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Communication Channels Utilized by Emirati Females to Enact Leadership

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COMMUNICATION CHANNELS UTILIZED BY EMIRATI FEMALES TO ENACT
LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

The purpose of this exploratory study was to identify the communication channels six Emirati females concurrently employed in organizations in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in which they had supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles recalled using with their direct reports to enact leadership. In particular, the study attempted to ascertain the reasons for the selection of communication channels when engaged in downward communication with organizational subordinates. Data were collected via three interviews with each participant over a four week period. Interviews were conducted both face-to-face and via telephone. Data were analyzed via thematic content analysis to identify themes, patterns, and/or trends in communication channels selected and the reasons for selection of these channels when engaged in downward communication with direct reports. Findings indicated the participants' preferred channel of communication when engaged in downward communication with their direct reports was face-to-face. Frequently face-to-face communication was reinforced via written follow-up. Encoding negative messages via written channels was found to be vigorously avoided except in the most extreme cases. Cultural factors were indicated to be influential in the participants' selection of communication channel. The findings of this study have workplace preparation and training applications for private sector organizations, government, and state-owned enterprises in Abu Dhabi—in particular, those organizations in which expatriates have supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership responsibilities in relation to Emirati direct reports. The electronic version of this dissertation is at OhioLink ETD Center, www.ohiolink.edu.etd.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Chapter 1 of this dissertation provides an overview of the research context, states the study's purpose, introduces the methods of exploration and analysis, identifies the areas to be reviewed from the extant literature, and briefly describes the remaining chapters of this dissertation work.

Study Overview

This study explored six Emirati female leaders' selection of communication channels employed in downward communication situations with direct reports. Findings indicated the participants' preferred channel of communication when engaged in downward communication with their direct reports was face-to-face. Frequently face-to-face communication was reinforced via written follow-up. Encoding negative messages via written channels was found to be vigorously avoided except in the most egregious instances of subordinate non-compliance. Cultural factors were indicated to be influential in the participants' selection of communication channel. This study adds to the English language literature on Khaleeji Leadership and leadership communication.

Research context. Since September 11, 2001 there has been an increased interest in the 'Islamic' and 'Arab' worlds. Researchers seem to have followed this trend by conducting research on the vast geographic region commonly referred to as 'the Middle East' (e.g., Kabasakal & Dastmalchian, 2001) and on the broad cultural group 'Arab' (e.g., Yaseen, 2010). T. Weir (2008) noted the misdirection of such categorization,

> Before we continue it is important to be aware that there is no such thing as "one" Middle East or Arab World. This region is made up of more than fifteen countries, half a dozen different religions, and countless regional/tribal specific ways of doing things. (p. 5)

Some researchers have attempted to correct the confusion in descriptive terminology by focusing their research on the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (e.g.,

Kowske & Chaar, 2009); however, this reinforces the illusion of regional homogeneity and creates a false sense of comprehensive generalizability,

> It is also crucial that organizations understand the national differences in each of the GCC states. The Saudi Arabia case has shown that there are national characteristics in the GCC that must be attended to separately. What works in Saudi Arabia might not fit in Kuwait and what is successful in the United Arab Emirates might fail in Bahrain.
> (T. Weir, 2008, p. 6)

These writers and others (e.g., Neal, Finlay, & Tansey, 2005) make a strong case that research based in the United Arab Emirates on Emirati leadership is warranted; generalizability and transferability of findings and conclusions from other parts of the 'Arab World' or even from neighboring GCC countries cannot be assumed. T. Weir (2008) argued, "It is time organizations in the region shift away from the notion of importing leadership" (p. 5).

An increase in international trade and migration, coupled with advances in technology, have produced fundamental changes to the way business is done throughout the world (Roy & Dugal, 1998). Geographic boundaries are no longer barriers (Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2007); business travel, expatriation, and intercultural teams (be they face-to-face or electronically-mediated) are the reality of the current business world (Salt, 2008). The United Arab Emirates is arguably a leading example of this phenomenon.

In 2008-2009, the UAE was ranked the 31st most globalized market in the world, and the most globalized of the Arab countries (Porter & Schwab, 2008) while registering the world's third largest economic expansion (World Economic Forum, 2008). Its position is sustained by businesses such as Etisalat, the world's 19th largest telecommunications operator with nearly 100 million subscribers (Etisalat, 2009). Furthermore, it is a country where an estimated 88% of the population (UAEInteract, 2011)—and more than 90% of the workforce—is expatriate (UAEInteract, 2009). In the UAE, like elsewhere, expatriate professionals are hired (a) to fill a skill or knowledge gap; (b) to address globalization

requirements; and/or (c) to oversee knowledge transfer (McNulty, 2009), frequently assuming positional leadership roles.

Leadership is enacted via communication (e.g., Barrett, 2006); consequently, effective leadership requires effective communication (Denning, 2007). A key element of effective communication is appropriate channel selection (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008). Channel selection is contingent upon process, interpersonal, organizational, social, and cultural factors (Lind, 2001). To exercise effective leadership, an understanding of the process, interpersonal, organizational, social, and cultural factors that define appropriate channel selection and use is important (Melcher & Beller, 1967).

Expatriate professionals do not always know or understand Emirati norms; thus, they may engage in incongruent behaviors such as inappropriate communication practices. These organizational and/or national culture violations may have negative repercussions such as the creation of barriers that inhibit the development of positive relationships and trust with Emirati peers which may impede productivity (Collins, 2001; Denning, 2007; Picardi, 2001; Rowe, 1990). Explicit knowledge and understanding of Emirati workplace values and norms including those related to communication, may enhance Emirati-expatriate relationships and improve expatriate professional practice in Emirati organizations.

Purpose of the study. Chen and Van Velsor (1996) posited, "[T]o better inform practitioners on how to manage diversity, it is important to explore and discover the various mechanisms through which diversity impacts organizational life" (p. 295). It is accepted that both leadership and communication are culturally-mediated, as such, it cannot be assumed that effective practices in one culture are generalizable to another. Al Lamky (2006) noted,

> while publications and studies pertaining to female leadership experiences
> within gendered work cultures, their traits and leadership styles,
> challenges and contributions are on the increase (Fels, 2004; Rhode, 2003;
> Acker, 1990; Buay, 1997; Kanter, 1993; Moss, 1994), most of these
> studies are conducted in western societies which are not necessarily

generalizable to other cultures despite their apparent value. This is particularly important in light of the dearth of research on the experience of Arab women in leadership positions. (p. 53)

In light of (a) the scant English language literature on the United Arab Emirates (Bristol-Rhys, 2010), in particular on leadership in the UAE (T. Weir, 2008); (b) the number of women currently in the workforce[1] (Mussio & Zahran, 2010) including those in leadership roles[2]; and (c) those in the pipeline[3] (Mussio & Zharan, 2010), research on the communication practices of Emirati female leaders is warranted.

The goal of this exploratory research was to identify the communication channels six Emirati females employed in organizations in which they had supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles recalled using with their direct reports to enact leadership.

Design, methods, and analysis. Data were collected via three interviews with each participant over a four-week period. Interviews were conducted both face-to-face and via telephone. Open-ended questions applied in a semi-structured format were utilized to garner participants' experiences and opinions.

The interview method was selected because (a) it has been noted to be well-suited for exploratory, ethnographic research (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998)—aligning it with the goals of the study and (b) it has repeatedly been used with success in the United Arab Emirates with Emirati participants (e.g., Abdulla, 2005; Al Jenaibi, 2010; Al Kaabi, 2005; Al-Oraimi, 2004; Sohb, Belk, & Gressel, 2008).

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[1] Women account for 66% of the government sector (UAE Ministry of State for Federal National Affairs, 2008).

[2] "[W]omen in the diplomatic service and higher posts of government amount to 30 percent of the UAE's civil service including diplomatic postings abroad" (UAE Ministry of State for Federal National Affairs, 2008, p. 5). Women also constitute 22.5% of the Federal National Council (UAEInteract, 2010).

[3] Approximately 75% of university graduates are female (Hamdan, 2010).

Two interview questions anchored this study: (I1) Think about a time in the past when you influenced a direct report to perform a task. What did you say or do to accomplish this? Why? and (I2) Think about a time in the past when a direct report refused to perform a task you assigned. What did you say or do to get her/him to comply? Why?

Data were analyzed for thematic content in a continuous, simultaneous, dialectal, and iterative process. The goal of the analysis was to identify themes, patterns, and/or trends in the communication channels selected by the participants and the reasons for selection of these channels when engaged in downward communication with direct reports.

Implications for leadership and change. Findings from this study may be used to inform education and training programs endeavoring to prepare Emiratis for the workplace, in particular those individuals who may one day assume leadership roles. It may also aid the acculturation of expatriates who currently hold, or may in the future hold, roles in Emirati organizations.

Dissertation document overview. Chapter 2 examines key concepts relevant to the proposed study in order to theoretically ground it, position it in relation to the extant literature, and explicate its importance. Chapter 3 describes the data collection methods employed in this study. It also introduces the participant population and presents the method of analysis. Ethical considerations, in particular those concerning research conducted in a host-culture environment, will be highlighted. Chapter 4 presents the data. Chapter 5 provides interpretation of the findings and explores implications of this study to the broader field of leadership and change.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to further understanding of, and to add to the scant English language literature on, leadership in the United Arab Emirates. Specifically, the study aimed to refine understanding of the ways female, Emirati leaders in Abu Dhabi use communication to enact leadership. The study approached this by exploring the communication channels six Emirati females concurrently employed in organizations in which they have supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles recalled using in downward communication situations with organizational direct reports, and why they made these selections. To do this, it is first useful to have an understanding of the principle theories and issues of salience as they relate to the topic investigated: leadership, Emirati culture, and communication.

In this chapter, the notion of leadership will be examined through the constitute elements of the working definition employed by the researcher: Leadership is a socially-based (e.g., Rost, 1993), culturally-mediated (e.g., Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2007), power-oriented (e.g., Northouse, 2007), and status-contingent (e.g., Eagly, 2005) influence relationship (e.g., Yukl, 2002) enacted via communication (e.g., Barrett, 2006). Special attention will be paid to areas of the extant literature that through the research process came to be identified as threats to the leadership of the participants in the study and strategies to surmount these possible threats. This will be followed by an examination of communication including a review of thought on its mechanics, a survey of the field of leadership and management communication, and an itemized exploration of the primary constituent elements of the communication process as they specifically relate to channel selection in legitimate downward influence communications between manager and subordinate in the organizational context. The chapter will end with an overview of Emirati culture with an eye to those aspects most directly related to the study participants' (Emirati females concurrently

employed in organizations in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in which they had supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles) selection of communication channels when attempting to influence direct reports to undertake a task.

Leadership

Leadership has been posited to be a socially-based (e.g., Rost, 1993), culturally-mediated (e.g., Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2007), power-oriented (e.g., Northouse, 2007), and status-contingent (e.g., Eagly, 2005) influence relationship (e.g., Yukl, 2002) enacted via communication (e.g., Barrett, 2006).

Socially-based. An exploration of the word leadership reveals that although understanding of the term has changed since it entered the vernacular around the year 800 (Rost, 1993)—and even in the time since researchers began a serious examination of the topic in the 1930s (Bass, 1990; Northouse, 2007), the social nature of the phenomenon has remained steadfast[4]. Bogardus (as cited in Rost, 1993) asserted, "Not only is leadership both a personality and a group phenomenon; it is also a social process, involving a number of persons in mental contact" (p. 47). The social interaction inherent in leadership has been noted by leadership scholars to occur through the process of influence (e.g., Schnurr, 2009); influence is enacted via communication (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Barrett, 2006; Cialdini, 2001; Lewicki, Saunders, Barry, & Minton, 2003).

Culturally-mediated. Leadership has also been noted to be culturally-mediated (e.g., Moran et al., 2007; Northouse, 2007; Rost, 1993); cultural values correlate with beliefs about the legitimacy of the embodiment and behaviors of leaders and leadership. Munley, Couto, and O'Neill (2010) noted,

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[4] Lead is a transitive verb (it requires an object on which to act) therefore a relationship with an external entity (i.e., its social essence) is a primary positive semantic trait.

> Leadership appears to be a universal phenomenon. There has been no society found where it is completely absent or where cultural norms have completely substituted for it. A variety of definitions for leadership accommodates the diversity of appearances that leadership may take among and within cultures and organizations. (p. 498)

House and Javidan, two authors of the 2004 GLOBE study, stated, "Leadership is culturally contingent" (p. 5). Rost (1993) asserted perceptions of leaders and leadership are influenced by cultural factors such as "race, gender, religion, family, and professional education" (p. 16). In short, culture defines leadership, dictates the legitimacy of leaders, and sets expectations for the behavior and interactions of leaders and followers.

Culture. Edward Hall (1959) asserted, "Culture is communication and communication is culture" (p. 169), wherein differences in communication styles are symbolic of different cultural frameworks (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Dodd, 1998; Gudykunst, 2005; Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Nishida, 1996; Lustig & Koester, 1999; P. Smith, Bond, & Kagitcibasi, 2006; Tannen, 1986; Varner & Beamer, 2005), and differences in culture manifest through differences in verbal and nonverbal communication behavior (e.g., E. Hall, 1959)[5]. Jameson (2007) called for the notion of culture to be expanded to include cultural groupings such as vocation[6], generation, and social aspects of biology (as a complement to national culture). Similarly, Maltz and Borker (1982) and Tannen (1994) have posited the degree of difference between men and women can be so great that men and women have been described as belonging to different cultures.

According to Varner and Beamer (2005), "Culture is the coherent, learned, shared view of a group of people about life's concerns that ranks what is important, furnishes

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[5] Linguistic relativity hypothesis (Carroll, 1997; Gumperz & Levinson, 1996; G. Lakoff, 1987; Sapir, 1929).

[6] Webb and Keene discovered that engineers' professional cultural values at times overrode those related to nationality (as cited in Jameson, 2007). This supports research by Spencer-Oatey and Xing (as cited in Jameson, 2007) showing communication satisfaction with superiors was linked to professional field not nationality.

attitudes about what things are appropriate, and dictates behavior" (p. 5). Kroeber and

Kluckhorn (1952) offered the following definition,

> Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior
> acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive
> achievement of human groups. . . The essential core of culture consists of
> traditional (i.e., historical derived and selected) ideas and especially their
> attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as
> products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of
> future action. (p. 18)

Lustig and Koester (1999) noted, "People are from different cultures whenever the degree of

difference between them is sufficiently large and important that it creates dissimilar

interpretations and expectations about what are regarded as competent communication

behaviors" (p. 58). When interactants have "different paradigms, norms, standards, and

values" (Phan, Siegel, & Wright, 2009, p. 331), they have different cultures.

Differences in culture-based norms and/or expectations can also be a contributing

factor in relationship breakdown (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Bonvillain, 1993; Dodd, 1998;

Hofstede, 1997; Jandt, 2001; Lustig & Koester, 1999; Moran et al., 2007; Terry & Hogg,

2000; Trompenaars, 1994; Varner & Beamer, 2005). Ineffective communication can lower

morale by obstructing the development of interpersonal relationships and the establishment of

trust. It can also can lessen productivity and lessen competitive advantage by creating

inefficiencies (Collins, 2001; Denning, 2007; Picardi, 2001; Rowe, 1990).

Varner and Beamer (2005) asserted culture has both "onstage" and "backstage"

dimensions (p. 3). Onstage dimensions are those elements of culture that are observable, such

as language. Backstage dimensions include schemata involved in cognitive processes, such as

decision-making and interpretation. Moran et al. (2007) labeled these terms "overt" and

"covert" (p. 12) aspects of culture. Thompson and Purdy (2009), like Levy (1986), referred to

"values, beliefs, and practices" as "[d]eep structure" (p. 191) culture. The tacit nature of

culture can make deep structures difficult to comprehend (Hofstede, 1997), subsequently

other cultures—and members of other cultures—remain unknown, misunderstood, and may

be perceived as a threat (Varner & Beamer, 2005).

Trust. Threat may be operationalized as the opposite of trust. Trust is an essential

element of effective communication (Barrett, 2006; C. Burke, Sims, Lazzara, & Salas, 2007;

Lewicki et al., 2003; Rowe, 1990; Tannen, 1986) and to building strong relationships (Dirks,

Lewicki, & Zaheer, 2009; Ren & Gray, 2009), both of which are vital to success in business

(Dent, 2008; Kamberg, 2006; Lee & Dawes, 2005; Lewicki et al., 2003; Mooradain, Renzl, &

Matzler, 2006; Pate, Beaumont, & Stewart, 2007), leadership (Hernandez, 2008; Huang &

Van de Vliert, 2006; Larkin & Larkin, 2006; Myers, 2006; G. Smith, 2005), and change

(Brinkman & Gleave, 2006; Gillespie & Dietz, 2009).

Trust is a state of psychological safety (Ni, 2007) that allows one actor to be

vulnerable to another (Dirks et al., 2009; Ni, 2007; Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009). Trust is a

cultural construct (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Huang & Van de Vliert, 2006; Lee & Dawes,

2005; Lustig & Koester, 1999; Varner & Beamer, 2005;) that "can be shaped by

organizational and cultural contexts" (Huang & Van de Vliert, 2006, p. 221) and is predicated

on perceived benevolence, predictability, and consistency (Lee & Dawes, 2005).

Trust can be difficult to achieve when interactants come from different cultures as

differences in culture-based norms and/or expectations can lead to communication and

relationship breakdown (e.g., Lustig & Koester, 1999; Terry & Hogg, 2000; Varner &

Beamer, 2005). These differences make predicting, and accurately decoding, others' behavior

difficult; behavioral norms and expectations in one culture may be violations in another; thus,

in acting appropriately for one's own culture, an interactant's actions may be judged as

inappropriate by the other, and as such one actor may deem the other untrustworthy.

Referring to the role of cultural expectations with regard to behavior in the maintenance of

trust, Varner and Beamer (2005) stated, "Trustworthy people follow form" (p. 127); consequently, "Unfamiliarity has led to distrust, even hostility" (p. 12).[7]

A leader in an organization, an individual with positional power (French & Raven, 1959), who exhibits verbal and/or nonverbal behavior that violates stakeholders' expectations—who is unpredictable, who is unknown—is unable to create trust and affiliation with stakeholders (i.e., cannot gain personal power). This is because, as explained by Campo, Cameron, Broussard, and Frazier, "[V]iolations cause misconceptions of correct attitude or behavior, leading to incorrect attitude changes in the participants" (as cited in Nimon & Graham, 2011, p. 19)[8]. Tannen (1994) noted, "When people who are identified as culturally different have different conversational styles, their ways of speaking become the basis for negative stereotyping" (p. 71). The leader comes to be perceived as an untrustworthy holding environment (Heifetz, 1994), a threat. Stakeholders, like most people, will actively seek to avoid that which they perceive as threatening (Lipman-Blumen & Couto, 2009). Under such circumstances, stakeholders do not choose to become followers (Bass, 1990).

Power-oriented and status-contingent. Rost (1993), quoting Morely, wrote, "[L]eadership is an inherently political process" (p. 25). Northouse (2007) noted power is central to leadership, "Power is the capacity or potential to influence" (p. 7). As such, leadership is a power relationship (Guskin, 1999; Keith, 2008; B. Smith, Montagno, & Kuzmenko, 2004; Yukl, 1981). Power has been defined as an individual's "ability to affect others' beliefs, attitudes, and courses of action" (Northouse, 2007, p. 7), in other words, it is

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[7] O'Brien (1998) noted, "Cognitive-emotive scripts (rather than mindfully reflexive responses) are the basis of most of our reactions to circumstances and encounters" (p. 21).

