While the marked feature of the second edition, *Cultures and Organizations* (1991), was that 'Hofstede openly acknowledges to a large degree the western bias of the entire research project to the extent of outlining his own history, beliefs, and values and scores on all dimensions, so they can be taken into account by the reader when evaluating and interpreting the results he presents' (Eckhardt 2002: 91).

Similarly, McSweeney (2002) termed Hofstede's model of national culture a failure of analysis on multiple counts, thereby making its validity profoundly problematic. He raised severe criticism, citing the implausibility of the research assumptions on which the Hofstede project is based. First, he argued Hofstede had conflated levels of analysis, the individual and national (McSweeney 2002, Smith 2002). Second, he criticised him for the 'unprovable supposition that within each nation there is a uniform national culture and on the widely contested assertion that micro-local data from a section of IBM employees are representative of that supposed national uniformity' (McSweeney 2002: 107-108). In this way he entirely ignored the existence of sub-cultures within the nation or state. Moreover, Hofstede undermined and devalued the role of occupational and organizational culture (McSweeney 2002: 97-99). Related to this is the methodological issue of statistical average based on individuals' views which were attributed and acclaimed as a 'national norm'

(McSweeney 2002: 107-108). This brings the issue of representation to the fore. For instance in the two survey rounds on Pakistan, only 37 and 70 employees of IBM Pakistan responded, yet were considered sufficiently representative of the national culture of Pakistan (McSweeney 2002). Therefore, the question arises why such a diminutive proportion is regarded as genuinely representative of the national population. Besides, IBM is a typical MNC that within the context of the corporate sector in Pakistan is considered a westernized and elitist organization, constitutive of just one segment of the corporate sector while other predominant public corporations and more prominent organizations in local industry were completely missed out from his sample selection.

Even scholars like Smith (2002) and Williamson (2002) who followed a positivistic line of epistemology and who were sympathetic to Hofstede could not defend him on issues of uniformity, integrity, homogeneity and continuity of modern national cultures. Smith (2002), like Roberts & Boyacigiller (1984), also considered 'measurement validity' as the principal weakness of Hofstede's project. As he says:

> Better understanding is required of the differences in levels of analysis. It is quite often argued that studies such as that of Hofstede (1980), which provide characterizations of nations as a whole, are of little use in understanding behaviour within a given sample, due to intracultural variability (Smith 2001: 21).

Similarly, Williamson also warned researchers that individuals should not be viewed:

> As 'cultural dopes', about expecting individuals values or behaviour to be wholly determined by their cultural background. These warnings relate to the ecological fallacy of attempting to predict individuals' values or behaviour from data about their culture (Williamson 2002: 1391).

Furthermore, Bearden *et al* (2006) with functionalist ontology applied the national culture (country level index score) to the individual level and demonstrated the unsuitability of using measures designed for unidimensional constructs to represent multidimensional and individual-level traits. Hence, what is more reckoning is that Smith (2001), perhaps one of the most ardent advocates of the functionalist research paradigm, commented on the impracticality and non-suitability of Hofstede's framework:

> We lack adequately developed theories that could help us to understand the variations found between management practices in the relatively collectivist cultures of Asia, Africa and Latin America, or the variations in management within the relatively individualist nations of Europe (Smith 2001: 1).

Therefore, it is conclusively evident from the above functionalists' critique that the Hofstede model of cultural research is associated with some structural flaws and inadequacies. This leads me to move beyond the functionalist paradigm of organization research especially when the context of the research is a non-western nation or state. At

this juncture it is appropriate to examine what discussions the Hofstede project has generated in its encounter with postcolonialism.

3.4.2 Postcolonial critique

The postcolonial perspective offers a more radical reassessment of ontological, epistemological and ethical assumptions of Hofstede-type studies. For instance, according to Jack & Westwood, knowledge production within the realm of postcolonialism is such that,

> Its epistemology(ies) reject(s) any universalist and unitarist view of science, revealing the Western orthodoxy's reliance on its specific historical, ideological and cultural locations. This opens a space for the recognition of viable alternative knowledge systems and local voices operative within their own locations… (2006: 488).

The above quote demonstrates the research imperative, that is, to discover and search for local knowledge or theory-in-use in a particular local context and conditions. This has been further verified by Weir's research findings on the Arab Middle East, which show that western business practices, when introduced into the Middle East, get conditioned by local-regional cultural norms (Weir 2005).

In the same way and more specifically, Coronado (2005) critically evaluates the role of culture research of the Hofstedian type and views it as a catalyst for the formation and promotion of global managerial discourse through management textbooks. For her, it is in line with ideological history of global economic and political order. She termed Hofstede's typology 'stereotypes of national culture' (Coronado 2005: 8) in consistency and continuity with western colonial legacy. For example, she states:

> His [Hofstede's] 'truth' is legitimised by his 'scientific', rigorous application of an exhaustive positivistic method on a huge sample, producing generalisations about cultures which in practice are largely stereotypes. They are simplistic external views of behaviours of others coming from interpretations, made through the lenses of western, Anglo ideologies (Coronado 2005: 7-8).

Moreover, for Coronado:

> Following the imperialist blueprint, this view of culture reproduces the relations of power that prevailed during the colonial era, the continuity sustained by the postcolonial ideological complex. Now the colonizer is the AmericanUS Corporation, with the expatriate manager (or local administrator of neocolonial interests) managing the 'Other' as in the postcolonial dichotomy. Those 'managed' are all assumed to behave as in the stereotype, which not only simplifies national cultures but also regional cultural 'clusters', Latin America among them (Coronado 2005: 8).

In the above two quotes Coronado exposes the political character of positivistic epistemology in managing other national cultures through the discourse and legitimation of scientific knowledge. Therefore standard business and management texts contain unified

hegemonic discourse serving politics and hence fail to deal with diversity and difference associated with different geographical location and cultures. Ibarra-Colado termed this aspect of coloniality 'the conquest of identities through knowledge' (Ibarra-Colado 2006: 463). Moreover, he states that such forms of knowledge are ordered and simplified through the use of instrumental rationality. He thus identified 'coloniality of knowledge' as the requisite of the 'coloniality of power' (Ibarra-Colado 2006: 464). Weir (2005, 2012) joined the criticism by making incisive observations on the non-acceptance of other (non-western) management and business practices. According to him,

> Where other management styles and business practices rooted in apparently alien philosophical and ethical systems are encountered, as in the Arab Middle East, they are apt to be dismissed with the discourse of "traditionalism" or "underdevelopment" or stigmatised as inconsistent with the requirements of business efficiency. Many of these systems of ethics are embodied in cultural traditions which are, in origin, older than those of western capitalism, yet in contemporary societies are evolving and transmuting even more radically. It is incorrect and un-helpful to see them as merely deviant cases or as unsuccessful attempts to reproduce western modalities (Weir 2005: 4).

Thus, in the above it is candidly accepted even by western writers that non-westerners are not only poorly represented in the dominant western knowledge production mechanism but also inadequately understood and least appreciated.

All these critiques cited above leads me to a significant question: can culture be studied without studying specific national or local context? Put another way, can context be quantified within a functionalist's model and still do justice to the narration of culture? By introducing the concept of field work, Malinowski (Chilcott 1987) was one of the first anthropologists to meld the personal and scientific (or to fuse subjectivity and objectivity) in his research. Though he was a thoroughgoing functionalist yet he recognized the need to grasp and understand the 'native's' point of view (Chilcott 1987). Further, according to Roth *et al*, '…much of our knowledge about other cultures must now be seen as contingent, the problematic outcome of inter-subjective dialogue, translation and projection' (Roth *et al* 1989: 558). For Anne Akeroyd, even the anthropological studies of non-western cultures were aired for political purposes or exigencies:

> Knowledge about other cultures can be used as the rationale underpinning policies detrimental to members of those cultures, and be used in a way quite contradictory to the intention underlying the anthropologic rationale for the presentation of that knowledge and its rationality (Akeroyd 1984: 8).

Therefore, it can be increasingly observed that the fundamental methodological problem with the functionalist perspective of cultural knowledge creation is that most of the cross-cultural studies are conducted though the use of etic dimensions or standardized questionnaires applied in different cultures which, by default, precludes an emic and in-

depth focus on a single national culture. Hence the etic framework of cultural analysis has a tendency to produce excessive generalization of the type Hofstede (1980), Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1997), House (2005) and other scholars proffer. Even Hofstede himself conceded, 'there is no such thing as a universal economic or psychological rationality. Nationality constrains rationality' (Hofstede *et al* 2002a: 800). Nina Jacob identified this as the problem of extensive global sweep (Jacob 2005). Astley (1985) in his classical study highlighted the use of ambiguous, highly abstract, and empirically imprecise language which dominates the theorizing underpinning organizational research:

> The most general and abstract theories, the ones farthest removed from empirical reality, exert a disproportionate influence on the field by virtue of their sheer ubiquity as umbrella concepts to which a multiplicity of more explicit hypothesis can be attached (Astley 1985: 501).

Another related matter in the field of cross cultural research is the issue of comparability of two or more cultures. For Boas, cultures are irreducible and incomparable, and hence there is no alternative other than to explore them from within (Crotty 1998: 76). In the words of Child, 'when equivalence is problematic, the validity of comparisons is compromised and we encounter the issue of what is referred to colloquially as comparing apples and oranges'(Child 2000: 89). Nina Jacob also raised the same objection asking: if countries are indeed culturally distinguishable, can they usefully be compared against each other (Jacob 2005)? Therefore, given the immense problems associated with etic theorization it is imperative here, I contend, to study leadership and culture using an emic approach.

3.5 Three prime methodological considerations

From the above debate what can be discerned is that three methodological considerations are of prime relevance and importance for the investigation of culture and leadership: how leadership is practised, what its episteme is, and finally how to seek emic construction of leadership in the cultural context of society and organization in Pakistan.

3.5.1 Practice concern

Making observation on practice is my foremost concern. If practice is considered as the main source of knowing about leadership, it follows logically that organizational scholars interested in this field should be asking the question: what do leaders actually do? The study of Mintzberg (1971) is considered a landmark and contributed to the development of what is now identified as the 'practice turn' (Schatzki *et al* 2001, Simpson 2009, Whittington 2006). For Cook & Brown epistemology of practice can be closely identified with 'epistemology of possession', as knowledge is something which people possess (1999: 381). The epistemology of possession is learned to prefer and prioritize knowledge

possessed by individuals over that possessed by groups (Cook & Brown 1999). Similarly for Kempster & Stewart,

> Practices relate to the micro activities of action that generate specific outcomes. The activities of practice are shaped through cultural and social assumptions and beliefs at both a societal and local (organizational) level: 'it is the historical and social context that provides structure and meaning to what we do' (Handley et al., 2007: 179). Practice draws on technical as well as social knowledge. It is both a skill and an identity, perhaps even a craft – learnt formally and informally – but predominately through participation in local contexts. Situated leadership practice is thus the day-to-day enactment of seeking to lead in a particular context (Kempster & Stewart 2010: 209).

Besides the above, the need for the study of practice is even advocated by a famous cross-cultural psychologist with functionalist ontology. For instance Smith advised the cross-cultural researcher to 'compare effective practices not simple means' (Smith 2001: 23), and reiterates:

> Germany is not like France. What we need to explore more fully is the nature and efficacy of management practices within an increasingly multicultural world. We can use existing theory to do this within a single nation or several concurrently. In each case, the goal is to show how a particular practice works out in a given context (Smith 2001: 23).

The quote reveals imperatively the significance of the study context of a nation or society for any social or organizational phenomenon under research. This in turn makes evident that practice can be viewed as 'a transactional social process involving experience and action as mutually informing aspects of human conduct' (Simpson 2009: 1329). For Gherardi (2009a) practice is not just something like a routine or what people actually do, but rather reveals an understanding of the social order. For her, 'practices are not only recurrent patterns of action (level of production) but also recurrent patterns of socially sustained action (production and reproduction). What people produce in their situated practices is not only work but the (re) production of society (Gherardi 2009b: 536). Similarly for Preda, practices are 'enacted by human actors in the production of social order' (1999: 361). Therefore, practice in Organization Studies is increasingly viewed as an epistemology for studying working practices, practical and hidden knowledge though 'practices are difficult to assess, observe, measure or represent because they are hidden, tacit, and often linguistically inexpressible in propositional terms (Gherardi 2009a: 116). This perhaps is why Alvesson & Sveningsson (2003) have suggested looking at leadership as the 'extraordinarization of the mundane', emphasizing local-cultural practices and micro-social activities of leadership exercised in the daily organizational life.

For one practice theorist, 'organizational knowledge is not solely mental. It is not situated in the brain of the human body or the organization; nor do the body or the organization serve as its instruments' (Gherardi *et al* 2007: 318). Rather for them organizational

knowledge is embodied in pathos manifested in social practices: 'It emphasizes the ability to express judgements based on taste, and to live the social practices performed in organizations with emotion, affect and attachment' (Gherardi *et al* 2007: 318). Therefore practice is by nature discursive, emergent through the organizational negotiation processes, and aesthetically formulated as one practice gets evaluated and compared to another (Gherardi *et al* 2007).

Similarly for another leading practice theorist, 'organizations are as they happen', and for him, 'happening of an organization has two basic components: the performance of its constituent *actions and practices* and the occurrence of events whereby its material arrangements causally support these activities (Schatzki 2006: 1863). For Schatzki, practice is a more comprehensive construct for doing organization research as practices represent, 'the co-occurrences of the teleological past, present and future in organizational action' (2006: 1863).

The epistemology of practice suggests that it is a self-expanding, open-ended, environmentally interactive and time-situated epistemic resource, 'that imposes its own rhythm on human actors and generates two tightly interwoven kinds of knowledge: (1) knowledge as an end result and (2) reflexive, processual knowledge' (Preda 1999: 353). For Latour as well, both human actors and artifacts are manifestations of practical knowledge, and are mutually grounded in a processual relationship and particular forms of sociality (Preda 1999).

Therefore, what we observe from the above is that tacit knowledge and processuality are two central features of social practice which in the view of Schatzki are 'temporally unfolding and spatially dispersed nexus(es) of doings and sayings' (Schatzki 1996: 89 quoted by Preda 1999: 361).

Within the context of Pakistan, Barth's study on political leadership among Swat Pathans (1959), is considered amongst the classics of political anthropology which brought a shift in anthropological theory in the sense that earlier, social structure was considered as the key for understanding political relationship while Barth laid the foundation of theory highlighting the role of individual initiative, choice and practice theory (Edwards 1998).

Though leadership has been investigated from various theoretical dimensions and perspectives 'yet much of this research still does not fully capture the experience of doing leadership as a practical activity in complex organizations' (Denis *et al* 2010: 67). Therefore this study endeavours to explain leadership through the lens of practice in a cultural context of organization and society in Pakistan. Here, in this study the account of leaders' perspectives of practice is drawn from narratives of their own leadership, and of

members in the upper echelon of organization who report on and evaluate leaders. This is in line with what Rouleau (2009) characterizes as a way of becoming informed on practice through the use of leaders' narratives (quoted by Denis *et al* 2010: 76).

One of the prominent features of practice as advocated by practice theorists is that it focuses on learning and the identity-formulation process. Practice is defined as a participative act – the acquisition of practice contains elements of learning, meaning-making and identity-construction. For Thompson, 'indeed, learning, meaning, and identity (in the sense of belonging to a group) are all aspects of the same participative act (practice) because "learning is not merely a condition for membership, but is itself an evolving form of membership" (Lave & Wenger 1991 quoted by Thompson 2005: 152). For Brown & Duguid practice involves learning, and 'learning is inevitably implicated in the acquisition of knowledge, but it is also implicated in the acquisition of identity' (Brown & Duguid 2001: 200). For them,

> Practice-focused analysis brings investigations of knowledge and identity in organizations closer to the point at which working life is lived, work done, and so working identities created, than analysis focused either on autonomous self-interest, on the one hand, or on what some cultural theorists recognized as the more abstract and distant sociological 'slabs' such as class or organization (Johnson 1983) on the other (Brown & Duguid 2001: 202).

Nonetheless, learning, work done and acquisition of practices and hence identity-formation is localized, dynamic and situated (Brown & Duguid 2001). What are termed socio-cultural slabs in the above can more or less be considered to be legitimate peripheral participation. For Wenger the legitimate peripheral participation within particular communities is interconnected with notions of identity-construction (Wenger 1998: 152 quoted by Kempster & Stewart 2010: 212). Legitimate peripheral participation has also been defined as access and opportunities for an individual to participate in relational activities (Kempster & Stewart 2010).

The views on practice cited above are shared by scholars like Carroll (2008) and Raelin (2011) who now advocate the movement to study leadership known as 'leadership-as-practice' (L-A-P). For Raelin, 'leadership [emerges] from social practices rather than from the external mind (Raelin 2011: 195) which focuses on the everyday practice of leadership including its moral, emotional, and relational aspects, rather than its rational, objective, and technical ones (Carroll *et al* 2008). For Raelin, L-A-P 'looks for leadership in its activity rather than through the traits and heroics of individual actors under the longstanding 'great man' theory portrayed by Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle. Leadership-as-practice is concerned far more about where, how, and why leadership work is being organized and accomplished than about who is offering visions for others to do the work'(Raelin 2011:

195-196). Hence, from the above discussion one can conclude that practice in general, or leadership practice in particular, does some epistemic work which according to practice theorists 'people must do to acquire, confirm, deploy, or modify what needs to be known in order for them to do what they do (Cook & Brown 1999: 399).

3.5.2 Epistemic concern

Practices, as cited above, are located and situated in local episteme, language and discourse, hence my second methodological concern is understanding construction of epistemes. 'Practice', as suggested by Brown & Duguid, 'creates epistemic differences among the communities within a firm, and the firm's advantage over the market lies in dynamically coordinating the knowledge produced by these communities despite such difference' (Brown & Duguid 2001: 198). This means organizational episteme is not something monolithic, fixed and coherent in nature, rather it is distinct, dynamic and generative. Moreover, it is not just true that organizations have distinct ways of knowing, rather it is true for all human groups, nations and cultures. As Vickers says, every human group 'has not only its own set body of knowledge, but its own ways of [knowing]' (Vickers 1976: 2 quoted by Cook & Brown 1999: 386). Similarly for another sociologist,

> The distinctive thing about any epoch or society is the nature of its questions about the world rather than its answers to them. Every society comprehends a new idea, event or phenomenon, within its own conceptual framework, i.e. with questions unique to that society's cosmological and ontological understandings. Ontological and cosmological conceptualizations determine, through the questions they allow one to ask, the answers to those questions as they are manifest in norms and values; and they have a determining effect on social action itself (Langer 1951 quoted by Rothstein 1972: 671-672).

Besides the existence of unique ways of knowing in every human and social group, as given above, articulation of what is known or construction of discourse and narrative is also unique for individual and social groups. Arendt identified this as, '…every individual life can eventually be told as a story with a beginning and end. This is the prepolitical and prehistorical condition of history … Narrative reveals meaning in one's life that would otherwise be perceived as merely an intolerable sequence of events' (cited in Kristeva & Collins 2001: 184).

For Foucault, the concept of epistemes is organized around historical epoch which explicates its own specific discourses and worldview – and hence lead people to come forth with their order of reason and peculiar sets of discursive formations, and arrangements of concepts. Hence each episteme order is different owing to conditions of that historical epoch (Foucault 1994). To him, 'knowledge and truth are not essential and ahistorical but are produced by epistemes, and at the same time hold that epistemes together' (Danker *et al* 2000: 29). Similarly, though Knorr Cetina's field of study is

science, culture and technology, yet her theorization has equal relevance for the discipline of Organizational Studies. For instance, her advocacy of the existence of 'epistemic culture' (Knorr Cetina 1999: 1), is quite engaging for my line of inquiry. For her, epistemic cultures are 'those amalgams of arrangements and mechanisms – bonded through affinity, necessity, and historical coincidence – which, in a given field, make up how we know what we know' (Knorr Cetina 1999: 1). Furthermore, 'when domains of social life become separated from one another – when they "curl up upon themselves" – for some period of time [they] become relatively insular or esoteric' (Knorr Cetina 1999: 2).

In light of the above it would be interesting to observe the formation of epistemic cultures of leading and organizing in the context of society in Pakistan. As I have stated earlier in section 3.3 I believe epistemic culture of organizing is based on an amalgam of four strands or flows of epistemes viz., post-colonial American, colonial English, Islamic and Indian. These epistemic cultures can be observed, in practice, to be competing with each other. Perhaps more interesting to observe, in the domain of social practice in general and organizational leadership practice in particular, is when these epistemic cultures 'curl up upon themselves', overlap each other and get diffuse and, and when they stay 'relatively insular or esoteric' and hence become distinctly identifiable. The rational for inclusion has been argued earlier in the above sections on ontological predilection and the subsequent epistemological critique of etic theorization based on flows 1 and 2, and suggesting a revision to include emic flows identified in 3 and 4. At a very broad level one can observe that there are two competing epistemic cultures operating when organizations are analysed from within the organization and when comparatively analysed. One, the amalgam of epistemic flow 1 and 2, can be described as 'modernist' or 'Western', while the other epistemic flow can be identified as cultural or *geo-cultural*. What in my view is significant for analysis in the two amalgams is the link between leadership or cultural practice and language. In my understanding practice has a deep connection with language as doing is deeply connected with saying. Practice is known and articulated through language, therefore language has an epistemic role in the formation of epistemic culture.

In the words of Hill & Mannheim, 'meaning can only be known in another language through social action and speech, and the relevant unit for analyzing these in another culture can only be worked out through their language. The entire intricate calibration is undertaken by the ethnographer in the field, often in an intuitive way. The process finally yields a report (usually) in the ethnographer's native language' (Hill & Mannheim 1992: 382-383). As is also evident from one socio-linguistic perspective, 'the ability of narrative [language] to verbalize and situate experience as text (both locally and globally) provides a resource for the display of [leaders'] self and identity (Schiffrin 1996: 167). Similarly, this

has been observed within the context of Southeast Asian studies that 'the epistemic culture of knowledge production, including the use of languages, appears to be a decisive…area' (Gerke & Evers 2006: 19). Likewise, Ibarra-Colado, a prominent post-colonial writer, refers to the loss of communicative action and hence of performance when Latin American scholars try to express their native thought structure in the English language (Ibarra-Colado 2008). For him, the situation is:

> When Latin American scholars speak or write in English, they adopt a strange way of expressing themselves, losing in their communicative action some degree of elaboration, complexity and specific meanings associated with some ways of saying or writing that can be expressed only in their native language. We must recall and emphasize that language is more that a neutral or innocent tool. It is a cultural device historically and locally constructed, that mediates the relationships between concrete individuals that live and operate in specific spaces and times (Ibarra-Colado 2008: 933).

The construction of the epistemic culture or community of Pakistan, owing to the very pronounced divide of English/Urdu as a medium of communication, resembles that of an emerging economy of Southeast Asia and Latin America as will be evident in sections 5.4.2 and 5.4.3 of the subsequent discussion chapters.

3.5.3 Emic concern

The terms 'emic' and 'etic' were first introduced in 1954 by Kenneth Pike (1993). Besides Pike, Harris (1976) and Berry (1990) were also associated with these terms for doing anthropological inquiry and interpretation of a society or cultural entity. According to Harris, 'emic operations have as their hallmark the elevation of the native informant to the status of ultimate judge of the adequacy of the observer's description and analyses. Etic operations, in contrast, elevate the observer to the status of judge of the concepts and categories employed' (Greenfield 1982: 485). There are some scholars, like Pike, Harris and Luthans, fervently seek reconciliation between the two, while there are others who see the two phenomena as distinct and incommensurable (Leung & White 2004). It is Pike, who believes that emic and etic approaches do not essentially constitute a dichotomy (Pike 1993, Franklin 1996). They only differ, and refer to an insider's or outsider's views of a system, and may be reconciled and integrated to produce an in-depth understanding of a system (Leung & White 2004). One can observe from the above discussions that, within the context of cross-cultural studies, the debate of scientific versus social scientific culminate in the distinction between etic and emic studies. The distinction between etic and emic is clarified further as under. The etic approach

> is based on the assumption that there are universal features of cultures that exist either in reality or in the minds of the researcher. The researcher knows them in advance and, by using them as absolute criteria, simultaneously compares a number of cultures on those features. In other words, the features provide an external view of

cultures. The etic approach is, thus, selective in the choice of cultural features, and yields only partial data that serve as a starting point for a more detailed analysis of cultures. The results of etic studies, therefore, are at best tentative, if not false (Sinha 2004: 20).

By contrast:

The emic approach… is culture-specific and grounded in one culture. The emic ideas, concepts, or theories are not known in advance. They are discovered during research mostly on or by the members of that culture. Hence, emic is an internal view based on the cultural features that are relevant with reference to the internal functioning of the culture itself. The emic view insists that every feature of the culture must be related to the other relevant features of the culture by integrating findings from the emic studies. The integrated findings lead to a comprehensive understanding of the totality of the culture (Sinha 2004: 20).

In view of the above reasoning, emic ontology and research techniques are deliberately followed in this study as emic concepts are increasingly considered to determine the locus of reality, though there is some variance in usage of what constitutes emic. 'Emic notions are those about which the subject is the final arbiter and which are such as must be determined by elicitation; etic notions are ones whose appropriateness is dictated by the inquirer' (Feleppa 1986: 245). To resolve, if such an elicitation on the part of the subject happens to exist in the target language or in an etic frame or recurs cross-culturally, it still will be considered as an emic concept (Feleppa 1986).

The problem of methodology is a central and recurring one in cultural and cross-cultural studies, as to which approach of inquiry the research or researcher might take. The etic approach, in this regard has been identified as afflicted by the 'Malinowskian dilemma' wherein one system is studied without even referring to the context of other system. Moreover, keeping in view the two perspectives above, one can find that the predominant problem with an etic approach is that it tends to become grossly ethnocentric. As a result, it is over-representation of this tendency which has led to Boyacigiller & Adler (1991), Redding (1994), Denzin & Lincoln (2005) talking of American organizational science as a 'parochial dinosaur'.

As illustrated above an emic perspective further get its evidence and support by the distinction that Gibbons *et al* (1994) make between 'Mode 1' and 'Mode 2' forms of knowledge production. Mode 1 derives largely from academic and investigator-led inquiry whereas Mode 2 knowledge is more context-driven and emergent from practice. Leadership and culture discourse is often perceived by the business community as lacking relevance, and is accused of being overly abstract and esoteric (Knights 2008), hence conforming predominantly to the Mode 1 form of knowledge production. In contrast, approaches with a Mode 2 orientation are seen to generate knowledge that seems more valid culturally, and tends to greater proximity to the context of application and practice.

Thus it follows from the above that the epistemology of Mode 2 research means employment of inductive research strategies that prompts the researcher to go out in the field, to observe at first hand and extract a practical account of 'what works' or 'what is out there' in the field. This means leaders, organizations and their cultures of organizing can be better understood through field-based studies which can take the form of either by participant observer or through formal and informal interviews, using documents, etc. (Kaghan *et al* 1999). This is why field investigation has been accorded primacy within cultural anthropology and it is considered to serve as the 'boundary-maintenance function' (Salamone 1979: 47) between anthropology and other social sciences (Salamone 1979). Importantly, such an epistemology of Mode 2 research heightens the researcher's subjectivity in the research process owing to sustained involvement in data gathering, in the knowing process and in knowing unique aspects of reality thereby creating doubts about comparability (Salamone 1979). Consequently such an epistemology of inductive means of comparing societies or cultures, western and non-western *per se*, is a forced or compromised one. Therefore, the study of culture and leadership, leads to the study of emics. For Pelto (1970), all anthropological research at the field work level contains an 'imbedded emicism' in which native viewpoints, meanings, and interpretations are given significant importance for understanding behaviour (Morey & Luthans 1984).

It can be observed that the methodological concerns I have highlighted above viz. leadership practice, epistemic concern and emic concern, all tend to converge and relate to each other, in order to make an appropriate assessment and analysis of organizational issues. This methodology has also been advocated by Jorgensen, who proposes:

> Start from a detailed study of concrete organizational practices. Analyse these one by one and put them in the right chronology and context. Then the larger patterns and their contradictions slowly emerge. Phenomena of a more global kind thus gradually emerge through the detailed study of practices. That is, more general social patterns have to emerge from a study of specific practices (Jorgensen 2002: 41).

The above quote suggests 'going emic' entails both practice and epistemic aspects of reality construction. Likewise, emic perspective of research on organization is vividly endorsed by post-colonialists:

> A postcolonial research practice, then, seeks to resist unreflexive, universalizing, essentializing and exoticizing tendencies and to pursue methods and modes of representation that are reflexive about their own conditions and effects and/or which allow for a more inclusive and polymorphous approach to knowledge and knowledge practices (Jack & Westwood 2006: 495).

Consequently, post-colonialists also urge us to make local voices and the local self-inclusive in the knowledge-construction project. Indeed, it is prescribed by Jack &

Westwood that 'local self-representations should be taken account of and ideally become the prime resource driving research conceptualization and practice' (2006: 493).

The point in the above is that so far few attempts have been made to study leadership in non-western societies from within or by emic research conventions. Rather, at a practice level, considerations are guided by contemporary academic concepts, models and abstract theories in leadership and culture research, developed and deployed in the Western world. To a large extent such abstracting tendencies are a legacy of the Western intellectual traditions (Hadot 2006, Jullien 2004). By contrast, this study attempts to look for leadership theory based on contextually valid and culturally relevant practices. An emic perspective of culture and leadership also draws credence and support from the recently emerging research on Asiatic and other non-Western societies. Moreover, in line with Jorgensen's advice, that 'to study local knowledges in organizational analysis means studying organizational practices on their own terms' (Jorgensen 2002: 40), the focus of the study here will be the individual and collective construction or interpretations of leadership practices from an emic standpoint within the corporate context of Pakistan.

3.6 Conclusion

Analyses of issues in organization, culture and management cannot be done without seeking clarity in ontology and epistemology. Moreover, for researchers in organization and management, ontology is not an optional extra (Fleetwood 2004): it is omnipresent in all phases of research. Therefore, in this chapter I have argued for and clarified my ontological predilections of social constructivism and interpretivism. As such I have demonstrated my distaste for, and dissatisfaction with, the dominant existing ontologies and epistemologies of research in culture and cross-cultural management. In a nutshell, I would reiterate my position as this: given the complex and contextual nature of culture it is naïve to think it can be comprehensively studied by the simple classificatory approach of the positivists' structural functionalism. Therefore, what I consider more appropriate is to pursue research through the social constructivist's ontological perspective and a thickly-descriptive narrative (subjectivist) epistemology, which can be termed capturing the objectivity of the subject. The criticism receives further impetus from post-colonial and critical research traditions, as I believe the cultural phenomenon is historical, holistic, contextual, complex and emergent in nature. This approach is considered to be social scientific, epistemologically, and perceived by interactionists and social constructionists as effective enough to resolve problems of cultural analysis as posited by positivists (Fine 1993). Such an ontological and epistemological orientation is central to the whole research process from research design, through methodology and data collection to discussion and analysis.

Furthermore, based on critical evaluation of the existing methodologies I advance three interrelated methodological preferences to conduct this research. In my view, culture and leadership can be better studied by way of knowing leaders' organizing practices – epistemology of practice. Second, the inquiry line of culture and leadership suggests knowing where these practices are located and situated; in local-cultural or global epistemic practice and discourse. Finally, in my view, organizational analysis should be sensitive enough to maintain the etic-emic distinction while undertaking research in a non-western context. In other words I have argued above that it is the emic methodology of inquiry that carries significant explanatory power to represent social and organizational epistemic flows and provides information on practice-based knowing.

In the next chapter I explain the operational aspects of my methodology. There I describe how my ontological predilections and epistemological orientation lead me to formulate and execute a particular research design, to stipulate constraints and methodologies at the practice level for data collection and to identify appropriate strategies for analyses.

Chapter 4 - Research Design and Methods

> Every culture has not only its own set body of knowledge, but its own ways of [knowing].
>
> [Vickers[9] 1976: 2]

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I deal with operational aspects of the research methodology explicated in chapter 3. This will explain why a particular research design was followed and what methods of research were used to generate data. Here, the research design is primarily concerned with elicitation of responses about the existence of local or cultural patterns of leadership and organizing. It is the field inquiry that suggests that corporate sectors in Pakistan comprise three distinct categories identified as A (public sector corporations - PSCs), B (multinational corporations - MNCs) and C (large local corporations - LLCs), in section 4.2.1 below. Therefore, I selected respondents from all three of these categories. This design is unique in the sense that it demonstrates effectively where to look for evidence in order to investigate local cultural ways of organizing especially in the context of emerging economies like Pakistan. Section 4.3 is devoted to explaining the sampling criteria and the process and methods of data collection. In section 4.4 I elaborate on the details of research methods and strategies I have actually employed. In the subsection I uncover my experiences of going through field research. In my view it is the field research that makes the entire research process an emergent one. Access to data is perhaps the most salient issue of the field, and I explain how I overcame this problem in the next subsection. In the subsequent subsection of 4.4 I highlight why inductive research is useful for emic and cultural research. Within the same section I chart out the interview methodology. My interview methodology focuses on ethnographic, polyphonic and emic aspects of interviewing as detailed in section 4.4.3.

Data were collected through tape-recorded interviews followed by intensive listening, translating and transcription. Thematic analysis techniques were applied in order to analyse data. Details of thematic analysis are given in section 4.4.4. Analyses tend to focus on indigenous terms, emic meanings of etic terms, on elaborating similarities and differences between local and western terms, on metaphors, linguistic expressions and meanings attached to them. Section 4.5 highlights the ethical concern of the research project and explains how I addressed issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality of data. Finally, the chapter also endeavours to expose some of the benefits and limitations associated with the employment of particular research tools and techniques.

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[9] Invited paper given by Sir Geoffrey Vickers, in 1976, entitled 'Technology and Culture', at the Division for Study and Research in Education, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA.

4.2 Research design

4.2.1 Three sectors and three domains of leadership

The three concerns outlined in the previous section are reflected in the research design and research methods of this inquiry. In line with what is explained in section 3.2, the type of research design deployed here indicative of the situation on the ground, is to investigate and locate the knowledge aspect which has been utterly neglected in previous research. Previous studies excluded altogether large local organizations or *Seth* type organizations – a segment which comprises more than 50% in terms of its presence in the economy (Mumtaz 2003). Hence, corporate sector organizations in Pakistan can broadly be identified to exist in the following three leading segments:

A. Public Sector Corporations (PSCs) - Leaders from Public Corporations.

B. Multinational Corporations (MNCs) - Pakistani leaders from subsidiaries of British MNCs[10].

C. Large Local Corporations (LLCs) - *Seth* are designated as leaders here in LLCs.

Modern-western organizations in category A can also be identified as classical or old-modern; those in category B can be described as newly-modern organizations while in category C are described as indigenous or local-national organizations. Hence, based on a stratified sampling scheme, individual leaders and managers were taken from each segment and examined as a unit of analysis, primarily selected from managers and leaders in the uppermost echelon of the organization. I gave preference to holding interviews with 'the person at the top'. However, where 'this person was not available', respondents were taken from the second tier of the organization. Of the total 84 respondents 26% were from PSCs, 35% were from LLCs, 19% were from MNCs and 20% were consultants[11]. The criterion for the selection of organization was simple: that the organization should be large enough to be listed on the country's leading stock exchange, that is, the Karachi Stock Exchange. Comparatively, MNCs and PSCs were found to be bigger than LLCs. A few unlisted LLCs were also selected in the sample but were roughly equivalent to the size of company listed on the stock exchange, that is, having an annual turnover in the region of US$200-300 million.

My criterion for identifying leaders was someone vested with significant authority in the higher echelon, either in territorial terms (like country manager or regional manager) or in functional terms (sales, marketing and finance). This research practice is in line with the

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[10] All respondents were from British MNCs except for the one who happened to join an American MNC in the recent past but also served in a British MNC for 15 years. So MNCs means British MNCs in this study.

[11] These were HR practitioners and consultants, management trainers as well as informed business educationists having established links with industry.

way Alvesson & Deetz (2000) define leadership. For them, 'leadership is implicitly defined as something which characterizes the formal superior in relation to subordinates' (Alvesson & Deetz 2000: 57). Moreover, not only were leaders interviewed directly, but senior managers working with them were also included in the sample to describe the leadership and culture of their organizations.