[8] "The information from Campo et al.'s 2002 study pointed to the powerful effect social norms have on behavior. Behavioral change effects link to and derive from the instinctual desire of humans for acceptance and social membership. Communities establish the processes and forms for human interaction that are a force in physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional architecture" (Nimon & Graham, 2011, p. 19).

the ability to influence9. Power is relational (Burns, 1978; Tannen, 1986) and asymmetrical (Tannen, 1986). Foucault (1980) asserted power is not possessed but rather created between interactants (i.e., it is social, dynamic, and relational).

Wilmot and Hocker (1998) posited a systems-based relational model of power in which power originates not in individuals but rather arises out of the socio-cultural context. Under the provisions of this model, the amount of power one has is a function of one interactant's perceived dependence (value) on what the other interactant controls; the greater the dependence, the less power one has in the relationship. Wilmot and Hocker (1998) liken power to 'currency' in that one can exchange one form of power (e.g., influence) for another form (e.g., resources).

Feminist writers (e.g., Fletcher, 1999; Wade, 2001) have proposed a gendered perspective of power. Miller (1991), following the work of Parker Follett, stated that "women may want to be powerful in ways that simultaneously enhance, rather than diminish, the power of others" (p. 25). Concordant with this, Eagly and B. Johnson (1990) noted women leaders tend to employ a more democratic style than males. In *Sex Differences in Social Behavior: A Social Role Interpretation*, Eagly (1987) noted these differences may not be natural to women but rather developed as a coping mechanism in response to social pressures that reject women's use of masculine-ascribed styles (i.e., authoritarianism).

Green (1999), following the work of French and Raven (1959, noted that power is a context-specific construct (both in type and degree) needed for successful goal attainment. French and Raven's seminal work identified two categories of power, with five bases: positional (legitimate, reward, coercive) and personal (referent, expert). While some recent

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[9] Current leadership scholars take a positive orientation to power and influence as a voluntary relationship juxtaposing it with coercion (e.g., Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2007).

scholars have critiqued the lack of discreteness of the five-base model (e.g., Hinken & Schriesheim as cited in Bass, 1990), it still serves as a useful framework to aid analysis.

Magee and Galinsky (2008) noted that power and status, while often used interchangeably, are, in fact, related, but different, constructs. While both are associated with a dimension or element that is socially perceived to have value, Magee and Galinsky (2008) distinguished status as being "characterized by rank ordering of individuals or groups according to the amount of respect accorded by others" (p. 359) and therefore creating external expectations of behavior, whereas power is a function of "the amount of resources each controls" (p. 359). Magee and Galinsky (2008) noted, "Individuals can experience inconsistencies between their level of status and their level of power" (p. 384). Tannen (1986), a linguist, defined power in relation to solidarity. She wrote,

> The terms *power* and *solidarity* capture the way we juggle involvement and independence in the real world. Power has to do with controlling others--an extension of involvement--and resisting being controlled--an extension of independence: the desire not to be imposed on. But it also has to do with registering social status, because superior status entails the right to control and the right to resist being controlled. Solidarity is the drive to be friendly, similar to what we have called rapport. (pp. 93-94)

Bourdieu (1991) posited language to be both a means of communication and a vehicle of power; this sentiment has been supported by others like Lauring (2011), "[C]ommunication implies not only the transfer of information but also relationship building and social organization, it cannot be conceived as a neutral act separated from power relations (Cooren, 2006; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)" (p. 235). Bourdieu noted the language one uses is indicative of one's power and status relative to others in the (social) context; discourse style reinforces and reiterates an individual's position, power, and status. In a reciprocal process, position, power, and status dictate who assumes the interlocutor roles of listener, questioner, and speaker. Noting the relationship between communication and power, Mullany (2004) wrote,

Mills (2002:74) documents that, by following Foucault, language can be seen as 'an arena whereby power may be appropriated, rather than power relations being seen as frozen societal roles that are clearly mapped out for participants before an interaction takes place'. (p. 19)

Influence. Cheney (1991) remarked "leadership is now commonly understood in terms of interaction, language, and persuasion" (p. 3). Northouse (2007) posited, "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). Yukl (2002) defined leadership as "the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish the shared objectives" (p. 7). Schlueter, Barge, and Blankenship (1990) noted, "Since the primary responsibility of management is to influence and control the activities of subordinates, the success or failure of female managers depends on their ability to direct subordinates towards accomplishing organizational goals" (p. 42). Madlock (2008) referencing Salacuse noted that "in order for leaders to persuade people to follow their vision, they need to communicate effectively" (p. 63). Yukl and Falbe (1990) noted, "One of the most important determinants of managerial effectiveness is success in influencing subordinates, peers, and superiors" (p. 132). Speaking from a non-U.S./'Western' perspective, Fu et al. (2004) asserted "the effectiveness of global managers depends on their ability to exercise influence in culturally mixed interpersonal networks (Smith and Peterson, 1988)" (p. 284).

Pfeffer (1992) asserted influence to be the means by which power is manifested. Theoretical conceptualizations of influence can be gleaned from work on power such as that done by French and Raven (1959) and Weber (1978). Schank and Abelson (1977) posited four assumptions that underpin understandings of persuasion[10]. The first assumption is there are only a few goals of persuasion: (a) acquire knowledge, (b) acquire an object, (c) acquire power to act, or (d) get someone to act on your behalf. The next assumption is there are only

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[10] Persuasion is a common form of influence and as such the two terms are frequently used interchangeably.

a few standard strategies to accomplish these goals. Third, there is an order to the application of these strategies: (a) ask, (b) emphasize relationship, (c) make a personal appeal, (d) bargain (for an object or favor), and (e) threaten. The last assumption is if standard strategies fail, other ones will be invoked to force compliance and these alternate strategies will be oriented toward the goal desired rather than normed rank order (as with standard strategies).

Hunter and Boster (1987) provided a model of selection for compliance-gaining messages which posits initiators prefer messages which elicit positive target affect and avert negativity. Variation in influence strategy selection is an outcome of the degree of the initiators' willingness for target negativity to gain compliance. Erez, Rim, and Keider (1986) noted tactic selection is, in part, a function of the agent's application of attribution theory vis-à-vis the target, "[T]he power-holder attributes to him- or herself the control over the target person's behaviour. Such an attribution leads the power-holders to exercise strong and controlling tactics of influence" (p. 25).

Strategies and tactics. Although researchers have created a detailed taxonomy of influence (i.e., persuasion, compliance-gaining) strategies[11], influence strategies are frequently referred to as either hard or soft (Barry & Shapiro, 1992). Hard tactics include legitimating, exchange, and coalition. Soft tactics include personal appeals, ingratiation, rational persuasion, and inspirational appeals. Similarly, tactics are frequently classified as either coercion-based or reward-based (Tedeschi, 1983). In *Interpersonal Conflict* (1985) Hocker and Wilmot (based on the work of French and Raven) delineated the relationship between power and influence. They asserted coercive power manifested through punishment influence strategies and tactics, reward power through reward strategies and tactics, legitimate power through title and position, referent power through attractiveness and

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[11] Clifton (2009) noted the lack of absolute agreement with regard to taxonomic classifications (e.g., Gordon, 1996; Higgins, Judge, & Ferris, 2003).

charisma strategies and tactics, and expert power through expertise. In addition to the five types of power proposed by French and Raven (1959), Hocker and Wilmot proposed information power which is realized by providing information to others and connection power which is exercised through interpersonal relationships. Hocker and Wilmot noted power exists in all relationships and that communication (specifically influence) is the means by which this power is displayed because of the relative advantage one interactant has over the other(s).

Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980) identified eight influence tactics (ingratiation, rationality, assertiveness, sanction, exchange, upward appeal, blocking, and coalitions) and found four to be most prevalent regardless of actor status (assertiveness, sanctions, ingratiation, and rationality). Erez et al. (1986) noted four of the tactics (assertiveness, sanctions, blocking and upward appeal) were characterized by "direct and intensive control over the target person" (p. 26) whereas tactics like "ingratiation ('acting humble'), rationality, ('explain the reasons for the request'), exchange, personal benefits, and coalitions signify weaker control over the target person as compared with the first four tactics (Kipnis et al., 1976; Falbo, 1977)" (p. 26). Kipnis et al. (1980) concluded the selection, use, and aim of influence tactic is conditional on the direction of influence. They did not find tactic selection and use to be mediated by gender.

Yukl and Falbe's (1990) study strongly supported the findings of Kipnis et al. (1980) concerning variation in aims; however, it did not support Kipnis et al. with regard to the association between selection and use of tactic and direction of influence. Yukl and Falbe's (1990) study posited eight influence tactics – although not the same eight as Kipnis et al.: pressure tactics, upward appeals, exchange tactics, coalition tactics, ingratiating tactics, rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, and consultation tactics.

By 1992, Yukl and Tracey offered nine influence tactics: pressure (e.g., threats, demands), exchange (e.g., favors, reciprocation), coalition (e.g., solidarity, support, aid), ingratiation (e.g., generalized positive interpersonal affect), rational persuasion (e.g., facts, logic), inspirational appeal (e.g., aspirations, values), consultation tactics (e.g., integration, compromise, inclusion, participation), personal appeal (e.g., loyalty, friendship), and legitimating (e.g., prerogative, authority). They found rational persuasion, inspirational appeal, and consultation to be the most effective tactics, and pressure, coalition, and legitimating to be least. More specifically, they noted ingratiation and exchange to be effective in influencing subordinates and peers, but not superiors. Yukl and Tracey (1992) concluded that regardless of the direction in which influence was applied (upward, downward, lateral) in a task commitment situation, consultation, inspirational appeal, and rational were moderately more effective than other strategies. The authors noted these tactics may be perceived as more socially desirable than others because they are oriented toward "an attempt to change the target's attitude about the desirability of the request" (Yukl & Tracey, (1992, p. 533). In addition, their data supported the assertion that (typically) pressure, coalition, and legitimating were ineffective. The authors posited,

> The negative correlations between these tactics and target commitment probably reflects their frequent use in influence attempts when resistance is anticipated or has already occurred in an earlier influence attempt. In addition, these tactics are likely to be viewed as socially undesirable forms of influence behavior in many situations, and the target may become resentful or angry with the agent for trying to coerce or manipulate him or her. (Yukl & Tracey, 1992, p. 533)

Research conducted in non-U.S. and cross-cultural settings, albeit scant, did not support the universality of findings from U.S.-oriented studies. Hirokawa and Miyahara (1986) cited a 1968 study by Whitehill and Takezawa that reported "attitudinal and value differences between Japanese and American workers prompt the use of different managerial strategies for motivating workers" (p. 252). Burgoon, Dillard, Doran, and Miller (1982)

found differences in the compliance-gaining strategies employed by Americans and Asians, with Asians using more positive strategies (e.g., reward) than Americans did as well as a greater variety of strategies than Americans. Schermerhorn and Bond (1991) found differences in Chinese and American managers use of rational appeals in upward and downward influence situations. Fu and Yukl (2000) found differences between Chinese and American managers with the Chinese rating "coalition formation, upward appeal, giving gifts/favors, and personal appeals as more effective, and rational persuasion, consultation, and exchange as less effective than did American managers" (p. 285). They noted an alignment, and a possible causation relationship, between influence strategies and cultural values. Findings of other cross-cultural studies of influence tactics (e.g., Hirokawa & Miyahara, 1986; Ralston et al., 2006; Schermerhorn & Bond, 1991; Ting-Toomey, 1985) supported the idea that differences in cultural norms and values between populations are associated with the differential preference, selection, and use of influence. Fu et al. (2004) delved more deeply into the factors that support and differentiate influence strategy and tactic use "such as the nature of the request, the direction of the influence attempt, the power possessed by the agent, and the relationship between the agent and the target (Yukl, 2002)" (pp. 284-285). They compared influence tactic use in 12 cultures. Preliminary findings indicated rational persuasion, collaboration and consultation to be effective across cultures. Gift giving, socializing, and pressure were identified as universally ineffective. To accommodate cultural variation, the study offered 16 influence tactics classified into three groups:

> (1) *Persuasive strategy* includes *rational persuasion* (using logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade the target), *inspirational appeal* (making an emotional appeal to the target's values or ideals), and *consultation* (seeking the target's input or participation in task). When influencing the target, the manager using this strategy focuses on the merits of the request, provides logical arguments, or connects the request to the larger good.

(2) *Assertive strategy* consists of *persistence* (repeated pleading with the target to carry out a request), *pressure* (using demands, threats, or persistent reminders to push the target), and *upward appeal* (seeking help from someone with higher authority). The manager, when applying this strategy, uses some form of coercion to influence the target.

(3) *Relationship-based strategy* includes *giving gifts* (offering gifts to the target), *informal engagement* (inviting the target to a non-work environment to make the request), *personal appeal* (asking the target to carry out a request as a personal favor), *socializing* (talking about a subject irrelevant to the request but of interest to the target before making the request), and *exchanging* (offering the target something in exchange for the help). With this strategy, the manager usually tries to use a positive social relationship or attempts to form one in order to influence the target. (Fu et al., 2004, pp. 286-287)

The authors supported previous propositions relating influence to culture. They wrote,

Results showed that different dimensions of individual social beliefs predict the perceived effectiveness of the three types of influence strategy, and that cultural values can moderate the strength of the relationship between these dimensions of individual social beliefs and the perceived effectiveness of influence strategies. (Fu et al., 2004, p. 284)

As an example, they proposed correlation between in-group collectivism and manager use of relationship-based strategies. They also noted the strong and consistent impact of religiosity on influence.

Gender. Hirokawa, Kodama, and Harper (1990), and O'Neil (2004) found no differences between men's and women's use of influence. This was explained by Carothers and Allen (1999), "[I]ndividuals experiencing masculine socialization pressures behaved in masculine ways,…The results suggest that the personality and experiences related to gender contribute to the use of influence tactics above the effects of gender in and of itself" (p. 385).

Some studies have found that men and women use the same array of available strategies; however, they differ in frequency of individual strategies used and in initial preference of strategy selection (e.g., Case, 1993; Harper & Hirokawa, 1988; Hirokawa et al., 1990; Holmes, 2005; C. Johnson, Clay-Warner, & Funk, 1996; Kipnis, Schmidt, Swaffin-Smith, & Wilkinson, 1984; Shockley-Zalabak, 1981; Tannen, 1996). These studies indicate that men in positional leadership roles are prone to employ more commands and imperatives

(Hirokawa, Mickey, & Miura, 1991; P. Johnson, 1976; Offerman & Schrier, 1985) while

women in equivalent situations have a preference for altruism and rationale based influence

strategies (Harper & Hirokawa, 1988; P. Johnson, 1976). The "situational authority

approach" (Maltz & Borker, 1982, p. 197) posits these dissimilarities are both a cause and an

outcome of the status and power differences between men and women (Kanter, 1977;

R. Lakoff, 1975; Zimmerman & West, 1975)[12]. J. White and Roufail (1989) compared men's

and women's relative use of specific influence strategies. They found that in relative terms,

men and women showed similar influence strategy preference – marked by most frequent use

of asking (verbal request and rational persuasion), followed by "self-oriented tactics, dyadic-

oriented tactics, and invoking social principles" (J. White & Roufail, 1989, p. 177) and most

infrequent use of coercion (e.g., threat, force). This supports previous assertions by Gruber

and White (1986) and Rule, Bisanz, and Kohn (1985). Steffan and Eagly (1985) had

previously found verbal requests to be amongst the most oft used influence strategies which

is concordant with J. White (1988) who found request strategies used more commonly than

coercive or reward strategies.

Receiver expectations concerning sex-congruent behaviors have also been found to

influence strategy selection (Bartol & Butterfield, 1976) with men expected to employ 'hard'

power (e.g., coercion) more than women (P. Johnson, 1976)[13]. Multiple studies of varying

foci have shown that men and women performing the same behaviors are frequently judged

differently (i.e., in accordance with gender expectations) (e.g., Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau,

2002; Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995; Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992; Korabik &

Ayman, 2007; Ridgeway & Diekema, 1992; Wiley & Eskilson, 1982). For example, Mohr

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[12] Magee and Galinsky (2008) noted, "Individuals can experience inconsistencies between their level of status and their level of power" (p. 384).

[13] P. Johnson (1976) noted males were allowed to use both hard and soft tactics, whereas women were expected to employ only soft ones. This was noted by Wiley and Eskilson (1982) as well as P. Johnson (1976) to create a catch-22 situation for women while expanding opportunities for male success.

and Wolfram (2008) concluded "male leaders get 'extra credit' for showing verbal consideration as it may be thought to entail special effort, whereas for female leaders it may be seen as normal and routine" (p. 4). However, Izraeli's (1987) Israel-based study found, "Managers were evaluated differently on the basis of the type of influence tactic employed and not whether they adopted stereotypically sex congruent behaviours" (p. 83) with females using more direct influence tactics. Izraeli noted the differing findings of her study may have been due to several factors, including culture: "Cultures also differ in the extent to which each sex is permitted to adopt patterns of behaviour associated with the other sex" (p. 83). Similar to Izraeli's supposition that contextual factors (i.e., culture) impact tactic selection, Moss, Barbuto, Matkin, and Chin (2005) posited the organizational context to be an impact. Ridgeway, C. Johnson, and Diekema's (1994) study concluded target resistance to downward influence can occur when the initiator of the influence attempt was marked by "external-status disadvantages" (p. 1052) (e.g., age, race, gender).

While the genesis of perceived or real differences between men and women managers in the workplace may be of great interest to researchers, Yukl (as cited in Ansari, 1989) proposed that ultimately "what is more important is to investigate the manner in which a leader influences his or her subordinates instead of focusing all attention on the bases of power for understanding influence" (p. 284).

Resistance. Followers do not always acquiesce to leader influence attempts. A 1998 study conducted by Tepper, Schriesheim, Nehring, Nelson, Taylor, and Eisenbach (as cited in Bass, 1990) and Zaltman, Duncan, and Holbek's 1973 study (as cited in J. Johnson, Donohue, Atkin, & S. Johnson, 1995) found two types of resistance exhibited in the workplace: active (i.e., refusal) and passive (i.e., non-compliance).

Causes. Followers may not comply with, or may resist, influence attempts for a variety of reasons including lack of resources (e.g., knowledge, experience), communication

breakdown (e.g., misunderstanding), perceptions of leader (il)legitimacy, and perceived threat (Tepper et al., 2006). While the first two reasons are frequently easy to identify and resolve in order to bring about compliance, the last two may be more complex and difficult to ascertain.

Leader illegitimacy. Leaders who behave in ways that violate follower expectations or who exhibit traits that are incongruent with follower schemata concerning leaders may be perceived as illegitimate, and consequently, lacking authority over followers and the prerogative to exercise influence. Lipman-Blumen (2000) noted that when a leader is perceived by stakeholders to have an image that is congruent with their expectations vis-à-vis leaders[14], she/he will be seen as legitimate which will encourage followership. However, an individual with positional power (French & Raven, 1959) who exhibits (verbal and/or nonverbal) behavior that violates stakeholders' expectations comes to be perceived as an untrustworthy holding environment (Heifetz, 1994), a threat, illegitimate. Stakeholders will actively seek to avoid (e.g., resist) that which they perceive as threatening (Lipman-Blumen & Couto, 2009) and will not choose to follow (Bass, 1990) (e.g., not comply with influence attempts).