This research is primarily inductive in nature. It starts with reliance on the researcher's observation of data and methods at the level of practice, and proceeds with appropriate methodological concerns and theoretical justifications later. These observations were then reviewed and compared with the literature on organization and leadership. This approach led me to a caveat in methodological treatment of organizations. My discovery was that most of the earlier research on organizations and culture ended up inquiring into either category A or category B organizations and, arguably, did not describe or assess organizations or the subject under research appropriately. So earlier research design tended to ignore the cultural existence of one significant segment of Pakistani enterprises – LLCs – altogether and hence led to imprecise theoretical formulations. Therefore, earlier research findings were insufficient owing to inappropriate methodological treatment as they were found to be loaded with questionable ontological and epistemological premises. As such the existing methodologies in the literature for organization research generated dubious description, measurement, comparison and hence poorly formulated organization theory. Previous research turns out principally to be a comparison of an ideal type of Western institution (new & category B) with the degenerated versions of western bureaucratic models (old-classical & category A). Therefore, measurement or description problems persist, not only with organization and society in Pakistan, but with most of the developing countries, except newly-industrializing countries like South Korea, China etc., in comparative management studies. This is, in my view, the most fundamental flaw in the research design of most of the large scale cross cultural projects like Hofstede (1980) and House (2005), which are meant to study leadership and culture from comparative perspectives. Therefore, in line with the research design stipulated above, one predominant concern in this research is being open to the possibility of finding distinct emerging cultural patterns, something akin to, or that can be compared with, the rise of *Guanxi* of China, *Keiretsu* of Japan or *Chaebol* of South Korea. As a result, ethnicity and family (sic: religiosity and politics) were identified by Stewart Clegg (1990) as distinct resources and practically rational in the construction of organization and organizing processes which we do not see in the typical Western conception of modern organization. For that reason, here the focus of methods and analysis is geared more towards observing and narrating emic construction and local specific cultural patterns, which are more pronounced in category C

organizations. Its incorporation in the research design and its comparison with category B organizations will result in an original empirical contribution to knowledge. For instance, in Pakistan, category A organizations (public sector corporations – PSC), and category B organizations (multinational corporations – MNC) are compared with category C (large local corporations – LLC). Organizations were selected: sample PSCs from the energy sector, MNCs from the fast moving consumer goods sector (FMCG) and LLCs from the textile sector. Therefore, the whole idea here is to narrate, compare, contrast and evaluate A, B and C instead of earlier studies which focused on either just A or B.

The interview question guide is presented in Appendix-B. Questions were asked on leadership practices and styles, job concept, professionalism, nature of conflict and politics in organization, decision-making, language, gender, etc. along the lines of what Brannen & Salk (2000) referred to as the inquiry into functional aspects of organization.

4.3 Data collection: Methods and sampling

The strength of qualitative research in the field depends on how successful the researcher is in building rapport with their respondent or participant (Pitts & Miller-Day 2007). Data were collected by going into the field, visiting and interviewing leaders in their office, factory, or plant location. My strategy was to hold candid and open-ended discussions with interviewee respondents. Hence, non-standardized or semi-structured interviews were conducted based on questioning that generate candid conversation and narrative (Fontana & Frey 1994). Asking 'what', 'why' and 'how' type questions enriched my understanding of the organizational context and leadership practices. In the interview the respondent was asked and encouraged to talk openly and candidly of his or her experience or subjective opinion of organizing and leadership. I can confidently claim that my rapport-building strategy in generating personal narratives through interviews was successful. Evidence for this is that I initially asked for an allocation of 30-40 minutes interview time, whilst in fact most interviews lasted for 60 minutes or more, and some even continued for up to 120 minutes. The respondents were also encouraged to give illustrations, examples of critical incidents or stories of their cognition and practices of organizing and leadership. Some of the more interesting events are included in this study as vignettes.

Vignette is defined as a short, impressionistic scene that spotlights vividly on one moment to give a particular insight into a situation, idea or event. I have used the vignette technique in my analysis as it is becoming increasingly useful in the field of sociology and culture. For instance, Brookfield showed how Dupuis in his field study includes a profusion of vignettes in order to describe and exemplify individuals in the cultural landscape of the Indian region Madras (Brookfield 1964). Similarly, it is viewed that culture, subculture and

social world can be better understood through a short, paragraph-length vignettes designed to illustrate concepts under study (Dowd & Dowd 2003). For Thomas & James, the vignette, the portrait and the story are proper ways of doing research inquiry (Thomas & James 2008). Ashman & Lawler laid emphasis to use the vignette technique in their study, 'Existential Communication and Leadership', as it tends to develop better understanding of leadership practices and directs the readers inward to search their own meanings and existence (Ashman & Lawler 2008). Denis *et al* (2010) also made effective use of vignettes to examine and describe leadership practices and authority relationship in organizational context.

The research process, as I experienced it, is an emergent one entailing a lot of uncertainty as to how the process will unfold in the implementation phase. Faced with data access problems I also included management consultants, business educationists and HR practitioners in the research design to gain information on the three types of organizational leaders under inquiry. This was a contingency plan and an improvisation for generating meaningful data. However towards the end I was able to gather enough data to study the three types of organizations.

A total of eighty seven interviews were conducted, in two stages of data collection. Out of them eighty four were considered usable interviews. In the first round thirty two interviews were held in the summer of 2008 while fifty five interviews were conducted in the second round held in the summer of 2009. The first set of interviews can be considered as a preliminary stage of data collection as the data gathered was used mainly for writing my Masters Dissertation. I consider the second stage of holding interviews as a more mature and valuable input for the PhD project, hence data generated in the later stage has been given more space and coverage. Table 1 contains a summary of interviews conducted in the two years of field research, while another table is attached as Appendix-C, indicating the demographics of the sample: interviews by sector, job titles or position in organization, gender, length of service or age.

Sector	No. of Interviews Held		
	2008	2009	Total
PSCs	-	22	22
LLCs	19	13	32
MNCs	9	7	16
Consultants	9	8	17
Grand Total	-	-	87
Usable			84

Table 1: Interviews held in 2008 and 2009

Interviews were tape recorded, and transcripts were generated of interviews conducted in the second stage (Smith *et al* 2009). An immersion strategy was employed, in that interviews were listened to many times for analysis, and to generate the transcript, so as to develop an appropriate sense of what was said and its meaning. The situation required me to use polyphonic interviewing as suggested by Fontana & Frey (1994). Though these interviews were conducted in a mixture of languages, Urdu, English and a few in local regional languages, communication took place predominantly in the national language of Pakistani society. Therefore I had to translate these interviews into English as well as generating the transcript. For this, McLellan *et al* suggest 'The transcript should be an exact reproduction. …do not prematurely reduce text' (2003: 65). Therefore, following this advice on data preparation I have generated verbatim transcriptions of the fifty five interviews held in the second round of interviews. Generating verbatim transcriptions has become a familiar data management strategy and is commonly considered an integral component of the analysis and interpretation of verbal data (Halcomb & Davidson 2006). Though I have translated the interview text with the benefit of my cultural exposure to two worlds (English and Urdu) yet the problem of intranslatability remains pronounced and intimate, and is inevitably there when it comes to the study of culture and language. For linguistic scholars the problem of intranslatability is always there when concepts in a foreign language are translated. Linguists often refer to the maxim *traduttore traditore* (translator, traitor) and further 'insist that "something" gets lost in translation, that no matter how good the translation, there is always an intranslatable residue' (Politzer 1956: 319). Similarly, according to B. L. Whorf, 'all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar' (cited in Politzer 1956: 321-322). Thus the study of organization necessitates the study of the culture of the country in which the organization exists, along with its language. Or in other words, studying organization without studying culture, and without knowing how linguistic concepts and structure in a particular society or country operate, will lead to inappropriate sense-making and wrong meanings. Therefore, as an emic researcher, with exposure to the two worlds of English and Urdu languages, and through polyphonic interviewing in mixed language, I think I was able to translate effectively and to generate meaningful text.

In order to generate rich or thick description on what it means to be an organizational leader in the context of Pakistan's corporate culture, I have relied on multiple respondents from the same organization. My first preference was to interview CEO of the organization. In the case of non-availability of CEO I have sought to interview person next to the CEO. If *Seth* is not available in LLC I interviewed person in the position of Director; President is

not available in MNC I interviewed VP; and MD is not available I interviewed ED in PSC. Methodologically, this is in line with Barker's definition of leadership: 'The word leadership refers to any activities or relationships associated with persons occupying top positions in a hierarchy' (Barker 2001: 469-470)**.**

To find out about leaders, in action, different researchers have used various methods of collecting evidence. For example, Brewer & Tomlinson (1964), and Burns (1957) used self-recorded diaries made over 3-5 weeks by senior managers working in UK industries. Other researchers (Kay 1959, Williams 1959) used critical incident methods, and still others (Child & Ellis 1973, Copeman, Luijk & Hanika 1963) used self-administered questionnaires and executive time survey sheets and observation (Hales 1986). Mintzberg went further in using multiple methods of intensive observations (shadowing) of five American CEOs, diaries and analysis of managers' records, and reviews of other research. Silverman & Jones (1976) used tape-recorded informal interviews and observation, Stewart *et al* (1982) opted for open-ended interviews and observation of ninety eight managers in different functional areas. Nichols & Beynon (1977) used informal interviews and field observations (cited in Hales, 1986). In my own research I have conducted interviews, keeping them semi-structured and trying to maintain an informal tone even though they were tape-recorded. I also took field notes which facilitated my analysis. My preference was to visit in the field (respondent's office or location) so as to be a non-participant observer. Visiting and interviewing in an office for an hour or so gives a 'live', albeit partial, reflection of leaders in 'doing mode'. It also meant having access to the personal space and the aesthetics of leaders' work environments.

4.4 Research methods

4.4.1 Inductive strategy

One of the principle benefits of an inductive research strategy is that it is flexible and open enough to emergent and unanticipated forms of responses where theories are formulated 'at the end of, and on the basis of, the field work' (Wass & Wells 1994: 14). Hence it seems more relevant for capturing diverse and complex cultural forces at work. For anthropologists following Geertz's approach, 'the emerging nature of both the data themselves and the understanding of them require a processual orientation rather than a product perspective based upon cause and effect or stimulus and response'(Shankman *et al*: 273). Sackmann (1997) argued vehemently that an inductive approach was needed so that 'unknown groupings could emerge' and which 'provide greater insight into the complexity of culture' (quoted by Bryman & Bell 2003). Therefore this research is predominantly conducted with an inductive research strategy orientation, though in general

it can be presumed that induction and deduction work iteratively in the analytical process (Boje 2001, Tierney 1996). For instance, while asking questions, even if it is a semi-structured interview, is deductive in nature, giving more weight and space to respondents' answers and following up responses makes it into an inductive one. Therefore, in this study the socially-constructed utterances and text of the respondents were more my focus than whether questions were aptly or rightly answered or not. To make my inquiry inductive and grounded in data, I first listened repeatedly to the interviews, subsequently translating and transcribing the data to create text. I also did initial analysis to observe the emergence of research themes. Listening gave me provisional understanding of what was happening, while the transcribed data gave me a sense of direction and order to see patterns emerge. I then proceeded to thematic coding, and writing by collecting evidence and citations from the Organizational Studies literature. It is argued in section 4.4.4 below that thematic coding is an appropriate and powerful tool to provide an explanation of the subject under study, such as culture and leadership. For example, my decision to include a chapter on identity was taken after going through data analysis based on the thematic pattern that emerged from the data, as this seemed more representative of the social reality, especially when no direct questions had been asked of respondents on identity-related issues.

4.4.2 Use of personal influence

I experienced high resistance in the conduct of my field work. I initiated contact by writing introductory letters and making follow-up phone calls, but this did not generate a good and effective response. This was overcome through the use of social, political and personal influence (Buchanan & Bryman 2008). This is a common research practice amongst researchers and ethnographers to establish close contact with one or two key informants in order to get real and crucial information (Alvesson & Deetz 2000). For instance, I tried to make contact with relevant persons through the good offices of previous organizations in which I had worked, through my educational institution, and through relatives of mine who hold high government office. Hence, in my experience, getting initial entry to any organization for research purposes was a difficult task, but once I gained admission respondents were willing to be cooperative, accessible and even generous in giving more time than scheduled. Some people volunteered and some even referred me to their colleagues. Very few turned out to be non-cooperative once access was given. Only one person, in a MNC, objected to my recording of the interview, so I had to rely on hand-written interview notes but I can certainly rate the quality of sharing specific information and engaging in open discussion as being much higher than recorded interviews. In general, interviewees in LLCs were more generous with their time and willing to talk openly and upfront as against people in MNCs and PSCs. Respondents in PSCs were more

self-conscious and sensitive so as not to reveal information and tried to talk more in abstract terms.

4.4.3 Interviewing methodology

I have conducted interviews deliberately and consciously characterizing them with two key features: of 'ethnographic' and 'emic' interviewing. There are two diametrically opposed views regarding the conduct of interviews and the nature of questioning. On the one hand it is suggested that interviewers are not to give their opinions and are to evade direct questions, on the presumption that both interviewers and respondents are 'faceless and invisible' and that this will lead to generation of value-free data (Fontana & Frey 1994). This more often than not leads to pseudo-communication and a non-realistic picture of the phenomenon under study. On the other hand, now it is prescribed that researchers should follow an interpretive mode of framing questions, and come down to the level of the respondent and engage in real conversation with genuine give and take understanding.

> This makes the interview more honest, morally sound and reliable because it treats the respondent as an equal, allows him to express personal feelings, and therefore presents a more realistic picture than can be uncovered using traditional interview methods (Fontana & Frey 1994: 371).

As such I took the path explained in the quotation above. More specifically, in the following section, I explain the rationale for formulating my interviewing strategy, and what constitutes ethnographic and emic interviewing.

4.4.3.1 Ethnographic and emic interviewing

For Hammersley, 'realities that can come to be known by the researcher getting into direct contact with them, through participant observation or depth interviewing' (1992: 196). Hence, interviewing and participant observation are considered to be the two prime modes of ethnographic research (Fontana & Frey 1994, Alvesson & Deetz 2000). I have opted for interviewing for being effective in terms of data access and time management. Beside the use of open-ended (in-depth) and semi-structured interviewing in particular which provide a greater breadth of the subject under research than the other types I have relied on informal interviewing in the field which tends to mitigate the distinction between participant observations and interviewing (Fontana & Frey 1994: 365).

There are a number of reasons for using interviews as a research technique. First, it is context-sensitive. Given that my focus is to conduct organizational leadership research from an emic perspective, directed to capture context, interviewing is one of the most appropriate research instruments for describing and interpreting the views of individuals and their competing world views and differing cultural practices. Interview is my preferred research tool owing to its strength in language which shapes meaning and inter-

subjectivity. Interview techniques have the potential to capture diversity and heterogeneity, and hence tend to be more dependable and an authentic method for research into culture or cross-cultural issues. Fontana & Frey (1994) laid great emphasis on the need for understanding the language and culture of the respondents in order to conduct effective research interviews. This is why I have labelled this as *emic interviewing*, since for me it is the use of language and local-cultural specific vocabulary that is of particular importance for creating a sharedness of meaning in which both interviewer and respondent understand the contextual nature of the interview.

The qualitative research interview is considered a primary construction site of knowledge. Kvale (1996) in this respect identified the following attributes of research interviews which generate socially relevant knowledge. For him such a knowledge can be taken as conversation (local, practical and real knowledge through discourse); as narrative (something embodied in stories and localized practices); as language (linguistic aspect of reality – represented in the interpretation of, and access to, information and meanings given by the respondent); and as context (embodied in heterogeneity of socio-political and historical context) (Kvale 1996). I have taken care of these attributes during the conduct of interviews, and this is liable to make the interviews emic in nature. Similarly, it is Alvesson (2003) who categorized interviews into three main types of structure: neopositivism, romanticism and localism. The research claim of neopositivists is to pursue objective, universally valid knowledge, by means of avoiding bias and obtain value-neutral reporting. Romanticists, on the other hand, try to access and extract the deeper core of the individual by means of empathy and trust; while localists observe the interview as a tool for obtaining information in which identity construction and discursive fragments, as elicited from respondents, can be studied meaningfully (Hoedemaekers 2008: 23). Consequently, I have conducted interviews with an approach oscillating between romanticism and localism, as while interviewing at the operational level I have tried to follow the techniques of ethnoscience research specified by organization researchers. The main type of questions I asked were of the following nature: 'descriptive and contrast', 'locally' relevant and 'emicly' significant. I preferred to begin the interview, as advised by Spradley (Spradley 1980 quoted by Morey & Luthans 1984), with the use of native language so as to minimize etic influences and maximize emic value.

4.4.4 Analysis and writing approach: Thematic analysis

After transcribing the recorded material, I extracted different narratives linked to the data generated through field work by means of thematic analysis. For Boje (2001), thematic analysis germinates from both deductive and inductive approaches iteratively. I share similar experiences from this research. For instance, the role or issue of English language

as a source of performance and productivity, or in the construction of effective organizational leadership, was identified by one expatriate management consultant, in my preliminary round of interviews. Hence in my subsequently interviews and research I tried to incorporate this finding and revised my interpretations. Given the nature of formal education in Pakistan, a researcher like me always tends to come fully equipped with preconceived notions and concepts, which one might call 'theories at hand', and look for confirmation of their plausibility. However, once he moves into the field, research reveals that, in practice, something else is there. At this point he is left with two choices; either to ignore data which is not in line with his hypothetico-deductive findings or etic structures, or accept data inductively and be willing to revise his theoretical guesses. For instance, moving forward inductively, I explored further the language issue raised by the consultant-respondent. It was reiterated by the respondent from a LLC which I have called 'espousal of national identity' in section 7.3.2 of the discussion chapters. Moreover, I have inductively incorporated many other emic and local linguistic terms in this study which were unknown to me at the time of formulating the semi-structured questionnaire. Inclusion of vignettes in the discussion chapters reveal my urge to learn and move inductively from the field data.

Thematic analysis, or the search for themes in the data, serves a strategic role as part of the research design, alongside that of research questions, goals of research, conceptual framework and literature review (Saldana 2009). Of the different qualitative analytical techniques available, I preferred to use thematic analysis for the following reasons. First, in my view, it is a comprehensive way of conducting and subtle way of developing a holistic and coherent narrative. Data themeing technique provides us with analytic function too (Saldana 2009). Though scholars define the word 'theme' in different ways, in general 'theme is a phrase or sentence that defines what a unit of data is about and/or what it means (Saldana 2009:139). Another reason for my preference for thematic analysis is that, 'unlike content analysis, which begins with predefined categories, thematic analysis allows categories to emerge from data (Ezzy 2002 quoted by Saldana 2009: 140). However, for Boyatzis (1998), theme is something which 'at minimum organizes possible observations or at the maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon' (quoted by Saldana 2009: 139). Perhaps more comprehensively, theme is defined by DeSantis & Ugarriza as 'an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent [patterned] experience and its variant manifestation. As such a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole' (DeSantis & Ugarriza 2000 quoted by Saldana 2009: 139). A more particular question which comes to mind is 'what gets themed?' For instance, for Ryan & Bernard, the data can be assessed for attributes such as:

> ... repeating ideas, participant or indigenous terms, metaphors and analogies, transition or shifts in topics, similarities and differences in participants' expression, linguistic connectors ("because", "since", "then", etc.), theoretical issues suggested by the data (e.g., interpersonal relationship, social conflict and control), and even what is missing from data - not discussed in or present in - the data (Ryan & Bernard 2003 quoted by Saldana 2009: 143).

In line with the above I took special interest in looking for contradictions, competing discourses, and critical incidents in the interviews. My main concern was also to look for indigenous and emic terms and metaphors, similarities and differences in linguistic expression of the respondents in the three different domains of the corporate sector in Pakistan. Rhodes & Brown (2005) also tend to view research as a social practice that is meant to discover the relationship between the research methodology, the researcher, and their mutual effects. Therefore, my way of generating themes is indicative of my understanding of historical truth, cultural experiences and the writing experiences which ought to be considered partial interpretation rather than fuller exposition in authority (Clifford & Marcus 1986). Similarly, postcolonial writers like Prasad and Mir, while explaining critical hermeneutics, emphasize that research 'begins with a choice of texts and involves studying the actual language and themes of a text, or texts, according to any textual method that appeals to the researcher, for e.g. thematic analysis and metaphor analysis' (Prasad & Mir 2002: 92). Hence, it is with these ontological predilections that I have codified the data and organized only the emergent themes which were identified, marked up and written in the first round of the writing and analysis process. In the second stage, efforts were directed to developing coherence with the available theoretical justifications and citation of literature. Themes identified from the data tend to fit in with my selection of narratives at a broader level meant to study culture and leadership at a holistic level. For instance, both narratives, 'identity' and 'politics', are considered to be a collective and holistic. For instance, Klenke (2007) considers 'identity' as a single explanatory concept on which leadership rests. Similarly, for Sievers *et al* (2006) the notions of power politics impacts equally on both organizations and society at large, and both for-profit and non-profit organizations, from small community-based organizations to global corporations, are deeply affected by world events external to the organization, and these also impinge on micro-processes internal to the organizations, hence having profound implications for leaders and executives.

At this juncture it is appropriate for me to spell out my understanding of the relationship between themes and narratives. In this study I consider *theme* as a first order construct based on primary data or text, while *narrative* forms a second order construct derived from thematic analysis. Moving a step further this is an attempt to theorize and seek connections between the emerging narratives like identity, politics and leadership practices. The

unifying narrative identified here is *geo-cultural* which should by no means be considered akin to grand or meta-narrative, but rather to depict local construction and culture-specific orientation of multiple narratives. In this way, the term *geo-cultural* signifies the locality or geographical space, holds multiple epistemic flows simultaneously, as has been identified in section 3.3, and is the receptacle of local leadership practices. It thereby tends to serve as the basis of social and political identities. Moreover, micro-sociological processes and practices also have a propensity to germinate from a geographical locale. Geographical space is the nexus of individual, familial, national and organizational identities, the centre of attracting politics and economic activities at multiple levels, local national or organizational. Similarly, cultural attributes are primordially linked with local-geographical construction of social practices. For Appadurai (1996), 'locality must be taken positively as a dominant construction of cultural being or identity, for an individual or a group otherwise will be treated residually or negatively' (cited in Silverstein 1998: 403). Similarly, in the words of Silverstein, 'indeed, "locality" becomes for a group of people an assumed property of self-ascriptions of having a particular "culture"' (Silverstein 1998: 403). Therefore, the term *geo-cultural* is used to describe the significance of local-ethnic production of human organizing processes, and a *geo-cultural* narrative holds together emic, epistemic and practice based local ontologies, in a coherent manner.

4.5 Ethical considerations

I have taken account of research ethics in this study in a number of ways. The first consideration is the delicate nature of the subject matter and the need to ensure interviews are conducted in a confidential manner, and presented in an anonymous way. Therefore, participant respondents were informed clearly of the research objectives and my own subjectivity. They were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, not only with respect to individual identity, but also of that of their organization. Therefore, once they were informed of the nature of the research and I believe they understood the project, consent prior to participation was obtained whereby leaders and subordinates agreed to corroborate data on each other. During the conduct of interviews I engaged respondents in a candid and open mode of discussion. Secondly, it needs to be ensured that interviewees feel comfortable answering the questions, and that any answers they give can be handled delicately. At times I found my personal political views to be diametrically opposed to those of the interviewee but did not allow this to impinge upon the interview process. Moreover, during the conduct of research I was conscious in particular of four types of ethical concern which have been indicated by Bryman & Bell (2003): 'whether harm comes to participants; informed consent; invasion of privacy; and deception'. All such

factors were taken care of to the best of my ability in the research design and conduct of field work.

4.6 Limitations

In general, research tends to operate with two very broad constraints: time and space. Entering the field means that research is driven by these and other emergent practical considerations. Thomas Kuhn (1970) observed that empirical data derived from the popular paradigm are bound temporally and spatially, and are subject to decay as new theories and methodologies challenge the validity and utility of the prevailing paradigm. Nonetheless, here I will explain some of the more obvious limitations that resulted from my empirical field work.

Perhaps the first and foremost limitation is related to the nature of research and the role and identity of the researcher which is inalienably nested in the various stages of the research process. Though there is no ideal type configuration of ontology, epistemology and methods, researchers try to impose their order of things on the research framework as the way of fixing reality; what is characterized by Lévi-Strauss as 'doing things with whatever is at hand' (1966: 17). Similarly Alvesson & Deetz (2000) referred to the same fallacy in the conduct of leadership research, albeit expressed differently:

> Leadership is not likely to be standardized, even if a particular definition may appear to dominate, given the variety of existent 'real phenomenon' that leadership may address, the idiosyncrasies of all the researchers (in particular if they are not all Euro-Americans), and the ambiguities of language, ways of thinking and doing research (Alvesson & Deetz 2000: 54).

The above quotation carries considerable relevance when the research output is delivered in the English language while the researcher and the researched (respondents) are non-English. In practice, no matter how effective both researcher and respondents are, competency in English is still limited, and variations in understanding and fluency lead to the communication lag. Moreover, interviews tend to take place in varying social interaction contexts. This is confirmed by Converse & Schuman (1974) as for them, 'there is no single interview style that fits every occasion or all respondents' (quoted by Fontana & Frey 1994: 364). Hence it is because of all these considerations I am inclined to consider the process of research as the emergent one.

Gaining access to interviewees was perhaps the most frustrating and alienating process in the field research, especially getting hold of top level leadership both at MNCs and PSCs. This needs a lot of patience and perseverance on the part of the researcher to stay committed to the research process. Some organizations which were originally targeted backed out for reasons unknown to me. This tempted me to think of alternative research

sites and respondents; for example, talking to HR practitioners and consultants, management trainers and business educationists to gain information about the three corporate segments included in my research design. With persistence, I overcame this problem and eventually secured a sufficient number of respondents to make my analysis and findings meaningful.

I engaged interviewees personally and deeply with interview process. The way they answered questions seemed to be the genuine reflection as leaders. However, in some cases I felt answers were more in line with textbook or rhetoric response. Human subjectivity is a crucially important dimension of the social constructionist approach I adopted. I learned to assess the relative veracity of responses by paying attention to discursive tone and the body language of respondents. Secondly, judgments concerning relative veracity can be made by listening to interview recordings multiple times - first listening in the evening following an interview or a day after, and then listening again to form different impressions and derive new meanings. This also highlights certain frustrations. For instance, listening at the time of transcribing data more systemically I found myself regretting why I never asked such and such a question as a follow up to a given response.

Similarly, language is another significant issue having direct bearing on my epistemology and the presentation of my research findings. I have conducted interviews in a flexible way giving the option to respondents to use whatever language they preferred to express themselves, be it English, Urdu or a mix of both languages. Some respondents very proudly used regional languages or phrases to articulate themselves while others felt shy of it. Equally this was a challenge for me to describe and narrate effectively for an English audience. Another related problem emerged when respondents tried to explain things formally in English language and through the use of etic concepts and language which distanced them from their local experience and the subjects which were of most interest and relevance to my research. The issues I have faced here are more in line with what has been observed by Alvesson & Deetz:

> Instead of language being capable of mirroring or fixing part of social reality, it works through providing a way of engaging phenomenon or illuminating phenomenon in a particular way. Language operates through how the author and reader construct meaning based on the local context, on how discursive logic forms associations, how one writes and reads between the lines, and through appealing to a prestructured understanding associated with culture and tradition (Alvesson & Deetz 2000: 54).

Therefore it is through the understanding of the complex and dynamic interaction of multiple languages – local and foreign, at the workplace or in the locality – that leadership practices can be contextualized and made sense of. Nonetheless, associated with the issue of language is the issue of translation or translatability and equivalence of concepts and

vocabulary. Loss of meaning is unavoidable no matter how perfectly one language is translated or compared with another.

4.7 Conclusion

I argue in this study that organization research is cultural research, and for cultural research one has to remain sensitive to the operational issues of methodology as it is important for the researcher to capture cultural context. Hence, in this chapter I have narrated the operational aspect of research methodology I have undertaken. This chapter states how deployment of actual methods facilitated me to achieve the overall objectives of the study. This was done in number of ways. First is the unique contribution of research design, which in my understanding is utilized for the first time within the context of emerging economies, for generating data on local organizations (LLCs) in comparison with modern-western organizations (MNCs and PSCs). Secondly, a total of 87 interviews were held to generate textual data to observe leadership and culture in the three types of organizations identified above as A, B and C, in section 4.2.1. Methodologically, the study remained sensitive to following inductive research strategy through the use of a semi-structured questionnaire, pursuing ethnographic interviewing and, significantly, using emic and cultural specific linguistic terms to understand leadership and culture in modern-western and local organizations in Pakistan. Thematic analyses were done to observe the emergence of pattern amongst leadership in the cultural context of the three types of organization. The research addressed and accommodated research ethics issues especially in generating data with informed consent and maintaining anonymity and confidentiality. Finally, this research, like all other is also governed by temporal, spatial and methodological limitations explained above in detail. However, despite these limitations, I have endeavoured in this chapter to contribute to developing methodology for the investigation of local-cultural and indigenous knowledge in an Organization Studies context.

Having discussed my research design and methodology I now turn to an analysis of findings in the following three chapters. Themes discussed are: leadership practices, politics and identity in organizations in Pakistan.

Chapter 5 - Leadership Practices

It is time for indigenous development, of countries and leaders alike.

[Mintzberg 2007: 5]

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss emerging themes related to leadership practices observed amongst the corporate sector organizations of Pakistan. Practices falling within the two fundamental constituent elements of leadership, namely, 'social' and 'organizational' will be discussed and analyzed by comparing and contrasting organizational leadership in three different types of organization. Though there appear to be many interesting sub-themes in the data, owing to time and space constraints I have limited my deliberations to the following three more prominent aspects of leadership: structural informality, personalismo and *geo-cultural* orientations. As has been discussed earlier in chapter 2, my data also leads me to argue that leaders' practices in organization seems to represent a combination of two perpetual streams of values, dialectically opposed to each other: social and organizational. What constitutes social can be considered as the combination of informal, personal, political and cultural as against organizational values that emanate from hierarchy, structure and system (legal-bureaucratic framework) dynamics. For instance, I observed that the organizational flow of values seems to stay dominant in the construction of leadership in MNCs in contrast to LLCs which gravitate more towards social flows. Nonetheless, being informal and personal, this stream of values cannot just be clearly segregated from the social stream which is invariably embedded there in a complex blend. Here we now focus in turn on these three emerging trends.

5.2 Structural informality

5.2.1 Practices in Multinational Corporations

A key feature of work organizations, I contend here, is the gap between formal and informal organizations. The gap becomes more pronounced in the case of large organizations and especially multinationals. Such organizations are primordially driven by concerns to impose control through the formal means of legally driven instruments and systems. Hence leadership in modern organization is structurally situated in organizational legality, and members of organizations are trained to view organizational leadership through this prism in terms of permissible and non-permissible, hierarchical and procedural constraints. For instance, one of the senior most executives, who is a trained Chartered Accountant by profession and had worked for a long time in the leading oil-based MNC and now working with a PSC, compares leadership and work values in the two types of organizations as follows:

> The company (Oxee) was more structured like all foreign companies where policies, procedures and compliance are very important. It helps you as it keeps in certain boundaries and areas defined if you want to do something, beyond that boundary if you get an exception you do it, and that exception is documented. But overall you have to stay within certain boundaries (EDF-PSC).

Therefore what we observe is that leadership operates within the formalized boundary parameters, and exceptions are seldom allowed, and if anyone is courageous enough to take an initiative, the predominant tendency is to make it a formalized part of the organizing system. Hence individual and situational flexibility by default is seldom permitted, and organization tends to become more of a static and mechanistic type. In the words of a regional sales manager of the leading FMCG-based MNC, when comparing his own organization with LLCs:

> Our inefficiency or where we are beaten up is what you can call us (UPL) as huge sea-ship or titanic, and in order to move titanic we have to move many [sic: sub] systems. It is the centralized system which makes us a bit inefficient. While they (*Seth* or LLCs) have a big advantage of not being centralised, and the decision maker is not that far away from you (its member). If you want to do something you can just directly pick the phone up and ask about any issue you are facing… while in UPL you have to go through proper channel, need some approvals and procedures to follow. These things do restrain us (DIR-MNC).

What one can observe from the above is, because the nature of organization and organizing varies in MNCs, it places a different set of requirements and expectation on its leadership, that is, to operate within highly constrained boundary conditions. Such a type of working is better explained by Espedal, in terms of manoeuvring space for leadership. For him leadership has less space for manoeuvring where rights and duties are excessively codified and internalized, and organizations are depicted as communities of rule-followers, consequently making manoeuvring space for top leadership ambiguous (2009: 204). For Espedal, 'manoeuvring space is not something objective and formal in organization' (2009: 205) and it can also be viewed as an arena where leadership has to work 'for a mandate for itself and where the leadership has elbowroom, discretional power and legitimacy to make decisions' (2009: 197). The point at issue is that it depends on the organizational leader to interpret, assess and carve out his or her own manoeuvring space. The manoeuvring space exists on the pretext of the leader being social and informal within the boundary parameters of formal organization.

Similarly, the presence of informality can also be evidenced by looking at the prevailing concept of job amongst senior executives at leadership levels. For example, AJK who served a British MNC for almost 20 years, and is now heading an American MNC as CEO says,

> It is much more than formal description, and more you get into the organization the wider that gets. Job is not what it is written on the piece of paper through job

description (JD). Though JD is not that irrelevant but it is only a partial thing. My job does not end here when I leave in the evening, it is 24-7, or round the clock, and it has to be. And as a leader you are not just judged for purely numbers you deliver, it is how you conduct yourself, interact with people, with government and stakeholders, and that does not happen only in office time (CEO-A-MNC).

In the above excerpt we witness the attrition of formal interpretations of job and job description. This has also been the case as admitted by the regional sales manager (RSM) of the leading FMCG organization:

Yes it is 24/7, if I talk from sales perspective; but I just cannot be set free from my responsibilities after 5.00 pm and for that matter anyone else… We do say, give time to your family, and in this regard our culture is quite open but that divide of 9-5 office and 5-9 family time is just not possible to be there (DIR-PSC).

What is revealed in the two quotations cited above is that the type of formalization enacted in MNCs is structurally misplaced and inadequate to capture fully the informal and social nature of leadership in organizations. Excessive focus on formalization simply addresses itself to a partial view of organizational leadership. The formalized component is fallaciously perceived as all-inclusive in the organization, as whatever is said or done by the leaders in the organization is viewed and interpreted formally and legally (through its predominant traditional reliance on written communication including, now, e-mails). Even though organizations are now automated, and IT-based systems are faster and more dynamic than traditional paper-based organization, yet they still connote and promote a rigid and strict pattern of communication. British MNCs tend to install and institutionalize a tight framework of rules and regulations for its leadership to learn and then implement in subsidiaries. This has been confirmed by Saka-Helmhout's account of how organizational learning takes place in British MNCs. For her, leadership in British MNCs 'chooses to standardize and formalize rules, procedures and policies to coordinate and control activities' (Saka-Helmhout 2009: 272).

5.2.2 Practices in Public Sector Corporations

In PSCs, at the practical level, one finds the concept of job description has greater redundancy or less relevance. In other words, the phenomenon of what can be identified as 'boundary-less organizing' is somewhat more prevalent than was cited in the case of MNCs. For instance, the leader on the upper middle tier of one organization says:

In any organization there are always tasks and activities (un-specified) going on, and your boss or head wants to pick up people and task and say you do it. I have been getting chances to lead a team of 4-5 people, of any sort, that are not related to my area, even then I used to go and work. For instance, previously I was working with one section banking and cash, and if there is any need or problem in other section, he used to call me and ask me for suggestion and remedies, so I keep flexibility with job (SMG- PSC).

One can witness greater job flexibility in the above citation. This can also be interpreted as leaders having considerable discretion over job interpretation and social leverage over followers and subordinates. This kind of flexibility in jobs or organizational role leads to a proliferation of skills in a cross-functional manner, which in turn leads to a type of holistic understanding of both job and organization. This is in line with what is identified by Van Dyne *et al* (1995) as extra-role behaviour (quoted by Fischer & Smith 2006). The extra-role behaviours can manifest in two different forms: passive, in following rules and in compliance and obedience mode with formal in-role behaviour, and more proactive aspects of behaviour in personal initiative and voice (Fischer & Smith 2006).

In the same way, MSS questioned the relevance and significance of formalization and strength of leadership in his organization:

> Rules and books have their own significance but on many occasions and situations books remain silent. What I mean is that such things are not covered by rules and procedures so the point is do not stick yourself to particular rules while you think it is in the best interests of the company. Nobody else can and will realize this except you, as you are the only one, who is involved in assessing that situation. Only he knows, the one who is involved in the situation that if he does it will be in the best interest of the company, and nobody else (SMG-PSC).

This means organizational life is so dynamic that leaders in Pakistan PSCs most of the time are faced with a critical choice, either to follow rules and procedure or to exercise their personal discretion, judgement and interpretation on organization matters. The proposition put forth here by the respondent is that it is the informal or personal basis of leadership in organization which is crucial in PSC type organizations. In the excerpt above leadership sounds like something 'intrinsic to the self' (Shaw 2010: 91) or it can be construed as a 'self-expressive act' as suggested by Shamir & Eilam (Shamir & Eilam 2005 cited in Shaw 2010: 91).

5.2.3 Practices in Large Local Corporations

Large local organizations in Pakistan are often family-based. These organizations are to a large extent driven by informal ways of organizing and leadership, hence initiative, inspiration, personal ways of acting and improvisation are much more frequent than is found in PSCs and MNCs. The peculiarly informal processes of organization and leadership are further illustrated in the following scenario drawn from my interview data. For instance, let us now see how relevant the concept of job or job description to leaders in LLCs. MAH, Vice President, Engineering and Utilities, in one of the most successful textile groups which is bench-marked by the industry, and known for its consistent performance since the 1960s, and considered as a state of the art and modern organization

producing 35,000 units of woven apparel per day for its European and American customers, says:

> No we do not tend to follow JD very tightly. Here for instance, I am doing one job, and within that there are three sub categories, but I / we never say here that this is not my or our job. Let me give you my own example. Once I was asked to do agriculture related job. One person came from outside and we have to coordinate with him – like for sowing, harvesting, and so on, and *Alhamdolillah* [Thanks God] me and my colleagues in Engineering department have done that by going beyond our jobs. There is no option for refusing job as it does not look nice. Similarly once I was asked for the design and development of a golf course. I did it despite I have never passed through near golf course in my life (GMM-LLC).

Therefore one can say that the nature of the job tends to become broader, more diffuse and all-inclusive for senior executives in higher managerial and leadership positions. Nonetheless what is more interesting is that people on lower rungs of organizations are also expected to interpret their jobs in the same way. The following quotation confirms this tendency:

> We the engineers are concerned with team building, and basically we have to manage teams and tackle its members – how to have job execution, how to do job sorting, who has got what calibre, and to allocate him what type of job, time frame and future planning. For instance, if there are 08 jobs within Utility Engineering departments like machine compression, piping, instrumentation, etc., and we have 08 people to decide who is to do what. For that, most people are multifunctional; not specified, and neither any one wants to retain that way in our industry as they are trained to have multiple skills. This is what happen in Pakistani industry and I do not know what happens abroad. For instance, if we have to do the alignment of a pump and if someone today or for some time is placed there, next time he will be rotated to do certain other functional skills. This is, for if someone is absent or leaves abruptly others are available to do the job. So people are cross trained for 08 jobs I listed within utilities department (GMM-LLC).

The extract above significantly illustrates the fluid and emergent nature of jobs across the hierarchy, found equally in higher and lower echelons of organizations in local industry. This turns out to be a trend against the typical understanding that job descriptions are quite tightly interpreted for the lower echelons of an organization. This even happens in an engineering department where jobs are fairly specialized, mechanized and quantified. Hence, practically, jobs tend to become more diffuse and holistic in LLCs than in MNCs and PSCs.

By the same token, in another leading textile-based organization, one can witness the indigenous way of job description in practice, and at work. For KAN, a third generation leader:

> Initially we have people here on the basis of well-defined job. Subsequently based on individual's performance and looking step ahead, from promotion aspect, is when his job profile starts changing. For instance, a person who was hired for sales with defined job of giving feed back to customer, and one fine day I will say if you have

done, go and target these three customers. So his job description starts changing suddenly, and then a dilemma stage for that person comes in when he says what his job is? I am doing this and that? Then he comes and has discussion with me for whatever is going on. Then he is told that you are being evaluated for your promotion and at times people were unable to do higher level job (required job) and were sent back to original position. And if he is able to do he is moved ahead. And when he moves step ahead his scope increases, and job description also changes, may be now you need more people under him so as to get things done from them (DIR-LLC).

It is obvious that in the local process, understanding and interpretation of job descriptions are more dynamic, agile and informal, containing elements of job specification, job evaluation and job role in a holistic way. It is a living process and considered highly fluid in LLCs, which in turn clearly reveals how static, limiting and redundant MNCs' style of formal job description is. This is grounded in the personal assessment of a leader, and rests on the foundation of experiential and learning competencies of his or her followers, instead of the 'tick mark' or time-based assumptions of job description, evaluation and promotion in MNCs and PSCs. There it comes within the personal competency of a leader to define the extent or boundaries of job formality in organization. The presence of structural informality generates a kind of boundary-less organization environment at LLCs. The idea of boundary-less organizations is advocated in order to eliminate vertical and horizontal boundaries within organization, and do away with chain of command and span of control, and is meant to promote a better team work culture (Robbins 1998: 495).

5.3 *Personalismo*

The term *personalismo* is used to explain the 'Latin American political habit of deference to and dependence upon personal authority' (Dunner 1964: 407); the tendency to interpret and react to everything in terms of personal considerations, instead of organizational, bureaucratic and a normative institutional frame of working and work ethics[12]. Similarly political sociologists and political scientists also come to agree in identifying 'personalized contact' (Verba, Nie & Kim 1971 quoted by Farrell & Petersen 1982: 406) as the most basic human political act. This tendency is observed to be more pronounced amongst leadership at LLCs but also found to cross over to leaders in MNCs and PSCs.

5.3.1 Practices in Multinational Corporations

The second aspect of leadership in modern organization and organizing in MNC rests on the assumption that a systemic (i.e. of control, communicating, monitoring, evaluation and objective setting, etc.) and presumed rational way of functioning is preferred over an

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[12] According to Marvin H. Alisky, a contributor to the Dictionary of Political Science, *personalismo* dates back to four centuries of Spanish colonial rule in the Americas which concentrated governmental, economic, and religious powers in a handful of officials (Dunner 1964).

idiosyncratic, personalized and individualized manner of work and performance. For instance, the head of sales for the second most populous region in Pakistan, on the efficacy of its organization says:

> There are procedures because of which we are inefficient, and as the work is much spread, and it just cannot be done without procedures. It is the amount of spread for which they have to make procedures. Now it depends how quick you are in running through that procedure [sic: personalising aspect] while local companies are more effective and efficient because of its fast and personalized decision making (DIR-MNC).

The sole focus here is that it is the personal element of an individual leader as to how he runs through the complex systems of procedures, authority jurisdictions and the domains of job description. Therefore, the litmus test for leaders in organization is their dexterity to fight or circumvent systemic constraints within the organization. Similarly there is another interesting narrative told by a management consultant on how LG (an LLC with Asian brand) replaced an MNC like Phillips in consumer electronics:

> Normally what these MNCs have are sales & marketing managers with high perks (cars & other benefits) and salaries for those qualified from IBA and LUMS13 having Western attire and outlook (suits and ties) belonging to upper middle class in a *Babu-sahib* style or profile who are least connected with people at ground level (MAB-CON).

In the above excerpt MAB, who served quite some time with a management consulting firm, is giving a critical explanation of how local companies have replaced MNCs. For him it is primarily because of people with high-flying Western managerial education from prestigious institutions, either locally or abroad, who are trained and have adopted imported vernacular and dress codes, and are at top-notch leadership positions in MNCs. Within the context of corporate Pakistan it is IBA at Karachi and LUMS at Lahore who provide the supply line of modern-western class managerial education. Graduates of these types of institution exhibit behaviour which to MAB can be identified as *Babu-sahib* style of management. Here the discourse strongly suggests that such leaders are interested in retaining high office jobs (with furnished and air-conditioned environment) and who prefer staying closer to paperwork rather than practical dynamics of the field. My own observation from the field substantiates this evidence as eventually what happens is what we see now in MNCs like UPL, which is that people with an ordinary and nominal educational background are hired for field jobs like sales, etc., while the criteria are quite

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[13] Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Karachi established in 1955, and Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) Lahore in 1990, are considered the two most modern and elite business schools in Pakistan from where MNCs recruit and select their management trainees and corporate leaders. IBA is in the public sector while LUMS is a private sector university. The case of LUMS is more interesting in that it was established by local industrialists with the idea of generating leaders and managers for their local industry but eventually directed to cater demands of MNCs.

different for hiring management trainees meant for providing leadership in the upper echelons of organizations.

The phenomenon of *Babu-sahib* is very pervasive in the culture of organizing and leadership, and is found equally in India and Bangladesh. At times the word is used for showing an expression of appreciation and admiration, but more valid meanings are associated with negative (ironical and satirical) connotations showing resistance to the ruling elite or Anglo-class. Etiologically, the origin of the word *Babu-sahib* is traced back to the colonization era, when English people needed local people for generating support for their administration. Therefore, the initial breed of civil servants who used to work at the lower echelons of public service, following English dress codes, adapting their language and following the ideas and aesthetics of the colonizers', were depicted as *Babu-sahib* with mixed feelings: at times with appreciation and conscious admiration, while more often indicating critique, satire and resistance. Ashish Nandi, political sociologist, described this class as 'the anglicized, city-bred, effeminate babus' (Nandi 1970: 59). There is a plethora of literature in Urdu literary writers, both in India and Pakistan, expounding on this theme. Quratul-ain Haider (1995), Qudratullah Shahab (2005), Karishan Chanddar (2003) and others have illustrated effectively the phenomenon and life style, pattern of thinking and dilemmas of this Babu class. This takes us to realize that colonization is still a vivid theme in the mindset, cognition and behaviour pattern of the leaders and the corporate organizing life in Pakistan.

5.3.2 Practices in Public Sector Corporations

In PSC type organizations one can find greater evidence of the personalizing element in its leadership, compared with MNCs. For instance, upon being introduced to the intent of this research, one respondent reworded and redefined the research subject as:

> Basically what you are looking at is how executives operate in Pakistani industry, what their pitfall and success stories in managing are, and what happened here in PCO, and how I was able to achieve goals to reach the position of CEO (MD-PSC).

This response in itself demonstrates the personalization of information by the leader of an organization with a large assets base worth US$1.8 billion. This is explicitly recognized by him as he categorically reiterated his relationship-building and communication strategy for dealing with his followers:

> A few things are important for me as leader; one should be a good listener; and I hear them out. Second, never ever insult your subordinate outright in a gathering or in a meeting. If you want to say something nasty, call him in the room, and remove his trouser, that is between him and you. I mean first of all trust starts and comfort begins, you are willing to hear them out; not only professionally but personally as they got personal issues. I mean you cannot get yourself totally blind and say this is

> your personal issue and is related to your household, and you just talk to me on things related to organization. PCO has got a family type of relationship (MD-PSC).

The above quotation eloquently describes a number of dimensions for organizational leadership in the PSC context. First, it is the indivisibility of personal and professional or organizational lives, which means that social and organization streams of leadership cannot be segregated in practice. Rather it is the personal-social aspects of leadership which are predominant in the working and behaviour of a successful leader. In other words, professional role or job construct is something embedded in the personal. This is in some contrast to the typical modern-western concept of organizing and organizational leadership, where it is admitted that such an 'elision of the personal has strategic exclusionary effects' (Tourish & Pinnington, 2002: 91) This has also been realized by Acker (1990) for whom 'eliding the personal from the definition of a job or role constructs an ideal occupant who has no personal responsibilities to (potentially) contaminate their commitment to the job' (quoted by Tourish & Pinnington, 2002: 91). Hence, the establishment of trust between a leader and his or her follower is based on one-to-one and personal rapprochement, as happens in PSCs, rather than on generalised transactions with masses of followers (even in a large organization) in a unitary and standardised bureaucratic manner. Similarly, from the followers' perspective, dealing with leaders in organizations needs immense patience as stated by the respondent here:

> I worked with a difficult boss and from whom I got three promotions in four years. He was difficult in a way that he used to start with 'no' first whatever you talk to him, that is, his first reaction would be 'no'. This was strange because you have to bring him down first by convincing, showing a lot of patience, may not be on the same day, the other day or it may not be the other day, thereafter. But that again becomes a habit of patience to deal with, so that his ego should not hurt (MD-PSC).

The above extract reflects that managing people above oneself in the hierarchy is a matter of patience, tolerance and persistence in one's claim and interpretation of events within the organization. Such attributes are more personal, social or cultural than organizational. Secondly, the path of leadership development in an organization is more about managing the ego of your superiors, which again is more of a social attribute. Hence, social cognition and skills are increasingly now considered part of leadership skills within the context of an organization under terms like social intelligence, emotional intelligence, ego resiliency, self-monitoring and practical intelligence (Ferris *et al.* 2000).

To some extent, this personalizing aspect seems too strong in the development of leadership, and leaders from an older generation are quite critical of contemporary modern managerial education. For instance, a leader from one of the top positions who gave me an interview as proxy to the CEO, when talking about on-going change and restructuring in the organization, and the consequent induction of fresh MBAs, said:

> How can you compare two persons with 12 and 3 years of experience? When we were Divisional Managers, we used to enter Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner's14 office in a bold and confident way. Who does not know me in the city even after I have left that place for about 15 years; just ask there whether you know Mr. SEA, and people do remember me because it was a personality carrying projection. It was a demonstration; like I will have some impression and you will leave a different one but that impression lasts which collectively comes out of someone. Now the situation is, despite too far short on experience, people were made GMs, and if you ask me I would not make them even a manager (GMM-PSC).

What is obvious from the above is that a leader's personal, practical and experiential (field-based) knowledge is valued as a source of strength in the development and realisation of leadership potential, more than the formal educational component of leadership development which is considered lacking in depth and of cosmetic nature.

'Down the line' leadership

The occurrence of organizational leadership as a personalized phenomenon is evident in what is described as 'down the line' leadership. For instance, according to one respondent,

> Leadership which I learned from one of my former head who used to take his team along, used to set direction, and suggest us to work on that direction, and then used to follow up by going down the line, and observe by staying involved. Going at implementation level and to see what is happening there, minutely, and then you develop an ownership. For instance, in a team of 7-8 people there are 1-2 will always be performing and 4-5 are not doing well, then it is responsibility of the leader to take all along (SMG-PSC).

> I think strong leadership is very important for organization to have, and by strong leadership I mean not only to follow rules, regulations and policies but to know what is happening on ground and at real level because when you are actually working many things appear instantly for which you have to take decision accordingly, and such decisions only a leader can take (SMG-PSC).

The two quotations above succinctly describe how leadership in the context of a PSC means minute and detailed involvement at the implementation level, and to know and control what is happening on the ground. Though the benefit stated above is that this creates ownership, trust and motivation among employees at a lower level, in actual fact it may prove to be counterproductive, causing alienation because of tight control, lack of trust and excessive guidance. Of the three activities and roles of leaders – operational planning and action, external monitoring and integrating, and direction-giving (as identified by Garrat (1987), cited in Coopey (1997)), leaders here are found to be more involved in monitoring and controlling day-to-day operations. Hence leaders in PSCs tend to develop competencies in micro-sociological processes that are in monitoring, managing and knowing things at ground or operational level. This is quite in contrast with leaders in

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14 In Pakistan, public offices in general, and the offices of Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner in particular, have been considered symbols of the utmost prestige, power and authority since colonial times, and people feel pride in having access to, affinity with and influence in such offices.

LLCs, who delegate more to professional managers, and are content with a direction-giving role.

A second aspect which comes out is managing people of diverse and varied competency and calibre, and how taking them all on the same boat is the responsibility, and one of the skills, of a leader:

> The leader is the one who takes along (with him) and ensures fair distribution of tasks, and on equity basis to all. Definitely some would be efficient, some would be dull and medium, and a true leader will take all of them along (SMG-PSC).

Therefore living with an imperfect world and making adjustments in the light of emergent issues and then seeking and setting the right direction for an organization and the people working therein, is the prime responsibility of leadership.

5.3.3 Practices in Large Local Corporations

In response to my question on the nature of politics in MTM, the Director of Finance, who was responsible for designing the financial management system, control policies and procedures, MIS reports and decisional appraisals across the organization said:

> The nature of politics is different here as it is the decision of one family member which prevails. You have to go by and develop things according to wish of your boss or director. You have to adopt or mould your mind, thinking and ways to proceed or action according to wishes of directors even if you stand contrary to it because end-looser or gainer is management [Owner-leader] therefore their wishes, planning and strategies are considered superior by default (GMF-LLC).

Therefore it is apparent that leadership development is more pronounced as a personality development approach in LLCs, where the managerial system and people in top managerial posts are subservient to the personalized leadership style of a *Seth*.

The same is confirmed and realized by leaders from competing organizations in the MNC segment of the same industry. When I asked one of the senior leaders in a MNC about *Seth* as a leadership entity, and whether *Seth* has any distinct efficiency pocket, he responded:

> Perhaps the most distinct advantage of *Seth* over large MNCs like us is that he does not follow 10 steps of decision making. He is very quick to respond, and his reaction time to take decision is very short. So what he does is just pick up phone and give instructions, which means simplicity in its operations. Another is that his operating margins are quite low as against large MNCs with high cost overheads, though margins are different for different. Therefore, what we see is that GP margins are not an issue for *Seth* (RSM-MNC).

It is equally important to note that such a personalized style of leadership (*Seth* or *Mian Sahib*) is under heavy criticism by those of its incumbents who are more indoctrinated by modern managerial education. The new generation of leaders in LLCs tend to define this as a lack of system, for example:

In the past the concept was everything will be done by *Mian Sahib*. Now today *Mian Sahib* does not have this much time to do each and every thing on software. So each [manager] having authority will be considered responsible then. And this is to bring in the cycle of cultural change. My emphasis is building on system so whenever people come here with problem I will say first we study the system where the loophole is or problem coming from. We close it up and then try to find solutions… (DIR-LLC).

At the same time KAN, who intends to zealously transform his organization into a state of the art and modern organization, says:

Strengths in our culture are loyalty and job security; why should I fire someone who has worked with me for 20 years. I believe cultural change is coming. Those who won't change will be wiped out. However our organization is quite productive while pulling along with old system (DIR-LLC).

The two quotations above describe the paradox in the practices of a third generation leader in one of the leading growth-driven textile groups. On the one hand, under the influence of modern business education, he is driven by an enthusiasm to steer the organization to be modern, systemic and formalized along the lines of MNCs, while on the other hand, his practice is to retain people who are loyal and into old ways of doing things. This is further elaborated in the following vignette:

Vignette 1: The desire for developing systems or being modern

When I joined people were coming in *shalwar-qameez* (local dress) so I regulated that and suggested we all should wear pent shirt except for *sabaz pagri* (green turban - considered religious ideologue). Initially for one and a half year I sat with staff and at that time I was a student (of MBA) as well. My main focus at that time was to maintain discipline and order; of tables, outlook and amongst people. I renovated the whole office with a modern corporate outlook. In my presence people were behaving decently while receiving phone calls and their voices staying normal and low but in my absence certainly it was noisy and abrupt as my surprise visits revealed this…

When I started people used to say about me you have made it American or European organization. We were in Pakistan; suppliers or buyers or the way contract had been written or should be implemented likewise, while we were doing business here for ages. That is the resistance line… Now, partially I have lowered down my expectation and partially they have moved up. I have turned lenient in the sense now I do not deal directly with them rather let my staff deal. I do not have to deal with it. My job is to take care of the system (DIR-LLC).

The vignette illustrates an interesting phenomenon happening in the work practices of large local organizations and depicts the ontological predilections of third generation leaders. Here, a number of things become obvious. First, local cultural outfits are not considered to create a serious impression of performance and a productive way of doing business. Leaders tend to impose modernization on the local organization because creating the impression of being modern is, it seems, far more important than satisfying people, whether customers or managers. Immense importance is given to establishing a modern corporate structure and outlook, in order to give the impression of being state of the art.

Similarly, local cultural business practices which were considered ambiguous, tolerance-prone and of emergent nature, were condemned and shunned in favour of a black and white, tight contractual interpretation. Nonetheless, new leaders coming into the business seem to be content with the retention and efficacy of traditional business practices after a while. Finally, the leader's psychological orientation reveals there is less ownership of the organization's historical and cultural business practices in favour of making the organization more modern and system-driven.

New generation leaders of LLCs are obsessed with regulating and re-defining the members' social and cultural worldview along the lines of modern-western corporations by regulating for dress codes, language and styles of interaction, thereby tending to create what is identified as a 'monochrome environment' (Tourish & Pinnington 2002: 162). Therefore one can observe how dress 'serves as a vehicle for representing… a web of multiple and contradictory identity-related issues' (cf. Humphreys & Brown 2002: 944). For Humphreys & Brown the notion of dress constitute 'as a site of identity of negotiation' as they illustrate 'how a single article of attire had become a symbolic node in the dynamics of identity challenge and conflict at an individual, organizational and national political level' (Humphreys & Brown 2002: 944). Consumption of identity is reflected in the old saying, 'you are what you eat' (Friedman 1990: 314), and modernity is appropriated through dress code which means 'you are what you wear' (Friedman 1990: 316). These are acts of identification, and represent the struggle for authenticity in a society. For Friedman, 'the act of identification, the identification of the person in a higher project, is in one sense pure existential authenticity, but to the degree that it implies self-defining symbols that are not self-produced but obtained in the market place, the authenticity is undermined by objectification and potential decontextualization' (1990: 314). What is also illustrated in the above vignette is dress as a desire and site of leadership practice and identity negotiation in the workplace. In other words, choice of dress on the part of an individual, group or organization symbolically represents an underlying identity contestation and conflict, not only at individual or group level but also at national political level. Hence it is this psyche and cognition of making the organization systemic and modern that predominates in the thinking of leaders as they develop an inability to see and perceive the benefits and strengths of personal, familial and local-cultural ways of working.

5.4 *Geo-cultural* orientation

5.4.1 Practices in Multinational Corporations

Confrontational

It emerges from my data that work values and ethics in organizing and leadership dynamics in MNCs tend to revolve around that very basic tenet of Western philosophy, 'survival of the fittest'. This manifests itself in organization practice as working behaviour which is egoistic, individualistic, confrontational and hyper-competitive. For example, the CEO of one of the leading MNCs who happened to work for both American and British MNCs says:

> The person who never inspires you is pseudo-leader, like *haathi key daant*, they are the worst kind of leaders the one you cannot trust them, and who are only for themselves, and are 'self consumed.' A true leader has a thing beyond him. He has to think about his people, his organization and other stakeholders (CEO-A-MNC).

It is important to observe here that the interviewee preferred to use a local-cultural adage to express himself even though he was well-versed in the English language. For him, pseudo-leaders are like *haathi key daant.* This means, literally, 'elephants have one set of teeth to show, and a different set for chewing or eating'. It suggests one should not be misled by the symbolic presence of something impressive and magnificent like elephant teeth. This evidence suggests that the nature of modern organization life is such that, more often than not, it results in having 'pseudo-leaders', who remain operative in authority mode, playing on hierarchy dynamics, and driven by immediate self-consumption-based needs. This comes quite close to how Bass & Steidlmeier (1999) differentiated the two concepts, 'authentic' and 'pseudo': authentic leaders takes care of morality, ethical values and legitimacy of choice and actions, while pseudo-leaders 'seek power at the expense of others, are unreliable, deceptive, manipulative and self-interested' (Shaw 2010: 7). This distinction is also recognised in another MNC as reflected in the following quotation of a regional sales manager:

> I believe we do not have to be reactionary, if someone is telling us then we must not immediately start snubbing them. This will make him stay away from you in future. So many things in feedback which you have to listen, you would not be able to listen now. We have seen this happening. We snub them, and this is how we silence them. So whatever little feedback we were getting we cease to receive it now. This culture should end now. Sit with him (subordinate) in a professional and productive way, and resolve the issue. In order to motivate them we need to just come at their level and talk to them (NSM-MNC).

The above extract reveals the nature of the boss-subordinate relationship. The behaviour of leaders (bosses) is based on an assumption of seniority, experience, superior authority, and presumed higher professionalism (with the supposed exclusion of the personal), which leads to the kind of behaviour depicted above: conflictual, adversarial and confrontational. So the organization tends to be in perpetual confrontational mode rather than seeking and establishing social harmony. Clearly one can see here a desire for more social and egalitarian construction of leadership with a different set of values, such as patience,

tolerance, listening and empathy. Based on the above empirical evidence it can be argued that the cultural mode of organizing is prescriptive of social, harmonious forms of organizing and leadership, whereas modern-western values have, both through the historical legacy of colonization and modern management education, resulted in the pursuit of leadership practices based on conflict and confrontation. These findings are in line with Whitley (1999), who studied comparative business systems at length, arguing that 'relations between actors in UK national business system labelled as compartmentalized, are defined as arms' length and typically adversarial' (Saka-Helmhout 2009: 272).

According to AJK, heading an American MNC's subsidiary, genuine leaders can be identified and differentiated from pseudo-leaders in the following ways:

> Do not look at people as how they are interacting with you as supervisor but how they are interacting with people below them. Actually your stunt as a leader is about how you manage below. You give them 'respect' and that is the biggest thing you need to give to people (CEO-A-MNC).

What can be inferred from the above? AJK posits a litmus test for a leader based on whether s/he treats his or her subordinates in command and authority mode or s/he is up to seeking to relate in social mode, for example giving respect and dealing with empathy. The former approach seems more prevalent, while the latter aspects are considered less relevant and practical in modern organization. Ample evidence exists for the presence of such behaviour, and one illustration is given here.

Vignette 2: Egoism, confrontation and overconfidence

> When TAP (LLC) arrived in Lahore and they were distributing sachet pack (free sampling for marketing) in *Anarkali* (old and populous market in Lahore), and I talked to brand manager and showed my concerns over the aggressive marketing of Tapal. You know, what happened then; he (my boss) ridiculed me for 20 minutes, and said what are you talking about? And are you comparing Thomas Lipton (MNC) with a petty ordinary retailer of *Jodiya bazaar* (in Karachi)? Look how arrogant we were as an organization…

> Now, the current situation is that a new company in the name of Vital Tea is launched by former Liptonians, getting together in the region of Bhalwaal-Sargodha, are making less money by offering good quality product. They have snatched our RSM in Multan which is very significant development, and you know RSM are like that of a core commander of military in any one marketing territory (RSM-MNC).

In the above excerpt ANB, in the regional sales department in Lahore, is critically examining the behaviour of his erstwhile boss who happens to be a Brand Manager. What is happening is a lack of deference and respect exhibited by the boss (Brand Manager) at leadership level for something (in this case, expertise and advice) coming from his subordinate, arising from the latter's concern over the rise of local competitor. It is customarily observed that people can be impressed by the external, public face of MNCs at a surface level, and so something which can be seen and interpreted at the outset as a

transformational leadership style might in actual practice turn out to be 'narcissistic, manipulative and self-centred' (Parry & Proctor-Thompson 2002: 75). Alvesson termed such organizational behaviour as the sustaining of 'functional egoism' which is perceived to be damaging, since successful research is seen as an outcome of multifunctional teamwork (Alvesson 2003: 1174). The situation of leaders remaining negative and confrontational towards their subordinates, unwilling to listen, and with an over-confident self-interpretation of reality, individually and collectively on the part of organization, paved the way for the rise of local giant (TAP) which has eaten up almost 50% of its market share. Moreover, owing to this type of cultural orientation this MNC is fast losing its trained human resources to local competitors.

5.4.2 Practices in Public Sector Corporations

Though both PSCs and MNCs are overtly modern-western organizations, yet the comparative view of data reveals that Asiatic or non-western cultural orientation is more pronounced amongst leaders in the case of PSCs than those of MNCs. This might be open to a number of interpretations, one being that PSCs are more distant in terms of time from the colonial era, paving the way for greater indigenisation and allowing the native social character of the organization to emerge. Another reason could be that the postcolonial era witnessed excessive expansion and growth of PSCs. The traditional tight colonial governing organization structure and style just could not keep abreast of the increasing demand. The case with MNCs is different, as they are still tightly controlled by headquarters in Europe, and local subsidiaries are just concerned with policy implementation and have marginal influence on policy formulation (Reade 2001).

One such example of the Asiatic approach to leadership, given below, is of YST, who is the leader one step down from CEO and aspires to future leadership of a large PSC:

> A leader is the one who creates bonding, and they do not behave like a leaders, as they behave like team members only then you start respecting them, and then constant flow of knowledge takes place from them to you, and a constant guidance, as you could go and talk to them on new subject, and they are always there to help you (EDF-PSC).

What one may surmise from the above is that leaders' behaviour ought to be like that of a non-leader: ordinary and socially accessible and acceptable, rather than behaving like an elitist organizational leader, thereby emphasising that social and cultural ingredients of leadership are more critical than those driven by an organizational and technical approach. For instance, explicit admission of this phenomenon can be observed in the following statement:

> I believe in Z management which involves a collective concept. Even person at lower level has esteem, and I am against management by criticism and being critical. In my

view Z management produces better and sustainable results than autocratic which might be effective in the short run (GMM-PSC).

The leader[15] quoted above seems quite conscious of the prevailing dominant practice of being critical and confrontational, thereby ignoring the esteem of people at lower level. Thus the organizational stream of leadership leads to an autocratic and antagonistic mode of exercising leadership, and what is described as Z-management is closer to the more harmonious social stream of leadership. Another senior executive confirms the strength of the social component of leadership when he says:

> I could see and relate to executives I met in EN (LLC) people of the stature of SMZ and ZAK, those were the individuals who had a lot of technical know-how and the strong thing about them was the humility, and the amount of time they spent in developing their subordinate when you have that type of a culture, and again with high ethical standards. By humility I mean you can walk into their office any time, they will speak to you with high respect, and sit with you in lunch room and discuss any subject that you would like to, and get invited to their houses, in spite of having a vast difference in positions (EDF-PSC).

What is valued and appreciated at EN (LLC) is that the role of social virtues, such as humility, ethics and deference, are more pronounced and embedded in the leaders identified above than the role of a technical or organizational torrent of organizational leadership. In the same way, leadership does not just concern itself within the narrow limits or immediate boundaries stipulated by the organization. Instead it transcends them in the social sphere and other organizations. This represents more of an ethical or moral leadership, where leaders who care about people and society at large, and behave ethically with members of the organization in their personal and professional lives, were thought to be fair and trustworthy (Brown and Trevino 2006). For example,

> In EN when you come into an organization the entire organization will make it a point to make you feel welcome not only you but to your family as well. My best friends even today are there in EN (EDF-PSC).

This seems quite unusual as people tend to leave organization with grudges and feelings of resentment, and within the prevailing transactional nature of jobs and contracts with organizations past jobs are seldom considered a resource. Continuity of bonding with previous jobs and the organization suggests something beyond the immediate material concerns in the organization. This suggests effective leadership is interpreted and practised broadly within the extra-organizational spectrum. These cultural attributes are further analysed and explained in the following vignette.

Vignette 3: Revenge and confrontation is poor leadership

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[15] The respondent remained associated with business school as a visiting faculty member.

This has been narrated by the leader of one of the largest PSCs, who was ousted by the political regime, and by the highest governmental officials, but was reinstated after six weeks of enquiry and suspension. According to RJG,

> I forgave people who were responsible for throwing me out from this organization for six weeks. And once I forgave them they become closer to me, more friends to me as they were expecting a hard hand. No, I said leave it as *Allah Ta'ala* (God Almighty) likes that person, who keeps other's weaknesses or fault behind the veil [under the carpet] and then definitely every one, you and me, have some weaknesses. It is alright for you to leave it and keep it under *purdah* [veil] as nobody is perfect. Everyone in history has got some blames, and blames were raised even on Prophets and big personalities. So you have to deal with them in a different way, and do not take revenge, that is a poor form of leadership. How to forgive is a better human quality than sticking it to your mind (MD-PSC).

This is an unusual event in the history of organizations in Pakistan, as very few people get reinstated by the same regime in such a short period of time. More astounding perhaps, is the leader's patience, tolerance and forgiveness – socio-religious attributes of leadership. No matter that there might be some compromises and political interpretation, too, in the narration, yet it is the prevalence of social attributes of leadership which predominate. More important perhaps here is the demonstration of the distinction between Asiatic leadership styles – particularly Pakistani styles – and modern-western leadership. The presence of socio-religious or moral elements seems deeply embedded in the personal self-construction of leadership, as his discourse involved words like *Allah, purdah* and citing the example of Prophets. We can observe explicit recognition of, and adherence to, Islamic injunctions as the leader makes reference to hiding the weaknesses of colleagues and belief in the superior virtue of forgiveness. That socio-morality or religio-ethics stay embedded in organizing and leading is a distinct aspect of PSCs, while this type of morality is given little or no space in the working of modern-western organizational leadership. This connects with Jackal's point that, 'the bureaucratized context of modern managerial work means that people are forced, to bracket, while at work, the moralities that they might hold outside the workplace or that they might adhere to privately' (Jackal 1988 cited in Watson 2003: 168-169). However, unlike in modern-western organizations, in emerging Asian societies like Pakistan, the presence of personal-cultural morality still constitutes a salient feature of organizing and leadership. This is in line with what Westwood *et al* have found – the presence of a 'personalistic tacit moral order' in Asiatic societies (2004: 365). Such types of personal morality in organizing thinking and practice on the part of the leadership in PSCs take them closer to the Asiatic leadership style of raising and running organization**.**

5.4.3 Practices in Large Local Corporations

Altruism

A careful examination of my data reveals that leadership in LLCs is more concerned with, and conscious of, their identity and developmental role in and around the region and locality to enable people at a practice level. However, at the level of rhetoric, such a role may not be as pronounced and celebrated as it is in organizations in the MNC and PSC sectors. There is a higher level of altruism and humane orientation exhibited by leaders in LLCs. For instance, it is clearly found here, when the leader of one of the most established groups in the textile industry says:

> They (local feudal) used to say where these *Khojas* (historic trading community) have come from, and tried to make us retreat from here. My father was very adamant in putting a unit close to this region; definitely the purpose was to make money but it was also motivated to enable local people. So these people would not be just slaves of the local feudal Shah, even whatever the *fiqh* or *maslak* (religious sect) is. This was his commitment, and also used to get our commitment as well on this matter. My father was anti-feudal, totally against them, and for him this (feudalism) will never let you prosper. The whole mankind will die but *mirasi* (lowest cast in Pakistan) will never be *numberdaar* (Land controller) … My father asked me, 'You promise me that one day your CEO will be a '*mirasi*'. You strive for this in your whole life as '*Zaat*' (caste) and '*fiqha*' (religious sect) has taken us back (CEO-LLC).

The excerpt above represents two things: one, how organizational leadership gets entangled with politics at the national level, which seems analogous to the familiar historical feud among agrarians and industrialists, like the one in the western history of industrialization. Similarly one can observe in the politico-developmental context of Pakistan too, that most leaders of large industrial organizations are fiercely anti-feudal. A second related aspect is how organization leadership at LLCs is concerned with local or regional development. This shows itself in the leader's symbolic and practical commitment to the *mirasi* (entertainer or conjurer) who is the downtrodden person or community in terms of esteem, whose role is to entertain the gentry, while the *numberdaar* (controller) is concerned with governance of the rural community. For sociobiologists, altruism or empathy is something constructed in human genes, hence social trust is situated in communities intrinsically connected by ethnicity and culture (Zutshi & Tan 2008). Such a profound commitment and concern for emancipating and enabling community one can never find in the discourse and actions of leaders of MNCs and PSCs, though they may tend to raise higher claims in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility, etc., at a rhetorical level. This can be further witnessed below:

> For him (my father), the purpose of our life is *Allah* has made us "Cashier", and as a Cashier we cannot keep just one rupee and have to distribute onwards. The job of a cashier is to receive and distribute money; not to retain it. If you retain then they are going to make complaint to the Owner of the world, *Allah*, who then is to change cashier as you never prove responsible. We then used to say; are we just a post office? He says yes you are. These things form the basics of our understandings on organization and on life. How many jobs you have created for people in your life, just think at the end of day, it is your duty (CEO-LLC).