Change. Followers may interpret influence attempts (such as requests) as threatening when the influence attempt could be perceived to result in change[15]. As noted by Lindebaum (2009) referencing LeDoux and Phelps, "[T]here is an implicit reference to the propensity to live one's life primarily through memory, and in consequence, anticipation of, or anxiety about, future events" (p. 232). Followers who wish to maintain the status quo (Bentley, 2005; Deary, 2008) may feel threatened by the consequences of change. Threats may include

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[14]Fiske and Taylor (1991) called expectations about attributes and appropriate behavior of a person in a particular positions a role schema.

[15] Change is a system with at least two distinct, yet related, constituents: the introduction of new operational elements (e.g., procedures) and the affective impact of those new operational elements on stakeholders (transition) (Adams, 2003; Bridges & Mitchell, 2000). Fear of the new, the unknown, and/or of the (unpredictable) ramifications of change may cause interactants to feel threatened (Bentley, 2005).

(perceived) struggles for political, social, and symbolic capital such as power, status, and attention as well fear of displacement due to job loss, loss of status, and loss of power (Clutterbuck & Hirst, 2003; Kanter, 1977; Pettigrew, 1998). Moreover, it may include existential threats such as self-doubt, change of self-concept/identity, loss of group membership, and lack of certainty (Bentley, 2005; Deary, 2008). Deary (2008) wrote,

> Change affects more than roles and skills; it alters power relationships (Foucault, 1977), makes trust issues salient (Morgan & Zeffane, 2003; Lines et al., 2005; Singh, 2006) and undermines existing pacts. Most important change "intrudes upon deeply rooted symbolic agreements, traditional ways, and ritual behavior" (Bolman & Deal, 1991: 375) and discourse (Fairclough, 2001; Francis, 2003). (p. 15)

Counter-strategies. Leaders can overcome/mitigate follower resistance by employing four overlapping strategies (a) understanding and using follower (i.e., target) frames to meet follower expectations; (b) creating positive affect and in-group affinity with followers, (c) maintaining a positive ethos and image, and (d) employing appropriate influence tactics. The understanding gleaned from the first three strategies can also be used to inform the fourth, selection of appropriate influence tactics.

Framing. Frames are the perspectives a person (or a group of people) employs to understand and to give meaning to a situation[16]. Frames are derived from personal, social, and cultural schemata and cognitive heuristics (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Frames can be positive or negative. Leaders can employ communication and rhetorical devices to bring followers' frames into alignment (Denning, 2007) with those the leader desires; frame re-orientation is particularly useful when proposing a task (i.e., an influence outcome) that may create psychological noise for followers and thus resistance. Barrett (2006) noted, "Effective leadership communication depends on being able to analyze an audience and develop a

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[16] This is the definition of framing as applied in sociology and psychology. Other scientific traditions employ other denotations for the term.

communication strategy for the context" (p. 33) and "Knowledge of what motivates others can help you create a positive ethos, which will make you more persuasive" (p. 12)

Levy (1986) and Thompson and Purdy (2009) argued for the need to understand and work on the deep structure level. They posited it is imperative for leaders to understand power and deep structures (culture) "[b]ecause deep structures are embedded and implicit, they reflect social, historical and political roots, and they act to shape how actors view what is possible and what is not possible" (Thompson & Purdy, 2009, p. 192). "Understanding deep structure is vital to a process view of innovation because it influences both observable organizational characteristics and power relationships between actors" (Thompson & Purdy, 2009, p. 191). Through effective listening[17] and adept use of elicitation techniques, leaders come to know how followers think and feel (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008) and can come to understand followers' frames; listening elucidates deep structure cognition. In order to be effective listeners, leaders must bracket their assumptions and biases (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008).

Once leaders understand followers' cognitive and affective states, they can adjust their communication to ensure the audience (i.e., followers) decodes the message as intended thus improving the likelihood of achieving their (i.e., leaders') aims (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Barrett, 2006; Denning, 2007; Krashen, 2003; Vygotsky, 1934). This can be accomplished through appropriate message organization and rhetorical devices.

Effective leadership communicators are purposeful with the order in which they present ideas to followers: first, they get the receiver's attention[18], then they address the

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[17] Poor listening may cause a leader to inaccurately decode stakeholder messages. This may cause the leader to engage in behaviors perceived by stakeholders as inappropriate (expectancy violations), starting a vicious cycle of marginalization and out-group designation.

[18] "In all kinds of settings, they communicate by following a pattern: first, they get attention. Then they stimulate desire, and only then do they reinforce with reasons" (Denning, 2007, p. 27).

audience's affective needs, lastly, they make cognitive appeals[19] (Denning, 2007). Denning

(2007) outlined the logic for this organization,

> [T]he traditional practice of using a comprehensive set of analyses of the
> reasons for change [does not] generate enthusiastic action. For one thing,
> it's too slow. By the time the traditional presenter is approaching the
> conclusion, the audience has already made up its mind—largely on
> emotional grounds. For another, it's addressed to the wrong organ of the
> body. To gain enthusiastic buy-in, leaders need to appeal to the heart as
> well as the mind. The audience has to want change. To be effective, a
> leader needs to establish an emotional connection and stimulate desire for
> a different future. Without the emotional connection, nothing happens.
> (p. 33)

 The pivotal role of affect was also noted by Kouzes and Posner (2007) as well as Tannen

(1986). Davenport and Beck (as cited in Denning, 2007) noted

> the factors highly associated with getting attention in rank order, were: the
> message was personalized, it evoked an emotional response, it came from
> a trustworthy source or respected sender and it was concise. The messages
> that both evoked emotion and were personalized were more than twice as
> likely to be attended to as the messages without these attributes. (p. 31)

Brain scans (Westen, Blagov, Barenski, Kilts, & Hamman, 2006) provide evidence

that that leaders must create emotional buy-in with stakeholders before endeavoring to obtain

reasoned buy-in. Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRIs) show that reactions to

statements that contradict pre-existing beliefs are emotional, not intellectual.

Research from the psychology community provides further support. Denning (2007),

referencing Bacon's psychology research on confirmation bias wrote, "Giving reasons for

change to people who don't agree with you isn't just ineffective. A significant body of

psychological research shows that it often entrenches them more deeply in opposition to what

you are proposing" (p. 23) as "[t]he human understanding when it has once adopted an

opinion…draws on all things else to support and agree with it" (p. 24). Bringing together

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[19] Gleicher (as cited in Rouda & Kusy, 1995) may argue that the emotion leaders appeal to in order to bring
about change is dissatisfaction.

findings from neurology and psychology and applying them to leadership, Denning (2007)

posited,

> If a leader offers reasons at the outset of a communication to such an
> audience [skeptical], the maneuver will likely activate the confirmation
> bias and the reasons for change will be reinterpreted as reasons not to
> change. This occurs without the thinking part of the brain being activated:
> the audience becomes even more deeply dug into its current contrary
> position. Reasons don't work at the outset, because the audience is neither
> listening nor thinking. (p. 26)

Stakeholders must decode positive relational messages of psychological safety, trust, and

credibility and they must be emotionally primed before they will accept content messages

(Denning, 2007). As he further noted,

> if reasons are given *before* the emotional connection is established, they
> are likely to be heard as so much noise. Worse, if the audience is skeptical,
> cynical, or hostile, the reasons tend to flip and become ammunition for the
> opposite point of view. By contrast, if the reasons come *after* an emotional
> connection has been established with the change idea, then the reasons can
> reinforce it, because now listeners are actively searching for reasons to
> support a decision they have in principle already taken. (p. 36)

Once the emotional connection has been made, the leader can drive home appeals

with knowledge, logic, and reasoning (Denning, 2007). French and Raven (1959)

emphasized the importance of credibility to leaders and used the term 'expert power' to

describe this pre-condition of trust and psychological safety. Expounding the concept, Green

(1999) wrote, expert power

> is commonly exercised in the form of rational persuasion. The leader
> presents logical arguments and supporting evidence for a particular
> proposal, plan, or request. Success depends on the leader's credibility and
> persuasive communication skills in addition to technical knowledge and
> logical or analytical ability. Proposals or requests should be made in a
> confident manner, and the leader should avoid making contradictory
> statements or vacillating between inconsistent positions. (p. 55)

Rhetorical devices used by leaders include euphemisms, metaphor, apology,

questioning, offering, challenging, and stories (Denning, 2007; Tannen, 1986). Rhetorical

devices help with frame re-alignment and reinforcement as described by Fairhurst and Sarr

(1996), "Just as an artist works from a palette of color to paint a picture, the leader who manages meaning works from a vocabulary of words and symbols to help construct a frame in the mind of the listener" (p. 84).

Festinger (1957) noted, common frames of reference may promote understanding and minimize cognitive dissonance. Through the use of communication behaviors that cognitively, emotionally, and rhetorically meet listeners' expectations a positive affective climate can be created which can promote compliance; through the appropriate utilization of follower frames, leaders can build a psychologically safe environment for followers which minimizes resistance to influence attempts (Denning, 2007).

Positive affect and in-group affinity. Clutterbuck and Hirst (2003) noted, "A very high proportion of poor relationships occur because people do not understand the values, perceptions, or circumstances of others" (p. 101). Leaders can apply their knowledge of followers' frames to communicate in a manner that builds trust and in-group affinity with followers (e.g., channel selection, physical context) which can then be used to leverage their status and power to influence followers to engage in desired behaviors.

Common frames create a sense of belongingness, of connectedness. They build community (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Denning, 2007; Tannen, 1986)[20] through the creation of a common culture, a common way of experiencing and understanding (decoding) the world (Bruner, 2002). The use of common frames also "communicates a sense of contextual support to the broader follower base, which forms the basis for follower trust in the institution" (Hernandez, 2008, p. 123).

Leaders can use communication judiciously to build a sense of community and belonging amongst followers (Rowe, 1990). Dunn (as cited in Denning, 2007) acknowledged,

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[20] Fletcher (1999) noted group membership, a sense of affiliation, may dilute the emotional intensity of the existential crisis by making material resources and emotional support available.

"communication is more emotional than logical" (p. 29). He continued noting that leaders can "draw upon people's emotional connection to the organization, to draw on that piggy bank of good will to the firm and use that as the way forward" (Denning, 2007, p. 29); to induce followers to overcome resistance and to acquiesce to influence attempts.

Maslow (1954) noted the importance to individuals to have a sense of belonging, of affiliation with—and acceptance by—others in order to attain achievement and competence. Ashforth and Mael (1989) called this "social identification" and defined it as "the perception of oneness with, or belongingness to some human aggregate" (p. 21). Claessens (as cited in Zhu, 2009) affirmed, "[H]umans are emotionally bound to direct relationships" (p. 292). Sashkin (1984) listed "decreased isolation" (p. 11) as one of three basic human work needs. Clutterbuck and Hirst (2003) noted the importance of community, of "each individual having both a sense of how they fit in and a feeling of belonging" (p. 33). Relational theory as put forth by Miller (1976) posited that the more an individual feels accepted and understood, the more accepting of others the individual becomes—a virtuous cycle develops (Wadel as cited in Fletcher, 1999)[21]. Positive framing and social identification are drivers of effective relationships; allophilia (Pittinsky, 2005) and the creation of trust may be consequences of effective communication.

Boni, Weingart, and Evenson (2009) noted, "Personal connections among team members provide the foundation from which trust, respect, and liking can build" (p. 411). Trust is an aspect of psychological safety (Dirks et al., 2009; Ni, 2007; Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009). Without trust, interactants will be reticent to "share their experiences,.. inquire about others' experiences, adjust these experiences to their professional context, and develop reflective conversations" (De Dea Roglio & Light, 2009, p. 165). "Psychological safety can

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[21] Barsade (2002) and McColl-Kennedy and Smith (2006) noted the phenomenon of emotional contagion: once an emotion is held by key opinion shapers within an organization, it is quickly adapted by others throughout the rest of the organization.

counter the cognitive and interpersonal obstacles that stand in the way of surfacing and engaging different points of view" (Edmondson, 1999, p. 354) because "[p]sychological safety encourages team learning behaviors, including such activities as experimenting, giving and receiving feedback, and raising problems or errors" (Foldy, Rivard, & Buckley, 2009, p. 26). They further cautioned diversity "brings with it the risk of an inability to communicate and understand one another, which can result in conflict and frustration" (Foldy et al., 2009, p. 410) and may lead stakeholders to deem the leader untrustworthy and illegitimate, to withdraw support for the leader, and resist influence attempts. Barrett (2006) noted "the key to interacting with others and managing relationships successfully is communication" (p. 175). The quality of communication impacts the quality of the relationship (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003; Dutton & Ragins, 2007): poor communication promotes negative relationships and inferior outcomes including resistance.

Participation in decision-making may strengthen the sense of community (e.g., group identification) as stakeholders are united in facing a shared problem and a common threat (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linksy, 2009). For individual stakeholders, group membership may assuage the stress and fear caused by the new status quo (Kritsonis, 2004; Robbins, 2003) as it expands the range of resources available to them to cope with the change and its consequences, "access to resources and contacts, technical and task assistance, emotional support, and advice" (Meyerson, 2001, p. 99).

Wheatley (2005) posited that an essential task of leaders is to "increase the number, variety, and strength of connections within the system" (p. 93). Larkin and Larkin (2006) and Ni (2007) indicated the need for frequent, open communication exchanges. The more team members interact, the more experiences they share and the more they should come to develop a common vernacular with semantic equivalence (Chomsky, 1988). This may increase the likelihood they will share cognitive structures (Senge et al., 1994), their behavior will become

aligned, and thus predictable, which may promote the development of positive relationships and encourage cooperation and compliance. Clutterbuck and Hirst (2003) wrote, "Communities consist of groups of people, who may have many differences, yet have enough purpose in common to accept each other, to co-operate with each other, to share with each other and to learn from each other" (p. 33). A positive communication climate includes trust and creates psychological safety. Clutterbuck and Hirst noted compliance requires a positive communication climate which includes leaders and followers to trust, resolve conflict openly, and share knowledge. Clutterbuck and Hirst see it as the responsibility of the leader to create a positive communication climate, to create "*the climate where communication can happen*" (p. 27)[22].

Positive ethos and image. Followers may resist influence attempts when the leader is perceived to lack a positive ethos[23] (e.g., credibility, integrity, honesty, predictability). The perceived negative ethos mitigates trust which in turn reduces followers' sense of psychological safety making them reticent to allow themselves to be vulnerable to the leader (i.e., trust) resulting in resistance.

> According to Aristotle, ethos is the most important persuasive device and most critical ingredient in the rhetorical situation: The "character of the speaker may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses". Therefore, "the orator must not only try to make the argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief; he must also make his own character look right and put his hearers, who are to decide, into the right frame of mind. (Roberts, 1954, p. 25)

Barrett (2006) defined ethos as a persuasive "appeal based on the perceived character of the sender of the message" (p. 11) and asserted its centrality to effective communication and leadership,

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[22] This is in alignment with Northouse's (2007) previously mentioned assertion that it is the leader who is responsible for initiating and maintaining relationships including assuring communication.

[23] In the rhetorical sense (i.e., persuasion) ethos is related to the audience's perception of the character or image of the speaker. Related concepts are logos (logical argumentation) and pathos (emotion experienced by the audience).

> A positive ethos will take leaders a long way toward influencing their
> audiences with their intended message, whereas a negative ethos is one of
> the greatest barriers to effective communication. How leaders are
> perceived makes the difference in how well they are believed, how
> persuasive they are, and ultimately how effectively they communicate.
> Successful ethos depends on projecting a positive ethos. (p. 11)

Adding, "If the audience does not trust or believe the speaker or writer, logic or emotion will have little persuasive force" (Barrett, 2006, p. 11). And, the ethos a receiver holds of the sender influences how s/he decodes the message, "An audience's receptivity to us, our ethos, or our message can assist or be a barrier to their receiving our message as we intend" (Barrett, 2006, p. 13). As such, "Our ethos may be the most persuasive tool we possess" (Barrett, 2006, p. 15).

Although the notion of ethos is culturally-mediated (McCrae, 2009), several traits have been noted to contribute to the creation of a positive ethos. These traits include trustworthiness, integrity, competence, consistency, and credibility and have been mentioned by Western leadership researchers such as Kouzes and Posner (2007), Arabian Gulf region researchers such as Abdalla and Al-Humoud (2001), and Islamic leadership scholars such as Adair (2010). Barrett (2006) explained how traits interact to create a positive ethos,

> The extensive research into emotional intelligence has shown that
> company leaders set the tone, create the mood, and determine the actions
> of the organization. They and their companies are trusted because of their
> reputation, because they are good at what they do, because of their
> knowledge, because they appear confident, and because they are believed
> to be ethical. All of these conditions lead to a positive ethos. (p. 15)

Barrett (2006) argued that although ethos and image are two closely associated concepts they are not synonymous. She asserted,

> Image is often associated with illusion or superficiality. It embodies what
> an audience thinks of us initially based on mostly superficial perceptions.
> "Ethos" refers to qualities of greater depth and substance. It ties more
> directly with our character, which our audience judges according to the
> culture in which we are communicating. (p. 10)

Heaphy, Sanchez-Burks, and Ashford (2004) stated,

> For many people, developing a reputation as a professional is an important impression-management goal because it signals that one is capable of meeting the technical and social demands of their jobs (Reardon, 2001; Roberts, forthcoming), and thus is one way of achieving the rewards organizations can provide, such as social approval, power, well-being, and career success (Baumeister, 1982; Leary and Kowalski, 1990; Rosenfeld, Giacolone, and Riordan, 2002). (p. 3)

Heaphy et al. (2004) and Ibarra (1999) noted professional image to be an external impression assigned to an individual by others[24] whereas reputation is an image of long-standing that has a perceived degree of permanence. Ibarra (1999), like Goffman (1959), noted image and identity are borne out of the interplay of personal characteristics (e.g., ethos) and social identities (e.g., gender, age, nationality).

A leader's professional image and reputation are important because they influence stakeholders' attitudes and followership. A leader who is perceived by stakeholders to have an image[25] that is congruent with their expectations vis-à-vis leaders[26] will be seen as legitimate which will encourage followership (Lipman-Blumen, 2000). When an individual meets the expectations of others, a positive image is created; and when there are expectancy violations, a negative image develops (Goffman, 1959; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

Because of the importance of image, Goffman (1959) noted that individuals (in social situations such as the workplace) will highlight traits that fit others' (e.g., stakeholders, followers) expectations and thus legitimize their social role. Ibarra (1999) observed this phenomenon in behavior (e.g., communication) while Omair (2009) studied the use of clothing for this purpose: professional image is both gender and culture specific. Although Heaphy et al. (2004) noted individuals often employ multiple channels to convey

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[24] This is different from (professional) identity which the individual assigns to herself/himself (Ibarra, 1999).

[25] Performativity theory (Butler, 1993) argues that identity and image are not fixed but rather is in a process of constant creation during interaction.

[26] Fiske and Taylor (1991) called expectations about attributes and appropriate behavior of a person in a particular positions 'role schema'.

(professional) image, Goffman (1959) and Rudman and Glick (1999) commented that the range of acceptable behaviors is broader for those perceived to have high status (e.g., men in organizations) than for those assigned lower status (e.g., young people in organizations).