You are not doing for all these things. You first determine for whom you are doing all this; for fame, for *biradari* (extended family of kith and kin), for cheap populism, for your family to tell; which are all futile? This is how he did my training. Of course, with all this we were in money making by looking at ROI, ROA and ROE things. These things I do not see in clash with modern managerial values when you know the whole purpose of your birth then there is no clash; clash comes in when you don't know the purpose of your existence. When He (*Allah*) has created us, in innocent and with beautiful face and form and in good family, the purpose is just not to make money and few cars and that is it, finish or end (CEO-LLC).

The two quotations above very cogently disclose the basic understanding of organization, organizing life and the role of leadership in the LLC. Two phrases in the above, 'what you are doing things for', and 'the whole purpose of your birth', are seeking clarity on the identity issues faced by members and the forthcoming leadership in the organization. Such clarity and the explicit recognition of the primacy of religious and philanthropic intent one seldom finds in leaders' thinking and practices, or in the mission and vision statements of modern-western MNCs and PSCs in general, and in Pakistan in particular. What is important is it cannot be categorised as theocratic organization or leadership as there is no perceived clash with modern managerial values of running and leading a business. For Michie & Gooty (2005), such self-transcendent values and emotions are manifestations of authentic leadership, while Avolio *et al* (2004) and Iszatt-White (2009) contend that authentic leaders are able to inculcate hope, build trust and induce positive affectivity in their followers via personal and social identification. This can be verified further by the senior-most executive of the same industrial group, illustrated in the vignette below:

Vignette 4: Deference and humility

SIL, General Manager at a large textile group experiencing phenomenal growth consistently for more than two decades, narrates his understanding about its leaders:

Since they are very professional so they are very respectful, and once they are professional and respectful things became straight and align with code of morality and ethics. For instance, if they know someone is using false excuses 10th time even they would not be saying him or charging him out rightly rather will tolerate his lying and say that we will point this out next time. Even if they have to refuse someone would not say so out rightly. They will say things like that: *Khair hai or koi baat nahi* (It is ok or it does not matter that much?); Let it go approach; or after approval they say politely, are not you using this reason or excuse too much; *Kafi dafa nahi ho gia* (Is this not happening too many times or isn't this enough?). At time while signing just they look on his face or his eyes, staring and saying nothing. In my view, generosity is an element too much in their leadership or management, and yes they (*Seth*) are very generous (GMH-LLC).

Therefore, it is observed at the practice level, that amongst stable and growth-driven companies and industrial groups in Pakistan, echoes of local-cultural values like tolerance, immense patience, humaneness, generosity and polite yet assertive behaviour, are more pronounced in leadership discourse. This is in contrast to the explicitly aggressive,

conflict-prone, confrontational and challenging style which is the hallmark of PSCs and MNCs and their underlying work ethics. Brown & Trevino (2006) describe such behaviour on the part of leaders as the intersection of leadership and ethics.

SIL further says:

> As I am at a last decade of my professional life so thought it better to work with seasoned and mature than working with people who are reactive. They are never reactive. Here I found always a responsive leadership instead of a reactive one. I can give you example from everyday life; like for once instance… *ye kiya kar diya tum ne* (What you have done?) or *kiya kur rahey ho chalo chalo bahut dekhay hain aisay* (Or what you were doing over there… get lost... I have seen many such time wasters)… etc. They never use such words and phrases. I have never listened such things or words in my life here of two and a half years of stay. They would always "*Aap kiya kar rahay hain*" (What you are up to? in a very polite tone). I wish people here would say "*tum*" (you) to me always say "*aap*" [aap again means you in a very deferential style in Urdu language for which no English word I can suggest] by way of which at times I feel either I am grown too big or too elder but in fact means they are very respectful with me and with other colleagues (GMH-LLC).

What emerges from the above is that being soft-spoken, humble, polite and extending respect to others is the leaders' distinct way of working here. The cultural aspect is adequately represented in the construction of language and discourse. For instance, in Urdu language '*tum*' and '*aap*' are two different words for the single equivalent 'you' in English. The word '*aap*' is used and considered a more delicate, formal and civilized way of addressing others with a high sense of deference, dignity and respect. Therefore, even in the case of something going wrong, culturally-driven leaders prefers to remain in soft and subtle tone to convey their message and still remain effective. Chhokar (2002) confirms the same in his study for GLOBE project on India, that people higher in age and status are often extended deference and respect despite an organization or society being modern or in transition. For him, 'seniority continues to have value in almost all types of organizations. It is common for seniors to be addressed formally by their last name. Honorifics such as Mr, Mrs, Sir, and Madam, and their equivalents in Indian languages are widely used' (Chhokar 2002: 21).

5.5 Comparative analysis and findings

The comparative study of data cited above indicates the differences in three constituting elements of organizational leadership. This is summarized below in table 1.

Leadership Contents	Type of Organization		
	MNCs	PSCs	LLCs
Informality	Low	Moderate	Maximum
Personalization	Low	Moderately high	Highest
Cultural Orientation	Western	Local-Western mix	*Geo-cultural*

Table 1: Comparative perspectives of leadership in three types of organization

The table above presents my findings on comparative grounds that formalization and systematization tend to be higher in MNCs as opposed to PSCs and LLCs. These trends reflect moderately in the case of PSCs, while in the case of LLCs, leaders tend to have the more informal and personalized mode which is inherently embedded in the social and cultural construction identified as *geo-cultural* orientation. While the cultural pattern of MNCs and PSCs represents the inbuilt superiority of Western culture, in its undercurrents and at a subliminal level the social stream of leadership is not so insignificant and ignorable. The superiority of the Western culture and intellect is something deeply imbibed by leadership and came about as a matter of colonial heritage and worldview. Postcolonial studies (Jack & Westwood 2006, 2009) and literature on colonization and imperialism give us further insight into why local leaders at PSCs and MNCs behave with the presumed superiority of the West. This presumed superiority is observable and manifests itself in the common day discourse, conversation and practices of leaders and members of organizations. It has been indicated by Rothermund that there is a non-critical acceptance of the Western paradigm of development, which he referred to as a 'constant dilemma of a colonial mind' (1986: 147), seeking modernization through imitation, and at the same time having the desire to retain the traditional pattern of glorified identity.

On the basis of my interview data, it seems that respondents characterize MNCs as primarily driven by concerns to impose control through formal means of legally driven instruments and systems. Hence leaders are structurally situated and trained to view leadership through an organizational prism in terms of permissible and non-permissible legal and procedural constraints. Therefore, in my observation leadership operates and abounds within the formalized boundary parameters, and exceptions are seldom allowed, and if anyone is courageous enough to take an initiative, the predominant tendency is to make it a formalized part of the organizing system. Hence individual and situational flexibility is seldom permitted intrinsically, and organization tends to become more of a static and mechanistic type. Therefore the nature of modern organization in Pakistan's corporate context becomes such that, most of the time, it ends up promoting 'pseudo-leaders' who remain operative in authority and transactional mode playing on hierarchy dynamics, and driven by immediate self-orientated needs.

Perhaps the most distinct pattern found amongst leaders in PSCs is the belief in, and practice of, exercising direct control of the lower echelons of their organizations. This 'down the line leadership' is a more eminent postcolonial tendency, quite unlike the leadership pattern in MNCs and LLCs. Organizations in the LLC segment show more of what could be identified as a *geo-cultural* approach to leadership, clearly differentiating from the Western approach of instant gratification, believing in gradualism, being polite,

simple, generous and soft yet at the same time staying assertive in a deep and subtle way. Therefore, leaders in MNCs and LLCs seem more progressive and prepared to delegate down the organization ladder, either out of individualistic or collective attributes, while leaders in PSCs - resembling what Wallace & Tomlinson described as 'piggies-in-the-middle of a state-sponsored multiple stakeholder-governed, multi-organizational, professionally staffed system' (2010: 25) – comply with the vision and practice prescribed by political governments. Interestingly, this is a pronounced leadership pattern which emerged across my interview data set for PSCs and LLCs and, on the evidence I gathered, seems common to both stable and growth-driven companies and industrial groups in Pakistan. In LLCs common discourse observed is one of tolerance, immense patience, humaneness, generosity and polite yet assertive conduct. This contrasts with the explicitly aggressive, conflict-prone, confrontational and challenging style which is the hallmark of MNCs underlying leadership and work ethics.

The analyses presented here were to explicate and illustrate the dynamic, social, collective and situated nature of organizational leadership practices. The two constituents of leadership in organizations identified here were organizational and social streams. In my analysis, personalised and informal leadership seems more apparent and influential in LLCs than in MNCs and PSCs as it is predominantly driven by locally and culturally grounded values. Leaders in MNCs and PSCs are more constrained by extensive non-personalization and formalization in systems and procedures, and situated and gravitated in Western culture. My analysis of data reveals that the social stream of leadership is more pronounced in the practices of leaders in LLCs than amongst the leaders at MNCs and PSCs who demonstrate more of the organizational stream.

Chapter 6 - Organization Politics

> In the modern world…, and…, in the world of the near future, important achievement is and will be almost impossible to an individual if he cannot dominate some vast organization.
> [Bertrand Russell 1948 quoted by Jay 1967: 11]

6.1 Introduction

Power politics in organization are considered to be 'regular social practices deriving from relations between various actors or groups' (Coopey 1995: 197). One of the main differentiating aspects in the organizing and construction of leadership, as discussed earlier, between modern-western and local-national organization, is their understanding of the nature, meanings and constitutive elements of politics, and leaders' political practices and ways of managing politics in their organizations. This chapter is structured around three main themes: first, whether there was any significant recognition given by the respondents to the occurrence or phenomenon of politics, as experienced by them in their organizations; second, to explore the constituent nature of politics in organization, and finally to examine how do organizational leaders manage politics. In general I have found an abhorrence or denial of the idea that politics is more prevalent in modern-western organizations (MNCs and PSCs) than in local-national organizations (LLCs). Or in other words, leaders in MNCs and PSCs tend to claim more of a formalist position: an apolitical and professional kind of leadership and managerial practice as against LLCs. Amongst leaders of LLCs, politics is given cognition as a historical condition, and consequently three streams were found in their way of managing politics: being outward, explicit and having active involvement in politics; being an apolitical or non-political self and through bureaucratic politics.

6.2 Political practices in Multinational Corporations

6.2.1 Recognition of the occurrence of politics

As earlier pointed out, modern organizations structured along the classical functional model seldom accept and give recognition to the existence and occurrence of politics therein. For example, a head of regional sales in a MNC states:

> Here we have lesser chances of politics. We do have such instances, but our system is so robust, I think, to resolve conflict and in eliminating biases (ROM-MNC).

Reasons to claim the non-existence of politics were given in the above excerpt. Nonetheless, a subsequent quotation, given below, added more to confusion and an admission of politics rather than its negation:

> When multiple people are evaluating on multiple KPIs (key performing indicators), through discussions and sessions, across different functional areas that eliminate bias

if there is some, and second possibility of politics, that is why, I think here there is a lesser element of politics (ROM-MNC).

Therefore, though in the above there is no direct admission of politics, there is, however, a tacit acceptance of it in this rhetoric, because more people and multiple evaluation criteria means more competition, negotiation and compromises in reality, which is what politics means and stands for in organizations. Ferris *et al* in this respect explained why leaders and managers are uncomfortable with affirming the existence of politics in organization. In their words, '[it is] perhaps due to the negative connotations associated with "politics" [but] many of the activities which occur in this process are undeniably political (Ferris *et al* 1992: 62). Another leader, while talking about his success factors in the same organization, but heading a distinct Strategic Business Unit (SBU), says:

It is networking, and good and effective presentation in English (DIR-MNC).

Here, networking was explained and meant as another name for politics. On another occasion he reiterated:

We have positive politics here… and we have named that as strategic influencing which is allowed, and that is too much here, that is networking to buy in support from colleagues and functional departments; it is less in sales but too much in head office (DIR-MNC).

Therefore what one sees in the above citations is that at practice level, there are different names and labels given to the phenomenon of organization politics, like 'positive politics', 'networking' and 'strategic influencing', and interestingly within such fine nomenclature and labelling, politics is considered permissible. Attribution theory in this respect offers us a better explanation, that managers consider it important 'to avoid their actions labelled with political intent, and it may be necessary to create the impression that goals are selfless and non-political' (Buchannan 2008: 51). This may make leaders and managers cautious to dissociate something as personal or political, rather they intend to depict, articulate and manipulate for the collective good of organization and its members, albeit in rhetoric. A collective and organizational motive in this sense sounds more legitimate. Ferris *et al* (2000: 30) depict the nature of political skills within the context of organization as 'an interpersonal style construct that combines social astuteness with the ability to relate well, and otherwise demonstrate situationally appropriate behaviour in a disarmingly charming and engaging manner that inspires confidence, trust, sincerity and genuineness' (also cited in Buchannan 2008: 51). Similarly, responding to the question 'what bothers you in this organization?', he says:

Good work or performance is taken for granted while bad job or mistakes are much talked about and criticised with comments, why you did not take action? *ye Aap soe rahey thay* (were you sleeping on the job?) and blame game of this sort (DIR-MNC).

Looking at the practice side, organizing politics again turns out to be omnipresent and persistent in organization routines and conversations, as illustrated above. Therefore, what is apparent is the occurrence and pervasiveness of politics in everyday life of organizations like MNCs. Political acumen is considered imperative for individuals and leaders if they are to have greater career successes and upward mobility in the organization. For Ferris *et al* (2000), though politics in general carries a negative connotation, effective use of political skills has become imperative for managers' or leaders' careers. At the higher echelons of the organization, the question on managing seniors generated this response:

> Obviously it is not something personal and it is always at some business level concern. For e.g. if I say this business is going to get down unless you do this, and then I explain, present and convince people around me, and then start influencing them so that everybody in the end start saying the same thing for critical mass build up. If one person does not understand you move on to the next, as it is not end of the world however people in our politics do see every issue as end of the world (VP-MNC).

The above narrates that skilful leaders or managers are required to express and articulate their individual concerns and worldview in business, technical and professional language, in order to get the desired results and direction within the organization. Similarly, there is a clear admission of how indispensable politics in organization is, as illustrated in the following comments by the Vice President of a MNC:

> The other day I made an agreement with HR director, let us not talk about our colleagues if they are not there. Because that is actually building up political issues if I say something about them it starts becoming political agenda. That is the most advanced thing if people are aligned politically, and they are against it; business objectives are separate and personal agenda is moving separately along with, and that is the wrong thing (VP-MNC).

The above quote describes how two things remain inalienable or inseparable – personal or individual concerns, and organizational objectives. The two exist side by side and move in parallel. Though it is considered wrong in the ideal world, or in the classical sense of organizing, as indicated above by the respondent, practically speaking the two stay close and remain embedded in each other. Ferris *et al* confirm the existence of this happening when they, within the context of political skills and refers to 'the metaphor of the individual employee as a private enterprise that is "Me, Inc."(Ferris *et al* 2000: 33).

6.2.2 The nature of politics - what is it for?

When questioned on the nature of individualism in the organization under his leadership, the CEO of a leading MNC commented:

> In any company you find at the age of superannuation CEOs get extension upon extension, and what does that mean? There is no one else in the world that can run the organization. This is the trend amongst the MNCs as well. Yes it is there. In ICI

last couple of CEOs left earlier because of their disagreements and before that there were cases of extensions (CEO-A-MNC).

At the organizational leadership level the very practical concern of most of the CEOs turns out to be staying politically secure (i.e. remaining in the leadership position). In the section above, a similar trend was observed in PSCs, in that leaders want to perpetuate their stay indefinitely, even after reaching the age of retirement. It is both interesting and ironic to observe that MNCs, which are considered symbols of organizational and management excellence in Pakistan, exhibit a similar feature to what is there in PSCs. Therefore, the nature of organizational politics is to secure self-interest, and the big question of what is in the organization's interest remains abstract, and subservient to the meanings and interpretations of individual- or self-interest. Therefore one can observe that the classical principle of organizing, as articulated by Fayol, that individual interest should remain subservient to the collective organizational interest, gets cast into oblivion at the practice level (Koontz 1993, Robbins 1998).

6.2.3 Management of politics and the exercise of leadership

Different leaders manage politics in various ways, according to their perception and orientation. For instance, one predominant way found in this research is that leaders tend to negate politics and resort to professional behaviour in their rhetoric. This is revealed here by one of the successful leaders who served British and American MNCs in the top positions of organizations. According to him:

> If progress is contingent upon playing politics, then I am not the one interested in. I cannot tolerate politics and I avoid politics. In any organization in which I have worked I am very clear from day one if it is politics you want to play, you cannot work with me (CEO-A-MNC).

Therefore, one way to deal with politics lies in its avoidance and dissociation. Talking further on the meanings of politics in organization, he says:

> Organization means two things; professionalism and diplomacy. If you are diplomat that does not mean you are playing politics. Politics is actually getting into groups, playing one-off against the other… and from my perspective politics is a definite no and no. However, one should have then statesmanship I acknowledge (CEO-A-MNC).

Here in the above excerpt, though politics is shunned or abhorred by the respondent, what is considered permitted is behaviour like that of a diplomat or statesman, which again is considered an ideal trajectory of politics. Therefore once an ideal, transcendental or ethical view of politics is accepted and permitted in an organization, it leads inevitably to the more worldly and practical side of politics. Another approach, which could be identified more as an ethical or cultural approach to managing politics within the context of Pakistani society, is illustrated in the following interview extract:

So if you do not say anything about someone in his absence it may curtail the formation of political agenda. In fact I am talking in the sense of *gheebah*. It kills the political agenda if you do not do *gheebah*. However this does not mean you do not get feedback about your subordinate that is a separate thing, and is part of your job (VP-MNC).

The concept of *gheebah* is a concept emic to Muslim society, and carries some strong admonitions for those who tend to manipulate and manoeuvre information in someone's absence for petty gains and to promote political groupings. This can be considered equivalent to backbiting and sounds like the universal ethics articulated by VP of the largest MNC. Therefore, people with greater ethical and religious orientation tend to manage in this way.

By the same token, avoidance of politics means more reliance on professionalism in an organization, and that can be considered by some leaders as the right strategy for managing organization politics. According to AJK:

Professionalism to me is to stay away from personal biases or personal relationships and of self interest… so professionalism is recognizing you are there to do a job, enjoy what you do and you do not confuse self interest with your job, and staying involved makes you professional. Yes, I do see a trade off between being professional and political (CEO-A-MNC).

In the above, the personal is considered political and *vice versa*, while professionalism in the ideal sense of the word, runs counter to the personal and political domains as these are considered to be based on self-serving interest and self-perpetuation. However, how far the strategy of avoiding politics or relying more on professionalism is successful can be illustrated in the vignette below.

Vignette 1

I left my previous organization (ICI) because of excessive politics. The disagreement was basically about succession towards the end; two horses' race for succession. The other person got appointed and I had no issue with that but he was hugely insecure with my being [presence] in that organization. Rest of the organization was riding behind me. Well this individual was very successful in managing relations with major shareholders. I decided then this is not for me, and you believe in me that I left [organization] on that very basis and did nothing for eight months (CEO-A-MNC).

The above vignette depicts that avoidance, or reliance on upfront professional behaviour, cannot be considered as the most appropriate way for dealing with organizational politics. Rather, it turned out to be establishing relationships with major shareholders, and not professional competency and popular acceptance within the organization.

Similarly, politics was identified as 'networking' which can be considered a more appropriate label for pursing politics. For instance, the head of a SBU of a large MNC states:

> We have positive politics here… that we have named that as strategic influencing which is allowed, and that is too much here, networking to buy in support from colleagues and functional departments; it is less in sales but too much in head office (DIR-MNC).

In this quotation we see that politics and the pursuance of politics is considered quite a legitimate tool in the organization for its members and leaders, albeit under other labels and names. This non-acceptance of politics is quite in line with Davey's concept of organization, which treats politics mainly as a covert organizational process, and considers it a 'masked activity' through which organizations are constructed and reconstructed (2008: 651). Thus politics remain operative at a hidden and subliminal level owing to the non-sanctioned nature of political behaviour. Perhaps a much better insight has been provided by Mintzberg, as according to him, 'if managers acknowledge that their career success is based on informal, ostensible parochial typically divisive political behaviour they would undermine meritocratic nature of organizations. This throws into doubt the fairness of promotion and the legitimacy of their own positions' (Mintzberg 1983 quoted by Davey 2008).

6.3 Political practices in Public Sector Corporations

Public sector organizations are considered to be inherently more complex than private ones, as they are the arena for the perpetual contesting of national political purposes. It is 'because government partly acts as the receptacle for the alienated subjectivity of citizens, public organizations have to contain much of what is disowned by the society in which they are situated (Sievers *et al* 2006: 171). Therefore politics appears to be much more subtle and entrenched in the organizing of PSCs than in that of MNCs and LLCs, since leadership and organizing in a PSC assumes delicacy and susceptibility to any change in national politics and government.

6.3.1 Recognition of the occurrence of politics

On the question of what invites intervention (political) in an organization, one senior leader observed:

> Well you know what invites intervention and I hope you know very well how things operate in Pakistan: the way country is run, organizations go the same way. It is before you whatever person in apex office wants he gets it done, same thing flows downward and people tow the same line of action. Like their head (of government or ruling political party) kitchen cabinet also behaves the same way. But this is our job not to let violate our systems, and do not expose our systems for them (EDS-PSC).

The above excerpt brings to the surface that organization in PSCs feels the direct impact of any change at national political or governmental level, and it illustrates how high-level politics gets connected to the organization. The respondent has a PhD in engineering, and a sensitive perception of the alienation of politics, political processes and politically-elected

persons of the country. This exhibits some kind of inbuilt confrontational animosity of leadership in PSCs towards the state of national politics. This further assumes that leaders in PSCs in their thinking and doing consider themselves by default better than, or superior to, the elected people at government level (i.e. parent ministry or regulating authority) to whom they are answerable or accountable. Therefore, there is a line of resistance found among the leadership in PSCs to protect themselves from extraneous governmental or political intervention. He goes on to say:

> It is the responsibility of the MD as leader not to discard anyone… some people in organization are negative, and some of course are closer to MD, like the word kitchen cabinet but the thing is kitchen cabinet here is on the basis of trust, as he knows who can deliver to me and who is unable to deliver… this happens, and some people are always aspiring for some positions and other feel pain of it (EDS-PSC).

The description above very lucidly explains that there are always some people in an organization who are perceived as negative, while others are trusted more and given positions, and act like a 'kitchen cabinet', and then people are constantly on the move to feel, act and try to replace them; a situation quite fluid, dynamic and emergent, negating the traditional assumption of static, sterile and value-neutral politics amongst leadership and management. Significant in the above excerpt is the formation of a kitchen cabinet, or close circle of leader and a few members on the basis of trust. Poon (2003), considers this to be the antecedents of politics in organization. For him, in organizations with a low trust climate, members are more likely to be more political as they are suspicious of each other's motives and intentions (Poon 2003 quoted by Othman 2008). In such a situation, it is not only informal and non-sanctioned behaviours that are more likely to be perceived negatively and as political (Othman 2008), but also there would be an increasing tendency to interpret formal and sanctioned behaviours as political. Similarly, for SEA:

> The context of public corporation is different from other organization, and there always have been some kind of problems during political governments while we had good and phenomenal growth during military regimes (GMM-PSC).

This excerpt describes the impact of the national political environment on organizations in the public sector. The person cited above was next to the apex leadership position, and gave me an interview as proxy for the CEO. He clearly admits that his organization faced tremendous problems during political regimes while having extraordinary stability and growth during military bureaucracies. During his interview, while talking of organizational leaders, he kept referring to national leaders like Bhutto, Zia, Benazir, etc., which eloquently describes the linkage between national politics and what is happening with organizations in the public sector. Important here is to observe there is inbuilt confrontation and distrust between political parties and the leadership in PSCs.

6.3.2 The nature of politics – what is it for?

On the question of why people 'do politics' in an organization, a director of finance, next to CEO's position, says:

> Mostly, it is for increments and promotions. Second people want to show they are king of their kingdom, to show importance by stopping work, and saying 'no' to someone's requirement and work (EDF-PSC).

The excerpt above confirms an observations of Drory & Romm (1988, 1990) on organization politics, wherein individuals are keen to secure interests which are self-serving, against the organization, for better distribution of resources, and for gaining power. Similarly it is stated by the senior organization leader:

> If I am here as GM not necessarily it be out of my competency, you know what the society it is. If Mr. X *sahib* (amongst one of the highest political and governmental office in elected government) makes a call to appoint Mr. SEA, who would dare then not to do so. We have some people here who became GMs only on telephone calls. During party reign we always get higher percentage of appointments and promotions that destroys organization structure and culture though we have developed some restrictions and parameters for such interventions but still this happens (GMM-PSC).

It is quite frequently observed in PSCs that leaders and aspiring leaders tend to develop exogenous links with political leaders or people in their controlling ministry or in high government office, so as to gain influence for their personal benefits, such as promotions and positions. Therefore, as mentioned above, the general trend in this type of organization is more for competitive relationship-building and networking, rather than building and playing on professional or competency-driven behaviour. This was openly admitted by a leader in another major PSC:

> When we sit for appraisal meeting and MD's phone always kept ringing, and at times we start laughing because everybody knows that we are in session and this meeting is to evaluate performance – increments and promotions. Everybody makes it a point to contact his buddy in the ministry who could make a call and influence us [said laughingly] (EDF-PSC).

The nature, timings and instrument of extraneous political intervention is quite apparent in the above quotation as being what instigates politics in organization. Decisions relating to personnel, such as promotion, selection and salary increments are highly politicised while according to Ferris & King (1991), performance evaluation and selection decisions should be depoliticized. Here, practically, it is considered by members of organizations as a kind of zero sum game where a person without any connection to exert influence during the conduct of a performance evaluation session, will be considered at a loss. Similarly, the CEO of a SBU says:

> In this organization everybody is for himself. There are probably 20 people who want my seat and waiting for me to commit a mistake or for me to fall or want to get me failed and leave, in order to take this [my] position. It is of high importance for a

good leader to understand things on the table, and also to understand what is going on under the table, and this is also of utmost importance for him [leader] to understand the pulse of people (CEO-PSC).

This illustrates how hugely insecure organizational leaders feel in their position, that things may go wrong politically at any time. Therefore, only politically savvy people can reach such a position and retain it as well. What is more important is to know what is happening in the organization in real time, behind the scenes (at an informal or invisible level) and to anticipate its political implications. The phrase 'what is going on under the table?' signifies the political construction of organizational leadership. This gets closer to Zanzi & O'Neill's (2001) assessment on politics in organization that at the top level, leadership is predominantly concerned with a considerable degree of uncertainty for which no formal rules and procedures exist. Consequently they get landed in the domain of informal and unsanctioned behaviour and what constitutes political behaviour. It is for this reason that Peled (2000) argued that modern managers [leaders] also need to be political (see also Othman 2008).

This is borne out in my data by the following quotation from a person next to the CEO position:

Likes and dislikes are there, and that is there in every organization, and it might be with me and might be with you as well. We have usual promotion on the basis of seniority but if a person goes ahead because of fitness then people get after him (EDF-PSC).

This fragment shows that human factors like desire and jealousy are also indispensable to instigate the perception of politics within an organization. Andrew *et al* (2003) argued that inappropriate distribution of organizational outcomes leads to mutual jealousy (quoted by Othman 2008) which shapes politics in organization. For instance, the director of finance in another organization which assumes industry leadership, admits that it is the issue of promotion or claims of seniority which politicize organizations. As different people take routes for promotion to be either more professionally or more politically based, what matters is that professionally competent people who have less political acumen, or who are more driven by professional ethics, are more likely to become the victims of organization politics.

Therefore what we see here is that in organizations, politics revolves around holding key positions, gaining promotion, and related issues of individual, personal interest or self-aggrandizement. Valle & Perrewe (2000) regarded this type of operation-level behaviour, of seeking or promoting either self or group interests, as politically driven though seemingly it is articulated as, and considered to be, rational and directed towards achieving strategic goals of the organization.

6.3.3 Management of politics and the exercise of leadership

Given the indispensability of the occurrence of organizational politics and reasons for why it exists, the important thing is to consider how leaders manage organization politics. For one, the leader has to be a socio-political being:

> It pays a lot if you go to your colleague's office once a month or week, and have a cup of tea without having work or agenda... when you do that by having a cup of coffee or tea, whole staff is seeing me entering his room, let us say if he (GM finance) at my level, will perceive for strength of relations; and so when my mail reaches him it gets different treatment then that of other GMs. It is because of my relationship with GM finance and then getting certain privileges, which I have developed over the years, realizing that organization cannot be run smoothly unless GM finance stands by you [politically]. This does not mean I am into flattery or anything like that; I just have a chat with him as this helps me a lot in my work. So subconsciously when I come out of his room or he comes out of my room our staffs believes finance person is with us (EDS-PSC).

The above illustration reflects a practical aspect of organizing. It may not sound very professional or rational to visit someone's office without any agenda, but it is for the sake of managing the impression it makes on others, which is another dimension of managing politics for getting things done better and more effectively. Moreover, the power or political significance attached to the office of finance as against other departments becomes more than obvious as it is considered the epicentre of power politics in most PSCs. Another respondent in the predominant leadership position says:

> Here it is for, just to trap him away; I should be nearer to the boss; with incentive in mind that I will be promoted; I will be the most likely best employee; and I will be getting increments and promotion. With these things in mind people do politics...so what happens then, the one who is progressing and move nearer to the boss, the other one tries to give negative feedback to his boss, and tries to dissociate with his boss, and if boss keep in their mind and own it (information given to him) then it will be disadvantage for you. This is what happens and is everywhere... and to manage politics you have to be a little diplomat (EDF-PSC).

Becoming a diplomat is considered the right expression in the above quotation for giving or manipulating information, by providing it to the leader or boss before his competing colleagues. At the same time, for the leader, the path to success lies in how quick and effective he is at retrieving information on his colleagues, subordinates and on-going events. This is what practically leads to some kind of leadership and management through cronyism. Peled (2000) in this context argued that of the three most requisite leadership skills, namely technology, administration and politics, leaders with better understanding of organization politics, and equipped with political skills, are able to successfully complete IT projects 'as they manage their project mainly upward and outward and tailor their technological visions to the day-to-day reality of their organizations' (Peled 2000: 20).

Another important decision for leaders to take or manage, peculiar to the context of corporate culture of Pakistan is how to handle *Sifarish*. A question on organization conflict generated this response to organization politics:

> Here unfortunately many people come through pressures of ministry through *Sifarish* when any particular minister wants to induct someone on the basis of relationship or friendship etc. We try to resist that but these pressures do come in. We try utmost to resist but at the end of the day some people have to be accommodated so the crowd [inducted in this manner] that is there is more emotional than professional (EDF-PSC).

The equivalent word in English language is something like 'recommendation' or 'reference'. This is a popular social and political instrument used for doing and getting favours. Tolerance for incompetence and acceptance of *Sifarish* can be construed as political acts – for compromising professional ethics, for building relationships and networking to get favours in return, for securing a job, especially when it is coming from top level government officials. *Sifarish* is an emic concept and considered a very popular instrument in Pakistani society to get things done and influence others. Typically, it is used for selection, placement and promotion-related decisions. Different people attach different meanings to it, from its outright acceptance to outright rejection, and then some try to draw fine middle lines of interpretation. For instance, the CEO of a SBU presented a more refined concept of *Sifarish*:

> When political parties come in, they do *Sifarish*, at time we reject *Sifarish* out rightly, my philosophy is we should not reject out rightly rather what is important to see whether someone recommended for *Sifarish* is up to mark, suitable or fulfil the job criteria. If someone does meet the criteria then *Sifarish* should not be considered a negative thing (CEO-PSC).

The leader quoted above draws a very fine political position as to when to accept *Sifarish* and when not to. In a way, he is accepting and legitimizing the *Sifarish* as it is quite pervasive in the organization and society. This seems a very pragmatic political view on the role and legitimacy of *Sifarish*. It is the same respondent who subsequently turned to question the integrity of top leaders:

> A good leader ought to have integrity above board but our corporate and political system is such, that, in it we are not lacking in for people with calibre, or that people here are of lower or bad intellectual quality or contribution but the fact is we slip when it comes to integrity. That is what lacks in Pakistan and what I feel is… and we are unable to develop because of their [CEOs & MDs] weaker area of integrity (CEO-PSC).

However, the same person openly admits that integrity and integrity maintenance in political and corporate systems of a country is the source of malfunctioning and lack of development. Leadership at CEO and MD level lacks the requisite level of integrity and uprightness, in other words can they go in for political compromises and manoeuvrings.

The survey research carried out by Den Hartog *et al* (1999) also demonstrates the link between a leader's effectiveness and perceptions about his or her honesty, trustworthiness and integrity. Simons (2002) verifies that behavioural integrity was one of the fundamental standards in the performance of directors and leaders. This is further reiterated by TRZ:

> For instance, if you are not a politician but people under you are playing politics then you are only a good leader if you be able to manage that politics … so leader is to be very sharp a person so that he be able to understand politics; what his colleagues are doing with him and what his juniors are up to. In other words politics is part of human nature and you cannot delineate it [sic: from job], and this is the job of a leader (CEO-PSC).

The quotation cited above indicates that managing politics is considered the job of the leader, and means good organization leadership is equivalent to being some kind of a politician in the organization. Specifically in the context of his organization, another leader (CEO) remarked:

> How I started managing politics – is through restructuring the appraisal form. I brought in the HR concept. Well, with Bell curve starts the issue of likes and dislikes… how I did it differently is to ask employee to write and assess them first… On the behavioural side, I always believe you to have pep-talk; talk them out, and I think by this we can get maximum results out of it (MD-PSC).

In the above it is the performance appraisal activity which appears to be the basis of politics and a manoeuvring tool to manage people within the organization. For Ferris *et al*, it is the promotion system which is considered the prime vehicle for upward mobility, and considered by far the major source of politics, as for them, 'promotion decisions are the most political decisions in organization' (Ferris *et al* 1992: 48). Second, does the above excerpt reveal the significance of the social discourse or conversation of the leader with organizational members? This discourse is considered important as it reveals a way in which leaders can judge and interpret members of the organization on their political understanding, inclination, group-mindedness, commitment to the organization and willingness to go along with the leader. Moreover, the nature of direct and face-to-face conversation style, that is, 'pep-talk' by leaders in the organization, also reveals the strength and vibrancy of political process and the strategy of being informal and social to engage followers or subordinates effectively. For Sussman *et al* (2002) face-to-face communication is preferred in organizations for conveying political messages, while work-related messages are frequently conveyed through written communication. This also is consistent with Davey's observation on politics as for her, politics in organization 'focuses on the subtle informal micro-processes through which organizations are enacted in contrast to the fantasies of rational, centrally managed and benign organizations' (Davey 2008: 651). Such informal micro-processes are by and large considered as extraneous to organization.

Leaders in PSCs were also found to develop political links with shareholders or stakeholders and forces external to the organization with the primary purpose of keeping their position intact. This aspect is illustrated here in the vignette below.

Vignette 2

> Let me give you my own experience and in fact the whole industry knows this well. I believe the company comes first rest comes later. We have ensured that there should be no interference in the running of this organization. I have been facing problems on this policy and then I was removed from this position by the present government as I was not willing to tow the line. I was asked to do things which I believe is not right, so I took the challenge. I came under pressure, I was removed, and cases were put against me, and in fact raised allegation that I am not loyal and patriot to this country. I was out of office for 06 weeks and they looked into everything, and I came out flying without any problem. This was because I turned out to be clean, and second I got amazing support from Government of Middle East as they took a stand and threatened to withdraw their investment of 5billion dollar in the newly proposed refinery, as they had a very high trust on me (MD-PSC).

This is an extraordinary and very unusual happening in Pakistan's corporate culture and politics, as once someone is removed from his position by the top political or governmental office the chances of getting reinstated are very minimal, especially by the same regime. The case above illustrates that managing political relationships with shareholders or stakeholders is the key to success. Therefore, this seems quite is line with Kanter's observations that 'chief executives of modern forms of organization tend to retain their identity, status and control, occupying positions which still yield considerable power, despite the difficulties they face in creating agency through network of stakeholders rather than simply controlling subordinates' (Kanter 1989 quoted by Coopey 1995: 204). This has been also explained by Schneider's stakeholder model of organizational leadership where stakeholders have 'the potential to influence or affect the firm, and/or be influenced or affected by it. They influence the firm through their words and deeds, through covert signals and overt protests, and most importantly, through their ability to help or hurt the firm's ability to create value' (Schneider 2002: 211). Hence effective leaders are those, as illustrated above, who tend to cultivate cooperative or political relationships with stakeholders.

6.4 Political practices in Large Local Corporations

6.4.1 Recognition of the occurrence of politics

In LLCs recognition of politics is given at two levels: the first internal, at organizational level, while the second is extraneous to the organization and inevitably linked to national level politics. There is high sensitivity found amongst the top notch industry leaders, whose families have been in the industry through several generations, for their concern on national political structure and relations with government. For instance, HNS, one of the

earliest industrialists, initiated discussion on national politics, and turned out to be highly against Bhutto's regime of the late 1970s because of his policies of nationalisation. He says:

> In fact our political movement, in my personal opinion was not well based right in the beginning. Big political leaders with *Quaid-e-Azam* were mostly from the landed aristocracy… very few were representative of middle class. That is why, I believe, political structure could not emerge in Pakistan appropriately. Here politics, if not all, almost 80% is in the hands of the landed aristocracy whose very attitude towards life is not very effective and is not production oriented (CEO-LLC).

Here the respondent was highly critical of the dominant feudal representation in the national legislature, because of which corporate industrial culture could not be steered in the right direction since the inception of Pakistan. Similarly, another leader of the same age and stature started talking of the Sir Stafford Cripps Act of 1935, and the Hindu-Muslim historical context of division and industrial development in Pakistan, and how Muslims of pre-partitioned India were left behind in industrial development, and were there only in the leather industry as, owing to their religious inhibitions, Hindus were shy of coming into the leather industry. The point is, that unlike the leadership of MNCs and PSCs, leadership in LLCs is much more cautious and sensitive to national political structure and culture. Within the context of organization politics, a third generation industrialist says:

> Again it is the inevitable part of organization. To counter politics bureaucracy exists, it is counter to politics. And your bureaucracy is not people it is system, so politics can be counter balanced by systems. So it is the system defines what is black and what is white… and regarding exogenous politics, I have no control over it. We are at arms length with government all the time (CEO-LLC).

This increasingly reflects that one of the predominant concerns of organizing in LLCs is to counter politics and to improve upon the organizational system. This is also admitted by the Director of IT in a large textile production unit in the following words:

> Politics is inevitable and is in all organization. Here the hub of politics is production departments (both Textile & Apparel) where people are more in number or strength then dominating other is easier. What would you do then is to change peoples' mindset in your favour and more in number means to frame policies in your favour is easier. So it becomes easier for more in number to become elder brother and turn out to be younger. So elders prove that they are always there, while younger say they cannot ignore us, and both insist on their interpretations and meanings. So this is how people then join to form group (GMI-LLC).

This refers to group and departmental level politics, and how it becomes inevitable for individuals to become part of group level politics. For Zanzi & O'Neill (2001), networking, persuasion and coalition building are desirable and socially permitted political nomenclature for doing organization politics. The respondent elaborated further on how difficult it is even for an owner-leader to deal with this type of group:

Informal groups form and break as well and then if they [group members] attend any meetings go with pre-decided for certain objectives. So such things do happen here. At times it becomes difficult for *Mian Sahib* as well to deal with them, but such people or groups do very well in short term as people know and take them as resource and getting thing done through them but ultimately they do not last for more than 2-4 years. I have spent my all time here in this organization so I am saying this on the basis of historical data, as they develop tension with management and eventually have to leave (GMI-LLC).

What is revealed here is that politics is a resource and can lead to short term gains, and an individual high on political activity may have to lose as well, as it is easier for LLCs to hire and fire people, unlike PSCs and MNCs. Second, the base of power politics in LLCs is more limited and discrete as against MNCs and PSCs because of a more unified authoritarian leadership structure. The requisite competency for leadership here in LLCs comes out as effective dealing and mediation with groups and sub groups.

All the interview evidence indicates that politics abounds, though its base is quite discrete as it remains within the personal or family ambit. Leaders in organizations of LLC type who are there through generations have to learn and develop skills and competencies in managing people politically. Knights and McCabe admit the role of individual self-interest and diverse conflicting power groups in organization and hence, for them, their need to go political, 'needs to be understood in terms of power and identity relations or how individuals seek through political manoeuvrings to further or secure their individual careers and identities in an uncertain world' (Knight & McCabe 1998 cited in Davey 2008: 652. See also Drory & Romm 1988).

6.4.2 The nature of politics – what is it for?

The plant manager of the leading textile mill states:

Often it is for people who work or perform, and believe they are right, but his point of view can be right or wrong, and at times people insist and personally strive for it, and persuade others for the same. But we try to address it rightly (GMP-LLC).

There is a personal political connection in the above citation. People strive politically for whatever they personally think of as what is right and what is wrong. Another leader actively involved in managing HR in his organization says:

Yes, whenever we induct new member at lower level, the person above will always give him tough time with the result he will approach me. The person above him will also come to me and asks what complaints do you have with me, and am I not working up to the mark? If you want to replace me I will leave if you say so. That is the biggest fear and it is not here only I think this is a global phenomenon (DIR-LLC).

The basis of politics in organization is job security, so the induction of new members is resisted for fear of possible replacement. Hence, it is imperative for new members to seek

and make political associations upon their entry. Again, it is admitted by the CEO of an industry leader in textiles that:

> The culture of organizations in Pakistan is of *feeta*-culture (to have stripes on your shoulders). How much straps you have? I am a senior manager, you are junior, I am provided with car or protocols, and you are not. I have higher perks and you have lesser. The problem here is when owners do behave as *Sahib* but managers down there turn out to be *Sahib*. That is not their fault but ours because we close our eyes (CEO-LLC).

The word *feeta* in the above excerpt signifies the existence of a red tape phenomenon in the organization of LLCs. Similarly the word *Sahib* is used within the cultural context of organizations in Pakistan to refer to someone who behaves with high protocols and tends to follow formal procedures. Both terms are considered to have their origin in British colonial rule. Therefore, though one of the distinct dimensions of organizing and leadership at LLCs as opposed to MNCs and PSCs lies in it being more informal and personalised (Khakwani & Case 2009), yet bureaucracy and hierarchy abounds in local organization as narrated above. What becomes obvious is that the very basis of politics in organization is human feelings of superiority, of making comparisons on equity issues and evaluating the relative contribution of efforts and outcome of each other. Therefore, ignorance of such kind of political undercurrents in organization will be inviting a host of other issues leading to mal-performance in the organization. This is further illustrated in the vignette below.

Vignette 3

> The base of politics, to me is *hassad* (Jealousy). Let us say there are two people, and one would want to grow and take more benefits, and then uses fair and unfair, all sorts of means, and now with competition starts coming in; one will consider how to degrade other so as to show his appropriateness for higher position. Second, you see junior people with better potential and sideline them, and cultivate loyal to you, as happens in government or public sector organization. This invites politics to come in as everybody is vying for same position, and they start into grouping; some would be favoured and others would not, and gradually tend to disturb organization structure. This happens only when there is no fairness. And this is human nature, and humans feel fearful of other replacing him, eating him out (cannibalizing), take his position, and it starts from there. I think here it is for benefits, status and promotions as well (GMT-LLC).

The word *hassad* is a kind of desire, and etiologically refers to an ethico-religious aspect of human behaviour which humans inevitably indulge in. This can be considered equivalent to jealousy in English language. In Muslim society there is a strong moral admonition to refrain from such type of thinking and desire, as it is commonly considered it will lead to disaster either for oneself (the one who envies the other) or for the other who is envied.

The above data is in line with what is argued by Othman (2008), that jealousy and resentment is right there in an organization when there is perceived to be an inappropriate and inequitable distribution of authority, reward or resources, and which then leads to, and

promotes the use of, unfair treatment and unsanctioned behaviour damaging to the organization. This makes obvious why one of the emerging and recurring themes in Organizational Studies is organizational justice. The nature of organizing and modern organization is such that it promotes individualistic behaviour and self-interest, leading to the spread of politics. For this reason, in order to regulate politics, one of the predominant concerns for leadership comes up as equity and distribution of justice in organization.

6.4.3 Management of politics and the exercise of leadership

My data suggests that leaders at LLCs are involved in managing politics at two levels: endogenous and exogenous to the organization. This is found to be in line with Farrell & Petersen (1982), for whom the internal-external dimension is one of the useful ways to classify organizational political activities. Since most of the LLCs are family-based, recognition of politics is extended to internal conflict and politics and its resolving mechanism as well.

Endogenous politics

A question on managing politics put to a leader from the textile industry elicited the following response:

> Politics is everywhere and it is inevitable part of the business. You cannot eliminate it completely but can control and you can use it to your advantage. To get advantage out of it depends on how you devolve and what you devolve? We have devolution of power clearly marked, and to manage politics is to just keep them busy. Moreover, to counter balance politics there is bureaucracy, and bureaucracy lies not in people but in system. It is the system which defines what is black and what is white. What is taught to my father by my grandfather is there in the system, and what I have learned from my father is also embedded in the system here (CEO-LLC).

In the above we find an open existence of the politics as part of the business activity. The respondent has a clear idea of managing this indispensable behaviour of organizational members. At a very practical level, the strategy is to keep them busy in their work so as to minimize damaging politics. Hence politics, in the view of the organization leader, is taken as a reality at a practice level, and then ways and means are suggested to cultivate politics as a resource, through devolution and delegation, so that it works to the advantage of the organization. This is quite unlike leaders in PSCs and MNCs, who shun and abhor politics in their idealistic and transcendental rhetoric.

A question related to the existence of split ownership, due to family politics, drew the following comment:

> This used to happen in most places and this happen sometimes here too. But the tendency has been reduced, and by the grace of *Allah*, we have our own family manpower quite sufficient. Like for instance, at this time we are eight family members running eight different departments. For example, if it is at CONE, none of my brothers, uncles and father even, will be allowed for interference in my business,

as a matter of policy. They will never talk to any GM, or instruct them for anything – so whatever they want to say they will talk to me and I will talk to them. The five GMs we have, can have general conversations but instructions and guidance on policy matters will always be managed by me. Similarly, I have never called directly to CG in design, stitching or process departments for getting something done. That is not my field, and I will go to my concerned cousin or brother over there. At times there is clash of interest and misunderstanding, and for that our parents are sitting at the top to moderate and balance us (CEO-LLC).

For the reason explained above, the emerging pattern in LLCs is greater recognition of politics in family-managed businesses, and its regulation and management by family elders. A related explanation for this is offered:

Another plus point for us is that we have intermarriages amongst all brothers and cousins. My sister is married to *Mian* LTF's son (the one Dubai based) while my brother is married to my uncle's daughter, so and so forth. So gap is never there owing to mutual ties and relationship (CEO-LLC).

What is implied in the above quotation is the issue of succession, which is a big political concern everywhere – for a family, organization and family organization. Consequently, what emerges here is a typical Asiatic pattern whereby family or ethnicity are considered a resource and inclusive in business and leadership practices. When asked a question on recruitment practices, the following response was forthcoming:

Our biggest belief is this – to take care of family and relatives – *Awwal khuwaish baad dervaish* (charity begins at home). Our own relatives comes first, others came later. Their right is the foremost (like of brothers, sisters, neighbours and relatives of kith and kin) and this is our very strong belief and numerous people in our company or associate concerns are attached with us – a lot of people (CEO-LLC).

Hence, hiring and selection is compromised politically. In the western world this would be seen as nepotism, but here in the given context, hiring from among relatives and within the regional locality is considered and interpreted above as their foremost moral right. The discourse *moral right* reveals the sense and ontology of organizing and leadership instead of a discourse based on *merit, legal or professional rights*. This type of organizing thinking and practice on the part of leaders in LLCs take them closer to the Asiatic leadership style of raising an organization on the basis of resources like kinship, and ethno-linguistic or local affinity, whereas modern organizing practices and leadership consider such traditional institutions as baggage or a liability to organizational growth and development (Clegg 1990).

Exogenous politics

There is much more variation in the way LLCs deal with politics extraneous to the organization, as politics within the organization is fairly discrete. Here we discuss three leading approaches followed by LLCs: being apolitical; being thoroughly political; and being political through bureaucracy.

6.4.3.1 Being apolitical

Being apolitical is considered the right political strategy by some LLCs and business groups in Pakistan. For instance, the CEO of the industry leader in textiles says:

> May *Allah* save us from politicians; their friendship and animosity both are bad and damaging. If someone says you want anything from government. I say no. There is no compulsion on us to be political… I do not know about others but I can say about my organization that there is not a one percent role of government, and it will never be there. I can share views of my father, and he says that it is better to die being not known than to go for cheap fame (CEO-LLC).

This is a strong expression of being apolitical in managing relations external to the organization, i.e. with political parties and the government, as it is considered insidious for organizational efficiency. It is quite natural for such an organization leader to envisage and rely more on professional behaviour internal to the organization, and to be less political as well. Naveed Hassan, in his doctoral research on the establishment of four pioneer industrial groups in Pakistan, reported that unlike other leading industrial groups, 'this group's political affiliations were limited… and political influence was limited' (Hassan 1997: 186). The same is manifested in this interview extract, presented in somewhat different tone:

> It [politics] is everywhere you cannot escape but you can control it and take advantage. It depends on how you devolve and what you devolve. It works when it is used as contributing to further development of a company adding more to the bottom line, creating successions, and all those things you can use politics for (CEO-LLC).

Therefore, realisation of the indispensability of politics is there, and the focus is on managing and controlling it through any mean so that it can be turned into a resource for the organization. One such means, identified in the above, is through decentralization and devolution in the hierarchy. Similarly, it is also conceived by Drory & Romm (1990), who argued that power politics is an organizational resource and may be directed for controlling resources and the attainment of organizational goals.

6.4.3.2 Being thoroughly political

As a way of managing politics, 'being political' is diametrically opposed to the approach described above. For instance, the GM of a rapidly expanding textile group confirms this trend:

> In fact this has become inevitable part of strategy that if you are in a large business, going political, can accrue certain benefits and facilitation for you. This is why the trend has continued and grown further in the case of Pakistan. This may be owing to the nature of our society in which protocols and relationships are considered very important. Therefore businessmen think that moving in politics will bring in too many privileges for them in terms of export, bank loan or problem facing from local department can be resolved easily through political base like minister or sitting MNA/MPA. This in turn has developed a negative impact for a manager to be

professional in LLCs as he becomes stronger in moving closer to power base so that they (*Seth*) never are able listen to and care for employees (GM-LLC).

The above reveals that by staying closer to the base of power politics, organization leaders invariably develop a propensity to ignore their professionals and employees, as their concentration is on political strategy rather than on business. Following this approach, the focus is to internalise extraneous politics which can influence the organization, business and industry. Therefore, at times organizational leaders also tend to aspire to national or regional political involvement, rather than having a policy of keeping government or political parties at arm's length. Naveed Hassan reported that the founder leader of D-group, one of the top five industrial groups in Pakistan, was thoroughly political and had enjoyed tremendous benefits from his proximity to President Ayub in the 1960s (Hassan 1997). Moreover, for him, 'this group entered manufacturing industry in Pakistan by the kick start given to them through the liaison of its pioneering entrepreneur with Ayub[16] and Nawab of Kalabagh'[17] (Hassan 1997: 270). This reveals a pattern quite analogous to the holistic approach of social reality, and seems more of an Asiatic than Western attribute. Instead of doing business in a compartmentalised way, it was considered quite rational and practical for some LLC leaders to take business and politics as complementary to each other. This is even considered rational by more modern-western educated second generation leaders in the textile industry, who were more open to, and recipients of, a modern business education. One such informant confirms this:

> We are also somewhat connected with politics as my father was an MNA. Basically we started with agriculture, then came in business, and then joined politics, partly. I also took part in election (last elections 2008) and bagged 65000 votes and lost to a lesser margin, mainly because of PML (Q). We have a very strong standing in our district, which is Toba-Tek Singh, my father remained MNA, MPA and district Nazim - very renowned person - neat and clean politician - the one who has developed region instead of doing corruption (CEO-LLC).

Hence, industry or business was taken as a political constituency, in practical terms, which seems quite at odds with the modern, western and professional way of managing organization and industry. The case of the Sharif brothers is before us amply validating the point as they are industrialists turned politicians. Looking at Pakistan's praetorian political history, one can observe this happens most often during military regime as it tries to cultivate and promote new and alternative political representatives as against the established political parties.

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[16] President of Pakistan Mohammad Ayub Khan was the first Commander-in-Chief who took over civilian government, and ruled for about 11 years. In general, his era is known for the rapid unprecedented industrial development and economic growth in Pakistan. At the time same this era is also known for the formation and accumulation of wealth by Pakistani capitalists and wealth remain concentrated amongst top 22 families of Pakistan.

[17] Nawab of Kalabagh was known as the iron man of the West Pakistan. He was Governor of West Pakistan, and was considered very powerful, rigid and strict administrator of the province.

6.4.3.3 Being political through bureaucracy

The third approach is a middle way of rationalising the two extremes. More mature and stable industrial groups tend to demonstrate this approach, that is, rather than staying too closely with political parties or staying away by maintaining political neutrality, the middle way is to work out sustainable political relations with the permanent bureaucracy, be it civil or military. In the textile sector, a Lahore-based, third generation industrialist states that:

> Politics can be counter balanced by systems. So it is the system defines what is black and what is white… and regarding exogenous politics, I have no control over it. We are at arm's length with political governments all the time (CEO-LLC).

The leader's preference and orientation in the above quotation is anchored in dealing with the system either within, by working out a better internal bureaucratic system, or extraneously, with a preference for dealing with bureaucracies rather than political parties. Similarly, for instance, MHN, a second generation industrialist based in Karachi confirms this when stating that:

> We tend to stay away from politics… and one cannot influence politics… we are merely followers of politics. We are not pro any political government. We rather prefer to deal with bureaucracies, and work through friends and family members (CEO-LLC).

Different people have differing interpretations of what is political. Politics is an ambiguous phenomenon for leaders, and different leaders attach different meanings to it. The two organizations cited above are considered more professional and efficient in managing their organizations within the industry. This again shows how more mature leaders and business families feel shy of dealing and investing with political parties and political governments. One of the plausible reasons could be that political parties and political governments are far from showing their stability and maturity in maintaining and perpetuating their rule, and in dealing with business and industry affairs.

6.5 Comparative analysis and findings

For Beck, the world of politics is not that of 'symbolically rich political institutions but the world of often concealed every day political practice' (Beck 1997 quoted by Bakardjieva 2009: 95). What is found common amongst all three corporate sectors is the strong presence of individual or self-interest as a factor in making organizing and leadership politically driven for both the individual's and the organization's construction of reality. This is there even if we take a typical normative statement with functionalist research paradigm and discourse orientation, such as this one from Pawar and Eastman:

> The transformational leader effects organizational change through the articulation of the leaders' vision, the acceptance of the vision by followers, and the creation of

congruence between followers' self interest and the vision (Pawar & Eastman 1997 quoted by Barker 2001: 482).

Here, what is termed 'articulation of the leaders' vision,' 'acceptance' and 'congruence of the vision by leader and follower' at an abstract level, seems in practical terms to be contained in the micro-sociological and political processes of organization. Again for Barker,

> The successful transformational leader finds a way to convince followers to align their self-interests and subsequent actions with organization structure and goals (Barker 2001: 482).

What is implied in the statement above is that 'convincing followers,' 'aligning self-interest' and 'organization goals' can all be construed as political acts of organizing and leadership. This, yet again, substantiates the feminist notion of organizing and leadership, that is, the 'personal is political'. Giddens gives much credence to the feminist perspective of political equated with personal as he takes 'the emergence of life politics as a dimension of the political in high modernity' (Giddens 1991 quoted by Bakardjieva 2009: 95). Therefore in organization either for individual members or for its leaders, issues sounding and surrounding strictly personal turns out to be with political ramifications (see Vigoda 2001 for further discussions). What is considered political becomes 'personal' and as such it is considered material and practical while 'what is organizational' resonates merely to some higher level of abstraction. An auxiliary axiom can further be inferred and established that what is considered organizational is in fact an embodiment of the personal and at an apex leadership level whatever is considered personal is construed as organizational.

Comparing my findings in the above sections, one can easily locate that the predominant pattern of discourse and practice amongst leaders in MNCs and PSCs is more for modern professionalism, while that of leaders in LLCs is on developing systems and managing group and organizational politics. If a LLC is considered to be a successful entity in its performance, then it is owing to the vibrancy and strength of its managing personal-political expression and its humane flavour in its organizing and leadership, which is somewhat lacking in the organizing of PSCs and MNCs. Naveed Hassan's doctoral study reveals that within the context of industrialization in Pakistan, 'pioneering entrepreneurs were a minority group of industrialists empowered with attendant economic and political privileges conferred on them by the state (Hassan 1997: 1).

Second, politics is given pre-eminence in the narrative of organizing in LLCs, while professionalism ranks high in the discourse and rhetoric of PSCs and MNCs. Organization politics tends to be embedded with national politics in the case of LLCs and PSCs as against that of MNCs. Leaders in LLCs give explicit recognition to the notion and

happening of organization politics as against leaders in MNCs and PSCs. National politics tend to appear as a factor embedded in the interpretation of politics in organizing in LLCs, while there is a kind of alienation, abhorrence and denial of politics found amongst organizational leaders in MNCs and PSCs. As far as management of politics is concerned, there are some LLC leaders who are proactively involved in national/local politics and there are some who steer clear of them. Those involved proactively may find and interpret politics at a higher level is to supplant business (business protection). This is there even in the Western world with established practices of corporate lobbying and policy influencing. Imperatively, one may infer that business leaders cannot stay isolated from what is happening at national political and ideological levels.

Finally, it is also evidenced from the above that leaders in LLCs tend to manage politics by devolving and through delegation, while in PSCs leaders tend to recourse to micro-social processes like pep-talks, social conversations and through hierarchy dynamics (performance appraisal) and enactment of formal instruments (rules and procedures). In the case of MNCs, leaders more often than not tend to see a trade off between what is political and what is professional, and hence to mange politics they are predisposed to instrumental use of 'social networking', 'professionalism' and 'diplomacy' in their self imagery and behaviour. The common pattern observed amongst leaders of MNCs and PSCs is managing politics through developing strategic relationships with shareholders and stakeholders. Moreover one can also evidence the surfacing and pervasiveness of certain emic concepts as instruments of managing politics across all three sectors with varying intensities. For example, *Sifarish* is considered to be one of the popular socio-political institutions, which permeates all three types of organizations, particularly PSCs, in while leaders in MNCs and LLCs refer to *Gheebah* and *Hassad* - very strong religio-ethical notions which place limits on politics in their organizations. One way or the other, the nature of politics, political behaviour and practices on the part of individual leaders, are related with identity structure and identity formation. Therefore in the next chapter I cover how leadership practices – organizational, social and political – exhibit identity patterns and identity creation processes in the three organizational domains under study.

Chapter 7 – Identity

The authentic self is the soul made visible.
[Sarah Ban Breathnach quoted by Klenke 2007: 68]

7.1 Introduction

The themes that emerged and that are explored in this chapter derive from the discourse, utterances and practices of the research respondents. In other words, I did not set out methodologically in a deliberate way to research 'identity'. Discussion focuses on the following three themes: how is the leadership in the Pakistani corporate or organizational context struggling with identity issues? How do modern-western organizational and local-cultural and social identities manifest, co-exist and mutually interact in the three domains of organizations? And what identity concepts and attributes are embodied in the leaders' utterances and practices of leadership in the three corporate segments, in Pakistan? These three themes will be covered for each sector in turn.

7.2 Identity practices in Multinational Corporations

There is strong empirical evidence found to support the existing literature on identity work in the context of corporate leadership in the MNCs segment. Here I have referred to three leading themes as emerging from the data. These themes are: espousal of global identity; denial of local identity; and resurgence of deep identity.

7.2.1 Espousing global identity

Within the context of MNCs in Pakistan, one can clearly find enough evidence of what Alvesson & Willmott (2002) termed 'organizational regulation of identity' and 'identity work' on the part of organizational members. This is increasingly evident in the organizational practices of leadership, departmentalization, functional specialization, or in reward practices, etc. For instance, identity formation of a manager and leaders working in MNCs takes place, in the first instance, through the notion of professional education, and then through training, cultivating a profuse sense of ownership and attachment to the global or transnational organization – like a sense or feelings of pride and prudency, rise in stature, and a sense of superiority over others [individual and organizations]. This process of identity creation in MNCs is observed to be very subtle, conscious, systemic and meaningfully inculcated amongst the members of its organizations. For instance, on the question of what motivates them, the leader of the second biggest sales region of the leading MNC in Pakistan says:

> We have a young team with us; at first we have to put this in their minds that they feel proud to work with this organization, and our second requirement is to admire them, and you must admire them for their work (NSM-MNC).

Here, organizational identification is carried out at two levels: first, the feeling of working with a leading global organization and being part of such a team, increases the self-esteem of its members. Second, in order to get more out of them you have to extend recognition to the individual's way of working, which again is paying respect to and gratifying the individual and his or her self-identification. Hence, the concept of self appears to be created through a synthesis of internal self-definition (paying respect to the individual) and through external definition (infusing a sense of pride and prudency in working for a MNC) by others. Thus the two stages of identity creation – 'expressing' and 'impressing' of Hatch & Shultz's model (2002) – seem to be at work as has been earlier described in Chapter 2 of this thesis. To reiterate, the process of expressing persists when organizational members, as happens in the above, make explicit claims of what the organization is. In this case culture is embedded in the material identity artefacts such as name, logo and symbols, etc., while if the cultural identity is projected by outsiders (media and social forces), it is known as impressing (Hatch & Shultz 2002).

At another point, the same informant referred to the nature of training given to the organizational members:

> UPL has a very extensive training programme. There is too much spending on individuals on training as against other companies. If it is only one training running in other companies, then here we go for three trainings, and at times, in a month all going on simultaneously. Good training is coupled with good food and hotel in the best possible environment. We have our own CD academy and give training on TM and AM levels (basic sales level in the field) for competencies and skills building. Moreover we have third party training carried on generalised competencies and managerial one (NSM-MNC).

In this respect Sturdy *et al* (2006) draw our attention to the nature of management education and training, and how 'it has shifted from traditional concerns to legitimacy or ideological power of management knowledge and individual careers to more towards managerial discourses and their power effects' (Sturdy *et al* 2006: 843), hence it is the managerial discourse which tends to shape identity. For Sturdy *et al*, global professional identity-formation is associated with acquiring fluency in managerial education. 'The MBA thus becomes a means for acquiring appropriate language fluency in management and self confidence to gain legitimacy and social privilege in senior management' (Sturdy *et al* 2006: 841).

Similarly, another regional sales head or leader, responsible for the 2nd biggest commercial city of Pakistan, explains and conforms to the organizing philosophy of his company in going global:

> We are an organization which is spread in more than 180 countries and 400 brands, just think of a matrix, and we receive gross revenue in billions of dollars, pounds or

euros, though resources are always limited. See in a country or a category that gives you better return than other, and similarly in the same country, for e.g. if I have category A & B, and B is giving me a 50% margin, my tendency would be to allocate more towards that category rather than category A. Scales comes into play, with one innovation globally and you start getting translated globally and start getting economies off that. So why would we start doing 100 local things versus if you hit globally – one big hit (ROM-MNC).

And at another juncture, the same respondent says more openly:

We are operating on a global philosophy basis, and for us 10% [margin or profit] is of no use while if we can earn a profit of 70% on another product like Max or deodorant (ROM-MNC).

The two quotations above indicate how the leadership in MNCs in countries like Pakistan rationalizes, owns and demonstrates adherence, acquisition and preference for what was described by Hatch & Shultz (2002) as 'mirroring' their global identity. The process of mirroring is there when organizational identities are produced as the images held by their key stakeholders. Similarly explaining further, it is the type of product produced (or strategy formulated in home country) that also reveals the nature of the identity generated, and is more often promoted and embedded within the overall organizational identity of the MNC in a host country. This further reinforces practically the shaping up of individual or personal identity to conform more to that of the home country (of the MNC) or the organization's global identity.

7.2.2 Denial of foreign identity

This seems quite paradoxical, as more often than not, MNCs in countries like Pakistan try to be defensive in their claims for global or international ownership or identity display at the level of public rhetoric. This may be owing to the perceived precarious situation in the contemporary international political environment in countries like Pakistan. For instance, when I visited the regional headquarters of one of the leading MNCs for interview purposes, there was no name or sign of identification at the main gate or building, which was quite unusual for a globally leading commercial organization of FMCG type. On being asked why there was no name displayed outside the regional office, the regional sales head replied,

I think our organization takes extra care of that, and you have to be sensitive to certain things (ROM-MNC).

This can be described as an act of concealing identity at the practice level. Das *et al* (2008) described similar action on the part of a transnational service provider as an act of masking, a situation where cross-cutting and nested identities are at work, employees and organizations are required to work under different names so as to mask their national identities.

Another distinct aspect of MNCs operating in Pakistan is that they tend to be in denial mode concerning their foreign ownership and identity at a public level. This might be because of any perceived backlash on social issues arising from the precarious contemporary political situation (Rugman 1997) in Pakistan. For example, when I tried to get access for an interview to one of the leading International Power Projects operating in Pakistan, its Director HR and Corporate Services offered this clarification:

> First, this is not solely an MNC as when this unit was privatized in 1996 only 36% shares were bought by IPR and took over management. In 2005 PDAWA (PSC) off loaded some of its shares to general public. IPR groomed local leaders and managers for various reasons, and then foreign element returned back, now it is 100% COKAP's own management, and controlling authority is board where IPR and PDAWA both are represented. We are unique in the sense that unlike Shell, ICI and UL, policies do not come from head office; rather from within the board (MAB-CON).

This act of hiding or concealing identity was too defensive and insecure a stance in order to repudiate a position based on global or international identification. Rather, it was positioned more to approximate and justify claims of being local and having a national identity.

Similarly the Vice President and board member of one of the world's leading FMCG based MNCs, who was Pakistani stated:

> I get so many emails about ownership, and people ask me and it is spread through internet as well; do not use products of this company because of its foreign ownership. I ask them how you come to know that. Did you do any research? And they say I am told by Tom, Dick and Harry. I argue and even pursue my family members as well, and then tell them that the shareholding structure is held with the public and a very tiny proportion is held by foreign entity (VP-MNC).

In the above situation, no matter that country-level leadership of the given MNC might depict some of the reason for perceived sensitivity to foreign ownership, or that it can claim local identity positioning owing to some emergent locally contingent cross-cultural issues and political misgivings, but at the practice level this again can be considered a case of masking identity. Therefore, in this particular case, one can simply observe that the organization's collective identity at a rhetorical level just does not match with individual level of identity-formation as discussed above at 7.2.1.

This aspect seems paradoxical and runs quite contrary to the organizational identification strategies MNCs have for their individual members [leaders and managers]. As has been explained earlier, MNCs by and large, tend to promote and emphasize greater localness – as image-building rhetoric for public consumption – through advertisement and

promotions[18] for multiple objectives like revenue contribution and employment generation and making certain claims on CSRs. This further means that such multinational organizations have a distinct strategy for image-building (local or national identity) for consumers, customers and the general public, while pursuing a distinct identity response and strategy (global identity) for their own internal members. Going by Hatch & Shultz's (2002) analysis, here the organization's 'expressing' and 'impressing' is different from its 'mirroring' and 'reflecting'. This reinforces the whole idea of the complex nature of identity work, and what has been referred to by Sveningsson & Alvesson (2003) as identity patchwork on the part of the organization at a collective level.

All this seems quite paradoxical. On the one hand, the leadership and management in MNCs have a global identity configuration and practices for its individual leaders and members, while on the other hand, they raise certain claims of being a local entity at the public or rhetoric level. However, in practice MNCs are engaged in skilful repair work on their global identity and tend to justifying through presence through promoting local identity patterns. This type of utterance and discourse from the leaders, itself leads to the evidence of multiple, shifting and fluid identities of the organization. Observing MNCs identity practices reveals that there is no such thing as a pure unitary or coherent form of global identity; rather place and people, local and national identities are embedded in the configuration of global identity.

7.2.3 Resurgence of deep identity and absorption of surface identity

It would be appropriate here to interpret the above identity pattern and paradox in terms of surface and deep concepts, which may offer some kind of resolution. Data generated, analyzed and interpreted in this study lead me to ask whether it is indicative of a resurgence and manifestation of deep identity over surface identity, or *vice versa*. Or in other words, surface identity significantly gets absorbed and becomes deeper identity in the construction of the individual's or leaders' identity. For Husserl, surface data is merely sense data not 'intentional', in his terms, and surface data cannot be taken as derivative of its depth (Harman 2009). Hence for Husserl 'objects are deeper than all their qualities and surface perturbations' (Harman 2009: 136). For Corley *et al*, depth is one of the key features related with organizational identity thereby making a distinction between

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[18] For example, one of the leading global MNCs facing tough competition from an emerging local giant (LLC), showed an advertisement with the slogan or Unique Selling Proposition (USP) *yahi tu hai apna-pun,* which means this is how to be within self. The advertising scene depicts two brothers, along with other family members, chatting over a cup of tea. The elder one, who has settled abroad (in a developed country), asks his younger brother to come over there and have a good career. The younger one replies – *mein yahinh theek hoon* – which means that I am a better fit here. Upon this theme song is flashed with company's USP - *yahi tu hai apna-pun (enjoy being within self).* This reveals the MNC's strategy for targeting consumers at large, indirectly and subliminally, so that it should be perceived as the local firm as it is facing tough competition from a local firm.

superficial or surface-level features that can change, and deep rooted fundamental characteristics. For them, 'the notion of depth suggests that identity characteristics may not be obvious, and some characteristics may be difficult to articulate because they are deeply rooted in individuals belief about the organization' (Corley *et al* 2006: 91).

Therefore, the concept generated within the context of leadership and organizing can be applied and looked into from the perspective of identity. Thus, one can extend and examine the identity framework of *surface identity* and *deep identity* as was empirically evidenced from data collected on MNCs, LLCs and PSCs in Pakistan. It is observed here cogently, that though surface identity (an identity of being modern) tends to be more apparent and pronounced, yet going a little deeper beneath the surface identity, there is something that does matter and is manifest at certain stages of life amongst the members and leaders of the organization. This is *deep identity* which is embedded in the local culture – geography, history, language and religion. For instance, when asked a question on the existence of a glass ceiling for outwardly practicing religious members of its organization, the VP amongst the three topmost executives of the leading MNC, replied, after a long pause:

> … I do not know whether there is a glass ceiling, and to be honest, I became religious after or at a later stage, and that is why I do not know whether or not this was a reason [for my slow promotion] (VP-MNC).

The admission of becoming religious after serving an organization for a long time carries several meanings. One is that the identity construction of an individual is itself in constant flow and flux. Second, this represents the manifestation and resurgence of deeper identity, in the form of utterances and discourse having traditional or religious overtones. Nevertheless, another person of the same stature and length of service in the same organization, VP-HRD's discourse revealed somewhat the stable and consistent patterns of match between its surface and deep level identities. Therefore, analysing this in the light of Hatch & Shultz's model (2002), the former case (VP-IMH) refers to an expressing process where culture is known through identity claims, while the latter case (VP-HRD) is more of a mirroring process, where the identity is mirrored in the image of others' identities. The point is further supported and evidenced by the following two vignettes illustrate my theorizing on the manifestation and resurgence of deeper identity in the context of organizing and leadership in MNCS.

Vignette 1

WJA, a person with a local business family background (cotton and construction business), and a LUMS graduate, preferred to join UPL not because of better monetary rewards, but rather to follow a better, modern, professional organizational career. In his words:

I preferred and decided not to take a government job and not to do family business… and as such I am not making as much money as my younger brother is, who filled in my position in family business but *Alhamdolillah* [All praises to *Allah* or in the sense of thanks to God] I think I am driven more by personal satisfaction, and this is what gives me energy to stick to this path. I think I had two personal constraints; one was ethics which is linked with the Pakistani (business) environment which is not conducive for you to stick to your basic remuneration, adhering to personal or universal business ethics - like getting involved in underhand deals and corruption - and secondly I do not practice Usury (ROM-MNC).

The discourse here depicts the identity construction of leadership in a MNC which seems, to all intents and purposes, based on the denial of local identity, and how his personal identity is embedded within religious identity construction. So being a part of a MNC was preferred, in order to avoid or deny local or family ways of doing business, and simultaneously what is happening is that modern-western professional identity is considered ideal and transcendental. And finally, more telling and convincing for leaders in MNCs, is that their cognition, construction, and interpretation of being part of such a global organizational identity is considered preferable to seeking, satisfying and practising local-religious identity. Hence, the 'expressing process' of identity-formation (Hatch & Shultz 2002) appears to be at work here, confirming my thinking with respect to the resurgence of deeper level identity.