Influence tactics. In the context of **legitimate power**, Yukl explained,

> [A]uthority is exercised by making a legitimate request, either verbally or in written form. A polite request is more effective than an arrogant demand. Compliance with the request is more likely if it is perceived to be within the leader's scope of authority. An illegitimate request is likely to be ignored, or otherwise resisted, … Legitimate requests should be made in a clear, concise manner, using language that the target person can easily understand. (as cited in Green, 1999, p. 55)

To be effective the influence tactic(s) employed must be congruent with the frames and expectations of the intended target for the given context.

Applying a lens model (Wilmot & Hocker, 1998) perspective to downward communication and influence tactic selection, a follower who has a transactional orientation toward the leader-follower relationship may be more receptive to exchange tactics delivered through an impersonal device like offering and a lean channel such as a memo whereas a follower who values the affective aspects of her/his relationship with the leader may expect the use of consultation employed through a face-to-face channel.

Leadership is a complex, multifaceted socio-cultural influence process that involves individuals engaged in communication as they negotiate for power, status, and authority.

Systems

The notion of systems underpins much current thinking in leadership (e.g., relational leadership, leader-member exchange) as well as other social sciences such as psychology, sociology, and communication and media studies that inform leadership theory.

According to the American Heritage dictionary (n.d.), a system is "a group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements forming a complex whole" (n.p.). One can speak of biological systems, political systems, communication systems, social systems,

and cultural systems. Showing personality as a system, Triandis and Suh (2002) wrote, "ecology, amongst other factors, shapes the culture, which in turn shapes the socialization patterns, which shape some of the variance of personality" (p. 135).

Bordia, Hobman, Jones, Gallois, and Callan, (2004) noted "most processes in organizations are highly interdependent, and the strategic, structural, and job-related of an organization are often nested sub-systems" (p. 511). As such, organizations can be views as systems. L. White and Wooten (1983) posited the existence of relationship and social systems, "[B]y viewing the conduct of individuals in a behavioral or organizational context as a number of role systems" (p. 692).

Systems thinking is a problem-solving technique that advocates the analysis of the linkages, interactions, and feedback of each component element in relation to every other component element, and in relation to the entirety of the context in which the problem is located. It rejects the notion that problems can be properly understood in isolation. As a holistic framework approach for problem-solving, systems thinking requires the analysis of both superficial (visible) and deep structure (invisible) elements (Gilovich, 1993; Heifetz, 1994; Levy, 1986; Senge et al., 1994; Vaill, 1996; Wheatley, 2005).

Complex adaptive systems (CAS). In the field of management and leadership, systems thinking may be guided by the concept of Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) theory. Uhl-Bien (as cited in Couto, 2009) explained,

> CAS operate like neural networks in the brain. And so you have agents—agents are, things like people, information, resources, worldviews, and technologies. These agents interact. In complexity it is important that these agents are heterogeneous, that they bring different interests and perspectives. That is what allows the complexity dynamics to produce creativity and adaptability—if all the agents acted and thought in the same way there would be no need to change. However, because the agents bring differences they create pressure in the system to have to work through these differences… But for the agents to be willing to do all this hard work of processing through conflicting constraints they need to feel interdependence. Without the interdependence there would be no motivation for them to continue to interact. (p. 6)

Uhl-Bien (as cited in Couto, 2009) continued to explain,

> non-linearity is where we get the unpredictability. In cybernetics and systems theory, the thinking was that if you can understand the system you can predict it. In complexity the interactions are nonlinear, meaning that even if we can begin to understand the system dynamics we can never really predict them (except in maybe the very short term). Things interact in ways that will generate something we couldn't have imagined before. (p. 7)

Complex Adaptive System (CAS) theory is differentiated from other aspects of systems thinking and complexity theory by its confidence in the constancy, dynamic nature, and unpredictable direction of change in systems as well as the ability of systems to learn and adapt. The ability of complex of adaptive systems to learn and change can be seen variously from the super-level of transnational culture to the micro-level of managerial selection of communication channel in influence interactions with direct reports. This will be explored in further detail later in this chapter.

Social systems. A social system is an inter-influencing and interconnected series of relationships between groups. A social group is an assembly of individuals who share a common trait or characteristic. Groups can be differentiated by traits they do not share. Culture—the ontological and epistemological model shared by a group which it uses to decode the world and subsequently take action—is a characteristic than can be used to differentiate groups.

Social systems can be viewed variously, or simultaneously, at the micro (i.e., interpersonal), meso (i.e., organizational), or macro (i.e., national, international) levels. Studies of social systems explore how groups are different, the interactions between groups, and factors that promote or inhibit positive relationships between groups.

Related to the notion of social systems is intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1991). Intersectionality theory argues that an individual's multiple identities (e.g., gender, culture, age) can only be fully understood in relation to each other and not in isolation.

Intersectionality theory examines the interplay of these forces of empowerment and oppression and how they impact the individual. For example, Bristol-Rhys (2010) noted how the simultaneity of being female, young, Emirati, and of a high socio-economic status constrained informants' communication behaviors.

Conflict and resistance can also be understood from a systems perspective (Wilmot & Hocker, 1998). Wilmot and Hocker (1998) proposed a model for understanding conflict and resistance. They posited conflict and resistance can be understood by (a) analyzing the relationships throughout the system (i.e., triangles), (b) identifying patterns within the system (i.e., the rules), and (c) understanding the role(s) of each constituent element in the system. Other perspectives for understanding conflict and resistance are Wilmot and Hocker's (1998) lens theory and Bolman and Deal's (2003) four frames[27].

Systems theory and thinking underpin many current conceptualizations of leadership, organizations, culture, social relationships, and communication.

Communication

Referencing Weisinger, Barrett (2006) wrote, "The basis of any relationship is communication. Without communication – be it sign language, body language, e-mail, or face-to-face conversation – there is no connection and hence no relationship" (p. 175).

Berry (2011) defined communication as "the process of transferring information, meaning, and understanding between two or more parties (p. 192) noting it "is fundamental to getting any organizing or work done, as communication provides the basic building blocks with which people collaborate, make decisions, and act to achieve organizational objectives" (p. 192). Clutterbuck and Hirst (2003) defined communication as "meaningful interaction between two or more people" (p. xxi). While Taylor and Van Every (2000) posited

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[27] Bolman and Deal (2003) proposed four frames through which change can be analyzed: structural, human resources, political, and symbolic.

communication to be a continual sensemaking process. Lustig and Koester (1999) defined communication as "a symbolic process in which people create shared meanings" (p. 25). According to Barrett (2006), "Communication is the transmission of meaning from one person to another or to many people, whether verbally or nonverbally" (p. 3). Adler and Elmhorst (2008) commented communication is attitude made visible via verbal and/or nonverbal behavior. Varner and Beamer (2005) were more specific in their explanation, "Communication is the perception of verbal (worded) and nonverbal (without words) behaviors and the assignment of meaning to them. Communication takes place whether the sending of signals is intentional or unintentional" (p. 28) and "even takes place when the verbal or nonverbal behavior is unconscious, as long as it is observed and meaning is assigned to it" (p. 28). Communication is unavoidable and it is irreversible (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008).

Mintzberg (1973) concluded managers spend 78% of their work life engaged in communication activities. These findings were further delineated by Volard and Davies (1982). Their study of 101 Australian managers in a variety of public and private sector organizations found, "Almost all managerial activity could be described in terms of some communication-type process" and "[a]lmost half (45.3 percent) of that communication was conversation" (p. 42). Moreover, these managers reported 54.8% of the time they communicated with subordinates, 42.0% with peers, and 23.6% of communication situations involved superiors. Of these communication situations, 61% were face-to-face interactions. Rice and Shook's (1990) meta-analysis found managers spent 50% of their day engaged in oral communication and 23% using text based channels. Luthans, Hodgetts, and Rosenkrantz (1988) noted nearly half of effective managers' time is spent in engaging in routine communication. P. Carlson and Davis (1998) noted these findings to be consistent this previous studies of managerial time use,

A meta-analysis of media use studies was performed and found that managers spend 50% of the day communicating orally and 23% of the day communicating using text (Rice and Shook 1990). These findings are consistent with other studies of managerial use of time (Ives and Olson 1981; Kotter 1982; Poppel 1982). (p. 335)

P. Carlson and Davis (1998) noted, "[S]ome authors have gone so far as to consider organizations as solely communication phenomena, that is, entities developed and maintained only through continuous communication activity among their participants" (p. 335). Amongst those authors referred to by P. Carlson and Davis was Weick who asserted organizations are created by, and with, stakeholder communication; organizations are at their essence communicative phenomenon. This perspective is congruent with notions of symbolic interactionism which posit,

[S]ociety as a dynamic web of communication (Blumer 1969; Cooley 1902, Dewey 1922; Mead, 1934). Society is interaction, and interaction is symbolic since, through their interactions, people assign meaning to things. For organization studies, symbolic interactionism is based on the premise that organizations are webs of interaction, and the basis for interaction among members is a shared system of meaning. (Carlson & Davis, 1998, p. 340)

Managers engage in communication in order to engage in sensemaking (Flanagin & Waldeck, 2004) as well as planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling (Fayol, 1949). Leaders use communication to establish, build, and strengthen relationships (or to negate or weaken them) (Collins, 2001; Denning, 2007; Rowe, 1990) and from this to influence follower feelings, beliefs, thoughts, and practice. Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) positioned communication as essential for affiliation building in organizations. Expanding this notion, Lauring (2011) stated,

[C]ommunication is a mechanism through which groups are created, maintained, and modified (Scott, 1997). To dominate the production and reproduction of communication structures is to dominate the legitimized access to recognition and resources. In other words, not only the level of comprehension but also the intentions and positions of groups and individuals affect the sharing of information and the building of relationships that could be the outcome of a communicative encounter (see Battilana, 2006). Accordingly, effective communication depends not only

on the skills of organization members but also on group and intergroup dynamics (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). (p. 235)

Barrett (2006) declared, "*[E]ffective leadership depends on effective communication"* (p. 3).

Communication models. Communication was originally envisioned as a process. First as a unidirectional, linear process (e.g., Berlo, 1960; Shannon & Weaver, 1949) and later as a feedback loop (e.g., Schramm, 1954). These early models focused on the transmission of information neglecting meaning and how it is made (Limaye & Victor, 1991).

More recent conceptualizations note communication to have both surface and deep meaning and to be influenced by an array of variables (e.g., Bowman & Targowski, 1987). Limaye and Victor (1991) have criticized more recent theories for underplaying the importance of culture; Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) observed culture not only impacts perception and behavior but also the way theories are developed, explained, and employed.

Current conceptualizations of communication note it to be a system (e.g., Barnlund, 1970; A. Hall & Fagen, 1956). To the extent the non-linearity and randomness of communication makes it unpredictable, one can argue that it is a complex adaptive system (Bowman & Targowski, 1987; Limaye & Victor; 1991; Lauring, 2011) and that communication behavior is adaptive (in the sense proposed by Heifetz).

Channel selection. Channel selection is an outcome of the interplay of the constituent elements of the communication process. These elements include the message, the sender, the target (i.e., intended receiver), the contexts in which the communication event is embedded, and the channels employed. These elements do not act in isolation, they continually act on, and are acted upon, by the other elements in a dynamic, and often unpredictable, fashion.

Channel selection is important because media choice has been shown to impact manager performance (Daft, Lengel, & Trevino, 1987) and organizational performance

(Markus, 1994). Reinsch and Beswick (1990) remarked, "Decisions about channel are important since they help determine the impact of specific messages and the effectiveness of message initiators. In the aggregate, such decisions help shape the effectiveness, efficiency, and ambience of an organization" (p. 801). Barry and Fulmer (2004) asserted congruence between the communication goal (e.g., relationship building, information exchange, sender ease) and the channel employed is key to effective communication.

The channel is the medium employed by the sender to transmit the message. Commonly researched channels of communication include face-to-face, telephone, voice mail, email, letters, spreadsheets, and reports. Prior to the 1960s, it was commonly believed message effectiveness was solely an outcome of sender word selection and receiver interpretation. This thinking changed in large part to the work of Marshal McLuhan. McLuhan asserted: the medium is the message (1964). The centrality of appropriate channel selection to communicative effectiveness cannot be overstated.

Channel classifications. Channels can be classified in numerous ways such as verbal/non-verbal, formal/informal, and by degree of media richness, social presence, and bandwidth.

Verbal/non-verbal. Channels can be classified as verbal or non-verbal. Non-verbal channels include gestures, facial expressions, haptics, proxemics, chronemics, kinesics, olfatics, paralanguage as well as a variety of other forms. Nonverbal channels have the capacity to reinforce, contradict, complement, substitute, regulate, and repeat verbal messages (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Denning, 2007; Pease & Pease, 2004; Tannen, 1986). Kruger, Epley, Parker, and Ng (2005) remarked upon the importance of nonverbal communication,

> If comprehending human communication consisted merely of translating sentences and syntax into thoughts and ideas, there would be no room for misunderstanding. But it does not, and so there is. People convey meaning not only with what they say, but also with how they say it. Gesture, voice,

expression, context—all are important paralinguistic cues that can
disambiguate ambiguous messages (Archer & Akert, 1977; Argyle, 1970;
DePaulo & Friedman, 1998). Indeed, it is not uncommon for paralinguistic
information to more than merely *supplement* linguistic information, but to
alter it completely. (p. 926)

Verbal channels can be oral or written. Oral channels include face-to-face and telephone.

Commonly used written channels in organizations include email, letters, and spreadsheets.

Wilson (1974) noted people gain different types of information from verbal and nonverbal

cues.

Formal/informal. Channels are often referred to as either formal or informal. Formal

channels are those that have organizational legitimacy. For example, email may be perceived

as a formal organizational channel because of the organization's involvement in its creation

and maintenance (e.g., computer server)—by virtue of providing email, the organization

legitimizes it. Organizational legitimacy may also be attributed to messages that originate

from senders who have positional power and authority within the organization (Dow, 1988;

Jablin, 1987). The formal-informal classification is not a dichotomy but rather a range. The

more authority an organization attributes to a channel, the more formal it is. Informal channels

gain authority and legitimacy through personal power and move through interpersonal and

informal communication networks. J. Johnson, Donohue, Atkin, and S. Johnson's (1995)

study found informal organizational channels to be valued more highly and to be used more

than formal channels. These findings have implications for leaders in that they offer support

for the resourcing of communication and they may impact the way leaders elect to

communicate—especially when the facilitation and development of quality connections

(Dutton & Heaphy, 2003; Quinn, 2007) is a goal. This last point has support in the findings of

Blau (1954) who asserted the use of informal channels has been linked in part to the

development of positive relationships. Melcher and Beller (1967) provided a possible reason

for the inclination toward informal channels, "[F]ormal channels would normally be regarded

as aloofness or falling back upon the effective neutral relationships of the formal

organization" (p. 50). Notwithstanding the findings of J. Johnson et al. (1995), formal

channels, as noted by P. Carlson and Davis (1998), serve an important function, "Uncertainty

is associated with lack of information, so to deal with uncertainty, organizations create

structures such as formal information systems, task forces, and liaison roles that facilitate the

flow of information" (p. 337) furthermore "[t]he role of media in uncertainty reduction is the

ability to transmit the correct amount of information …To deal with equivocality, the

organization must find structures that enable rapid information cycles among managers so that

meaning can emerge" (p. 337).

Sensory/institutionalized. Channels can also be classified as sensory (those based on

the five senses) or institutionalized, such as letters and email (Wilkins, 1977). According to

Wingenbach (n.d.),

> Each institutionalized medium requires one or more of the sensory
> channels to carry the message from the sender to the receiver. For
> instance, when we use face-to-face conversation (an institutionalized
> medium) we make use of sight (gestures, expressions), sound (voice, other
> noises), and possibly touch, smell, or taste. (n.p.)

Researchers have found sensory-rich institutional channels to be more effective in gaining

receiver's attention (Denning, 2007).

Media richness. According to media richness theory (MRT)[28], channels can be ranked

according to their degree of richness/leanness (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Daft et al., 1987; Rice,

1993; Trevino, Daft, & Lengel, 1990; Trevino, Lengel, & Daft, 1987). Channel richness

refers to a medium's capacity to carry "multiple communication cues, provide instant

feedback, and offer a personal focus to the communication" (Sullivan, 1995, p. 49).

According to Flatley (1999), "Media richness theory ranks communication channels along a

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[28] MRT is also called information richness theory (IRT). MRT is predicated on assumptions from McLuhan and
contingency theory (e.g., Fiedler, 1958) that the channel employed has a significant impact on communicative
effectiveness (Lengel & Daft, 1989).

continuum of richness, defining highly rich channels as those handling multiple inherent cues simultaneously, such as using feedback, nonverbal cues, and several senses simultaneously" (p. 1).

Sullivan (1995) summarized conclusions (then to-date) from three benchmark studies, Short, Williams, and Christie (1976), Trevino et al. (1987), and Rice (1993), on channel richness rankings. Sullivan noted all three ranked face-to-face as the richest channel due to the visual and auditory cues provided. This was followed by telephone and lastly (i.e., least rich) email. Sullivan noted Trevino et al.'s (1990) dissention, placing email in the middle of the richness/leanness continuum. Fulk and Boyd (1991) and Markus (1994) remarked MRT was devised to describe traditional channels (e.g., face-to-face, telephone) not new ones (e.g., email) and as such MRT assumptions are not generalizable newer channels.

Fulk and Steinfeld (1990) proposed medium richness is less a function of channel features (i.e., information carrying capacity, immediacy of feedback, personalization) and moreso of social constructions (e.g., social influence model of communication) and user technical ability (e.g., typing). Others such as Ngwenyama and Lee (1997) have drawn on critical social theory including the work of Weick and Habermas to propose perceptions of channel richness/leanness are an outcome of the way the channel is employed to convey the message as well as a function of the form of the message transmitted.

Related to the notion of richness/leanness, Rice (1987) proposed the idea of channel 'bandwidth'. Bandwidth refers to the variety of cues a channel can convey—the greater the diversity of cues, the greater the bandwidth.

Sullivan (1995) remarked upon the commonality between MRT and bandwidth: both define "communication media using technology-related characteristics, such as the volume of information, or the number and diversity of non-verbal cues that can pass through the channel" (p. 50).