Vignette 2

Another typical example of how constraints apply on the formation of deeper level identity in becoming, or transforming, surface level identity is depicted in the vignette below. The CEO of one of the leading American pharmaceutical MNC (A-MNC), who happened to serve 15 years in the British MNC (B-MNC), stated:

Yes, there is a glass ceiling for religious people in my former organization (B-MNC) but this is not here in this organization (A-MNC). I think in the last 15 years of my stay over there no one really went up who had really [exhibited religiosity]… In fact I would like to put it this way: a colleague of mine, who was a very senior director and highly religious, made a very telling statement to repeat here. He used to have a very short beard, and one day he said when I retire then I will grow my beard. I said why do you not grow it now? He said because in Islam also, is it not said 'do in Rome what the Romans do'? This will not be accepted here, and it will affect my career here. I said it is hypocrisy - you have to go by your belief. And, you know that guy never grew his beard till he retired, and yes he got promotions (CEO-A-MNC).

In this vignette, growing a short or trendy beard is considered as a surface level identity practice, a gesture of being modern and conveying a professional identity while actually holding a belief that the full beard was recessive in the outlook and behaviour of a leader. In other words the short beard is expressive of surface identity, the full beard that of deeper identity? Thus individual leaders in MNCs prefer to go for a 'mirroring' way of managing their identity, or pay greater attention to surface level identity claims in their utterances,

appearance and actions, rather than going for an 'expressing' mode of identity management. They make a conscious attempt to curtail connections with deeper (religious) identity. Moreover, the curtailment of deeper level identity can be considered akin to the identity-denial phenomenon. Pratt & Foreman (2000) described this as 'deletion' when individual leaders and managers are confronted with the dilemma, having to opt from amongst the multiple identities they have, and hence trying to get rid of one or more of its multiple identities. This is reminiscent of what Sveningsson & Alvesson (2003) call 'identity work', whereby individual or leaders are constantly involved in repairing, revising and strengthening their personal narrative and construction of identity.

7.3 Identity practices in Public Sector Corporations

Though there are multiple themes that emerged from the interview data, I shall restrict the scope of my analysis here to just three of the more prominent identity facets of leadership at PSCs. These are: the claiming of professional identity; espousal of national identity; and denial of local identity.

7.3.1 Professional identity at work

Organization and leadership in the public sector cannot be understood appropriately without understanding its historical context. Thus, it is the colonial legacy that has created an asymmetry in institutional or organizational development, on the one hand of technical and bureaucratic forms of organization (as introduced by Western colonizers) and on the other, societal politics, political institutions and political leaders of the local or colonized subject. Consequently, the whole gamut of local politics – the concept, political processes and political leaders – were viewed with a sense of alienation and suspicion, denial and confrontation, from within organizations. This legacy continues to influence work and organization to this day. For instance, one of the most senior persons, next to the CEO, revealed:

> Political interference might be there at MD levels, not below. We never promoted anyone who has come through political connections, within the [department of] finance, joint ventures and within strategic business planning. For any issue, you look at it in a simple way, based on your knowledge, as *Allah* has given you wisdom and mind; on that basis you take that solution which is simple and do-able. Everything is do-able in the world if you look at it from intent to do it, otherwise you can make the do-able non-doable because of critiquing and complexities (EDF-PSC).

When asked another question, related to the perception of existence of a professional and political trade-off, he replied:

> It is difficult for me to answer you on politics as I am not a politician [no ownership of political being]. Being political is difficult… since I am coming from outside, so to me there is no politics but it might be there. I have not seen it majorly. No doubt

that is there; yes, and it goes on. But my view remains very simple as a professional, that we will give our best opinion and best judgment (EDF-PSC).

The above extracts demonstrate amply the identity-construction of a senior executive in a PSC: he attaches more weight to being a finance professional than being a member of the organization, as he considers himself an outsider (when he says coming from outside) even after serving the organization for more than a decade. Second, since this individual leader was from a finance background and profession, to him there were no politics in the two departments he was personally heading or leading. Third, there is a contradiction, as he admitted to the existence of politics at the top or MD's level, but denied its existence below. Yet politics is something pervasive, and it trickles down and proliferates once it is there at the top. And finally the identity-construction of the respondent leader involves strong denial of his being political or a politician.

Another PSC leader narrates the concept of the organization he is leading and narrates its performance with high confidence:

> Our organization is a success story, in managing 1.8 billion dollar assets due to one main reason, it is a joint venture between GOP and GOAD, where all decisions are taken by consensus, and there is no interference from either of the government (MD-PSC).

> Any country which would like to invest in Pakistan, no point to debate on this that we are on a thin edge of more of a failure than of a success, whatever reasons there may have been, and I do not want to get into political mode and want to remain in a professional mode (MD-PSC).

These two quotations from the CEO of one of the largest organizations in Pakistan show he prefers to reveal his identity and the constituent leadership practice more along professional lines. Secondly, one can infer from the statements that success comes from warding off political intervention by the two governments.

Similarly, the General Manager of HR in another leading PSC openly acknowledges challenges in the following:

> Being a public sector organization the leadership has not just to face business challenges but also political challenges of public sector organization. So at times it is just not possible to follow best practices; rather they are compromised (GMH-PSC).

This is an open and frank admission of the challenges faced by PSCs, and these challenges are admitted to be higher, more difficult and tougher during times when political, rather than military, regimes have been in power in Pakistan. This is quite in line with the social identity of a praetorian society where administration and control is given privilege over the meanings of politics and negotiation.[19]

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[19] For military sociologists, Pakistani society can typically be characterised as a praetorian society, that is, a society where the military intervenes frequently to take over from civilian government. Since its inception

7.3.2 Espousal of national identity

For the purpose of this research I have taken a broader view of what is considered as national identity. The constituent social elements of national identity-creation are gender, family, history, geographical locality or region, religion, language and culture all embedded and inseparable from each other. Considering the notion of national identity broadly is appropriate for this study in order to generate thick descriptions as against the 'thin' focus of many identity studies. Methodologically this is more in line with Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003). For example, the plant head of the leading oil refinery stated very categorically:

> We belong to this region and are Indian first and only then we are Muslims (GMR-PSC).

Here in the above two identities seem to be at work. First is the respondent's claim to order his multiple identities, and of all of them, to him it is the geographical or regional identity which comes foremost. The leading argument of Brown & Humphrey (2006) is to understand *place* as a discursive resource in the construction of organizational identities, which may include nostalgic and fantasy elements. Second, is the recognition of being Muslim, thereby considering religious identity as an inalienable component of organizational settings and leadership in Pakistan.

i) National-local languages and identity

> Since English language is dominant in this country and in organizations - which is not compatible with our society - therefore, here [in this organization] it goes and gets mixed, at plant level. We speak mostly Urdu, and when we are frank we talk in *Punjabi* [regional language], and hence it is not a big issue (CEU-PSC).

> Though effective communication in English is considered part of professional skills, to do presentations, and to be impressive, being convincing, being an orator, it is part of the personality and it is part of leadership skills (CEU-PSC).

> Nonetheless we do not see English proficiency as compulsory, we see how expressive he is in whatever language, and if he is good at English that will get noticed (CEU-PSC).

The three quotations above reinforce what is stated by Brown & Humphrey, who 'regard "organization" as constituted through language'. They focused on 'how employees constructed the text of the organization through their descriptions of it', and argue that 'local actors constructed their organization through ongoing linguistic acts of labelling and description,… and in the constitution of the organization as a locale for hegemony and

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the country has seen four military interventions in 1958, 1969, 1977 and 1999. For scholars, in the absence of the regular role of political institutions and political parties, institutions and organizations get excessively politicized. S. E. Finer (1988) in his classic study, *The Man on Horse Back*, gave an exposition of why the military intervenes in Pakistan. Khakwani (2003) argued the inadequacy of the Western concept of civilian supremacy in the historico-cultural context of Pakistani society. For further details on military interventions in Pakistan see Cohen (1984), Rizvi (2000) and Shafqat (1997).

resistance' (Brown & Humphrey 2006: 232). These excerpts also depict how the language issue persists across all three sectors, it tends to be more pronounced in the case of MNCs operating in Pakistan. One interesting aspect which comes forth is that Urdu, which is lingua-franca, is also considered alien, at one level, as individual members in the organization tend to be more expressive in their local language, such as *Punjabi* and other local languages.

Similarly, on the pervasiveness of the English language and the retention of national language, one senior leader in a PSC commented:

> In Pakistani organizations we all speak Urdu and write in English, so the communication language can be called Urduish or what is an Urdu-English mix. And the same goes here as well. People are communicating by mixing Urdu and English. English is not considered a barrier here but yes these things [English, accent, style and fluency] do exist and matter in MNCs (EDF-PSC).

The emergence of *Urduish* (hybrid language) generates complexity in meaning and context as has been identified by as: 'organizations can more appropriately be regarded as texts, constituted in discourse, and analysable as locales' (Brown & Humphreys 2006: 232), and hence emerge 'complexes of social meanings' (Brown & Humphreys 2006: 232).

ii) National identity

The question posed on leadership generated a prompt response on the identity aspect from a senior and influential leader who granted me an interview as proxy to CEO:

> The question then is who is the leader? The one who has guts to bring in change, to see into the future, ability to work as team member, and also who can guide the nation or team to achieve the defined destiny, like the destiny of *Quaid-e-Azam* [founder of Pakistan] to establish Pakistan (GMM-PSC).

Therefore what we see is that the question on organizational leadership was responded to with emphasis on national identity and with reference to the founder of the nation. The respondent clarified further what the destination is in his view:

> We are under the government of Pakistan, so we have been told that you have to achieve this, so this is decided elsewhere (outside the organization) and we are not deciding on leaders rather they (governments) are appointing leaders (GMM-PSC).

Therefore it is the government which influences national identity-construction through the appointment of leaders in PSCs. Therefore, at practice level, it is observed that the identity-construction process is a highly contested one, not only purely from the organization's perspective but also from the national political dimension. For instance, identity-construction manifests itself practically, in the form of tension and conflict, when it comes to the formulation of organizational objectives:

> Every year we set our objectives in terms of volume or in terms of generation of revenues, with some saying this should be expressed in rupees earned while others

say to calculate profitability in dollars, and yet there are others who want it in terms of litres or different production parameters of volume (GMM-PSC).

The point here is, because the organization cited above operates internationally, it generates multiple claimants of identity. It is interpreted by different members to have different identities: some claim more of a global or international entity or status, while others base their claim on national identity concerns. This seems to be a deeper dilemma in identity-creation (who are we? and where are we going?) than that of formulation of organizational objectives at surface level.

Similarly, familial influence on identity construction can be observed as one of the leaders at the second topmost tier at the plant who volunteered to be interviewed for this research, articulated his views thus (unprompted by direct identity queries):

> Let me tell you about myself. There are few things placed by *Allah Ta'ala* (God Almighty) in every person donated by nature or by birth, and nobody is without these attributes what can be called 'God-given', and nobody is without these attributes or qualities but that very person seldom or never knows what these qualities are? So knowing oneself is the foremost requirement. I have learned something from my late father and then learned from my mother at home… I learned two things; discipline from my father (he was a Captain during world war-II) and *aajzi, inkisari* and *saadgi* (humility, being down to earth and simplicity) from my mother… to know what I am and what I should be. I am personally inspired by people like Iqbal, Roomi and others, though I do not know Persian (CEU-PSC).

Here we clearly observe how the identity pattern tends to emanate and flow from personal or familial identity and transmutes into national and organizational identity. Thus we cannot see the de-personalization of self, as was discussed in chapter 2, happening here. Rather, organizational identity can be seen through this quotation as transient and operating at the surface level, while national identity seems to be more subtle and a deeper phenomenon. One cannot escape national identity and thus it can be considered like a skin as humans cannot just move out of it. Therefore, 'deletion' and 'identity repair work' from this perspective can be seen as cosmetic and of an ephemeral nature. Explicit and conscious recognition is given by the leader, who considers himself a thorough professional, to his parents and what he has inherited from his father and mother. He knows himself through historical conditions and conditioning (within national, cultural and religious domains) and sees his identity resonating with the work of scholars like Roomi[20] and Iqbal[21].

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[20] Jalaal-ud-Deen Muḥammad Balkhi (also known as Jalaal-ud-Din Rumi and popularly known as Mevlana in Turkey and Mawlana in Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and known to the English-speaking world simply as Rumi (1207-1273) was a 13th-century Muslim poet, jurist, theologian, and Sufi mystic. Rumi is a descriptive name which means 'Roman' since he lived most of his life in an area called 'Rumi' (then under the control of Seljuq dynasty) because it was once ruled by the Eastern Roman Empire. He was one of the figures who flourished in the Sultanate of Rum.

[21] Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) also known as Allama Iqbal is admired as a prominent classical poet by Pakistani, Indian and other international scholars of literature. His first poetry book, *Asrar-e-Khudi*,

Another person next to the apex position of CEO in another top performing PSC, revealed the nature of distinct national values in the following words:

> They (Pakistanis) do hard work and they are honest, at times they may not be very upfront. I think I am upfront because of my training (in USA & MNCs); normally Pakistanis are a shy sort of lot, but not submissive. Even if they want to differ they differ in a fashion which would not hurt others. I think this is a difference between ODC and other companies (EDF-PSC).

The above interview quote narrates the influence of national identity on the leader's self identity and his way of organizing, and how this creates, at a higher organizational level, a distinction between various organizational identities at work. In this study, PSC leaders were observed to give far greater emphasis to national identity than do Pakistani leaders in MNCs. Thus national identity can increasingly be interpreted and seen as a factor in the construction of organizational identity. This perhaps explains why and how equally modern and professional organizations in PSCs differ substantially from that of MNCs despite being in the same industry. In order to look for further evidence I present some illustrative vignettes.

Vignette 3

One of the benefits of field research is it generates a vivid picture of what is happening in organizations at a practice level. While I was conducting interviews at PCO, it was facing the problem of succession, as GMP was about to retire and a new person had to be appointed. Initially there were four competitors for the GMP slot. After six months of evaluation and assessment the competition was reduced to two candidates. During the course of my research interviews one was selected. Here I briefly present the context in which the new plant leader (GMP) was appointed:

> SIM, chemical engineer by qualification, was professionally very sound and a technical expert in this industry. He sacrificed his career or could not reach to the top level position owing to his family issues with the factory school. He decided to take his family out of the colony (officially provided residence) and started living in the nearby big city, and consequently has to move out fortnightly for family visits. He also tends be a bit of a loose talker, blunt, with highly individualistic style of a Western type (open and confrontational). He was left out in the competition for the top slot of plant leadership while a more mediocre mechanical engineer, and docile in his demeanour, was selected instead (CEU-PSC).

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appeared in the Persian language in 1915, and other famous books of poetry include *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi, Payam-i-Mashriq* and *Zabur-i-Ajam*. Some of his most well-known Urdu work is *Bang-i-Dara, Bal-i-Jibril a*nd *Zarb-i Kalim*. Besides his Urdu and Persian poetry, his various Urdu and English lectures and letters were also very influential in cultural, social, religious and political disputes over the years. He was knighted by the King-Emperor George V in 1922, and was thus officially entitled 'Sir Muhammad'. Iqbal is known as *Shair-e-Mushriq* means *Poet of the East*. He is also called *Muffakir-e-Pakistan* ('The Inceptor of Pakistan'), and *Hakeem-ul-Ummat* (The Sage of the nation). Pakistan has officially recognised him as its 'national poet'. His birthday is celebrated on November 9 and it is a declared public holiday in Pakistan.

The above episode illustrates that within the context of Pakistan, it is not only the technical and professional competence of the organizational member which qualifies them for a leadership position. Rather, it is social competence and political acceptance of identity which matter as well. In this case, the individual of high calibre and professional competence could not make up or compete for the topmost leadership slot by ignoring the collective, socio-political dynamics of the community around. While having a technically or professionally less relevant identity, a mechanical engineer in the oil refinery industry was deemed fit for the leadership position owing to a more pronounced surface level socio-political and religious identity. This clearly illustrates that organizational leadership is a social endeavour (Birkinshaw 2010), as has been explained earlier in section 2.4.1. Moreover, leadership is a process of social influence that tends to emanate more from social identity than from professional or organizational identity.

7.3.3 Denial of local identity

Denial of local identity is a general tendency observed amongst the better and high performing PSCs, and even LLCs, to consider themselves more as MNCs rather than local or national organizations. I had an interesting experience in this regard. The moment I told respondents that I was doing research on management in Pakistan, the immediate response more often than not was: is there any? The question then is how one can interpret and justify the presence of this type of rationalization, in the denial of being a local or national organization; that is, an inability to think and believe in self-identity or to be part of a collective identity or global professional community. For Hardt & Negri, this type of denial can be taken as an instance of foreclosure, 'where [a] repressed element and idea is buried deep inside, the foreclosed is expelled outside, so that the ego can act as if the idea never occurred to it at all' (Hardt & Negri 2009: 69)**.** The foreclosed in this case is the non-European [non-Western] contribution to modern culture and society. For instance, the plant head of the leading organization in the oil refinery segment shared his views right at the outset of an interview:

> Let me first tell you something about PCO, it is not a public sector organization, it is a multinational organization, and is governed by a BOD from two countries; Governments of ABD and Government of Pakistan in 40:60 shares. We have altogether a different culture from that of public sector companies… We are the largest and the state of art, and most modern refinery of the country (GMR-PSC).

The last two lines were in effect saying 'we are different from other PSCs'. A more calculated response came from the leading public sector organization in the oil exploration sector:

> It is our desire to become an international company and MNC, and for that to happen leadership has to think the way the MNC thinks. We are gradually working for that as we have not gone abroad, but we will go *Insha'Allah* (EDF-PSC).

The above is indicative of a rationalization on the part of the leader and his denial of being a local or national organization. This is referred to as *deletion* by Pratt & Foremann (2000), and occurs when managers actually try to rid the organization of one or more of its multiple identities. Or in other words, leaders tend to follow the deletion strategy when an organization is vying for ascendency of a single or dominant identity.

7.4 Identity practices in Large Local Corporations

The discussion and analyses here are restricted to three leading identity dimensions that emerged from the data on prominent LLCs in Pakistan. These are: pre-eminence of *geo-cultural* identity; retention of multiple identities; and denial of local identity.

7.4.1 Pre-eminence of *Geo-cultural* identity

The concept of identity is no more considered static, stable and fixed over time and space even if there occur spatial, geographical, and time related changes. Based on the evidence coming from my field research I would like to theorize identity construction of organizations as *geo-cultural* in nature. It is something associated with historical and collective conditioning of individuals, communities and societies entrenched in a particular local identity (geographically based) which generates its own specific interpretation and meanings. As such, *geo-cultural* identity-construction is an amalgam of personal, familial, linguistic, religious and other local cultural features deeply ingrained with the historical conditions of the geographical region. This for Zizek (1989) is 'one in which reality becomes ideological enabling individuals to construct and strategize their identities as an amalgam of attributes, values and choice' (quoted by Kosmala & Herrbach 2006: 1395). For Kosmala & Herrbach, 'individual identity is no longer passively derived from one's position in the social space; rather it is the responsibility of each individual to reflect upon how they choose to exist in a historically and culturally specific time' (Kosmala & Herrbach 2006: 1395). The emerging pattern of identity as exhibited by individual leaders in LLCs suggests what I term here *geo-cultural* identity. For instance, a member of one of the leading successful industrialist families in Pakistan since the 1950s, narrated his affinity with a region beyond territorial Pakistan:

> All leading Pakistani businessmen used to work in leather sometime back so we had our tanneries at Madras, Calcutta, Delhi, Amratsar, and Jalandhar. We originally belonged to Chinniot [ethnically from that region] but we had run away from Chinniot to where these strong markets were… In our view, arrival of a new civilization takes around 250 years, even if your title is of Sir [Knighthood] it takes 250 years to deserve it and just does not happen overnight. It is the movement of generations which either make things better or destroy things (CEO-LLC).

One can observe in the above that identity transformation is associated with the flow or movement of forces such as regional or international markets, profession, industry and opportunities. Similarly, as identity is a living concept, living with diverse settings and other communities also has impact on identity transformation. For instance, it is worth noting how the same individual recalls his historical retention of family, caste, region and religion:

> We belong to a *Zamindar* [agrarian] family; Rajput by caste, and in Chinniot we might have been turned Muslim during the time of Aurangzeb[22] (1618-1707), converted from Hindu, and we were not of originally Muslims. They [our elders] got lands allocated in Chinniot so used to establish *deray* [settlements] by having *ucha shimla* [high turban - symbol of esteem] and used to consider *Uttum Khaitee* [superior work is agro-based] land possession or doing agriculture as the most superior of all businesses (CEO-LLC).

What is emphasised in the above is learning business from the Hindu community despite being converted Muslims, and the repudiation of Arab identity and the formation of a new distinct identity which can be identified as Indo-Muslims. This is further manifested in the following interview extract:

> We learned from *Bunya*; how do they work and practice business? I think this was a blessing for us to learn from them, had we been Arab then would have been like today's Arabs so our interaction with *bunya* has given a lot of business acumen to us. They knew how to do *vapar* [trade] and that has contributed for whatever we are today (CEO-LLC).

The renunciation of Arab identity is simultaneously replete with distinct Indian Muslim identity; aspects of self that can be identified as belonging peculiarly to Indo-Pak Muslims, spatially distinct, embedded with regional, linguistic and familial identity, as the above discourses reveals.

i) Regional and linguistic dimensions

The concept of *geo-cultural* identity seems to be empirically supported by the LLC's data, and further can be related to what I have earlier analysed as a deeper identity. For instance, one of the most prominent textile industry leaders says:

> We left tanneries completely, left *Hindustan* [India] totally and our permanent residence in Madras; we used to come to Chinniot once a month or so; one uncle was Delhi based, one uncle was Calcutta based, and my maternal relatives were Delhi based. So we came back to the place of origin as we had a very strong sense of belonging to where we belong to, with intense desire to do business or practice nearer to our *watan* [native town or country] (CEO-LLC).

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[22] Abul Muzaffar Muhayy-ud-Din Muhammad Aurangzeb Alamgir (1618-1707) commonly known as Aurangzeb Alamgir which means 'Conqueror of the World', was the sixth Mughal Emperor of India, whose rule lasted for nearly half a century. He was the second longest reigning Mughal emperor after Akbar. During his reign the Mughal Empire reached its zenith with its territories encompassing over 1.25 million square miles and with more than 150 million subjects, nearly 1/4 of the world's population at that time.

At this juncture one can say this is a manifestation and resurgence of deeper identity. Obviously, leaving India and big commercial centres of India and rejoining Chinniot, one of the remotest regions of Pakistan was not at all considered the rational and logical decision from a business and economic point of view.

How this resurgence of an old, historical and deep local identity took place, say after its suppression (when people started to leave the region) some 400 years back, is an important phenomenon to note along with the change in the geo-political situation, i.e. the creation of Pakistan (a new national identity). Within the discipline of cultural geography this question is explored by a number of scholars. Larsen (2004: 944), for example, notes 'how *place* identities are negotiated, transformed, and ultimately reconstituted as an integral part of modernity?'. The respondent above further reiterates his affinity with the region thus:

> We are known as *Jaanglis* of Jhang-Chinniot-Maghiana region, which starts from Khanewal region, and is spread in between up till Chakwal (CEO-LLC).

Note how now the Chinnioti-identity becomes a much celebrated and pronounced one within the business community, known for trade and entrepreneurship, while at the time of the creation of Pakistan it was one of the least developed regions. Etiologically the word *jaangli* is derived from jungle, meaning inhabitant of the jungle, and metaphorically means people with no culture or people who are least civilized. What is perhaps most interesting here is that the organization leader who was considered to be amongst the top 22 richest families of Pakistan is disclosing his identity with the once least developed and uncivilized region with great pride. He started his interview in the same *jaangli* language. Thus we can observe here that 'language', as was suggested by Fiol, 'plays a critical role in not only reflecting the product of identification, but also in shaping the processes of identification' (Fiol 2002: 655).

ii) National-religious-familial identity

In the following extract, MNS is reminiscing about the training he received from his father in a very idealised manner, displaying the identity pattern described above:

> For him [my Father], the purpose of our life is that *Allah* has made us a "Cashier", and as Cashier we cannot keep just one rupee and have to distribute onwards. The job of a cashier is to receive and distribute money; not to retain it. If you retain [money or cash] then they [people] are going to make a complaint to the Owner of the world, *Allah*, who then is to change cashier as you never prove responsible. We then used to ask are we just post office. He [my father] used to say "yes you are". These things form the basics of our understandings on organization and of life. How many jobs have you created for people in your life? Just think at the end of day it is your duty. *Namaz* [prayer] is to build a relation with *Allah*, and job-creation is relation-building with His creations [people]. If you just give them money they would not work - you just enable them to earn, like establishing a shop or *Rehri*

[hand pushed moving stall or vehicle] or merchandise to sell and make money (CEO-LLC).

One can empirically observe here the existence of what can be termed '*Geo-cultural identity*' which stems from the individual's simultaneous retention and expression of multiple identities deriving from religious, regional, familial, professional and job- or industry-related affiliations across multiple times and spaces. For Willmott (2006) there is no single identity-construction that can encompass holistically what the person is. The concept of identity is inherently vulnerable to subversion. Identity retention and the resurfacing of historical past runs side by side with more modern, professional, and other global identities, as illustrated in this extract:

> He [my father] was an enabler and used to '*daan*' not in terms of giving money but in order to practice an enabling approach. I have created 12000 jobs in my life but could have created three times more. My father was the biggest teacher, though I have been to Harvard and other places yet I believe my father was an ultimate teacher. He used to say the education you have received is okay but where is your training? You have constructed a house but where is its spirit? And for that either you follow me or someone else (CEO-LLC).

The word used here *daan* is of Hindu aetiology and is reminiscent of latent past religion (some 400 years ago) and the recognition of the Father as the biggest teacher and trainer refers to the family as a resource in identity-creation. There are two approaches which researchers have identified regarding the interface of work and family: the facilitative and the depletion approach. The former suggests that the individual's participation, skills and resources generated in one domain may benefit and enrich the other domain, while the latter suggests commitment within one domain may reduce the resources available for other domains, since time, energy and other resources are fixed for the individual (Bagger & Gutek 2008: 187-188). Therefore, in the above extract when the respondent refers to his father as 'the biggest and ultimate teacher' this suggests a facilitative approach to work, organization and its interface with the family. Stryker also makes a similar point within the context of identity formulation theory: 'when family identity is salient, the family role becomes an important part of the self and has critical effects on one's self-concept' (Stryker 1987 quoted by Bagger & Gutek 2008: 190).

For MNS, identity patterns emerge mainly from the family, and he compares his interpretation of Western and Asiatic values:

> Major differences exist in values and family structures between West and East. There is no such thing as training within their homes, both parents are working while a child eats drinks and plays on his own. Institutions of mother and father, uncle and *biradari* [extended family] have gone as there is no restriction and intervention over him; they [children] have independence and develop confidence on their own but nobody teaches them and transfers values - they are just educated (CEO-LLC).

Sharing and comparing his experience with western education, he states:

My sons are educated in the West; the elder at Wharton, the younger at Boston. Nobody taught them values so they have ripples in their minds as they spent 10-12 years abroad, passing through a highly inflammable age. They are what we call *madur-pidar azad* [free from clutches of Mother and Father]. You cannot have a kid over night; you need some time to have that (CEO-LLC).

Therefore, in the two quotations above, one can infer that the process of organizational and national identity formation starts from family identity creation, especially in the context of family business in LLCs. It exists and persists at an informal level, in the form of practical training rather than on the basis of formal education. Leaders do send their children abroad to stay abreast with modern, professional education, but at the same time remain critical of their modern approach towards life.

iii) Local-cultural values

With identity flows values and cultural practices. For example, the quotation below reveals a local set of values which are quite distinct from today's modern values:

Around 5 o'clock, in the evening he [my father] used to take me to some hospital [for social work], and so on. Not for any photograph, show off, snobbery or *feeta* [cutting tape] ceremony with your name in front, just forgot all these things (CEO-LLC).

The path to leadership development mentioned in these three lines above articulates values which are quite unlike those typically held by individuals and leaders in modern corporations, be it MNCs or PSCs or even some modern LLCs in Pakistan. The set of values speaks to being humble, having high levels of humility, doing things not for fame, staying collective, being patient and sacrificing instead of being aggressive, egoistic and deterministic, or seeking instant gratification in one's personal approach to life. Similarly, at another juncture he stated:

You are not doing [business] for all these things. You first determine for whom you are doing all this. For fame, for *biradari* [tribe or extended family], for cheap populism or for your family to tell; are all futile … I can share views of my father, and he says that it is better to die being not known than to go for cheap fame … This is how he did my training. Of course, with all this we were into money making by looking into ROI, ROA and ROE things (CEO-LLC).

Therefore, what one can infer is an organizational leadership inheriting and maintaining a distinct identity pattern, which is not just based on following Western benchmarks of corporate performance; this in a company that has been one of the top performing organizations in Pakistan for decades. It is certainly not just a pure or static mode of identity. Rather it is a living, complex and emergent blend of identities; a hybridization of Western, modern, national and local identities, at a generic level, so to say. Alice MacGillivray also made similar observations in her study of leadership in a network of communities as, 'perhaps humility and a complex orientation keep them from calling themselves leaders' (MacGillivray 2010: 29).

Furthermore, what is important to note in the above is that leadership is not driven solely by altruism. Rather the simultaneous occurrence of compound-values clearly reveals the existence of multiple identities and the seeking of various identity-related objectives. When asked whether there was any perceived clash or conflict between modern managerial values and his cultural business practices, MNS replied:

> These things I do not see as clashing with modern managerial values; when you know the whole purpose of your birth then there is no clash; clashes comes when you do not know the purpose of your existence. When He [*Allah*] has created us, in innocence and with a beautiful face and form, and in good family, the purpose is just not to make money and consume one or few material things - and that is the end (CEO-LLC).

Even the third generation industrialist, successor of the respondent quoted above, in his mid-thirties, when asked about his interpretation of the relationship between religion and business, commented:

> They do not match [in terms of objectives] but for values, yes; as values coming out of religion and out of what is taught by modern management system are similar in substance. There is no better value provider than the *Quran* [Holy Book]. And this is not akin to fundamentalism but its basic teachings are part of your business process what it teaches us. [Imperatively]You have to be fair with people, and avoid exploitation and tyranny, not to lie, and promptly pay *Zakat*[23] or taxes (CEO-LLC).

This is a perspective which believes in the co-existence and embeddedness of modern business, religious and family identities. This is evident from Corley's findings that top managers and leaders were more sensitive in viewing organizational identity with strategy and purpose of organization, in order 'to adapt with the demands and constraints placed on the organization by outside forces' (Corley 2004: 1169). Certainly, this is not the dominant identity paradigm on which business models are based in Pakistan – the dominant paradigm may be to follow modern-western business practices in their entirety. Nonetheless such an identity pattern shows the co-existence and reconciliation of multiple identities, as is illustrated further in the vignette below.

Vignette 4

Similarly, MRS's father, approaching 70, stated somewhat more altruistically:

> I have dealt with all leading European nations. Americans were my partners and I have received training in Japan on Kaizen, Six Sigma, Quality Circles from Oshikawa, and I am also a qualified black belt; I feel that they have a different form and purpose of life. In one way every one is there to make money but if you say *Bismillah*, or *O-Allah* I am doing this for your sake that I can pray for you, maybe you are pretending 5% or even 50% or more, but this is how you remember your

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[23] *Zakat* is considered to be a religious duty, and is expected to be paid by all practicing Muslims who have the financial means *(nisab).* Therefore, *Zakat* is considered much more than tax in economic sense. In addition to their *Zakat* obligations, Muslims are encouraged to make voluntary contributions (*sadaqat).* The *Zakat* is not collected from non-Muslims, although they are sometimes required to pay the *jizyah* tax.

Creator. If I have to sleep why not do this after making *duas* [prayers], to have a good peace sleep that I can pray for you more, and have *Halal*[24] earnings … only then you will have a *barakah* [synergy] (CEO-LLC).

In the above vignette we can clearly see that leaders' adherence to religious and business identities are reconciled in a pragmatic and pluralistic way. It is not a matter of a trade-off between business identity and a monolithic religious identity. Although within the discipline of Organization Studies, religion and corporate identity construction in general has not yet been explored extensively, there is a significant literature which suggests religion has an influential role in the construction of an individual's identity. For instance, within the context of America, Galush (1966) identified the inseparable linkage between the identity of Polish immigrants and Roman Catholicism, while Lucas (1955) argued that Dutch Calvinists form a strong cohesive community not because of their ethnic or national causes but on the basis of their religion (Chong 1998: 264). Recent work of Case *et al* (2012) deals with much broader and complex question of how do belief system - secular or religious - manifests and represents in individual and collective organizational practices and generates certain processes of socialization, identification and commitment in organization.

Lori Peek, in her study, reveals that religion significantly plays its role in the identity construction of Muslims, and undergoes three stages of development: 'religion as ascribed identity; religion as chosen identity; and religion as declared identity' (Peek 2005: 215). Her research demonstrates how religious identity emerges in a socio-historical context and this identity becomes central to an individual's concept of self. Similarly, for Jacobson, religion amongst British Pakistanis turns out to be a more significant source of social identity formation than ethnicity, and in her words, 'The social boundaries which encompass expressions of religious identity among young British Pakistanis are pervasive and clear-cut in comparison to increasingly permeable ethnic boundaries' (Jacobson 1997: 238).

Hence, the two vignettes above also demonstrate how religion has become a strong source of personal identification and such an identity has its linkage with an organization's strategic actions. Nonetheless, this does not mean at all that there is a single coherent identity pattern right across the LLC sector, as the majority of business leaders and organizations, at the practice level, predominantly view the two identities as irreconcilable, and mutually exclusive.

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[24] *Halal* means lawful, legal or permissible. The term designates any object or an action which is permissible to use or engage in, according to *Shariah* or Islamic law. The term is commonly used to designate food seen as permissible according to Islamic law. The opposite of this word is *Haraam* – forbidden, prohibited or illegal in Islam.

7.4.2 Retention of multiple identities at work

Leaders at the LLCs holds multiple identities simultaneously, political (discussed in details in chapter 6 on organization politics), professional, religious, familial and modern. In the following I will discuss how multiple identities are embedded and juxtaposed in the leadership at LLCs, as against MNCs and PSCs who are oriented more towards cherishing their modern-western and professional identities.

i) Identity response to modern business education

> We went to Harvard and they told us people who pass out from Harvard turn out incompetent and those who drop out are successful. This is owing to labelling; those who got this label, say do not talk to me and get aside. They came here and say what you are talking about; I am a LUMS fellow or a pass out. I reply then and say, oh then I am an illiterate. They say, No you are not an illiterate. But you are not trying to understand me… I am a LUMS fellow (CEO-LLC).

The above quotation can be more meaningful if seen in conjunction with the fact that business graduates from the West, or from a top Western-style institution in Pakistan, are least present in the top performing LLCs. The discourse between leadership of a top performing local corporation and MBAs from LUMS, which is considered one of the most prestigious and world class institutions for business education, probably explains why LLCs have fewer MBA graduates from foreign and top class national institutions like IBA and LUMS. Sveningsson & Alvesson (2003) appropriately referred to the structuring of identity through acquisition of knowledge and discourse and how it is related to the emotional aspect of self confidence, and in their words, 'The MBA therefore provides the appropriate (strategic) language as well as existential condition (self confidence) for material and social privilege'(Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003: 846). In the case of LLCs, whatever reason there might be (whether it is the LLC which does not prefer to hire business graduates of the type mentioned above, or that business graduates do not choose LLCs to work with) certainly we can see a mismatch between the identity responses of the two. While this type of language and discourse is considered somewhat less relevant in LLCs for various reasons, MNCs instead offer or exhibit a near perfect fit or complementary consumption mode of identity – knowledge, language and performance. Instead, the type of education and identity creation and response relevant for LLCs is driven by functionally oriented education (engineering and finance etc.) and is more of an informal learning and practice-based knowledge. This is evident from the following extracts.

ii) Language, leadership training and familial identity

> First I am told that by the virtue of being born into *Mian Nasir Sahib* I do not have the right to be in a position where I am now unless I earn and I learn. So I started

with blower room spinning, and went through the entire process, from floor operator perspective, spent time in various departments… My real learning began when I joined this company.

About my college education abroad: my father says it is a licence to learn not licence to practice. And no teacher I met is better than what I get taught here. And I also have the luxury of learning from SMC who is a superb teacher. He is Irish and has worked throughout the world, and very basic thing he has taught us, is that nothing beats learning, you do not have to go fancy on it, the simpler it is the better it is (CEO-LLC).

Therefore one can see that the entire concept of identity in the case of LLCs is more closely related to practical learning and occupational group, and the level of professionalism seems more vibrant at an informal level than at a formal level of management education.

An observation about the language prevailing in an organization which is serving international customers in America is highlighted by MRS:

At the end of the day what we have seen here and have practised if I have to talk at floor level I will talk in *Punjabi*. When I talk to manager I will talk in Urdu, and with our customers I talk in English. Similarly this is practiced by my manager, and the one who is at floor level (CEO-LLC).

Similarly, the senior VP of the apparel division in the same organization says:

Language matters a lot. But with CEO I have developed a lot of understanding. We talk in *Punjabi* not even Urdu, but being a firm up to the standards of MNC, language should be English, and it plays a role, nonetheless, I am more comfortable with him (CEO) talking in *Punjabi* (GMT-LLC).

The significance and role of language stands out in the above data extract. It means something of higher order of identities merger or mix as language itself constitutes a separate subject matter of identity-construction at individual, social, organizational and national level. Three languages means at least three identities operating at multiple layers of organization, and then learning and meanings get exchanged in a complex, fluid mode and never stays constant within the boundaries of one layer. Thus, when an industry leader in textiles was asked about learning from his ancestors and the world class education he received from Wharton (USA) and other developed countries, he replied:

If I have to quantify that education is not even 5%, the practice side is more decisive, that is lead by example. For instance, I have seen my father operate but I have not the luxury to see my grandfather operate but I hear that my father is modified version of grandfather. But I like it or not I will be modified version of my father. I don't think it is a bad thing rather it is a good thing, as there is a value system in place. We are roughly 3½ generation industrialists, or in business.

All the time we refer to DNA of organization. What is meant by DNA – different persons who worked for it? Because as a generation we are deteriorating in thought process, morality or whatever you want to call it. Whatever my grandfather was, I cannot match him (I am not him) and my father is not him. Similarly I am not that of my father. It does not mean we are bad, we are just different. My father has received

(business knowledge) from his father (and my grandfather). My father has given to me, and eventually what I have to give this to my succeeding generation in whatever business terms they will be different. But what the system does, it captures what my grandfather did, takes his intelligence and generates feed back in the system, it takes what my father did, joins it together, re-sharpens it and put in the system what I do would also be embedded in the system, hence the system starts becoming intelligent so what you want to call it MRP or ERP, that is the system, it is a combination of software, hard ware and best practices (CEO-LLC).

The leader above is quite conscious of identity transformation; its retention, variation and differentiation from generation to generation and what he inherited can be referred to as themes of continuity and coherence in identity formation as well.

7.4.3 Denial of local identity

There is, again, a trend in high performing local companies to refer to themselves as equivalent to or like international firms or MNCs. Therefore, when asked to comment about *Mian Sahib* Phenomenon (*Seth* model of leadership) in the textile industry and its distinctiveness, a plant head replied:

> Nothing here exists of such type; there is no such thing as an *Mian Sahib* here in this organization as he has delegated almost everything - all the powers and responsibilities delegated. He is not involved in day to day tasks or activities. He visits us every week, (MRS and MNS) every other week or once a month sometimes, just to have a basic review, otherwise they have delegated all authorities and responsibilities, and we have to deliver against certain criteria. So, there is no typical *Seth* or *Mian* Sahib like environment here (GMP-LLC).

While the industry trend especially in the textile sector does demonstrate the existence of distinct *Seth* or *Mian sahib* model of leadership or management. Similarly a VP and head of apparel, right at the beginning defined his organizations in as follows:

> If we take the case of CBL, it is very closer to being MNC, against any Pakistani firm, as there is no *Seth* system here, and the management is very professional, in my understanding, but I do not know much about MNCs. Decisions; only the big and final decisions are done by owners or only BOD, but most professionals are given chance to decide on their own. It invites their intervention if they cannot decide properly or there is much delay in deciding by professionals. In my opinions it is almost 90 – 95 % we decide on our own in our daily routine matters. This is how we work in CBL (GMT-LLC).

The whole case in point pleaded by VP of the large local organization is that there is delegation, BOD and decision-making rationality of the MNC type here instead of claiming that the *Seth* model of business is vibrant and dynamic enough to incorporate and learn from modern corporate values. What is, perhaps more interesting to note is the views of the third generation industrialist whose organization is considered the industry leader in the textile sector, interpreting its organization and business's identity in the following ways:

I do not think we are in textile business we happened to be in that business. We are in the business to make money, and it happened to be textile today but I think a lot of our strength is embedded in this organization – Quality Engineering strength, Process Engineering strength, IT strength, HRM strength and you name anything… anything at international level not local (CEO-LLC).

Therefore, the identity of becoming a modern organization or like an MNC reigns supreme in the emotions and desires of leaders and managers at LLCs, that is, cherishing, becoming and claiming being modern and international and simultaneously driven by the urge to deny being local.

7.5 Comparative analysis and findings

To summarise, I have made an attempt to trace the prevailing identity patterns in each corporate segment. Perhaps the most interesting finding was that while identity practices in MNCs seemed to involve denial of their foreign identity, paradoxically high performing PSCs and LLCs tend to deny local or national identity at a collective level. Such an identity pattern described by individual leaders and managers is perhaps inextricably woven with individual's social and organizational level of self-identity construction (Watson 2008, Alvesson 2010).

I have sought to examine and apply the concepts of 'surface' and 'deep' identity in the context of interview data drawn from three corporate sectors in Pakistan. In some cases it is the resurgence of deep identity over surface, while in others surface identity itself seems immersed and turns out to be deep level identity. This is especially the case with respect to MNCs. There seems to be a recurring tension between surface and deep levels of identities as manifested and reflected in the rhetoric and practices of individual leaders and managers.

At PSCs, self concepts of individuals and leaders in the organization reveal more of a professional identity at work and tend to exhibit denial of politics and alienation with political government's intervention. Besides this, their identity and identity-creation process seems to be unconsciously embedded more in national social ethos, values and culture.

LLCs seem to be more distinct from the two in exhibiting what I have termed *geo-cultural* identity. These multiple identities are embedded in national, local and relative identity-creation based on region, language, religion, history and culture. Therefore, this seems more in line with Brown & Humphrey's perspective on identity-formation, namely, that 'organizations are socially constructed through acts of languaging which create situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relations between people and groups of people (Brown & Humphrey 2006: 232).

Led by empirical evidence, I argue here that the identity creation process in the corporate sector of Pakistan is something that can be described as *geo-cultural*. The concept retains and gives recognition to the simultaneous existence of multiple identities, be it organizational or local, social or national. For Pratt & Foreman (2000) this was argued as aggregation of identities while Sveningsson & Alvesson (2003) noted an amalgam of identities. Though Pratt & Foreman's (2000) study was oriented towards managerial determinism, my interpretation of *geo-cultural* identity of a leader is constitutive of the leader's agency in responding to various identity options in identity-construction and in synthesizing a multiplicity of identities. This also appears to be in line with Alvesson's observation that identity-creation should not be considered as 'unitary, coherent and autonomous individuals who are separate and separable from social relations and organizations' (Alvesson 2010: 194). Identity should be considered as fragmented, turbulent and precarious; deep-rooted in locality, history, language and culture. Moreover, one can also observe that the status of national identity in Pakistani organizations or corporate life is a much contested one. It is also competing with social identification in a sense that local or national social identity is deemed inappropriate for corporate and business imagery, by and large, with different intensities, as given above in the rhetoric and discourse of leadership in all three types of organization. For instance, more often than not any form of association or affinity with the local – place, religion or tradition – is denied and regretted by the leaders in the organization. The 'localness' is considered to create contrasts with the symbols and imagery of modern, professional, global organizational or corporate life. The 'modern' is something to be aspired to, upheld, cherished, and promoted. It represents in the cognition of many respondent-leaders what it means to be a member of a 'high performing' modern-western business organization in Pakistan.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

We know more than we can tell.

[Polanyi 1966: 4]

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I intend to briefly describe my experience of living in the UK as cultivating a Pakistani emic sensibility toward what I experienced as a foreign Western world. This will also contain my reflections on translating emic knowledges. Here, I also review the knowledge and research concerns and contributions made in the thesis. Moreover, a condensed summary of the key findings and concluding observations of each chapter is presented and discussed. The chapter also identifies some structural limitations and, finally, considers possible future research directions and offers reflections on the overall research experience.

As has been pointed out earlier in chapter 2, the emic perspective should not be viewed as static or fixed, rather it is a dynamic and learning oriented position incorporating and appropriating etic concepts. My stay in the UK was characterized by a great deal of learning, perhaps primarily from Western social scientific literature but also broader experiences. For example, it entailed learning the English language, understanding UK culture, managing self, learning from peers, learning from the work environment, from a professional academic community and learning how to conduct research in a methodical way. I had earlier gone through a wide range of research based readings on culture and leadership but considered it lacking in various ways. However, once I had completed the course work of the MA Applied Sociological Research I developed a better understanding of my subject and, in particular, knowledge of research methodologies. My studies and the complexity of the associated socio-cultural conditioning led me to favour emic-oriented research methods, i.e., approaches which take seriously the subject positions and understandings of the world from those positions.

It was Wilhelm V. Humboldt who said that every language presents a particular world view. Moreover, it is a world of language rather than a world of *essentialist* reality in which the individual lives (Politzer 1956). I found that synthesizing different world views and competing interpretations of reality was no easy task. Therefore, for me, establishing appropriate correspondence and interpretation between the knowledges of languages I had and how they interacted with reality was somewhat challenging. For instance, thinking in what I take to be the emic terms of the Urdu language and then interpreting and writing in etic terms taken from academic English language writing presented a serious issue in 'knowability' and communicability across cultures. This issue became important in the thesis and is addressed in terms of a triple hermeneutic condition (on p.188).

In chapter 2 I quote Foucault's observation that, 'subjugated knowledges are … those blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematising theory...' (Foucault 1976: 81-82). My predominant concern was to retrieve and recover the subdued and subjugated interpretation of reality of organizational and leadership knowledge within the specific context of Pakistani culture. This line of enquiry led, for example, to my pursuing the concept of *Seth* organization, a field that has never been systematically studied despite these organizations comprising more than 50% of the economy. It also led me to question why successful large local organizations in Pakistan are ignored in theoretical and empirical terms within the realm of Organization Studies. I was also exercised by the fact that South Asian organizational phenomena are invariably interpreted through the lenses of Anglo-centric theory. Hence, this thesis is a modest attempt to see data through indigenous eyes and to think about Pakistani leadership and organization in terms of my own languages.

One general observation stemming from field experience is that mainstream theory is not typically practiced in Pakistani organizations and that, by contrast, what is practiced is not theorized. Likewise, given the gaps in knowledge pointed out earlier in the thesis – theoretical, empirical and methodological – I saw an opportunity to contribute original knowledge to the field of Organization Studies. My main concern, bounded by time and space, and other structural limitations which I have identified later in this chapter, was to elucidate and express organizational knowledge, concepts and practices as manifest in the cultural context of Pakistan.

8.2 The distinctive nature of my research contribution

This research has tried to make a distinctive contribution in terms of its research design, methodological orientation, theoretical considerations and unique empirical findings. Most earlier research on Pakistan in relation to culture and leadership was carried out using positivistic methodology and etic theorization. My own endeavour has been to study the region 'from within' using an 'emic' perspective. Therefore, it was primarily concerned with exploration and description of how leadership, identity and politics are constructed, cultivated and embedded within the local-national corporate context of organizing. This level of cultural sensitivity has been lacking in previous organization and cross-cultural studies. One of the most important findings of this study is that leadership appears to be an emic concept while notions of *organization* or *management* often turn out to be etic constructions, especially in the cultural context of Pakistan.

There are a number of limitations in the literature and flaws of methodology with prior studies on Pakistan which I sought to overcome in this thesis. First, no previous studies

have been designed to focus on and capture the cultural context of organizing and leadership of local-national organizations. Earlier research either on public sector and multinational corporations (PSCs and MNCs) understands the phenomena merely in terms of stereotypical *national* ways of organizing and leadership. In my view, by contrast, PSCs and MNCs are representative more of modern-western organizations than any indigenous national pattern. Second, to elicit how local-national and modern-western phenomena of organizing and leadership are similar or different, this study was designed to facilitate comparative analyses of organization in three sectors: MNCs, PSCs and LLCs. And finally, the present study focuses on local-national and modern-western organizations in Pakistan from an interpretive perspective, which sharply contrasts and distinguishes it from previous studies. Earlier studies drew heavily on functionalist literature and research methodology perspectives. The study also endeavours to address and mitigate the theory-practice gap by pursuing knowledge through emic and anthropologically sensitive attention to *practices*.

Having discussed the overall contribution to literature and methodology in brief, I will now summarize the key findings of this thesis. These findings, articulated below, are offered as an explicit and concise response to the research questions raised in section 1.6.

8.3 Main findings and chapter summaries

In chapter 2 I discussed the rationale for studying the phenomenon of culture and leadership through the adoption of an emic mode of research inquiry. I argued, based on the literature review, that studying and defining organizational leadership phenomena in the abstract is inadequate, and that this needs to be supplanted by approaches that view them as inextricably embedded with society and culture. Leadership and culture can be studied through two modes of research: etic and emic. The study of culture through an interpretive lens takes us much closer to what can be considered emic constructions of knowledge and theorization. As such, three broad themes have been reviewed and articulated to justify and authorize emic research. These are leadership as: (1) socially and culturally practiced; (2) politically mediated; and (3) based on identity-construction of individuals in social context.

Though literature on organization is heavily influenced by attributes of what Courpasson *et al* (2008) refer to as 'impersonality', 'individualism' and 'formalization', here I argue that organization in general and leadership in particular is characterized by forms of personalization, collectivism and informal ways of accomplishing things.

It is also evident from the data, however, that the socio-cultural episteme stands distinct from the organizational episteme, yet creeps in and gets structurally embedded with the

organizational episteme no matter how productive or restrictive the organizational episteme seeks to be in terms of performativity and economic rationality. Consequently, alongside formal modes of organizing there are socio-cultural and informal modes which manifest themselves at a practice level of leading and organizing. The mainstay of my thesis is the premise that organizing and leadership can better be understood by what is constituted by a surrounding locality-based socio-cultural episteme which expresses itself through informal practices (in contrast to any universal principles of formal organizational leadership).

My observations, furthermore, lead me to conclude that there is no clear segregation between organizational and social identities as far as the identity of a leader is concerned. The two forms of identity-construction remain fully entwined with each other and are manifested simultaneously in leadership discourse and practice.

Identity is conceptualized as constituently composed of multiple discursive and socially constructed themes. Contrary to essentialist and functionalist perspectives (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003), identities intersect in organizations, and are socio-politically contingent. Hence, leadership practices, identity formation and political processes are constitutive narratives for the emic construction of organizational leadership.

In chapter 3 I discussed the context of undertaking a particular research design and methodology. This was done in a number of ways. First, a conscious attempt has been made to explicate my ontological assumption and the critical epistemological considerations under which this research has been conducted. Second, I argued for a particular research design and set of interpretive methods that follow from the ontological and epistemological assumptions. I explained the reasoning underlying my sample selection, data access approach and strategies of data generation. Finally, the chapter endeavoured to uncover some of the limitations associated with the employment of the research techniques adopted.

I mentioned earlier that research on Pakistan has predominantly been carried out with putatively 'scientific' and functionalist notions of knowledge production. While research on culture and leadership cannot be adequately conducted through static categorization using an objectivist epistemological mindset (Brannen & Salk 2000), interpretation of culture necessarily reflects the background and values of the researcher (see also Yeganeh & Su 2006).

Likewise, knowledge production within the realm of leadership and culture can be considered highly Anglo- and Euro- centric, yet is generally depicted as universal and globalized knowledge (Redding 1994). The phenomenon of knowledge production is

understood to be political in nature (Calas & Smircich 1991, Feldman 1999). Hence the functionalist ontological approach with positivistic epistemology creates a type of knowledge which is essentially partial, de-contextualized, ahistorical and acultural, and therefore, I contend, is inappropriate for the production of useful or practical knowledge. The resulting 'epistemic coloniality' refers to the institutionalization of knowledge as scientific knowledge, via native elites and education, into the dominant ideology of Western modernity (Ibarra-Colado 2006: 464). It is argued in this chapter of the thesis that the cultural phenomenon should be considered historical, holistic, contextual, complex and emergent in nature. This interactionists approach, I suggested, is effective in enabling a deeper level of cultural analysis than is possible using positivist methodology (Fine 1993). Based on this line of argument, I employ a social constructionist ontology driven by a thick descriptive epistemological orientation. This is central to the whole research process from design, methodology, data collection through to interpretation, analysis and discussion.

The chapter identifies three methodological considerations as being of prime relevance and importance for the investigation of culture and leadership: (1) the *practice* of leadership; (2) a leadership episteme; and (3) the development of emic constructions of leadership in the cultural context of society and organization in Pakistan. In line with Foucault's understanding of knowledge being produced by epistemic eras (Foucault 1994), I argued that leadership and culture knowledge in the context of society in Pakistan is based on a complex interaction of four epistemic strands or flows, namely, postcolonial American, colonial English, Islamic and Indian. I have identified the first two as modern-western and the last two as local-national. The research design was intended to permit exploration of these epistemes as embedded and embodied in the cognition, discourse and practices of leaders in three corporate segments of Pakistan. Previous studies excluded local-national or cultural voices resulting from Islamic and Indian epistemes. They have completely neglected, for example, LLCs or *Seth* organizations which comprise more than 50% of the Pakistani economy (Mumtaz 2003).

Data were collected by going into the field, visiting and interviewing leaders on-site in their offices, factories, and plant locations. A total of eighty seven interviews were conducted. Leaders from three sectors, PSC, MNC and LLC were included, with preference given to interviewing individuals who occupied positions at the corporate leadership apex. Non-standardized or semi-structured interviews were conducted based on questioning that generates candid conversation and narrative. By asking 'what', 'why', 'where', 'when' and 'how' questions I was able to enrich my understanding of the organizational context and to explore leadership from an emic perspective.

In chapter 4 I argued that leaders' practices in the corporate context of Pakistan can be analyzed and examined in terms of three narratives: Structural informality, *Personalismo* and *Geo-cultural* orientation. These narratives are represented across three corporate sectors with varying intensity.

Structural informality

Leaders' practices in organization seem to emerge from two perpetual streams of values, dialectically opposed to each other, social and organizational, which operate singularly or in combination. What constitutes the social can be considered as the combination of informal, personal, political and cultural as against organizational values that emanate from hierarchy, structure and systemic (legal bureaucratic) dynamics. For example, though it crosses over to all three sectors, 'organizational' flows of values tend to be dominant in the construction of leadership in MNCs as against that of LLCs where 'social' flows – being more informal and personal – seem more influential. Hence leadership in MNCs operates within the more pronounced and formalized organizational parameters, allowing little space for exceptions. If anyone is courageous enough to take initiative, the predominant tendency is to make it a formalized part of their organizing system. Therefore, individual and situational flexibility by default is seldom permitted, and organization tends to become more of a static and mechanistic type. Espedal (2009) makes a similar point about the manoeuvring space for leadership. For him, 'leadership has less space for manoeuvring where rights and duties are excessively codified and internalized and where organizations are depicted as a community of rule followers. Manoeuvring space for top leadership is ambiguous under such circumstances' (Espedal 2009: 204).

Based on discussions in chapter 4, my data revealed that excessive focus on formalization just addresses partially the needs and development of organizational leadership. The formalized component is fallaciously perceived as all-inclusive in the organization, for whatever is said or done by leaders in the organization is viewed and interpreted formally within legal frameworks. Modern-western organizations, in general, and British MNCs, in particular, tend to install and institutionalize tight frameworks of rules and regulations for its leadership to learn and implement in their subsidiaries.

By contrast, LLC leaders have greater discretion over job interpretation and social leverage over followers and subordinates. This kind of flexibility in job or organizational role leads to the proliferation of skills in a cross-functional manner which, in turn, leads to a holistic understanding of job and organization. Here, followers are expected to take on extra-job and extra-role responsibilities and behaviours. The extra-role behaviours can manifest in two different forms: 'passive', i.e., obediently following rules with formal in-role

behaviour; and 'proactive', i.e., pursuing personal initiatives and finding a personal voice (Fischer & Smith 2009).

Hence, empirical evidence suggests that the nature of the job is considered to be much more fluid and emergent in LLCs. This is so for all jobs across the hierarchy, from higher to lower echelons of the organization. Hence, in practical terms, jobs tend to become more diffused and holistic in LLCs than in MNCs and PSCs. It is probably this attribute which gives leaders at LLCs more personal say, agility and decisiveness in decision-making.

Personalismo

Leadership in modern-western MNC-type organizations rests on the assumption that systemic (control, communication, monitoring, evaluation, objective setting, etc.) and presumed rational ways of functioning are preferred over idiosyncratic, personalized and individualized manners of work and performance. Therefore, the direct role of personal voice is, in general, negated in the construction of leadership in modern-western organizations while it is more pronounced and immanent in LLCs. Against the common fallacy – my data suggests – those leaders are more effective in MNCs who have a personalizing element or initiative by which they can run through the complex systems of procedures, authority jurisdictions and domains of job description. Therefore, the litmus test for leaders in organization is their dexterity to fight or circumvent systemic constraints in organization.

Within the context of organizational leadership in PSCs, I found personal and professional lives to be indivisible, which means that social and organization streams of leadership practically cannot be segregated. Rather it is the social aspects of leadership which stay predominant in the working and behaviour of a successful leader.

It is observed that managing people above oneself in the hierarchy is a matter of patience, tolerance and personal persistence with respect to one's claims and interpretation of organization events. These are more social or cultural attributes than organizational. Moreover, it is revealed by some respondents, that the leadership development path in organization is a matter of managing the ego of superiors which, again, is a social rather than organizational attribute. Hence, social cognition and social skills are increasingly considered part of an individual's leadership skills, a fact that is reflected in the Organizational Studies literature on social intelligence, emotional intelligence, ego resiliency, self-monitoring and practical intelligence (Ferris *et al* 2000).

Leadership in the context of PSCs also means minute personal involvement at the implementation level; to know and control what is happening at ground level. Though the

rhetoric is to create ownership, trust and motivation among employees at lower levels, in actuality it may produce alienation and distrust.

It is important to note that the personalized style of leadership within LLCs (*Seth* or *Mian Sahib*) is under heavy criticism from its incumbents who are increasingly indoctrinated by modern managerial education. New generation leaders in LLCs, under the influence of modern business education, tend to define this as a lack of system and the organization's deficiencies in being modern. However the practice side still demonstrates the retention of old habits, ways and local-cultural philosophies of accomplishing tasks.

Within LLCs a number of distinctive attributes can be found. First, local cultural or traditional outfits are not considered to cast a serious impression of performance-driven productive ways of doing business. Leaders who receive a modern business education tend to impose modernization in local organizations so as to cast a public impression of being modern. Thus symbolic construction of 'the modern leader' seems far more important than satisfying people, customers or managers. The establishment of modern corporate structures and outlook is given immense importance in order to give the impression, at least, of *being modern* or adopting *state of the art* methods. Similarly, local cultural business practices considered ambiguous, tolerance-prone and of an emergent nature were condemned and shunned in favour of black and white, tight contractual interpretations. New generation leaders of LLCs are much obsessed with regulating and re-defining the members' social and cultural worldview along the lines of modern corporate life for dress codes, language and styles of interaction. They thus tend to create a 'monochrome environment' (Tourish & Pinnington 2002: 162). It is this psyche of making the organization systemic and modern that predominates in the thinking of leaders which, conversely, results in an inability to see and perceive the benefits and strengths of personal, familial and local cultural nous.

Geo-cultural orientation

My data reveal that, at the practice level, work values and ethics in organizing and leadership dynamics of MNCs tend to revolve around the predominant tenet of Western Darwinian philosophy of *survival of the fittest*. This principle is manifested in organizational terms in egoistic, individualistic, confrontational and hyper-competitive modes of working behaviour. Empirical evidence suggests that the nature of modern organization life is such that, more often than not, it ends up producing *pseudo-leaders* who remain operative in authority mode playing on hierarchy dynamics, and driven by immediate narcissistic needs. According to Shaw, pseudo-leaders are those who 'seek

power at the expense of others, are unreliable, deceptive, manipulative and self-interested' (Shaw 2010: 7).

The nature of boss-subordinate relationships and behaviour of the boss is based on the assumption of seniority, experience, superior authority, and presumed higher professionalism (with presumed exclusion of the personal) which leads to the formation of conflictual, adversarial and confrontational behaviour. Quite contrarily, local-cultural modes of organizing are prescriptive of social, egalitarian and harmonious forms of organizing and leadership.

Comparative data reveal that the Asiatic or non-western cultural orientation is more pronounced amongst leaders in the case of PSCs than those of MNCs. In PSCs social virtues, such as, humility and morality of care and deference become more evident and embodied in the construction of leadership than that of a technical leadership. More importantly, one of the leading distinctions which stands out between Pakistani and modern-western notions of organization and leadership is the presence of socio-religious or moral elements which seem deeply entrenched in the leaders' construction of self, as their discourse and practices are observed to give explicit cognition and recognition to the virtues of morality and ethics. Hence, socio-morality or religio-ethics stay embodied in organizing and leading while such types of morality have little or no place in the working of modern-western organizational leadership (Jackal 1988, Watson 2003).

A careful examination of my data reveals that leadership in LLCs at the practice level is more concerned with, and conscious of, identity and a developmental responsibility in and around the region and locality in terms of enabling people. While in rhetoric such a role may not be as pronounced and celebrated as it is in organizations in the MNC and PSC sectors. In other words, MNCs and PSCs make more claims of social responsibility in rhetorical terms than LLCs, however in practice LLCs are contributing more. There also seems to be a higher level of altruism and a humane orientation evidenced amongst leaders in LLCs. One seldom finds such attributes in the mission, vision or CSR statements of modern organizations of MNC- and PSC-type. This is confirmed by Michie & Gooty (2005), as for them such practices refer to self-transcendent values and emotions found in what they term 'authentic leadership'.

Leadership practices amongst stable and growth-driven companies and prominent industrial groups in Pakistan seems to give expression to qualities of tolerance, immense patience, humaneness, generosity, politeness and assertiveness. This contrasts with the explicitly aggressive, conflict-prone, confrontational and challenging styles of leadership found in the work ethic narratives of PSC and MNC leaders. It is because of the presence

of such local-cultural attributes and practices that I have termed leadership as a *geo-cultural* identity orientation. While the cultural practices and pattern of leadership in MNCs and PSCs is marked by extensive non-personalization and formalization in systems and procedures. Though *geo-cultural* identity orientation is not something cherished and promoted in the construction of leadership in modern-western organization yet it is out there socially and at a subliminal level.

In chapter 6 I discussed, compared and contrasted the practices of politics as it emerged amongst the leaders of modern-western organizations and LLCs, and have demonstrated how the political working of LLCs differs from that of modern-western organization. Political practices were found to cluster around three themes: (1) the extent of recognition given by the leaders to the occurrence of politics in organization; (2) how the nature of politics is interpreted by respondent leaders; and (3) how leaders manage or exercise politics in their organizations.

Recognition of the occurrence of politics

With respect to MNCs, my data suggest that at a rhetorical level no direct admission of politics was made by respondents. However, there was a tacit acceptance of politics when some leaders referred to multiple evaluation criteria and KPIs which necessitate competition, negotiation and compromise, and in reality such processes are political in nature.

Second, at the practice level there are different names and labels given to the phenomenon of organization politics. These include: 'positive politics', 'networking' 'diplomacy' and 'strategic influencing'. Interestingly, within this nomenclature and labelling, politics is considered permissible; hence my inferential use of the 'politics' label remains consistent with my emic approach. The dynamics of modern-western organizations are such that leaders feel compelled to create the impression that goals are selfless and non-political (Buchannan 2008). This may make leaders and managers cautious to characterize something as personal or political; rather they prefer to depict themselves as acting for the collective good of the organization and its members. The collective and organizational motive in this sense sounds more legitimate and uncontaminated by the self-interest connoted by politics. Hence, skilful leaders or managers are required to express and articulate conduct in business, technical and professional language, masking their individual concerns, political intentions and worldview in order to promote a unitary picture of the part they play in organizational life.

Data collected on PSCs confirms the linkage between national politics and happenings within organizations. An important observation here is the inbuilt confrontation, alienation

and distrust between political government and PSC organizational leaders. PSC leaders, in their thinking and ways of doing, consider themselves by default better or superior to political people in the governmental tier (the parent ministry or controlling authority) to whom they are accountable. Therefore, there is a line of resistance found amongst the leadership at PSCs to protect themselves from exogenous political intervention.

In LLCs, outright recognition is given to politics at two levels: 'internal to organization' and 'external to organization'. My data suggested that national politics are embedded in the organizing of LLCs. At the external level, LLCs leaders tend to be more cautious of historical national political contexts compared with leaders in MNCs. Therefore national politics can be seen as a factor embodied in the construction of local organization. There is high sensitivity found amongst top industry leaders whose families have been in a particular industry for generations, about national political structure and relations with government. Unlike MNC and PSC leadership which tend to mirror the organizational and political configuration of modern-western organizations, LLC leadership stays significantly distinct in its political working. It is much more cautious and sensitive to national political structure and culture. At the internal level the base of power politics in LLCs is narrower and discrete as against MNCs and PSCs because of their more unified authoritarian leadership structure – a *Seth*.

My respondents also revealed that politics is perceived as a resource and can lead to short-term gains. Nonetheless individuals more active in politics are more vulnerable to lose out as well, as it is easier for LLCs to hire and fire people, unlike PSCs and MNCs. The requisite political competency for leaders in LLCs, according to my data, seems to be effective dealing and mediation with groups and sub-groups. All the interview evidence indicates that politics abounds, though its base is quite discrete as it remains within a personal or family ambit. Leaders in LLCs who are there as a result of a long familial legacy have to learn and develop skills and competencies in managing professional people politically.

The nature and meanings of politics

At the organizational leadership level in MNCs the very practical concern for most CEOs turned out to be political security. A similar motive was observed in PSCs: leaders want to perpetuate their stay indefinitely even after reaching the age of retirement. Interestingly, and perhaps ironically, MNCs which are considered to be a symbol of organization and management excellence in Pakistan, exhibit a parallel here with PSCs. The nature of organizational politics is to secure self-interest, and the mysterious question of what organizational interest is remains elusive, abstract and subservient to the meanings and

interpretations of individual self-interest. Therefore one can observe that the classical principle of organizing, as articulated by Henry Fayol (Koontz 1993), that individual interest should remain subservient to collective organizational interest, gets reversed at the practice level in modern-western organizations.

In PSCs, leaders and aspirants for leadership positions tend to develop exogenous linkages with political leaders or people in their controlling ministry or high governmental office so as to gain influence over personal promotions and positioning. Therefore as mentioned earlier, the general trend in such organizations is more to compete for building relationships and networking rather than building and playing on professional or competency-driven behaviour. Therefore, only politically savvy people can reach and retain apex positions. What is more important is to know what is happening in the organization in real time, behind the scenes (at an informal or invisible level) and to anticipate its political implications. This gets closer to the Zanzi & O'Neill (2001) assessment of politics in organizations: that at the top level leadership is predominantly concerned with a considerable level of uncertainty for which no formal rules and procedures exist. Consequently, leaders are landed in the domain of informal and unsanctioned behaviour which is inherently political. It is for this reason that Peled (2000) argued that modern managers [leaders] also need to be political.

The basis of politics amongst members of an organization is job security, as new induction is resisted for the fear of possible replacement. Hence, it is imperative for new members to seek and make political associations upon their entry. Moreover, people strive politically whenever they personally think they are right and others are wrong. It is also observed that the very basis of politics in organization is human feelings of superiority, of making comparisons on equity issues and evaluating the relative contribution of efforts and outcome of each other. For Zaleznik (1971), personality conflicts, small disputes and every day human jealousies, ambivalent attitude and authority distribution form the basis of politics in organizational life.

Culturally, the word *hassad* turns out to be the reason for politics in organization. *Hassad* is a kind of desire and etiologically refers to an ethico-religious aspect of human behaviour which humans inevitably indulge in. This is an emic concept that emerged out of my data that can be considered equivalent to that of 'jealousy' in the English language. In Muslim society there is a strong moral admonition to refrain from such thinking and desire as it is commonly considered that it will lead to disaster either for oneself (the one who envies another) or for the other who is envied.

Management of politics and the exercise of leadership

Leaders in the three corporate segments were found to have different perceptions, orientations to, and ways of managing politics. In MNCs, one predominant way revealed by my research is that leaders tend to negate politics and make recourse to professional behaviour in their rhetoric. For instance, politics is shunned or abhorred by respondents, by and large, but what *is* commended and considered permissible is behaviour like that of a diplomat or statesman which again is considered an ideal trajectory of politics.

The concept of *gheebah* is an emic concept within Muslim society, and carries strong admonition for those who tend to manipulate information in someone's absence for petty gains. This can be considered equivalent to backbiting. Leaders with greater ethical and religious orientations tend to espouse the *gheebah* approach to management.

By the same token, avoidance of politics means more reliance on professionalism in organization that can be considered by some leaders as the right strategy to manage organizations. As such people do see a trade-off between being professional and being political. For some respondents the personal is considered political and *vice versa*, while professionalism, in the ideal sense of the word, runs counter to the personal and political domains as these two concepts are considered to be based on self-serving interest.

In practice, according to some respondents, avoidance or reliance on upfront professional behaviour cannot be considered the most appropriate way for dealing with organizational politics. Rather, it turns out that establishing relationships with major shareholders leads to career success in the organization (downplaying the importance of competency and popular acceptance within the organization).

I observed in the study that the pursuit of politics is considered quite a legitimate tool in the organization for its members and leaders, albeit with other labelling. This non-acceptance of politics in MNCs makes it mainly a covert organizational process and renders it a masked activity (Davey 2008). Thus politics remains operative at a hidden and subliminal level owing to the non-sanctioned nature of political behaviour. Knights & Murray (1994) explain why managers do not accept politicking in an organization because it would then mean their career success is based on political behaviour – informal, ostensibly parochial and typically divisive – and this would undermine espoused meritocratic values of organization.

Within the context of PSCs 'becoming a diplomat' is considered the right expression for giving or manipulating information by providing it to the leader or boss earlier than one's competitor colleagues. At the same time, an imperative for leaders is how quickly and effectively they retrieve information on colleagues, subordinates and on-going events in

order to be perceived successful. This is what practically leads to certain kinds of leadership and management through cronyism.

Sifarish is an emic concept and considered a very popular instrument in Pakistani society to get things done and influence others. Typically, it is used for selection, placement and promotion-related decisions. Different people attach different meanings to it, from its outright acceptance to outright rejection, and then some try to draw fine middle lines of interpretation. The equivalent word for *Sifarish* in English is 'recommendation' or 'reference'. This is a popular social and political instrument used for doing and getting favours. Tolerance for incompetency and acceptance of *Sifarish* can be construed as political acts; for compromising professional ethics, for building relationship and networking to get favours in turn; for securing a job, especially when it is coming from top level government officials and politically influential.

Moreover, the nature of direct, face-to-face social conversation by leaders in organization reveals the strength and vibrancy of political process and the strategy of being informal and social to engage followers or subordinates effectively. Socio-informal, micro-processes such as listening, the art of conversation and managing information with dexterity, lie at the heart of political practices. Managing political relationships with shareholders or stakeholders is claimed by some respondents to be the key to success in PSCs, and leaders in MNCs have been observed to retain a similar pattern.

As against PSCs and MNCs, the political workings of LLC leaders stand out distinctly and can broadly be characterized at two levels: endogenous and exogenous. At the endogenous level we find more direct and open acceptance of the phenomenon of politics as part of the business activity. Most of respondents have a clear idea of considering management of politics as a constitutive behaviour of organizational leadership. At a very practical level the strategy is to keep members busy in their work so as to minimize damaging politics. Hence politics in the view of organization leaders is taken as reality at a practice level and then ways and means are suggested to cultivate politics as a resource through devolution and delegation to work for organizational advantages. This is quite unlike leaders in PSCs and MNCs who shun and abhor politics in their idealistic and transcendental rhetoric.