Social presence. Social presence theory (SPT) is complementary to MRT. SPT builds on the foundation set by the MRT and bandwidth concepts and adds "the perception of the people who use the media, and their evaluations of the "social presence" of each channel" (Sullivan, 1995, p. 50). Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) stated social presence theory "posits that media can be arranged on a continuum from lean to rich, based on their speed of feedback, variety of channels, personalness of source, and richness of language used" (p. 143). The capacity of a channel to sustain the role of each interactant and at the same time support the interpersonal relationship between interactants is called 'social presence' (Short et al., 1976). A primary assumption of social presence theory is that interactants value a channel as much, if not more, for the 'psychological closeness' (Short et al., 1976) they perceive it offering than for its technological benefits. Short et al. (1976) argued interactants consider social needs and goals when selecting a channel. Rutter (1987) posited a positive correlation between the number and range of cues a channel offers, the amount of information transmitted, and the perceived degree of psychological closeness (i.e., interpersonal involvement). According to Kupritz and Cowell (2011),

> [S]ocial presence refers to the degree to which a medium conveys the
> psychological perception that other people are physically present and
> suggests that media that are capable of providing a greater sense of
> intimacy and immediacy will be perceived as having a greater degree of
> social presence (Short et al., 1976). (p. 58)

They further explained,

> Social presence in and of itself has been defined as the sense of
> being with others (Heeter, 1992), the level of awareness of the copresence
> of another human being (Biocca & Nowak, 2001), the degree of salience
> of the other person in the interaction (Short et al., 1976), and the feeling
> that one has some level of access or insight into the other's intentional,
> cognitive, or affective states (Biocca & Nowak, 2001). (Kupritz & Cowell,
> 2011, p. 58)

Kupritz and Cowell (2011) noted SPT to be derived from the ideas of intimacy and immediacy postulated by Argyle and Dean (1965) and Wiener and Mehrabian (1968). Short

et al. (1976) linked social presence to non-verbal cues. Fulk and Collin-Jarvis (2001)

correlated nonverbal cues to "specific communication functions, such as mutual attention,

channel control, feedback, illustrations, emblems, and interpersonal attitudes" (Kupritz &

Cowell, 2011, p. 58). Kupritz and Cowell (2011) noted,

> Although SPT developed independently of MRT, the theory concurs with
> MRT's argument that face-to-face communication best facilitates
> awareness of another during communication exchange, agreeing that
> media that better capture the interactive and social properties of others
> may evoke more social presence than other media. Accordingly, SPT
> predicts that face-to-face communication provides the highest social
> presence (Miranda & Saunders, 2003). (pp. 58-59)

Although some researchers have ranked SPT on a continuum (e.g. Short et al., 1976; Trevino

et al., 1990)—face-to-face, video, telephone, email, letters—the final judgment of a channel's

social presence richness/leanness is at the discretion of the user(s), "Because social presence

is based on one's perception of a particular communication medium, each channel can vary in

its perceived degree of the quality" (Sullivan, 1995, p. 50).

Rice (1993) introduced the idea of media appropriateness. Media appropriateness

combines information richness/leanness and social presence. The goal of media

appropriateness theory is to predict channel use. Rice (1993) asserted media appropriateness

rankings from most to least to be face-to-face, telephone, video, letter, and lastly email.

A criticism of MRT, bandwidth, SPT, and media appropriateness is that rankings are

assumed to remain constant regardless of the communication event or of the impact of

situational factors (e.g., urgency, context, interactants) (Fulk, Steinfield, Schmitz, & Power

1987; Markus, 1994). This critique was supported by Sullivan (1995) who found "both use

and preferences for e-mail vary according to the type of communication activity in which one

engages. The use of e-mail differs depending on the type of job one has and the staff

member's position in the organizational hierarchy" (pp. 60-61).

Oral channels. Oral channels include face-to-face and telephone. The face-to-face channel is posited to be the most information-rich "because a person can perceive verbal and nonverbal communication, including posture, gestures, tone of voice, and eye contact, which can aid the perceiver in understanding the message being sent" (Waltman, 2011, n.p.). This channel allows interactants to utilize all five senses and provides opportunity for continuous feedback (i.e., multisensory redundancy); subsequently, it "has the greatest potential for getting the receiver's attention" (Debashish & Das, 2009, p. 36).

Face-to-face. While face-to-face has been noted to be the most information rich channel, it has also been noted to be the most limited one as well. The speed and volume of communication as well as the ephemeral nature of oral communications can lead to communication breakdown and recall errors. In addition, the physical time-space requirements can be a barrier to its use (Reinsch & Beswick, 1990).

A 1971 study by Dewhirst found preference for face-to-face engagement over written interaction. Similarly, a 1969 study Zaidel and Mehrabian found preference for face-to-face over telephone interactions. Several authors have proposed the information richness of face-to-face lends itself well to situations in which nuance and control are required, like negotiations and emotionally fraught events (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Barnard, 1991). The face-to-face channel has been noted to well-suited to non-routine business and to have a "synergistic effect that improves the outcome" (Flatley, 2007, n.p.) of the interaction because of the personal nature of the medium (i.e., natural language interaction) (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008). This channel has been cited as effective in reducing and repairing communication breakdown before it can yield negative effects because "[i]n face-to-face conversation, feedback is more easily perceived" (Debashish & Das, 2009, p. 38). Kupritz and Cowell's (2011) study "determined that employees perceived human resource information that is private (confidential), personal, or sensitive as critical to receive through face-to-face

contact" (p. 54). Wickman (1970) found greater cooperation in situations employing face-to-face communication than other communication media.

Telephone. The telephone is another commonly used oral channel. It is also ranked highly on the information-richness continuum. The telephone provides many of the benefits of face-to-face (minus those dependent on visual cues) while reducing time-space constraints. A 1969 study conducted by Morley and Stephenson determined that during negotiations, arguments were more successful when presented over the telephone than when presented in-person (i.e., face-to-face). M. Cook and Lalljee (1972) observed "fewer interruptions, shorter pauses, shorter utterances, less filled pauses, and a greater amount of speech in telephone than in the face-to-face channel" (as cited in Housel & Davis, 1977, p. 51).

Voice mail. Related to the telephone is voice mail. Voice mail has been suggested as a channel well-suited to the transmission of short messages that are too nuanced for writing but do not require immediacy of feedback (Reinsch & Beswick, 1990). It is also useful in situations when the sender wishes to avoid interaction with, and immediate feedback from, the receiver (Hiemstra, 1982).

Written channels. Written channels include correspondence (letters, email, SMS) and reports (including spreadsheets). Features of written channels include permanence and the provision of time for recipient understanding (Berry, 2011). Letters and e-mails are ranked toward the least rich end of spectrum with regard to media-richness and immediacy of feedback (Rice, 1993; Short et al., 1976).

Email. Email is the most common form of written communication in the workplace and is the second most frequently used channel after face-to-face (Barrett, 2006). Wellman et al. (1996) asserted email aids collaboration and supports strong and weak ties between interactants. Email has also been noted to facilitate equality of participation and idea quality (Finholt, Sproull, & Kiesler,1990; Wellman et al., 1996). This is congruent with S. Johnson,

Chanidprapa, Yoon, Berrett, and LaFleur (2003) who found team members working in a

virtual environment were more openly expressive of ideas and opinions due to the

psychological safety offered by the physical distance inherent to the channel. The ideas of

Finholt et al. (1990) and S. Johnson et al. (2003) are supportive of the contention that email is

beneficial for those who experience communicative apprehension (Flanagin & Waldeck,

2004). Other advantages of email include its lack of dependence on the time-space

relationship (i.e., temporal and physical independence) and speed of transmission (Berry,

2011; Flanagin & Waldeck, 2004). It has also been proposed that email can "carry more

information faster, at a lower cost, and to more people while also offering increased data

communality" (Flanagin & Waldeck, 2004, p. 142). These features were also noted by Berry

(2011) who also asserted that computer-mediated communication, like email, facilitated

documentation due to the ability to automatically archive interactions and products. Trauth,

Kwan, and Barber's (1984) study of managerial decision making found preference for

channels with print features and that "the use of electronic messaging resulted in improved

recall of information" (p. 123). They concluded, "A major reason to employ electronic

messaging systems is to increase productivity among knowledge workers by increasing the

efficiency and effectiveness of internal communications" (Trauth et al., 1984, p. 124) because

it enhances communication flow and promotes timeliness of information which aid decision-

making.

Email has been posited to be well-suited to short, direct, unequivocal, content-

oriented messages that may necessitate time for decoding and feedback (e.g., Adler &

Elmhorst, 2008; Berry, 2011; Sullivan, 1995). Kupritz and Cowell (2011) found

"[e]mployees perceived that information not deemed confidential—meeting times, training

times, policy changes, system problems, and information with numerous details—were just as

productive and some even critical to receive through e-mail" (p. 73).

It has been argued that email is not well-suited to affective messages because it lacks non-verbal cues—non-verbal cues are a primary means of ascertaining the affective aspects of a message (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008). Berry (2011) noted,

> Verbal cues such as intonation, facial expressions, gestures, and contextual cues that enable listeners to *read* (or misread) the speaker's intent are missing in computer-mediated communication, and this can aid (or hinder) understanding (Sproull & Kiesler, 1991; Vroman & Kovachich, 2002). (p. 193)

A 2005 study by Kruger et al. found that email readers do not perceive tonal aspects such as humor and sarcasm as well as senders think they do. Similarly, Lind (2001) raised concerns that email use may reduce face-to-face communication resulting in weakening of the social connections that are vital to information sharing, trust building, and promotion safeguarding. Berry (2011), in partial disagreement, noted, "Overall, social information exchange is similar in both virtual and face-to-face communication although the computer-mediated sharing of social information appears to occur more slowly at first, and so the difference is likely one of rate rather than depth of content" (p. 199).

Theories and studies. As a means to explain and predict channel selection, theories have been developed[29]. There are two principle channel selection theories: trait and social influence (e.g., P. Carlson & Davis, 1998; Donabedian, McKinnon, & Bruns, 1998; Minsky & Marin, 1999).

Trait theory. Trait theory emphasizes congruence between task characteristics and channel features in channel selection. Trait theories are alternately referred to as rational choices theories (Donabedian et al., 1998; Minsky & Marin, 1999). Trait theory can be sub-divided into the access/quality approach and the feature approach.

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[29] One criticism of research in the area of channel selection has been its nearly exclusive sender orientation (Sitkin, Sutcliffe, & Barrios-Chaplin, 1992).

The access/quality approach posits channel selection to be an outcome of cost-benefit analysis. Melcher and Beller (1967) asserted, "Communication of either a legitimate or illegitimate nature may require the use of substantial resources of time, money, or material" (p. 45) while P. Carlson and Davis (1998) posited costs to include factors such as accessibility and benefits to include information quality. P. Carlson and Davis noted studies found users rated information quality second to "[a]ttributes such as convenience, easy access, and reliability" (p. 337) when engaged in channel selection.

The feature approach entails "matching the task with a medium based on the need to negotiate meaning or to feel that someone is physically present during the communication" (P. Carlson & Davis, 1998, p. 336). The feature approach is linked to the MRT, SPT, bandwidth concepts which are predicated on the assumption that channel features are stable and objective and users privilege uncertainty reduction in communication decisions (J. Carlson & Zmud, 1999; Minsky & Marin, 1999).

Channel expansion theory (J. Carlson & Zmud, 1999) emerged to explain inconsistencies in MRT and SPT studies by proposing channel features are not objective rather they are subjective and created through user's experience with the medium, the topic of the message, the (organizational) context, and the other interactant(s). Work on channel expansion theory was extended by D'Urso and Rains (2008). D'Urso and Rains found strong support for the theory that experience in the aforementioned four key areas impacts user's perceptions of channel richness/leanness. They also posited social factors to impact perceptions of channel richness/leanness.

Social influence theory. Social influence theory emphasizes the ways in which "users come to ascribe certain characteristics to the media and tasks that influence media selection" (P. Carlson & Davis, 1998, p. 336). Social influence theories focus on forces external to the user (e.g., peers and superiors) that act upon the user to influence channel selection (Minsky

& Marin, 1999). Social influence theories were noted by P. Carlson and Davis (1998) to be grounded in symbolic interactionism.

Selection studies[30]. While theories of channel selection are still developing, researchers have undertaken studies to describe which channels users employ and under which conditions.

Short et al. (1976) observed different tasks (e.g., information exchange, problem solving, decision making, persuasion, conflict resolution) require different channels because they offer different features. Sullivan's (1995) study of "face-to-face, telephone, written and electronic mail communication channels found that preferences were significantly related to the type of communication task undertaken and that in some instances electronic mail was preferred over either the telephone or face-to-face communication" (p. 49). Daft and Lengel (1984, 1986) found manager's channel selection to be influenced by task and environmental forces. Daft et al.'s (1987) study with mid- and upper-level managers found task ambiguity positively correlated to rich media and routine tasks associated with leaner channels. A 1991 study conducted by Barnard found new managers dealt with personnel problems through the use of rich channels. Donabedian et al. (1998) in a study with US and Canadian managers indicated support for MRT. Markus' (1994) study of manager email use concluded,

> Managers were found to perceive various media in ways that were relatively consistent with information richness theory, but to use email more and differently than the theory predicted. In particular, effective senior managers were found to use email heavily and even for equivocal communications tasks. These results cannot be explained by information richness theory or by simple modifications of the theory. Rather, they suggest that the adoption, use, and consequences of media in organizations can be powerfully shaped by social processes such as sponsorship, socialization, and social control, which require social perspectives to understand them. (p. 502)

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[30] See Carlson and Davis (1998) for an extensive list of studies on channel selection.

Minsky and Marin in a 1999 study of university faculty email use concluded, "These results support Webster and Trevino's (1995) argument that rational choice and social influence theories provide complementary explanations for media choice." (p. 204).

Fulk, Schmitz, and Steinfield (1990) reported differential use of email to be partially attributable to user hierarchical level in the organization. Rice and Shook (1990) found more frequent use of media rich channels to correspond to higher hierarchical position. Findings from Zmud, Lind, and Young (1990) concurred with this. Although during the same time period, a 1989 study by J. Jones, Saunders, and McLeod concluded contradictory findings when they observed executives employed written channels more than others in management positions, mid-level managers mostly used the telephone and written channels, and low-level managers engaged in fact-to-face interaction most frequently. P. Carlson and Davis (1998) found

> directors were more "self" oriented in their media choices, more often choosing media based on access/ease of use criteria, while the managers were more "other" oriented, more often making choices based on media richness/social presence criteria. Participants lower in the hierarchy make more use of "other-oriented" or relationship building/interpretation developing criteria for media selection, while directors tend to choose media based on "self-oriented" reasons. (p. 335)

Gefen and Straub's (1997) three nation study (Japan, USA, and Switzerland) indicated female and male perceptions of email differed but not their use. Lind (2001) also found channel use to be influenced by gender, but noted the differences to limited and the cause(s) ambiguous.

Selection factors. Studies have indicated an array of features and factors to influence channel selection. P. Carlson and Davis (1998) offered

> [A] sample of 22 variables that are considered to be important in media selection. These traits include task (Steinfield 1985), job pressure (Steinfield and Fulk 1986), geographic dispersion (Steinfield and Fulk 1986; Trevino et al. 1987), job categories (Rice and Manross 1987; Rice and Shook 1990), complexity (Culnan 1983), ease of use (Culnan 1984), perceived attitudes and behavior of communication partners (Fulk

et al. 1995), social influences (Schmitz and Fulk 1991), social context (Rice et al. 1994; Zack and McKenney 1995), job categories and organizational levels (Jones et al. 1988-89; Rice and Aydin 1991; Rice and Shook 1990; Zmud et al. 1990) the symbolic cues provided by media (Trevino et al. 1987), and information relevancy (Zmud 1978). (p. 341)

Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) stated channel features, the social context, user traits, and organizational norms to be essential considerations in channel selection. More recently, Kupritz and Cowell (2011) noted message type, interactant characteristics, channel features, and the social context to impact channel selection and use. In short, the message (e.g., ambiguity, complexity), the sender (e.g., ease, apprehension), the target (e.g., politeness, disposition), the context (e.g., distance, urgency, norms), and channel features (e.g., richness/leanness, social presence, bandwidth) need to be considered in order to select the appropriate channel of communication as there does not appear to be one element, context, norm, or feature that universally accounts for channel selection—all are significant, although their relative value varies. P. Carlson and Davis (1998) concluded

access to be the most desirable trait of media, since it is most convenient for the communicator. This trait, however, is over-ridden by other characteristics that, when needed, are more important. One such trait suggested by the study is the need for relationship building. (p. 353)

While Melcher and Beller (1967) remarked, "The characteristics of the message sender, receiver, intermediaries, and higher level supervisors are important variables in channel selection" (p. 47). They further posited the following factors warrant systematic consideration when selecting channels: "(a) the nature of the communication, (b) the personal characteristics of those involved, (c) the character of the social system, and (d) the communicational attributes of the channels" (p. 42). Similarly, Reinsch and Lewis (1984) indicated considerations in channel selection to include "proximity, organizational structure, interpersonal relationships, message content, and, perhaps communication apprehension" (p. 53). Berk and Clampitt (1991) contended,

> Managers need to be aware of the possibilities, complexities and nuances of the various channels of communication. By seeking to align the needs of the sender and receiver, and the attributes of the message and channel, managers can be more confident in their selection of channels to communicate more effectively. (p. 4)

Message. The message is the concept the sender wishes to convey. Messages can be transmitted verbally or non-verbally. Verbal messages can be transmitted orally (e.g., spoken words) and/or graphically (e.g., written words, drawings). Verbal and non-verbal communication are not mutually exclusive, they can occur simultaneously or consecutively (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008).

There are two aspects to each message: the content/cognitive and the relational/affective (R. Hall & Lord, 1995; Madlock, 2008). The content aspects of a message communicate facts while its relational aspects convey feelings (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008). The relational aspects of a message are often conveyed non-verbally. The content aspects of a message are most frequently conveyed verbally.

Denning (2007) argued the order in which these two aspects are presented impacts the receiver's acceptance of the message and thus overall message effectiveness: "[T]he order in which you give people information influences how they think. If they're already positively oriented to the subject, their reaction to what you are saying is very different from what it would be without that connection" (p. 17); "it is vital to establish an emotional connection at the outset" (p. 17).

Explaining why content messages need to be presented after attention-getting and relational messages, Eagly and Chaiken (as cited in Lindebaum, 2009, p. 233) are quoted, "[A]ttitudes precede behavioral responses, it becomes evident that behavior is an external expression of an internal evaluation toward a particular entity. Denning (2007) put it more simply, "Giving people reasons at a time when they are ready to receive them is one of the keys to communication that leads to action" (p. 36). Once the emotional connection has been

made, the leader can drive home appeals with knowledge, logic, and reasoning (Denning, 2007). Messages can be understood according to their characteristics such as urgency, ambiguity, complexity, length, orientation (content or relational), and influence type (e.g., persuasive, assertive, relationship-based). According to Reinsch and Lewis (1984), the nature of the message impacts channel selection since the nature (e.g., urgency, complexity, length, tone, formality, degree of ambiguity) of the message impacts the features desired by the sender (Trauth et al., 1984). Berk and Clampitt (1991) asserted before an appropriate channel can be selected, the sender must first determine the orientation of the message (i.e., which aspect of the message is most salient). Reinsch and Beswick (1990) posited rich channels support interpersonal and social relationships; thus, when the relationship between interactants is important, richer channels are preferred. In agreement with MRT and SPT, Berk and Clampitt advocated the use of oral channels for relational messages and written channels for content-oriented messages. Berk and Clampitt noted, "Because communication channels have certain attributes, senders must be sure that their intentions are congruent with the dynamics of the channel" (p. 3). Kupritz and Cowell (2011) concurred with these assertions noting "some media (e.g., videoconferencing or telephone) have greater social presence than others (e.g., e-mail), and the use of media higher in social presence should be important for social tasks such as building relationships (Robert & Dennis, 2005)" (p. 58). Similarly, Kupritz and Cowell found participants believed confidential messages should only be transmitted face-to-face; managers commented email was not appropriate for confidential messages. Channel selection is, in part, a function of perceived congruence between the message and the medium.