For instance, the hiring and selection process in LLCs is somewhat compromised politically in terms that equate with the western notion of nepotism. Within the context of most LLCs, hiring from within kinship groups and the regional locality is considered and interpreted as their foremost moral right. The discourse 'moral right' by the LLC leader reveals the sense and ontology of organizing and leadership instead of a discourse like 'merit, legal or professional rights.' This is in line with what Westwood *et al* have found to

be the presence of a 'personalistic tacit moral order' in Asiatic Societies (Westwood *et al* 2004: 365). Such types of organizing thinking and practice on the part of the leadership in LLCs take them closer to the Asiatic leadership style as raising an organization on the basis of traditional institutional resources like kinship, ethno-linguistic or local affinity, whereas modern organizing practices and leadership consider such traditional institutions as baggage, or a liability to the growth and development of institutions and organizations (Clegg 1990).

Moreover the basis of politics in LLCs is fairly discrete and limited owing to the centrality of one figure (father, grandfather or big brother as the dominant paternal figurehead) while in modern-western organizations it is quite diffused with more legal and social space to manoeuvre.

At the exogenous level, there seems to be much more variation in LLCs in meanings and approaches to dealing with politics extraneous to the organization. Three distinct sets of political practices followed by LLCs were revealed in the data as follows: being apolitical; being overtly political; and being political through bureaucracy.

Being apolitical is considered by some leaders in LLCs as the right approach to develop a strong expression of being apolitical and professional in managing relations external to organization like with political parties and government. Some LLC leaders tend to be thoroughly political, quite contrary to the previous approach, compelling them to stay closer to the base of power politics and developing a propensity to ignore their professionals and employees. Following this approach the focus is to internalise extraneous politics which can influence the organization, business and industry. Therefore, at times organizational leaders also tend to become aspirant of national or regional politics, as against dealing at arm's length with government or political parties. This again reveals a typical Asiatic model or pattern of following a holistic approach to social reality instead of the modern-western idealized way of following a segregated, compartmentalised and indirect business strategy and development.

My data also suggested that if an LLC is considered to be a successful entity in its performance then it is owing to the vibrancy and strength of managing personal-political factors and in the humane flavour of its organizing and leadership; features which are uncommon in the organizing and leading narratives of PSCs and MNCs. The study also reveals that leaders, in western-influenced organizations (MNCs/PSCs) turn out to be more politicized than their rhetorical claims for being 'professional' and 'denial of politics' suggest.

In chapter 7 the focus was on studying identity as it emerged in my respondents' data. I posed myself a series of questions: how leadership in the Pakistani corporate context is struggling with identity issues; how national social or local and organizational identities manifest themselves and mutually interact in the three types of organizations; and what type of identity concepts and attributes are embodied in the leaders' utterances and practices of leadership in the three domains of organization?

Identity espousal

Identity formation of managers and leaders occurs while working in MNC type organizations through the notion of professional education, and then through training, cultivating a profuse sense of ownership and attachment with the global or transnational organization – feelings of prudency, rise in stature, and developing a sense of superiority over others. This process of identity creation in MNCs is observed to be very subtle, conscious, systemic and meaningfully inculcated amongst members and leaders of their organizations.

MNC leaders in countries like Pakistan rationalize, own and demonstrate adherence, acquisition and preference for what was denoted by Hatch & Shultz (2002) as 'mirroring' their global identity. The nature of business, product and functional strategies are such that the identity of leaders which is generated and promoted is more often than not found to be nested within the overall organizational identity of the home country of MNCs. This further reinforces practically the shaping up of individual or personal identity to conform more to that of the home country or the organization's global identity. Hence leaders and managers are found to espouse a global or international identity in their narratives.

PSC leaders tend to give far greater emphasis to national identity than do Pakistani leaders in MNCs. At PSCs, self-concepts of individuals and leaders in the organization reveal more of a pattern of professional identity at work and tend to exhibit alienation, denial of politics and resistance toward government intervention. Besides, their identity and identity-creation process seems to be embedded more in national social ethos, values and culture.

Identity denial

I find strong evidence in my data that leaders in MNCs tend to deny publicly the foreign identity and ownership of their organization. This means that MNCs tend to pursue a distinct strategy for image building (local or national identity) for consumers, customers and the general public while pursuing an altogether different identity response and strategy (global identity) for their own internal members. As Hatch & Shultz (2002) suggest, the organization's 'expressing' and 'impressing' is different from its 'mirroring' and 'reflecting'. This reinforces the whole idea of the complex nature of identity and identity

patchwork which has been referred by Sveningsson & Alvesson (2003) as identity work on the part of the organization at a collective level. This lends further credence to the existence of multiple, incoherent, shifting and fluid identities of the organization. A more credible position could be that there is no such thing as a purely unitary or coherent form of global identity. Rather, place and people, local and national identities are embodied in the defining of global identity considerations.

Paradoxically, leaders in PSCs tend to be in denial of being local-national. Their claim for being global or international rests on their size and scope of business, organizational, industry or professional practices and attributes. There is a general tendency and a pattern observed amongst better and high-performing PSCs, and even LLCs, to consider themselves more as MNCs rather than being a local or national organization. The rationalization on the part of the leader in the denial of being a local or national organization depicts either an inability to believe in self-identity, or a belief in being part of a perceived higher order collective identity or global professional community.

Leaders in PSCs also tend to deny vehemently any political intervention from governments. Such identity behaviour may be explained better in the light of the historical development of such institutions reflecting colonial patterns of professional identity cognition and practice. By and large the technical and bureaucratic form of organization and institutional framework introduced by Western colonizers led to inherent alienation, confrontation, hatred and denial of local or national identity politics, and hence adversarial relations exist between national political leadership and leaders in organization.

Similarly, like PSCs there is a tendency amongst high performing LLCs to refer to themselves as equivalent to or like international firms or MNCs. Therefore, aspirational identity claims of becoming modern organizations or 'like MNCs' reign supreme in the emotions, leadership and managerial practices of LLCs, both amongst leaders and managers. This pattern seems to accord with what Sturdy *et al* (2006) described as learning as becoming. In other words, at the practice level this represents leaders' learning to become modern, well in line with arguments advanced by Handley *et al* (2007) that individuals' learning is shaped and regulated by the individual themselves.

Resurgence of deep identity

Identity patterns of leaders in MNCs have been examined in the wake of 'surface identity' and 'deep identity' concepts. It is found, in general, that MNC Pakistani leaders privilege the surface appearance of modernity over deeper level cultural identity. However, one can also note cogently that though surface identity (an identity of being modern) tends to be more apparent, obvious, dominant and very pronounced, when one probes a little deeper

there is something richer and different that manifests in the individual cognition and practices of leaders and organizational processes. This manifestation can be described as 'deep identity' embedded in the local culture, geography, history, language and religion. This seems quite contrary to the organizational identity literature for which the criterion of identity lies in 'distinctive superficiality' (Corley *et al* 2006: 93).

Empirical evidence suggest that in most cases it is the resurgence of deep identity amongst individual leaders while there are some individuals who claim their surface identity deep identity as one or the same thing. This is especially the case with a few leaders of MNCs who claim their identity is not merely a skin deep. Nonetheless, there seems to be a recurring tension between surface and deep levels of identity as manifested and reflected in the rhetoric and practices of individual leaders and managers.

Resurrection of *geo-cultural* identity

Leadership and organizing in LLCs seem to be distinct from modern organizations in exhibiting what I denote as *geo-cultural* identity. Respondent narratives suggest how multiple identities are holistically embedded in national and local identity-creation based on region, language, religion, history and culture. Hence, the existence of *geo-cultural* identity seems consistent and convergent with multiple identities like religion, regional, family, profession and job or industry across multiple times and spaces. Willmott (2006) also suggests that there is no single identity construction that can encompass holistically what the person is in essential terms. For Pratt & Foreman (2000), the person is understood to be an aggregation of identities, while Sveningsson & Alvesson (2003) take personhood to entail an amalgam of identities.

Identity should be considered as fragmented, turbulent and precarious; deep-rooted in locality, history, language and culture. Moreover, one can also observe empirically that the status of national identity in Pakistani organizations or corporate life is a much contested one. It is also competing with social identification in a sense that local or national social identity is deemed inappropriate for corporate and business imagery, by and large, or at least manifests at the surface level with different intensities, in the rhetoric, discourse and practices of leadership in all three types of organization. Parker seems more relevant here as he suggests considering culture [and identity] of organization as *fragmented unities* (Parker 1999: 5). 'Organizations', it is argued, despite sharing commonalities of structural attributes – industry, profession, management technology yet primarily, 'are patterned collectives which have distinct cultures [and identities] because of their particular histories, geographies, key actors and so on' (Parker 1999: 5).

There is reasonably strong empirical evidence to support my theorizing of identity as *geo-cultural*. First, the *geo-cultural* identity pattern appears to be stronger amongst leaders of LLCs than of MNCs and PSCs. Second, the language issue does not seem to persist in LLCs, whereas it is pronounced and persistent in the case of MNCs operating in Pakistan. Third, the path to leadership development in LLCs speaks to the prevalence of cultural values which are quite unlike those held by individuals and leaders in modern-western corporations, be they MNCs or PSCs. Such local-cultural values prescribe that 'good leadership' performance lies in being humble, having high levels of humility, doing things not for fame, staying collective and being self-sacrificing instead of aggressive, egoistic and deterministic in one's personal approach to life. Finally, there is a perspective which emerged in the data that speaks to the co-existence and embeddedness of multiple identities – modern, professional, business, regional, national, religious and family. One can clearly observe the trend in my LLC data that leaders' adherences to religious and business identities are reconciled in a pragmatic and pluralistic way rather than privileging a monolithic religious identity, or seeking clear trade-offs between the two. In MNCs and PSCs such identities are considered to be competing and mutually exclusive to each other.

8.4 Limitations

The study was subject to some basic constraints of time and space which were pointed out earlier in chapter 3. Here I refer to some other limitations related to the creation of text.

'Can social reality be known and represented?' is a big question. Capturing social reality in the context of an emerging society which is dynamic, liquid, polyphonic and paradoxical is a difficult, if not ultimately impossible task for the researcher. As is typical of most doctoral research, this study is not without its limitations. The findings articulated above are not at all exhaustive. Rather, I aimed to make a modest contribution which addressed a missing perspective in the extant literature, namely, an anthropologically sensitive and emic treatment of leadership and culture in Pakistan.

Moreover, the subjectivity and values of the researcher cannot be eliminated in the type of qualitative, thick descriptive and cultural narratives I am involved in producing here. Adopting a social constructionist approach in management research may confront the researcher with issues like: 'The connection between formal and informal; The connection between the visible and the hidden; The connection between what is said and what is left unsaid; The connection between words and actions; The connection between the implicit and the explicit; The connection between the destabilisation and the stabilisation carried out by the researcher involved' (Plane 2000: 238-239). Hence it is the subjectivity of the researcher to resolve all such issues consciously or unknowingly. Therefore the subjectivity of the

researcher is always implicated in creating meaningful text. As Case (2002) argues, narrative research can be used to 're-humanise' and 'to re-enchant the disenchanted texts of organizational science' (2002: 1).

For Hegelund, the 'observer selects certain things thereby ignoring others' (2005: 651). This has been identified by Weick (1979) as the imposition of subjectivity. Similarly, Deetz points out that 'the choice of research conceptions, questions, and methods is always value laden' (Deetz 1985 quoted by Philips & Brown 1993: 1573). Hence, 'all knowledge comes with a point of view, and the best researchers can do is to be critical and reflexive and examine their own and others' assumptions (Philips & Brown 1993: 1573). Along with subjectivity, a second imposition is that of coherency as the researcher may often try to ignore incongruencies and contradictions, knowingly or unknowingly, which are part of the subjective world of those under study (Abu-Lughod 1991). Hence description is imprisoned in what Boje & Durant (2006) refer to as a modern obsession with the coherence of Beginning, Middle and End (BME) narratives.

Research design

Though my research design was intended ideally to generate data on firms from MNCs, PSCs and LLCs operating within the same industrial sector, field research constraints made it quite difficult to do so in practice. Driven by temporal constraints, organizations were taken from different industrial segments, with MNCs taken from FMCG sector, PSCs taken from the oil exploration and distribution sector, while LLCs were drawn from textile sector. Though at the practice level this design has its own advantages in terms of capturing context and variety or heterogeneity in different areas of operation, yet I perceive a lack in terms of coherence and continuity.

Language

Most writers try to impose structure and coherency in presenting and communicating what they think reality is. Choice of language also plays a significant role in what is considered communicable and what is incommunicable. After all, whatever has been translated from primary data was emic in nature and was meant for communicating across a language divide. It is also a common problem for researchers in emerging societies as to how to present native-local thinking in a foreign-global language. Loss of meanings may occur unintentionally. Nonetheless, my own translation of Urdu or any other local language into English does seek to capture emic expressions. Translation and back translation, no matter how effective they are, offer only partial solutions, and as such do not create equivalence of concepts and meanings in cross-cultural context and study. For Hoedemaekers (2008),

there is always some kind of extra-textual dimension in the translation where the essence of the original lies.

Similarly, interviews in one way also tend to be problematic as 'the communication of truth or genuine experiences because of the multitudes of contextual influences, as social norms, scripts for talking, value-laden language, expectation of both interviewee and interviewer political interests' (Alvesson 2003: 1170).

Limits of knowability and communicability

In my view one of the most predominant research tasks for the researcher is related to communication and presentation of research findings. Incommunicability always tends to serve as the limiting factor besides the comprehension of reality. Smith *et al* (2009) identified this as the problem of hermeneutics. The phenomenon of double hermeneutics is bound to play between subject and object of research in interpretive research analysis. At first, meanings are lost in the research process especially when the research subject tries to communicate whatever reality, partial or holistic, he/she has experienced. A second-order communicability problem arises when the researcher perceives the issue, objectifies it, and then intends to communicate what he/she considers is real. Based on my experience of the research and writing process, here I would like to add yet another layer to the problem and say research in the context of emerging societies is governed by 'triple hermeneutic conditions'. This third layer is posed by both the native researcher's and respondents' language by way of which the researcher has to translate and communicate what is emic into what is a global medium of communication for effective and acceptable outreach. This may compromise any understanding of 'reality'. Hence incommunicability or incommensurability exists at the level of triple hermeneutics for cultural research on an emerging society, rendering the 'correct correspondence between knowledge and reality' (Hegelund 2005: 655) even more problematic.

Generalizability

My findings with respect to issues of leadership, politics and identity practices in organization do not permit strong claims of generalizability. Nonetheless, I think the research design and stratification is such that the data are suggestive of general patterns which could be explored further in future research. The peculiarities of a synchronic study of the sort I have conducted also mean, of course, that the patterns I have described may vary over time. This is because such patterns are embedded in the cultural context of organizations and a society which is in a continuous state of flux. Moreover, presuppositions of *one* culture, *one* society, or *one* organization with *one* culture are erroneous (Sackmann *et al* 1997: 32) because individuals are seen as simultaneous carriers

of several cultural identities and assumed to belong to various cultural groups at any given moment (Sackmann *et al* 1997: 34). For example, in my overall analysis I observed that owing to the cultural specificity of the LLC segment, it does not present as coherent a model of organizing and leadership as do the MNC or PSC segments. Therefore one can observe that the LLC sector retains greater variation and fragmentation of multiple shades of organizing and leadership, constitutive of modern-western notions and at the same time also tends to show the strong presence of local-national elements.

8.5 Practice implications and research reflections

Despite some of the limitations stated above I believe this study yields results which have significant ramifications.

At a very broad level the study tends to have two opposing repercussions for individual and society, as power-knowledge relations and organizing of human and cultural life remain inseparable when viewed from a Foucauldian organization analytical perspective (Knights 2002). Commenting on my work, one of my supervisors noted that: 'you are producing powerful knowledge that could enable dominant leaders to reproduce the very relations you set out to criticize…' In other words, emic explorations of culture and leadership within the context of society in transition could further add to the knowledge base of leaders who could then misuse it to reinforce hegemonic relations and institutions. My intention, of course, is contrary to this. Once greater recognition is given to the existence of emic organizing it could lead to a better understanding of self, organization and society, which would, in turn, contribute to emancipation and transformation of human relations and institutions. In my view, it is important to recover heretofore displaced, distorted and emasculated local and emic forms of knowledge and give them appropriate recognition.

Other practical ramifications are: First, at the level of self, this study may lead members and leaders of organizations to develop a better understanding of narrating or defining their 'self concept'. The emic way of defining oneself, be it as an individual, or in relation to organization or any other collective entity, may have deeper consequences at multiple levels of analysis: individual, organizational, national or international. For instance, the concept of an individual's self-identity holds the potential for generating emic meanings of leadership, leadership development, organization and management strategies. As against the common practitioners' rhetoric and fallacious 'nay' to the existence of a distinct Pakistani management/ leadership model, the study reveals the existence, manifestation and resurgence of distinct local leadership practices based on local-cultural identity. It also

traces how multiple identities co-exist where organizing and leadership tend to emanate and flow from the central concept of identity.

Second, the study may also have some significance for MNCs' strategy formulation and creating new meanings for globalized engagement. If taken up by MNCs, the findings might prompt them to exhibit greater sensitivity and responsiveness to locality and culture, and hence have greater differentiation and greater localization; as opposed to the pursuit of homogenized forms of leadership and strategy. The research also has implications for training, HR development strategies, and organizing strategies for foreign organizations or MNCs operating in Pakistan. My point is that trainers and developers would do well to introduce and incorporate emic perspectives into what are, at present, predominantly etic training curricula. I believe this would add to the sustainability and vitality of leadership in organization would also contribute to Corporate Social Responsibility agendas.

For PSCs this study will lead to developing a better understanding and formulation of public policies and community development strategies. Given the manifestation of identity paradoxes observed in the practices of leaders, the role of leadership in PSCs turns out to be one of seeking balance between identity maintenance and modernization. This is rather imperative for leaders in all three types of organizations: MNCs, PSCs and LLCs.

Within the context of management education the study seems to have equal relevance for other disciplines, such as International Business and its sub-disciplines; for example, international management, comparative or cross-cultural management. Better understanding of self and other on the part of both leadership in LLCs and international organizations will facilitate international business as this carries an implicit explanation of how local companies do business, and with what presumptions international organizations may enter into partnership with locals, or operate in the emerging Asiatic economies of countries like Pakistan.

Last but not least is the development of indigenous literature on managerial knowledge. I consider this study to be a modest step forward for the development and accumulation of emic literature. The emergence of emic literature, it is expected, will tend to redress anomalies and gaps in relevance, appropriateness and theory-practice considerations in the way managerial education is imparted here at local universities and institutions.

The scope of the present study is relatively wide as it involves the comparative study of organizations in three corporate sectors in Pakistan. However, each segment in its turn can be further narrowed down and the analysis refined. Each contains subtle variation and depth that would invite further study in Organizational Studies (OS) terms. Moreover, industrial sector-wide studies could also be conducted across modern-western (MNCs and

PSCs) and Pakistani (LLCs) types of organization. For example, such industrial sectors where LLCs have demonstrated strong financial performance – like in consumer electronics, pesticides, pharmaceutical, tea and oil & ghee, to name some, where MNCs have been knocked out or marginalised by local-national organizations – could be treated to more detailed cross-sector comparative study.

Similarly, the study could be extended to look further into promising disciplines and OS themes, such as, the Asiatic way of organizing and leading, or a comparative study of business ethics across modern-western and Asiatic types of organization. For instance, the concept of *Sifarish* as discussed here suggests that within the context of Asian business and organizing ethics, it may be considered not only as a moral right but also carries practical value for organizations. Such claims, however, would run against the transcendental and meritocratic norms of Western ethical traditions. Similarly the issue of surface and deep identity of a *Seth* or leaders in MNCs and PSCs could be further explored in future research. As has been mentioned earlier, the question of cultural agency in the formation of organization identity and its linkage with national social identity structures could also be a fertile topic of future investigation. For instance, as has been pointed out earlier in chapter 7 that religion and construction of corporate identity has not been explored much within the discipline of OS. This study highlights how influential the role of religion is, in the construction of identity of corporate leaders in Pakistan. Furthermore, the concepts of etic and emic should not be viewed as something static and fixed in nature; rather they are dynamic and continuous processes. Therefore, infusion of etic and emic concepts, in a particular local-cultural space, is yet another potential theme worth exploring. For instance, within the context of South Asia, the establishment of the Moghul administrative state represents the imposition of etic and retention of emic constructs of leadership, administration and state governance. Similarly, upon the arrival of British colonizers – and the subsequent introduction of western concepts of legality, morality, organizing and leadership – there was again an imposition of etics along with significant retention and continuation of emics of Muslim administration and even pre-Muslim India. For instance, with regard to the British land revenue system in India, it has been noted that:

> After the advent of the British to the country, India was still ruled and strictly administered under the Moghul system of money-making with Islamic rule still dominating the scenario. The arrival of the British [etic] was looked at as a cultural and administrative shock… The interface of the colonial policy and the existing systems gave rise grossly dissimilar local results and hybrid forms. It is fascinating to note that the techniques employed in land revenue in various parts of India remain

largely unaltered even today since their initiation by Raja Todarmal during the reign of Moghul emperor Akbar[25].

What is perhaps more interesting to observe in the above quotation is how the imposition of etics subsequently leads to the sustenance, retention and the emergence of emics. As has been earlier mentioned, the present study focuses on emic experiences, interpretations and sense-making of etic concepts like organization, culture and leadership. Nonetheless, such concepts do infuse with local-cultural organizing space, and institutions tend to generate their own version of local and culturally relevant autopoietic (self-producing or self-constructing) emics. Therefore, such research themes deserve much more attention to be identified and explored further.

Moreover, each of the three themes – identity production, politics and leadership practices in organizations – discussed and analyzed above could also be made an exclusive point of departure for future studies. In short, there are very many ways in which the work I have begun here could be extended, expanded or developed further.

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[25] Retrieved from http://www.indianetzone.com/40/british_land_revenue_system_india.html[Last accessed 12th December 2012]

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Appendix A - Glossary of Urdu terms

Aajzi–o-inkisari
A guiding principle to life which implies being down to earth, showing humbleness and humility despite having authority, professional competence and a successful life. It can be considered the opposite of arrogance and prudence.

Babu
The term *Babu* or *Babu-sahib* is used for people with western attire and outlook (suits and ties) belonging to the upper middle class. *Babus* are interested in retaining desk or paper oriented jobs and as such are less connected with the realities of the field. The word has its origin in British India and as such the phenomenon of *Babu-sahib* is quite pervasive in the cultural context of organizing and leadership all across South Asia. At times the word is used for showing an expression of appreciation and admiration, but more valid meanings are associated with negative (ironical and satirical) connotations showing resistance to the ruling elite or Anglo-class. Etiologically, the origin of the word *Babu-sahib* is traced back to the colonization era, when English people needed local people to support their administrative endeavours. Therefore, the initial breed of civil servants who used to work at the lower echelons of public service, following English dress codes, adapting their language and following the ideas and aesthetics of the colonizers', were depicted as *Babu-sahib* with mixed feelings: at times with appreciation and conscious admiration, while more often indicating critique, satire and resistance. Ashish Nandi, a political sociologist, described this class as 'the anglicized, city-bred, effeminate babus' (Nandi 1970: 59).

Barakah
An emic concept that something less in quantity is better than more in numbers. In other words, the focus is on quality rather on quantity. The word synergy is close in meaning in the English language, but there are subtle differences.

Burkhurdari
Showing respect, obedience and reverence towards elders and seniors.

Farmaburdari
Obedience, deference and submission shown to authority, elders and seniors.

Ghairat
Esteem, self-respect and honour are approximate synonyms in English. It is a kind of emotional state of affairs. People driven by *ghairat* do not move then on the basis of material, rational and sensual needs.

Gheebah
The concept of *gheebah* is an emic concept within Muslim society and carries a strong admonition for those who tend to manipulate information in someone's absence for petty gains. This can be considered the equivalent to backbiting. Leaders with greater ethical and religious orientations tend to espouse the *gheebah* approach to management. If one is not involved in saying anything about someone in his absence it may curtail the formation of a political agenda. However, practitioners draw a fine line between getting genuine feedback about a subordinate and state of affairs that is part of one's job and doing *gheebah* for the sake of politics or vested interests.

Halal-Haraam
Halal means lawful, legal or permissible in *Shariah* or Islamic jurisprudence. The term describes any object or an action which is permissible to use or engage in, according to *Shariah* or Islamic law. The concept is commonly used to authorize edible food seen as

permissible according to Islamic law. The opposite of this word is *Haraam* which means forbidden, prohibited or illegal in Islamic law.

Hassad

The word *hassad* is a kind of desire, and etiologically refers to an ethico-religious aspect of behaviour in which humans inevitably indulge. This can be considered equivalent to jealousy in the English language. In Muslim society there is a strong moral admonition to refrain from such thinking and desire, as it is commonly considered that it will lead to disaster, either for oneself (the one who envies the other) or for the other who is envied. Practitioners believe that the source of organization politics is *hassad* (jealousy). It is, perhaps, inevitably in competitive situations. It can lead to seeking favours, benefits, status and promotions for oneself or one's group while depriving and negating other members and groups.

Layhaaz

This refers to the preserving of others' sentiments. Taking care of others or restraining oneself in conversation or behaviour out of good ethics or courtesy, especially when one is not under any compulsion to act.

Saadgi

Simplicity in deeds, actions, conversation and dress, etc., is considered a better way of life.

Sabar

Tolerance and patience are close synonyms in English. The concept refers to the belief in deferred gratification in order to be successful, as against instant gratification.

Seth

Seth organizations comprise more than 50% of the Pakistani economy. In common parlance, *Seth* refers to an entrepreneur or rich man in South Asia, and is someone who knows the art of money making, or is a leader in economic and organizational terms. The word is widely used in the same sense in India, as it originates etymologically from the Hindu *mahajan* or moneylenders. In the Karachi region, *Seth* is commonly used to refer to business and industrial tycoons but can also be used to characterize a mode of organizing. However, in the province of Punjab, the popular term for business entrepreneur or tycoon is *Mian Sahib*. Unlike MNCs in Pakistan who have generally imported the openly competitive appointment processes and qualification criteria typical of modern organizations, *Seth* organizations place far greater emphasis on family connections, identity, personal performance and loyalty.

It is interesting to note that leaders who consider themselves more progressive and educated abhor the idea of being identified as *Seth or Mian sahib* as it is commonly perceived to have highly negative connotations; for example, being considered as miserly and cost- or penny-conscious. The *Seth sahib* is also caricatured as something of a 'control freak' in common English parlance. It is equally important to note that such a personalized style of leadership (*Seth or Mian Sahib*) is under heavy criticism by those of its incumbents who are more indoctrinated by modern managerial education. Khakwani and Case (2009) observed that at the practice level, amongst stable and growth-driven companies and industrial groups in Pakistan, local-cultural values like tolerance, patience, humaneness, generosity and polite yet assertive behaviour, are more pronounced in *Seth*-leadership as against explicitly aggressive, conflict-prone, confrontational and challenging style of modern-western organizations.

Sifarish

The equivalent word in English language is something like 'recommendation' or 'reference'. This is a popular social and political instrument used for doing and getting favours. Tolerance for incompetence and acceptance of *Sifarish* can be construed as political acts – for compromising professional ethics, for building relationships and networking to get favours in return, for securing a job, especially when it is coming from top level government officials. *Sifarish* is an emic concept and considered a very popular instrument in Pakistani society to get things done and influence others. Typically, it is used for selection, placement and promotion-related decisions. Different people attach different meanings to it, from its outright acceptance to outright rejection, and then some try to draw fine middle lines of interpretation. Organizations and leaders are under immense pressure when political parties come into power. In general *Sifarish* is considered antithetical to meritocratic principles of social organization. However, Pragmatists adopt a subtle political position when deciding whether or not to accept *Sifarish* conduct, as it is quite pervasive in the organization and society.

Sula joey
Keeping peace and harmony all the time is considered a superior guiding principle of life.

Zakat
Zakat is considered to be a religious duty, and is expected to be paid by all practicing Muslims who are above certain financial means or capacity (*nisab*). Therefore, *Zakat* is considered much more than just a tax in an economic sense. In addition to their *Zakat* obligations, Muslims are encouraged to make voluntary contributions (*sadaqat*). The *Zakat* is not collected from non-Muslims, although they are sometimes required to pay the *jizyah* (a tax imposed in lieu of their security and protection).

Appendix B - Interview Question Guide
<u>Semi-Structured Questionnaire</u>

FOR LEADERS
Introduction
- Of researcher and research subject
- Interviewee: would you please introduce yourself (background – education, family and career profile)

On Leadership – What do leaders do?
- Leadership you received in different stages and at different points of time
- Lessons you learnt and the way you believe leadership is accomplished?
- Attributes of ideal organization leaders?
- What motivates employees or managers in practice?
- Your concept of 'the job' – Is this a charter of duties, written description or much more than this?
- Your description and understanding of meanings of the word 'professionalism'
- Sources of conflict in this organization and how this get resolved
- Constraints on leadership
- In what ways leadership in this organization is different from other organization?

On Organization Politics
- Internal organization politics – how do leaders manage politically?
- External – national political influences – industrialists moving to politics and politicians moving to industry.

On Managing Diversity
- Gender
- Language
- Religiosity

Any illustration of organization being ethical/unethical?

Any illustration of employees/managers demonstrating commitment or ownership?

Leading organization bottlenecks

Issues in technology adaptation

Your personal vision of life

Appendix C - Demographics of Respondents

Total Interviews (2008 & 2009)

Sector	Number of Interviews Held
PSCs	0+22
LLCs	19+13
MNCs	09+07
Consultants	09+08
Grand Total	87
Usable	84

Cumulative List of Interviews

No	Name	Designation	Organization	Location	Gender-Age	Date
LLCs						
1.	SMN	GM	SGH	Karachi	M-54	26-07-08
2.	SMD	SMG	-do-	Karachi	M-40	26-07-08
3.	MHN	CEO	-do-	Karachi	M-35	26-07-08
4	MAL	CEO	PCF	Karachi	M-61	29-07-08
5	SQB	CEO	MTG	Karachi	M-43	05-08-08
6	SSD	SMG	-do-	Karachi	M-37	07-08-08
7	AZM	Dir. Production	-do-	Karachi	M-48	07-08-08
8.	MSH	CEO	MTC	Multan	M-70	12-08-08
9.	KAN	Director	MMT	Multan	M-30	17-06-08
10	KAM	Director	MMT	Multan	M-26	03-07-09
11	AMP	GM Finance	MMT	Multan	M-45	07-06-08
12	YKD	GM Purchase	MMT	Multan	M-35	03-06-08
13	THN	GM Marketing	MMT	Multan	M-33	02-06-08
14	SIL	GM HR	MMT	Multan	M-54	07-06-08
15	JBT	GM Fabric	MMT	Multan	M-65	20-06-08
16	GZM	GM Spinning	MMT	Multan	M-45	20-06-08
17	T ZD	CEO	CXN	Multan	M-55	10-07-08
18	FZD	CEO	-do-	Multan	M-53	16-07-08
19	AZA	SMG	-do-	Multan	M-48	16-07-08
20	ATR	GM	CONE-CGL	Lahore	M-59	29-06-09
21	FAS	-do-	-do-	Faisalabad	M-33	01-07-09
22	MBJ	-do-	-do-	Lahore	M-45	27-06-09
23	MKS	CEO	-do-	Lahore	M-37	27-06-09
24	MOS	CEO	-do-	Faisalabad	M-28	01-07-09
25	HNS	CEO	MTC	Lahore	M-65	23-06-09
26	MNS	CEO	CMB	Lahore	M-62	22-06-09
27	MRS	CEO	-do-	Lahore	M-37	26-06-09
28	FSL	GM Fin.	-do	Lahore	M-35	01-07-09
29	MSS	GM Plant	-do-	P-Bhattian	M-43	06-07-09
30	MAH	GM Maint.	-do-	P-Bhattian	M-44	06-07-09
31	NEL	GM IT	-do-	P-Bhattian	M-40	06-07-09
32	WAD	GM Textile	-do-	P-Bhattian	M-38	06-07-09
MNCs						
33	AZB	Former ASM	UPL	Islamabad	M-34	29-06-08
34	HSH	Director FSL	UPL	Karachi	M-36	27-07-08
35	KNR	Director	UPL	Karachi	M-45	29-07-08
36	TSL	Director IT	UPL	Karachi	M-46	01-08-08
37	FHM	Director Supply	UPL	Karachi	M-51	29-07-08
38	ASL	Director	UPL	Karachi	M-37	30-07-08
39	DND	Manager Training	UPL	Karachi	F-31	30-07-08
40	ANB	RSM	UPL	Lahore	M-41	04-07-09
41	WJA	ROM	-do-	Lahore	M-33	04-07-09
42	NKN	ROM	-do-	Lahore	M-37	25-06-09
43	MSD	NSM FS	-do-	Lahore	M-30	24-06-09
44	MSL	Manager	PCT	Lahore	F-26	02-07-09

45	ZAD	ASM	PCT	Lahore	M-36	02-07-09
46	AJK	CEO	ATB	Karachi	M-50	29-07-09
47	HWD	VP	UPL	Karachi	M-50	30-07-09
48	IMH	VP	UPL	Karachi	M-45	31-07-09
PSCs						
49	YST	ED Fin.	SOP	Karachi	M-51	17-07-09
50	SEA	GM Marketing	-do	Karachi	M-57	23-07-09
51	DZD	ED Supply Chain	-do-	Karachi	M-53	17-07-09
52	BHD	GM HR	-do-	Karachi	M-44	21-07-09
53	SSM	DGM Fin.	-do-	Karachi	F-33	23-07-09
54	IAH	DGM	-do-	Karachi	M-50	21-07-09
55	RJG	MD	COP	Karachi	M-62	27-07-09
56	TRZ	CEO	COP SBU	Karachi	M-59	27-07-09
57	KNH	GMR	- do-	Multan	M-61	05-08-09
58	ATL	DGM	COP	Multan	M-57	05-08-09
59	MSS	SMG Fin.	-do-	Multan	M-32	05-08-09
60	SIM	Chief Eng.	COP	Multan	M-57	05-08-09
61	JKN	Chief Eng Utility	-do-	Multan	M-55	06-08-09
62	YAK	Head Eng Serv.	-do-	Multan	M-57	06-08-09
63	KHP	Management Trainee	-do-	Multan	M-26	05-08-09
64	AHQ	Chief Eng. Process	-do-	Multan	M-54	06-08-09
65	QQR	Manager Maint.	-do-	Multan	M-57	06-08-09
66	MLK	Dy. Div. Manager	SOP	Multan	M-28	21-08-09
67	MRF	GM Fin.	GOC	Islamabad	M-55	02-09-09
68	AAD	ED Fin.	-do-	Islamabad	M-58	02-09-09
69	ARQ	DGM HR	-do-	Islamabad	M-38	02-09-09
70	FAZ	ED HR	-do-	Islamabad	M-39	03-09-09
CONSULTANTS						
71	AAZ	TRAN	TIC	Karachi	F-52	04-08-08
72	DAW	ACAD	AMJ	Karachi	M-61	04-08-08
73	DMN	PRAC	IAB	Karachi	M-64	24-07-08
74	DMF	ACAD	IAB	Karachi	M-54	07-08-08
75	SSD	PRAC	IMT	Karachi	M-58	07-08-08
76	SHD	-do-	IDP	Karachi	M-54	22-07-08
77	NSQ	-do-	QNC	Karachi	M-60	05-08-08
78	LON	DHR	SHL	Karachi	M-50	07-08-08
79	KDN	DHR	TAP	Karachi	M-32	21-07-08
80	MAB	-do-	KAP	Lahore	M-37	28-05-09
81	DEH	ACAD	MUL	Lahore	M-58	22-05-09
82	DIA	ACAD	MUL	Lahore	M-57	22-05-09
83	SGA	HR	EFP	Karachi	M-63	16-07-09
84	JAG	HR	EFP	Karachi	M-64	14-07-09
85	RZA	TRAN	STG	Karachi	M-45	24-07-09
86	JJJ	CON	TOC	Karachi	M-57	28-07-09
87	SMZ	CON	RTN	Karachi	M-64	31-07-09