Trauth et al. (1984) noted information quality to be a central determinant of channel selection. Daft et al. (1987) and Trevino et al. (1990) are amongst those who have posited content ambiguity results in the use of richer media, especially oral mediums. Barnard (1991)

noted manager uncertainty to be a central element of an organization's information system as such "[s]ubjects handling personnel problems were more uncertain about the situation, and used the rich media channels…significantly more often than did subjects dealing with non-personnel problems" (p. 312). Morand (2003) came to a conclusion similar to Barnard noting face-to-face is preferable for messages that due to the "interpretative information regarding speakers' intent and their emotional states – there is greater likelihood that novice message recipients will misconstrue or overinterpret ambiguous phrasings" (p. 536). Kupritz and Cowell (2011) proposed uncertain or equivocal messages required the of richness of face-to-face communication. These assertions concerning the association between ambiguity and channel selection are congruent with the trait theory of channel selection, which posits rich channels lead to certainty through the provision of large volumes of information in many forms which can instantaneously be affirmed and /or clarified to ensure understanding. Adams (2003), Adler and Elmhorst (2008), Barrett (2006), Denning (2007), Kaiser, Hogan, and Craig (2008), Kotter (2007), and Tannen (1986) are amongst those who have noted the importance of conceptual clarity for the successful transmission and decoding of messages.

J. Johnson, Donohue, Atkin, and S. Johnson (1995) claimed "[i]nterpersonal channels generally have been found to be more useful in transmitting highly complex subject matter (Chapanis, 1971; Conrath, Buckingham, Dunn, & Swanson, 1975; Picot, Klingenberg, & Kranzle, 1982; Tushman, 1978)" (p. 69). They posited rich channels to be better suited to complex messages because they offer more cues to off-set the uncertainty caused by the complexity. Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) used social presence theory to explain the relationship between message complexity and channel selection, "[W]hen information is complex, technology users will assess the "degree to which a medium is perceived as conveying the presence of communicating participants" (Rice, 1993, p. 452) and select the

medium that they believe has the highest social presence" (p. 143). Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) also remarked that "media richness theory proposes that effective communication occurs when there is a match between the richness of a medium and the complexity of the communication task for which it is selected" (p. 143).

Related to the message is the task to be accomplished. Tasks include such activities as planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, controlling, informing, requesting, and motivating (e.g., Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Melcher & Beller, 1967). E. Jones and Pittman (1982) correlated task types to influence strategies and tactics. The nature of the task can impact channel selection. For example, motivating a direct report may entail the use of inspirational appeal; inspirational appeal draws on the target's emotions, as such, a channel rich in non-verbal cues (non-verbal communication has been linked to the relational aspects of a message), like face-to-face may be selected.

Sender. The sender initiates transmission of the message[31]. Adler and Elmhorst (2008) noted effective communicators are cognizant of the benefits, disadvantages, and purposes of formal and informal communication networks and they are aware of variations in listening, speaking, and conversational style. They acknowledge the power of, and relationships between, nonverbal, verbal and paralinguistic communication. They are sensitive to variations in interactant communication expectations and behaviors due to differences in the social, physical, chronological, and cultural contexts. And they comprehend that communication is a process that can mitigate problems but is not a panacea. Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) underscored the importance of sender self-reflection (e.g., self-efficacy) and

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[31] Although a complex systems model of communication acknowledges the simultaneity of multiple and multi-directional senders, for simplicity, communication will be described from the perspective of a single sender with positional power in an organization in a unitary downward communication event.

self-monitoring (e.g., theory of reasoned action[32]) for effective communication. They noted, "High self-monitors pay close attention to behavior and search constantly for cues regarding situationally appropriate behavior" (Flanagin & Waldeck, 2004, p. 150).

When communicating, leaders need to balance task and outcomes with relationships (e.g., trust-building, in-group affinity), follower expectations, and image management in order to be effective, efficient, and to reinforce her/his position, status and power. The personality, positionality, and preferences of the sender can also impact channel selection.

Personality is derived from the intertwining of socio-cultural[33] and individual identities[34] (Bruner, 2002; Bruton & Lau, 2008; Church, 2000; Edwards, 2008; Freire, 2001; Goby, 2007; Jameson, 2007; Kitayama, Snibbe, Markus, & Suzuki, 2004; Roy & Dugal, 1998; Triandis, 2006; Triandis & Suh, 2002); it is borne of the interplay of socio-cultural identity (the sense of self resulting from group memberships that influence decoding) and individual identity (the personal and idiosyncratic influences that distinguish one from other members of the group) (Triandis, 2006). Through experience and affiliation, personality can change over time (Jameson, 2007).

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[32] Fu et al. (2004) explained "people consider the implications of their actions before they decide to engage or not engage in a given behavior. Its fundamental assumption is that any specific set of behaviors reflects not only the influence of underlying individual factors (i.e., traits and personality) but also the influence of other external factors unique to the situation in question. When confronted with the need to decide on a course of action, people consider their beliefs about the likely consequences of available alternatives, beliefs about the normative expectations of important individuals or groups, and the required resources and potential impediments characterizing the world in which they function. These beliefs result, respectively, in the form of attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms with respect to the behavior, and perceived behavioral control, which in turn influence behavioral intentions and actual behavior" (pp. 285-186) .

[33] Personality is influenced by culture, "[C]ulture is mental programming, it is also a mental map of reality. It tells us from early childhood what matters, what to prefer, what to avoid, and what to do. Culture also tells us what ought to be" (Varner & Beamer, 2005, p. 5). Personality is a social phenomenon and is thus linked to concepts of power and privilege (Bonvillain, 1993; Bourdieu, 1991; Jameson, 2007).

[34] Personality is also idiosyncratic. According to Lustig and Koester (1999), "Personal identity is based on people's unique characteristics which may differ from those of others in their cultural and social groups" (p. 139). Differences in neural processing (Pease & Pease, 2004), need (Maslow, 1954), and experience (responses to past needs) compel individuals to act in ways that are not always in accord with the norms of group(s) with which they are affiliated (Jandt, 2001; Varner & Beamer, 2005).

Trauth et al. (1984) applied the notion of personality and applied it channel selection. They proposed each sender possesses a 'channel disposition': "[A]n assessment of the impact of the channel on both the quality of the information and the quality of access" (Trauth et al., 1984, p. 126). Further explicating the notion of channel disposition, they referenced field studies from Germany conducted by Picot, Klingenberg and Kranzle (1982) who noted channel disposition to have affective and cognitive aspects that acted as determinants in channel selection. They also cited work by Zmud that linked pre-existing ideas and attitudes to channel use. Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) noted individual's attitudes and perceptions toward channels are in part socially constructed and impact channel selection. Minksy and Marin (1999) stated,

> Social influence theories regard perception as a social construct. However, a person's perception of a particular communication medium may be a function not only of social context and rationality but of the combined influences of these and of traits intrinsic to the person, such as personality traits, inclinations, and demographic factors. The behavior flowing from this confluence, moreover, may be inconsistent with the behavior predicted by rational choice and social influence theories. A person characterized by a strong disinclination to change may refuse to adopt *e-mail* despite demonstrable benefit and social pressure, preferring instead to talk face-to-face even about trivial matters amenable to e-mail. (p. 198)

Trauth et al. (1984) after an extensive review of previous research, concluded dispositions (positive or negative) held by the sender will influence her/his perceptions of the communicative event and as such decisions concerning channel selection. For example, Fu et al. (2004) found cynicism correlated to aggressive communication behaviors and religiosity to pro-social ones, which in turn impact channel use.

The sender's communication skill repertoire and proficiency impact channel selection; communicative effectiveness requires proficiency in receptive skills, productive skills, and reasoning skills (Barrett, 2006). Senders who experience communication-related apprehension may avoid, or show a preference for, certain channels (Reinsch & Lewis, 1984). For example, Housel and Davis (1977) drawing on the work of Zimbardo noted

features of certain channels may provide (relative) anonymity and/or psychological distance thereby creating psychological safety which can lower channel apprehension.

The social/organizational position of the sender relative to the intended receiver(s) is significant. The power relationship between the sender and the receiver impacts the degree of receiver attentiveness (e.g., perceived urgency, action required); the more power a receiver perceives a sender to have, the higher the degree of attention given to the message which moderates channel selection (Morand, 2000).

The sender's knowledge vis-à-vis the message and related contextual factors influences channel selection and use. The more breadth and depth of understanding a sender has with regard to other constituent elements of the communication event, the better s/he can refine the message to optimize effectiveness (Barrett, 2006).

The positionality of the sender (e.g., age, sex, disposition) vis-à-vis the communication event also influence strategies, tone, format, and channels employed (e.g., Barnard, 1991; Fu et al., 2004; Holtgraves & Yang, 1992; Trauth et al., 1984).

Several authors have noted convenience to be a primary consideration in channel selection and use (e.g., Kupritz & Hillsman, 2011; Minsky & Marin, 1999; Sullivan, 1995). Lind (2001) cautioned, "It cannot be assumed that greater channel usage means a richer channel. It may just mean that the channel is more accessible or easier to use…" (p. 238).

In order for communication to be effective, a sender must assess, consider and monitor the relationships, interactions, and the impact of relationships and interactions between communicative elements (Melcher & Beller, 1967).

Target. The intended receiver of a message is the target. In order to be effective the sender must tailor the communication to the target (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008) which requires a systematic and multi-faceted understanding of the target; this is congruent with much of the current thinking on leadership, leaders, and followers (e.g., LMX, relational leadership). The

sender must have an understanding of concepts such as the target's professional, social, and cultural frames; expectations of leaders and leadership; notions of organizational and leader legitimacy, and the target's personal dispositions toward the leader[35].

Understandings of target perspectives can be garnered from concepts such as social identity theory (Hogg, 2001), frame analysis (Goffman, 1974), face negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1985), fundamental attribution error (Ross, 1977), group homogeneity bias (Tajfel, 1982), trait ascription bias (Kammer, 1982), the ecology fallacy (Robinson, 1950), the belief perseverance effect (Nickerson, 1998), intergroup contact theory (Pettigrew, 1998), and other forms of cognitive bias (i.e., mental schema which predispose interactants to certain interpretations). To understand the target requires the sender, as suggested by intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1991), to systematically analyze the interrelation and intertwining of multiple identities and socio-cultural forces of advantage and oppression (i.e., power) associated with the target (e.g., race, sex, nationality) in order to find the channel, tone, and message format that are most congruent with the mental frames of the receiver thus optimizing decoding (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008). A 1997 study conducted by Reinsch and Shelby concluded, "[P]ersons of different genders and cultures have differing business experiences or draw differing conclusions from their experiences" (p. 7) while Walker (2009) remarked upon generational differences in communication preference. Al Jenaibi (2010) suggested Wilmot and Hocker's (1998) lens model offers a systematic way to comprehend the intersectional matrix,

> The type of lens a person has is influenced by culture, gender, race, age, and so forth. For example, each generation will have a lens based on the social and historical events of that era, which influences how they perceive the world and its events. Gender can also affect how people perceive conflict behaviors. High-context, low-context, individualistic and

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[35] Kruger et al. (2005) extensively cited research concluding "the assessment of another's perspectives is influenced, at least in part, by one's own" (p. 925). This assertion was explicitly applied to culture as a filter/barrier by Gudykunst and Kim (1997), Lauring (2011), and Varner and Beamer (2005).

> collective cultures all respond to conflict in different ways and often do
> not understand the responses to conflict from people from other cultures,
> increasing the likelihood of cross-cultural conflict. (p. 68)

Additionally, the sender must also consider factors such as the target's attitudes toward the message and the sender[36], the target's communication skills, and the target's knowledge vis-à-vis the communication event .

Receivers are known to interact with a message on three levels: cognitive, affective, and behavioral (C. Johnson, 1994). Cognitively, the receiver must believe the message to have merit. Affectively, the receiver must be positively oriented toward the message. And behaviorally, the receiver takes action. The greater the degree of perceived concordance between the message and the positionality of the receiver, the greater the likelihood the message will be accepted (effective). Receiver action (feedback) is the primary measure of effectiveness (influence): when the receiver takes the action desired by the sender, the message can interpreted to have been effective or influential; when the receiver does not, the message can be determined to have been ineffective. All messages have some impact on the receiver (Schramm, 1954).

Politeness theory (P. Brown & Levinson, 1987) can assist leader-senders to effect communications that respect target-followers expectations. According to Morand (citing Brown & Gilman) politeness is communicating "in such a way as to take into consideration the feelings of others" (2003, p. 524).

Politeness theory has origins in Goffman's (1967) concept of face, "[T]he positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (p. 5). Morand (2003) noted, "Face is a crosscultural universal. That is, all interaction is dramaturgic; actors work to maintain their own and to support

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[36] The literature from the area of leadership shows "when the leader has been positively prototyped by the follower, memory and communication are enhanced" (Salter, Green, Duncan, Berre, & Torti, 2010, p. 8).

others' face, in all cultures (Brown & Levinson, 1987)" (p. 527) further asserting, "[C]rosscultural variation in politeness behaviors, that is, differential culture-specific norms for treatment of face, comprises an important dimension of crosscultural organizational behavior. The gentle and respectful handling of others' face is a vital social behavior in any cultural context" (p. 521). Face is about the actions we take on our own behalf to preserve/enhance our public image; politeness theory is about the actions we take to preserve/enhance other's public image. The goal of politeness is to attain "socioemotional alignment" (Morand, 2003, p. 527) in light of face threatening acts (FTAs); to mitigate other's face threat and to enhance positive interpersonal relationships. Acts (e.g., threat, corrections, criticisms, impositions, information requests, disagreements) or omissions that cause one interactant to perceive the acts or omissions from another interactant negatively are face threatening (FTAs).

Politeness theory not only furthers understanding of how power and social distance influence channel selection to avoid FTAs but also how FTA severity impacts channel selection in reparative situations (Morand, 2003). P. Brown and Levinson (1987) offered five strategies to protect face: (1) don't perform the act, (2) go off record (speaker intent is deniable), (3) use negative politeness (lessen imposition for hearer) (4) use positive politeness (emphasize closeness to hearer), and (5) engage in no attempt to save face.

Kupritz and Cowell (2011) asserted, "Organizational justice theory proposes that an important aspect of how a message is interpreted is the perceived fairness of a communication exchange in the social interaction (Bies & Moag, 1986; Timmerman & Harrison, 2005)" (p. 64). Two elements of organizational justice theory that impact subordinate perceptions of communication and fairness are informational justice and interpersonal justice (Kupritz & Cowell, 2011). "Informational justice refers to the adequacy of an explanation that an organization communicates to the recipient of a negative outcome"

(Kupritz & Cowell, 2011, p. 65) and "[i]nterpersonal justice is the degree to which an individual is treated politely and respectfully by the decision maker while enacting procedures or communicating outcomes. Personal and considerate treatment in the communication process increases tolerance of negative outcomes (Bies & Moag, 1986)" (Kupritz & Cowell, 2011, p. 65). Bies and Tripp (as cited in Kupritz & Cowell, 2011) noted that perceived fairness has been linked with positive employee outcomes including supervisor satisfaction whereas negative perceptions of justice may result in retaliatory action.

Madlock (2008) stated, "[W]hen leaders effectively communicate their vision, they win the confidence of followers, which in turn aids in communication satisfaction between the leader and follower (Pavitt, 1999 in Madlock)" (p. 61); Castaneda and Nahavandi (1991) supported the link between subordinate reports of satisfaction and their perceptions of supervisor behaviors that include both task and relational consideration. Communicative effectiveness has been positively associated with professional image (Guffey, 2006; Mehrabian, 1981; Pease & Pease, 2004), trust building (C. Burke et al., 2007; Dent, 2008; Dirks et al., 2009; Gillespie & Dietz, 2009; Huang & Van de Vliert, 2006; Larkin & Larkin, 2006; Mooradian, Renzl, & Matzler, 2006; Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009; Wergin, 2007), enhanced relationships (Dent, 2008; Dirks et al., 2009; Gillespie & Dietz, 2009; Larkin & Larkin, 2006; Mooradian et al., 2006; Ren & Gray, 2009), and quality of information transfer (Gray & Robertson, 2005; Hernandez, 2008; Huang & Van de Vliert, 2006; Myers, 2006; G. Smith, 2005), which, in turn, allow those employed in organizations with supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles to better meet the demands of the adaptive challenges they face and to create high quality connections with organizational direct reports.

To effectively communicate with followers (i.e., targets), leaders (i.e., senders) must select channels that will facilitate follower decoding as intended. For example, a 2011 study

by Kupritz and Cowell concluded subordinates perceived specific types of messages require specific channels. While Timmerman and Harrison (2005) observed channels that provide cues that convey honesty and respect for the target support the target's sense of justice. Similarly, Kupritz and Cowell (2011) noted the impact of channel selection on perceptions of fairness. Morand (2003) noted adherence to interaction order[37] includes channel use. And Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) noted how channels can be employed as a politeness strategy to save another's face, "Use of databases rather than face-to-face contact may save time and be potentially face-saving for newcomers (e.g., by sparing them the embarrassment of posing inappropriate questions or ones with obvious answers)" (p. 143). Bowman and Targowski (1987), however, cautioned, "Because the semantic reactions in the minds of sender and receiver depend more on the information each brings to the communication process than on the message communicated, even the best message properly delivered in a given situation may be misinterpreted" (p. 33).

   Context. Taking a systems perspective, every communication event (micro-level) can be understood to be embedded in meso- (e.g., interpersonal, historical, organizational) and macro-level (e.g., social, cultural) contexts. These contexts are presumed to constrain the prerogative of interactants with regard to what is expressed, how it is expressed, and when it is expressed (Bourdieu, 1990).

   The relationship between the sender and the target, the interpersonal context, impacts communication, for as noted by Jandt (2001), "[T]he relationship between the source and the receiver may help define much of the meaning of the communication" (p. 32). Spitzberg and Cupach (1981) remarked, "Competent interaction can be viewed as a form of interpersonal

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[37] Interaction order refers to "rules for comingling" (Morand, 2003, p. 521) during "instances of sustained face-to-face contact" (p. 521). Morand (2003) explained "Actors sharing a situation generate common conventions" and "[s]uch rules establish how individuals are to conduct themselves by virtue of being in a gathering, enabling actors to coordinate behavior, and to share a common state of involvement in a social situation" (p. 521).

influence, in which an individual is faced with the task of fulfilling communicative functions and goals (effectiveness) while maintaining conversational and interpersonal norms (appropriateness)" (p. 1). Goffman (1967) noted the sender's communication choices to be a reflection of her/his interpretation of the interpersonal dynamics of the communication event. Underpinning interpersonal dynamics are forces such as those described by attribution theory; Chen and Van Velsor (1996) remarked that attribution theory describes the "subjective biases and errors that both leaders and followers can make in explaining and interpreting each others' behaviors" (2006, p. 289). They further asserted "attribution biases may result from differences in gender, race, culture, and nationality and these biases seriously affect the quality and effectiveness of leader-follower interactions" (Chen & Van Velsor, 1996, p. 289). Barrett (2006), speaking to the confluence of leadership and communication, asserted, "The importance of understanding your audience cannot be overemphasized" (p. 11). According to channel expansion theorists (e.g., J. Carlson & Zmud, 1999; D'Urso & Rains, 2008), previous interactions between the communication participants impact channel perception and use. Senders involved in a positive interpersonal relationship with the target may use different channels than a sender in a communication event in which the interpersonal relationship of the interactants is contentious.

The history and chronology of the communication event also impacts channel selection (Daft & Macintosh, 1981). In a parallel study of order of influence strategy employment, Schank and Abelson (1977) found that if an initial strategy fails, a different strategy will be tried. The same can be presumed of channel selection and use: if one fails, another will be attempted.

The salience of the physical context to communication was noted by Edward Hall (as quoted in Kupritz & Hillsman, 2011, p. 155) who remarked, "Nothing occurs, real or imagined, without a spatial context, because space is one of the organizing systems for living

organisms" (p. 24). This contention has been supported by evolutionary psychology and is supportive of Barker's (1968) notion of 'synomorphy'. Kupritz and Hillsman (2011, citing Sundstrom, Bell, Busby, & Asmus), remarked, "[P]hysical context is an important aspect of communication because it can "support, constrain, symbolize, and confer meaning upon various aspects of social relationships" (p. 491); the physical context has symbolic and physical traits of that influence communication. Kupritz and Hillsman (2011) found supervisors perceived physical features of the organizational environment such as having a private office (and a door) enhanced oral communication with employees by facilitating the use of non-verbal cues. Citing the works of Brill and Gans, Kupritz and Hillsman (2011) proposed design features such as layout, visual and auditory privacy, dimension, and physical distance to impact interaction; the physical properties of the environment promote or constrain perceptions of physical accessibility. Reinsch and Lewis (1984) cited an organizational study by Conrath which demonstrated a positive correlation between physical proximity and quantity of face-to-face and written communication. They concluded the physical environment impacts channel selection. According to Short et al. (1976), who linked social presence theory to conceptualizations of intimacy and immediacy as posited by Mehrabian (Wiener & Mehrabian, 1968), physical features also influence perceptions of psychological access. Kupritz and Hillsman (2011) wrote, "The findings, supported by the Kupritz (2002) study, suggest that the physical environment may influence communication richness and social presence" (p. 176). Privacy, which has been linked to sense of psychological safety (W. Kahn, 1990), has also been posited to be linked to physical features of the organizational environment. Kupritz and Hillsman (2011) stated, "Supervisors discussed privacy communication problems caused by cubicles" (p. 177). They noted study participant responses to include "acoustical distractions, excessive traffic flow, and lack of confidentiality in or near cubicle workspaces" (Kupritz & Hillsman, 2011, p. 177) as

constraints on privacy. Symbolic features of the environment have also been found to impact

communication, and in themselves, to have communicative value, (e.g., Adler & Elmhorst,

2008; Kupritz & Hillsman, 2011). For example, office size and location are associated with

degree of power and status demarcation. The symbolic properties of the physical environment

assist organizational sensemaking (Kupritz & Hillsman, 2011). Lauring (2011) observed

symbolism not only denotes power and status but also influences interactions which

demarcate social groups; Housel and Davis (1977) remarked upon the correlation between

channel use and interaction.

Leadership and communication are social phenomena that intersect in the

organizational setting. Hunsacker and Hunsacker (as cited in Rost, 1993) stated "Leadership

involves *communicating* the what and how of job assignments to subordinates and *motivating*

them to do the things necessary to achieve organizational objectives" (p. 78). Lauring (2011)

noted

> organization has its basis in communication (Taylor, 1999) and
> organization cannot be perceived independently of communication since
> communication is where the organization is produced (Taylor, 2006). This
> happens because human actions and perceptions become organized and
> ordered through processes of interaction (Weick et al., 2005).
> (pp. 237-238)

Lauring (2011) thus concluded, "[E]ffective communication depends not only on the

skills of organization members but also on group and intergroup dynamics (Weick, Sutcliffe,

& Obstfeld, 2005)" (p. 236) and "the social organization of the workplace is both conditioned

of and conditioned on communication" (p. 247). This was supported by P. Carlson and Davis

(1998) who remarked understanding of organizations can be had through symbolic

interactionism (Blumer, 1969) as "organizations are webs of interaction, and the basis for

interaction among members is a shared system of meaning" (p. 340).Two organizational

factors salient to channel selection are organizational norms and organizational power

structures. Organizations, like other human groupings, have culture (e.g., Adler & Elmhorst,

2008). Deary (2008) described organizational culture as "a system of rites and rituals, patterns of communication, the informal organization, expected patterns of behaviour and core values" (p. 27) shared by members of an organization. Levy (1986) proposed a similar definition, "[T]he organization beliefs, values, and norms. It also includes symbolic action and elements, such as myths, rituals, ceremonies, the look and arrangement of the physical setting, and the style of management and relationships" (p. 17). The dynamics of organizational norm creation and maintenance were explained by Mills (2005),

> [S]ensemaking complements rules theory by providing an explanation for why organizational actors choose to enact rules in a particular way and what is it that influences the meaning they bestow on them (Helms Mills, 2003; Helms Mills and Mills, 2000). Weick (1995) has defined sensemaking as a way of constructing meaning, placing items into frameworks and interacting in pursuit of mutual understanding. Thus, sensemaking contributes to our understanding of organizational culture because it helps make sense of the sensemakers. The sensemaking process is the result of seven interdependent properties. These are that sensemaking is ongoing, a social process, grounded in identity construction, enactive of the environment, retrospective, driven by plausibility not accuracy and reliant on the extraction of cues.
> (pp. 245-246)

Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) affirmed the positive correlation between organizational norms on stakeholders' perceptions of appropriate channel use, including symbolic properties, and actual utilization of channels. Markus (1994) linked organizational norms concerning channel use to stakeholder expectations of appropriateness and goal achievement. Minsky and Marin (1999) noted, "Social information helps a person identify what other people in organizations consider important" (p. 198) and as such "Fulk (1993) suggested that social information influences both attitudes towards and use of communication media" (p. 198). Reinsch and Lewis (1984) proposed that due to organizational norms "channel selection decisions rarely require full engagement of an individual's decision-making skills and in fact are frequently matters of habit" (p. 53). Although organizational and social norms guide channel selection and use, Melcher and Beller (1967) asserted channel selection can still be confounding

because—except in extreme cases—how and when to communicate is not explicitly stated by the organization unlike many other policies and processes (e.g., lines of responsibility, authority structures). Adler and Elmhorst (2008) noted communication, as such channel selection and use, is impacted by power relationships; power differences impact the form and means of communication. Lauring (2011) asserted "[C]ommunication implies not only the transfer of information but also relationship building and social organization, it cannot be conceived as a neutral act separated from power relations" (p. 235). He continued,

> [C]ommunication is a mechanism through which groups are created, maintained, and modified (Scott, 1997). To dominate the production and reproduction of communication structures is to dominate the legitimized access to recognition and resources…Accordingly, effective communication depends not only on the skills of organization members but also on group and intergroup dynamics (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). (Lauring, 2011, p. 236)

Dow (1988) remarked that the relative power of the interactants engaged in a communication event can impact communication channel selection. Morand (2000) remarked that the more power one has, the less constrained by the maintenance of face of those with less power one needs to be. Daft et al. (1987) and Barnard (1991) affirmed the impact of hierarchical position on channel use. Kersten and Phillips (1992) observed email user behaviors to be image management strategies, and as such, also to be power management strategies.

Organizational and change theorists have posited that organizations do not exist in isolation, rather they are embedded in, and are products of, the socio-cultural milieu in which they exist (e.g., R. Burke & Nelson, 2002; Heifetz, 1994; Levy, 1986; Senge et al. 1994; Vaill, 1996; Wheatley, 2005); practices are not idiosyncratic to the organizations in which they exist but rather reflect (to a greater or lesser degree) the macro-level values and norms of the broader socio-cultural contexts. As such, understanding of the dynamic, complex, hierarchical, and multi-dimensional nature of the communication in

organizations requires a systems perspective employing a multiple frame model (e.g., Bolman & Deal, 2003). Thompson and Purdy (2009) stated, "[D]eep structures are embedded and implicit, they reflect social, historical and political roots, and they act to shape how actors view what is possible and what is not possible" (p. 192). Norms and values external to the organization are internalized and are brought to the organization by stakeholders; stakeholders then enact these in the organizational context. They are evidenced in resource allocation; hiring, retention, and promotion practices; and communication behaviors including channel selection and use. The interaction of organizational and social norms, power structures, and status hierarchies collude to provide legitimacy to leaders and to the channels they use to communicate; communication channels can also symbolize the leader's power, legitimacy, and authority thereby affirming them. Organizational legitimacy is linked with formal authority. To retain the power and authority of their positions (as well as the position itself), leaders must continue to demonstrate to the organization that they merit them. Proving their worthiness has task and social dimensions. Leaders can prove they warrant legitimacy by completing tasks effectively and efficiently and by meeting the social expectations of the organization. Leaders must not only demonstrate to the organization that they deserve the power and authority bestowed upon them (and more if they desire promotion), but they must also prove this to direct reports (i.e., followers). The more the leader shows congruence with followers' expectations (which are often socio-culturally derived and brought with them to the organization), the more likely followers are to perceive the leader as legitimate. Leader legitimacy is associated with trust, predictability, and other socio-culturally mediated qualities; qualities followers require for the creation and maintenance of a positive image of the leader. Legitimacy and positive image are central to followers' respecting the leader's authority (e.g., complying with influence attempts). Hollander (1993) asserted followership to be the essence of leadership noting followers

bestow leadership, "By their role in legitimating leadership, followers affect the strength of a leader's influence, the style of a leader's behavior, and the performance of the group, through processes of perception, attribution, and judgment" (p. 29). Formal, positional legitimacy and informal, personal legitimacy are not exclusive. Research on employee satisfaction and teams has demonstrated the mutually reinforcing and cyclical nature (virtuous, vicious) of these relationships.

Leadership, communication, organizations, sensemaking, and decision-making have been described as social processes created through negotiation between interactants. Explaining the foundational mechanics of these dynamics, Mills (2005) wrote,

> Unger (1987) contends that 'the origins of social arrangements lie in past social conflicts and the institutional and imaginative arrangements, which followed their resolution'. According to Blackler (1992, p. 283), '"formative contexts" are deep seated and pragmatic in their effects on everyday life [and] provide an implicit model of how social life should be led'. On its own, the concept of formative contexts, does not sufficiently explain the social and psychological processes that lead to certain outcomes. However, it meshes nicely with the rules approach, which suggests that an individual's experience is grounded in the context of a pre-existing set of rules that, at the very least, constrain how a situation is viewed. (p. 247)

Nimon and Graham (2011) explained the adherence of individuals to social norms vis-à-vis behavior (e.g., communication),

> The information from Campo et al.'s 2002 study pointed to the powerful effect social norms have on behavior. Behavioral change effects link to and derive from the instinctual desire of humans for acceptance and social membership. Communities establish the processes and forms for human interaction that are a force in physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional architecture. (p. 19)

Flanagin and Waldeck (2004) explicated the link between social forces and channel selection,

> In addition to the importance of media attributes for individual media selection and use, there exist compelling social influences on organizational media-related attitudes and behaviors. For instance, the use of technology by one's work group is positively related to individual technology use, especially when group attraction is high (Fulk, 1993; Orlikowski, Yates, Okamura, & Fujimoto, 1995). (p. 153)

 Consideration of social learning/cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), legitimacy theory (Eskilson & Wiley, 1976), self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1982), planned behavior theory (Ajzen, 1988), reasoned action theory (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), gender role socialization theory (Bem, 1981), and the coordinated management of meaning theory (Cronen, Pearce, & Harris, 1982) can assist understanding of the links between individual, organizational, and social practices.

C. Johnson (1994) and Fu et al. (2004) noted the association between the social and cultural contexts. C. Johnson (1994) observed that social relationships are influenced by culture, and as such, the cultural context impacts communication choices and communicative effectiveness. While Fu et al. (2004) stated people's perceptions "are affected both by their framework of social beliefs (social cynicism, reward for application, fate control, religiosity, social complexity) and by the cultural milieu in which they function (uncertainty avoidance, in-group collectivism, future orientation)" (p. 286).

Culture has been explored in numerous milieu. Trompenaars (1994) explored dimensions of organizational culture, and Jameson (2007) called for the notion of culture to be expanded to include cultural groupings such as vocation[38], generation, and social aspects of biology (as a complement to national culture). Hofstede's (1980) uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and individualism/collectivism taxonomies are arguably the best-known and most commonly used categorizations employed to differentiate national-level cultural groups. Some researchers such as Triandis, Bond, and post-colonial theorists like Said and Bhabha have criticized the Eurocentric bias of extant taxonomies and have called for a reframing to privilege the paradigms of non-'Western' and non-dominant groups (Ailon, 2008; Frenkel, 2008; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2008; Prasad, 2000). While there are numerous orientations to culture,

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[38] Webb and Keene (1999) discovered that engineers' professional cultural values at times overrode those related to nationality (as cited in Jameson, 2007). This supports research by Spencer-Oatey and Xing (as cited in Jameson, 2007) showing communication satisfaction with superiors was linked to professional field not nationality.

and perhaps just as many definitions[39] of culture, it is generally agreed that culture is learned, it is shared by a group, and it involves interpretations and attitudes that influence behavior (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Bonvillian,1993; Dodd, 1998; Hofstede, 1997; Jandt, 2001; Moran et al., 2007). Cultural values and practices influence communication behaviors (e.g., P. Brown & Levinson, 1987; Morand, 2003). This association is evident in the link between individualist/collectivist cultures (Hofstede, 1980) and high-context/ low-context communication cultures (E. Hall, 1976); individualist cultures tend toward low context communication whereas collectivist cultures have a propensity for high context communication. Thomas (2008) noted,

> [C]ollective cultures are 'High Context', that is, more implicitly expressed through intonation, euphemism and body language than in the coded explicit part of the message (Hall 1976; Hofstede 1997; Loosemore 1999). Communications are therefore 'integrally linked to the context of relationships within which they occur, including the history of the interactants, their common ground of shared understandings and the setting of the interaction' (Smith, Bond, and Kagitcibasi 2006, 153). (p. 86)

Following this understanding, as well as evidence provided by researchers on the correlations between organizational and social norms and channel selection, it may be assumed that national-level culture norms will similarly influence channel selection. For example, members of collectivist, high-context culture groups may show a greater initial preference for rich and high social presence channels than members of individualist, low-context groups. This contention has been indirectly supported by Fu et al. (2004),

> In-group collectivism suggests that, in certain cultures, people draw upon the 'we' identity and value group goals, collective needs, and emotional dependence on society. In such cultures managers are more likely to establish and focus on relationships with others, and these relationships serve as the basis for influencing others. (p. 289)

And by Holtgraves and Yang (1992)

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[39] Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) listed 164 definitions in *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions.*

> [T]he perceptions, attributions, and social behavior of people from collectivist cultures (or those with an interdependent self) are more sensitive to the situational context than is the case for people from individualistic cultures (Shweder & Bourne, 1984; Triandis, 1989; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). (p. 254)

It was more directly supported by Limaye and Victor (1991),

> Japan, which has access to the latest communication technologies, relies more on face-to-face or oral communication than the written mode. We think that the determining factor is not the degree of industrialization, but whether the country falls into low-context or high context cultures as Edward Hall defines the categories (Hall, 1959). (p. 286)

As well as by Walker (2009), who assuming Jameson's perspective of generational cultures, asserted "Gen Y prefer to communicate synchronously" (p. 3). Culture also shapes perceptions of channels and channel features and consequently selection and use. For example, Limaye and Victor (1991) noted different concepts of time impact perceptions of immediacy of feedback. Edward Hall (1959) asserted culture and communication to be a unitary construct, with differences in communication to be tantamount to differences in culture. This is exemplified by the previously mentioned assertion that men and women communicate differently (Tannen, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1996) because they are socialized to so as children (Maltz & Borker, 1982); in other words, men and women are culturally distinct (Borisoff & Merrill, 1992; Gilligan, 1982; R. Lakoff, 1975).

S. Brown (1979) conducted a review of 32 studies examining managerial behavior differences between men and women. He concluded the findings were largely contradictory. He attributed this to differences in the orientations of the studies (trait, style, contingency) rather than actual sex or gender differences. Klenke (1996) noted the contradictions and inconclusiveness of research on women and leadership and posited it may be due to the number and combination of variables that impact leadership—the leader, his or her followers, the time, the place, and the circumstances—and the difficulty researchers encounter in accounting for these in studies. In 2004, van Engen and Willemsen conducted a meta-

analysis on gender and leadership; they also found mixed results. The inconclusivity of the results led them to call into question the source of the variation. They posited this was due to variations in the researcher perspective of leadership coupled with differences within and between the variables explored (and not) such as age, experience, and education. They concluded that the differences in perspective, variables, and contexts of the studies means that it cannot be assured that the studies were actually looking at same underlying phenomenon. Studies that have identified differences between males and females include those by Barbuto, Fritz, Matkin, and Marx (2007), Eagly (1983), Eagly and Wood (1982), Falbo (1977), Harper and Hirokawa (1988), Instone, Major, and Bunker (1983), P. Johnson (1976), Mullany (2004), Schermerhorn and Bond (1991), and Schlueter et al. (1990).

J. White (1988) offered an explanation for these findings,

> Research on reward allocation suggests that women are governed more strongly by the norm of equality than by the norm of equity; hence, they are more willing to sacrifice personal gain to equalize their own and others' resources (Stake, 1985). Research on influence on the other hand, suggests that males may use rewards as a power base more than females (Howard et al., 1986; Instone et al., 1983; Johnson, 1976, 1978). (p. 435)

Numerous studies have been conducted to determine if there are differences between the communication behaviors of male and female managers. The findings of Birdsall (1980), Day and Stogdill (1972), and Kipnis et al. (1980) found no significant differences. Baird and Bradley (1979), Berryman-Fink and Wilcox (1983), Hirokawa, Mickey and Miura (1991), Schlueter et al., (1990), Staley and Shockley-Zalabak (1986), and Todd-Mancillas and Rossi (1985) all found significant differences. Status characteristics theory (SCT) provides one accounting of these differences. SCT focuses on face-to-face interactions and how social status and interpersonal engagement are mutually reinforcing. C. Johnson, Clay-Warner, and Funk (1996) noted SCT to be "a multilevel theory, which links the larger society's cultural assumptions about gender, race, and age (for example) to the development of status hierarchies in small groups" (p. 221). They further explained, "[T]he theory argues that

gender is a status characteristic which has two states, male and female. Society evaluates these differently in terms of esteem and value: Males are values more highly than females" (C. Johnson et al., 1996, p. 222). SCT posits women's lower group and organizational status is an extension of their lower status in the broader society (C. Johnson et al., 1996). Ridgeway and Berger (1986) noted lower status creates legitimacy dilemmas for female leaders' thus impacting influence attempts. C. Johnson et al. (1996) remarked "[T]o legitimate their task contributions and to ultimately gain influence, they must appear cooperative and group-oriented…One way to do this is with positive socioemotional behaviors" (p. 224). Lauring (2011) also asserted status perceptions and gendered behaviors are exhibited through communication, including channel use.

Studies on gender and channel use have been limited. A study by Gefen and Straub (1997) found women's email use to be equivalent to men's although they perceived it differently: women reported email to have higher social presence and to be more useful than did men. The social presence perception was supported by Lind (1999). Lind's 2001 study on gender and channel use concluded, "Communication channel richness does appear to have cultural/gender differences which in turn lead to differences in channel usage" (p. 238). Carothers and Allen (1999) cautioned "much theory and research (e.g., Bem, 1981; Kohlberg, 1966) suggests that gender-relevant behavior is related largely to social, cognitive, and personality factors that are not directly linked to gender in and of itself" (p. 376). This sentiment was similarly expressed by Carli (1990), Eagly (1987), and Ridgeway and Diekema (1992).

The dynamism and diffusion of factors and forces proposed as essential for consideration during channel selection—just one element of the communication process—lends support for a complex adaptive systems perspective of channel selection (Lauring, 2011).

In order to facilitate understanding of the methodological choices, data, analysis, and findings of this study, the next section in this chapter will provide a brief historical and cultural overview of the United Arab Emirates, specifically addressing the topics of communication, women, and leadership.

The United Arab Emirates and Emirati Culture[40]

Hydrocarbon production is the mainstay of the UAE economy. The UAE is estimated to possess 9.5% of the world's crude oil reserves and 4% of its natural gas. Nearly 40% of the nation's GDP is directly based on oil and gas output (Central Intelligence Agency, 2008) as such, Davidson (2005) asserted the UAE to be a rentier state. In mid-2010, the UAE government stated the United Arab Emirates had a population of 8.264 million with 947,997, or 11.4%, of those being Emirati (UAEInteract, 2011). Of the total Emirati population, it is estimated that 330,000 are active in the labor force with this number project to increase to 450,000 by the year 2020 (Mussio & Zahran, 2010).

Of the seven emirates that comprise the nation, Abu Dhabi is the largest geographically and the most abundant in hydrocarbon resources. Abu Dhabi controls more than 90% of the nation's crude oil reserves and nearly 92% of the country's gas reserves (Ministry of Finance and Industry, n.d.). It has a population of 1,643,344 with 406,797 (206,221 males; 200,576 females) (Statistics Center, 2009) Abu Dhabi Locals (as Emiratis refer to themselves) comprise 42% of the Native population (UAEInteract, 2011).

The seven sheikhdoms of the UAE united in 1971 – although each emirate retains a high degree of individuality: to speak of Dubai is not necessarily to speak of Abu Dhabi (Davidson, 2005). For example, Peck (1986) noted many of the prominent families of Dubai are of Iranian descent whereas the majority of influential Abu Dhabi families are of Arab lineage. Moreover, in the era of

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[40] Due to the dearth of English language literature on the United Arab Emirates, research from the Arabian Gulf region and the wider Arab World has been selectively and judiciously applied to the describe the UAE context. This is not to confound the differences between the UAE and other places, rather to fill-in gaps when UAE-specific literature was not available and in my experience the findings are applicable to the UAE.

British protectionism (during which the region was known as the Trucial States) the rulers of Dubai maintained a more cooperative relationship with the British representatives[41] while the rulers of Abu Dhabi, most notably Sheikh Shakbut, maintained a policy of resistance (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Davidson, 2005).

Historical overview. Prior to the days of oil wealth (mid-1960s), Emiratis lived in extended family groups based on clan and tribal affiliations (Sarayrah, 2004; Sayed, 2004). These alliances were reinforced through endogamous practices such as the preference for marriage between first-cousins—the *bint 'amm* (the daughter of the paternal uncle)—which continues today (Bristol-Rhys, 2010). In these times, women were, by necessity, active in public life. While men were away for extended periods of time fishing, pearling or herding, women undertook agricultural activities and ran businesses (e.g., Al Jenaibi, 2010; Al Oraimi, 2004; Crabtree, 2007; Doumato & Posusney, 2003; Omair, 2009; Pirzada & Puri, 1998); segregation of the sexes was not economically feasible[42]. And although the honor of the family rested with the chastity of its female members (Abdalla, 1996; Jawad, 1998; Sayed, 2004), concerns about this were mitigated as public interactions (with men) were limited to community members, who were one-and-the-same as family (Sarayrah, 2004); the village (in the settled mountain, coastal, and oases areas, the *Hadar*) or the group (for the nomadic *Bedu*) was the family. Sayed (2004) further explicated this socio-cultural phenomenon,

> traditionally in the gulf region, families banded together in order to survive the desert environment. Once resources were gathered, they were guarded from outsiders by the tribe. Tribes thus evolved as exclusive

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[41] During the time of 'protectionism' (late 1700s-1971) the British maintained a non-intervention policy with British agents stationed in ships in coastal waters – until oil exploration began in the 1950s—and non-native agents undertaking land-based activities (Onley, 2004).

[42] The exception being the women of the very wealthy families, usually limited to members of the ruling family (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Sayed, 2004). There are various hypothesis regarding this phenomenon including serving as a sign of socio-economic status (Al Meer, 1998; Syed, 2010) and a symbol of piety.

groups who restricted membership so that the group's solidarity was not
diluted. Not readily allowing the entry of foreign males into
a tribe – and on a grander scale, as citizens, is both a matter of tradition
and a matter security. (p. 52)

After oil, when the Bedu were settled into towns, and villages became urban areas, families came to live in *freej*, "patrilocal" (Bristol-Rhys, 2010, p. 12), family-dominated neighborhoods. Bristol-Rhys (2010) noted women felt no inhibition of movement within these family areas.

As oil brought wealth to many Emiratis (directly through business activities or indirectly through state subsidies), populated areas grew and merged; different clans and tribes came to live within the same neighborhoods. Hydrocarbon resources financed widespread government education initiatives such as the establishment of the co-educational United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) in 1976 and the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) in 1988 as well as a national university for women, Zayed University[43], in 1998. Al Jenaibi (2010) noted, that from the mid-1990s onwards, women began entering the workplace in ever increasing numbers. A report on women's activity in the formal economy showed an increase of 548% in female labor market participation in the UAE between 1960 and 2000 (World Bank, 2003). This increase was in-part due to government initiatives aimed at reducing reliance on expatriate workers and increasing local human resources (i.e., Emiratization)[44] (Al-Ali, 2008; Randeree, 2009), as well as the creation of expanded educational offerings (for Emirati women).

Female employment. It is frequently believed that the employment challenges Khaleeji females—including Emiratis—face are due to negative stereotypes about women. In 2010, Al Lamky corrected this stereotype,

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[43] Zayed University, a U.S.-style, U.S.-accredited, 'Western'-educated staffed university created exclusively for Emirati women with the purpose of supporting the development of locally-educated, work-ready, female Nationals (Zayed University).

[44] Workforce nationalization, the integration of national citizens into the labor force, has been a priority for Khaleeji governments since the mid-1990s. The terms for these initiatives are country-representative: Saudization in KSA, Omanization in Oman, Emiratization in the UAE, and the like (Randeree, 2009).

> Despite rhetoric about the discrimination of women in Arab societies, in this survey women feel empowered by their work environments and the state and believe they have equal opportunity. These findings raise questions about the gender discord between perceptions and reality, the universality of international reports, and research assumptions about coherences among women but difference between men and women. (p. 11)

Prior research conducted in the UAE supported Al Lamky (2010), including Sayed's (2004) study which found "both male and female college students reveals that females are not considered to be intellectually weaker than males" (p. 92). In a regional replication of Schein's 'Think Manager, Think Male' study, Marmenout found "[t]here may be many reasons why women are less represented in the workplace in this region but gender stereotyping is not one of them" (Al Ramahi, 2009).

Although female economic participation appears to be governmentally[45] (Gallant & Pounder, 2008) and religiously[46] (Randeree & Gaad, 2008) sanctioned in the UAE, many believe because of the socio-religious responsibilities assigned to females and males that males should be given preference over females in hiring and promotion. Abdulla's (2005) research with female, Emirati college students found,

> Despite the high educational and career expectations of Emirati women, 32% of respondents' agreed with the statement that a woman's place is in the home. 75% agreed that men should be given greater work opportunities than women and 14% disagreed with the statement that women should receive the same pay as men for the same work. While at the same time 67% agreed that women should be given the opportunity to run public and private corporations. (p. 141)

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[45] According to the Emirati government report, *Women in the United Arab Emirates: A Portrait of Progress*, Sheikh Zayed, the first president of the UAE, stated, *"Like men, women deserve the right to occupy high positions according to their capabilities and qualifications."* (UAE Ministry of State for Federal National Affairs, 2008, p. 3) *and "Women have the right to work everywhere."* (UAE Ministry of State for Federal National Affairs, 2008, p. 3).

[46] The majority of the Emirati population adheres to the Sunni form of Islam, the state religion, which is not only a theology but a way of living and interpreting the world (D. Weir, 2000). According to the Koran, male and female (social, cultural, and biological) roles are complementary (Al Oraimi, 2004; Sayed, 2004); one is not subordinate to the other, (Abuznaid, 2006; Al Lamky, 2006; Briegel & Zivlovic, 2008; Jawad, 1998; Mernissi, 1987; Syed, 2010). The Koran states, "[B]e it man or woman; each of you is equal to the other (3:195)".

Other Arabian Gulf-based researchers have also noted this sentiment (Al Ali, 2008; Al Jenaibi, 2010; Al Oraimi, 2004; Mostafa, 2005; Sanad & Tessler, 1988; Sayed, 2004). Bristol-Rhys (2010), Dhaher and Al Salem (1987), Schvaneveldt, Kerpelman, and Schvaneveldt (2005), and Simadi (2006) are amongst those who found support for female employment to be generationally linked, with younger people more likely to be supportive of it. Abdalla (1996), Mostafa (2005), Sayed (2004), and Whiteoak, Crawford, and Mapstone (2006) found younger females to be more supportive of female employment than were young males.

Cultural dimensions. Honor has been noted to be a central value of Emirati culture. Triandis and Suh (2002) identified the UAE as an honor culture "in which people are socialized to be fierce and to react aggressively to insults, so that strangers will be discouraged from stealing their moveable goods" (p. 138). Bristol-Rhys (2010) observed gender segregation has historically been one means of safeguarding honor. Crabtree (2007) noted

> [t]he early social development of young children in the Arab world has traditionally been carried out in the exclusively feminine world of the mother and her female kin. The father has little to do with his offspring in terms of practical care and socialization processes and indeed this is not considered a role that is compatible with masculinity…However while a young girl will continue to inhabit this predominantly female world, her brother will becoming increasingly absorbed in the separate world from the age of five years onwards (Bouhidiba, 1977:126-141). (p. 578)

Hofstede (1980) grouped the United Arab Emirates with those countries having a collectivist orientation. This assertion has been supported by Arabian Gulf scholars such as Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001), who wrote, "Gulf societies endorse typical collective values and practices such as preference for personalised relationships, broad and profound influence of in-group on its members, and limited cooperation with other groups. Tribal traditions and their collectivistic culture profoundly influence Arab managerial styles" (p. 511). Acknowledging the importance of the family in pan-Arab culture, Jandt (2001) wrote,

"Loyalties are to family, clan, tribe, and government in that order. Individuals subordinate personal needs to family and the community" (p. 271). This assertion was supported by Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001). Joseph (1999) noted family to be the fundamental unit in Arab society with family interests superseding the interests of the individual. More specifically to the UAE, Abdulla (2005) noted Emiratis "view the family as the central social unit to which they belong" (p. 131) while Bristol-Rhys (2010), writing in, and of, Abu Dhabi, more recently stated, "In all significant ways Emirati society is a tightly knit and rather closed society that revolves around the extended family" (p. 12). Peck (2004) traced the centrality of the family to the pre-Islamic concept of *asabiya* (group solidarity).

The UAE, like many other collectivist societies, values "group harmony" (Javidan, Dorfman, de Luque, & House, 2006, p. 80) and works to "avoid group conflict" (Javidan et al., 2006, p. 80). Kron (2008) noted that in the UAE, consensus and agreement are reached through influence gained via trust and respect, not through persuasion, and that the separation between work and family is not concrete—the two spheres overlap. Whiteoak et al. (2006) asserted the UAE to be a "culture of face" (p. 85) with pressure "to conform to societal norms and beliefs. One aspect of "saving face" is the reluctance to say no and to avoid giving an answer that others do not wish to hear" (Whiteoak et al., 2006, pp. 85-86). Wright and Bennett (2008) seeking to see how the collectivism of Emirati culture may impact the business environment conducted a study with Emirati and U.S. female undergraduate business students. They found Emiratis more sensitive to inter-member conflict and to exhibit more behaviors to promote team harmony such as suppressing individual opinions and ideas than their US counterparts.

Trompenaars (1994) noted that in collectivist societies the delineation between the professional and personal spheres is ambiguous and in such societies commitments to family take precedence over professional obligations. Javidan et al. (2006) noted that "although it is

important for the individual to be successful, it is the family or group success that is more dominant" (p. 82). According to Schweder and Bourne's (1984) criteria the UAE can be classified as a sociocentric culture. Whiteoak et al. (2006) classified the UAE as a "Gemeinschaft society" in which "social life and work activity are patterned along lines of personal relationships, relationships moderated by family and birth. In such a society, action is a symbolic derivation conducted according to a limited range of consensual norms that are shared and understood by others in the society" (p. 78). Al-Kazemi and Ali (2002) pointed out that "in the workplace, issues of selection, evaluation, and promotion are normally influenced by tribal and sectarian affiliation" (p. 373) with loyalty having precedence over ability. This tendency to make decisions and to allocate resources based on personal relationships and connections is referred to as *wasta* (Hutchings & Weir, 2006).

According to Edward Hall's (1976) criteria, the United Arab Emirates can be classified as a high-context communication culture. Thomas (2008) noted,

> Firstly, it is claimed that an oral tradition exists in the UAE (Winslow, Honein, and Elzubeir 2002) over a written tradition and that an informal, communal, 'majlis' setting may best support such a tradition. Secondly, it has been noted that collective cultures are 'High Context', that is, more implicitly expressed through intonation, euphemism and body language than in the coded explicit part of the message (Hall 1976; Hofstede 1997; Loosemore 1999). Communications are therefore 'integrally linked to the context of relationships within which they occur, including the history of the interactants, their common ground of shared understandings and the setting of the interaction' (Smith, Bond, and Kagitcibasi 2006, 153). (p. 86)

Khaleeji leadership. Research conducted by Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) and O'Neill (2011) – albeit not positing identical findings – found support for the assertion that there exists an implicit leadership theory[47] unique to the Arabian Gulf region. O'Neill termed

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[47] Lord and Maher (1991) defined implicit leadership theory as "implicit beliefs and convictions about the attributes and beliefs that distinguish leaders from non leaders and effective from non-effective leaders" (as cited in Northouse, 2007, p. 313).

this 'Khaleeji[48] leadership'. She noted Khaleeji leadership is characterized by an

interpersonal orientation of personalized consideration including the leader dimensions:

humane orientation, charismatic (inspirational), integrity, team (collaborative), and team

(integrator). It is highly interpersonal and relationally-oriented. Abdalla and Al-Homoud

(2001) noted "desirable leadership profiles are consistent in many ways with the Islamic

leader profile in terms of its emphasis on charisma, integrity, team, future and performance

orientations" (p. 524). Congruently, Abuznaid (2006) characterized idealized leadership in

the region to be denoted by honesty, firmness, teamwork, supervision and follow-up while

Sarayrah (2004) listed empathy, persuasion (not coercion but consensus building), and

commitment to growth of others and community building to be central to understandings of

effective leadership in the Gulf. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) noted a vital responsibility of the

leader is to promote employee affective commitment. Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001)

observed Arabian Gulf leaders "have intense loyalty to their "in-groups" and they consider

themselves the protectors, caregivers, and fathers of their employees. They tend to consult

with their in-groups (the equivalent of kin)" (p. 511). Central to understandings of Arabian

Gulf leadership are the concepts of *shura* (consultation) and *qiwama* (protection).

   Consultation. Peck (2004) noted consultation is central to the exercise of leadership

in the region while Bouraoui (2010) observed the propensity for "collective decision-making"

(p. 12). Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) associated the region's in-group collectivism with

the use of consultation. D. Weir (2008) made a similar observation with regard to the majlis

tradition while both Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) and Sarayrah (2004) noted the Islamic

and Bedu antecedents of consultation. Thomas (2008) synthesized,

> Within the United Arab Emirates, it is claimed that legitimacy of a ruler
> derives from consensus and consent, and the principal of consultation or
> *shura* is an essential part of that system (Ministry of Information and

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[48] Khaleeji is the Arabian Gulf dialect term for the Arabian Gulf.

Culture 2000). The operationalization of consensus and consent has traditionally taken place in the 'majlis' (meeting place, council or sitting room) common in Arab cultures (Ministry of Information and Culture 2000; Winslow, Honein, and Elzubeir 2002). In the 'majlis' leaders may hold an 'openhouse' discussion forum where individuals may forward views for discussion and consideration (Ministry of Information and Culture 2000). This process has also been observed more broadly in collective cultures whereby opinion on new issues is formed in family conferences (Hofstede 1997, 59). (p. 85)

Hutchings and Weir (2006) clarified the relationship between consultation and other factors essential to leadership, "[I]n the Arab world, trust is also central to business activities with *shura* (consultation) being key" (p. 144). C. Burke et al. (2007) explicated the relationship between consultation and trust in the leadership relationship noting, "[C]onsultative leadership has also shown a positive relationship to trust" (p. 616) and "research has indicated its role not only as an antecedent to many valued leadership outcomes, but also as a process that results from collaborative interaction between the leader and subordinates" (p. 607).

Abuznaid (2006) remarked on the benefits of consultation, "Consultation enhances the spirit of solidarity between employees and their managers" (p. 133) and "diminishes whatever mutual suspicions and lack of confidence that may exist between the various parties" (p. 133).

Protection. Sarayrah (2004) commented on the expectation that leaders will be generous and provide protection to the weak, vulnerable, and the at-risk. This protection has been noted to be exercised in several ways, including generosity (Peck, 2004), forgiveness (Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 2001), and face saving (Hutchings & Weir, 2006). Hutchings and Weir (2006) wrote,

> As it is difficult within Arab culture to say no face-to-face, successful managers are those who have developed the capability to give negative messages while maintaining strong interpersonal support (Weir, 2003b). Similarly, a good leader is one who arranges matters so as to protect his dependents from shame (Peristiany, 1966). (p. 153)

Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) also affirmed the importance of assisting others, including

superiors, with face saving. Like Abdalla and Al-Humoud (2001), Bouraoui (2010) noted the

propensity in Arab organizations for superiors to omit negative information and feedback

about subordinates because the role of the leader is to protect the members of the in-group

collective. She described it as "underground leadership, where power and authority are

masked by gentleness" (Bouraoui, 2010, p. 12). Abuznaid (2006) noted protection to be

rooted in religious belief,

> It is part of the mercy of God that thou does deal gently with them: wert
> thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about
> thee. So pass over their faults, and ask for God's forgiveness for them, and
> consult them in affairs (of moment). Then when thou hast taken a
> decision, put trust in God (Holy Koran, 3:159). (p. 133)

This has also been observed by Yousef (2000, 2001) with regard to the Islamic Work Ethic

(IWE), a prevailing force in UAE organizations. Yousef compared the Protestant Work Ethic

(PWE) to the IWE and noted "unlike the PWE, the IWE places more emphasis on intention

than on results. For instance, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stated, "actions are recorded

according to intention, and man will be rewarded or punished accordingly"" (p. 154).

Shura (consultation) and qiwama (protection) may be exercised through wasta

(intercession through connection) (Hutchings & Weir, 2006). Wasta is the power and

influence one has as a result of informal, interpersonal connections—usually family and tribal

affiliation (Abdulla, 2005; Cunningham & Sarayrah, 1993; Metcalf, 2006). Wasta is

perceived to aid those who can access it (e.g., hiring, promotion) and to marginalize those

who cannot (Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Hutchings & Weir, 2006) as it is a vital component of

"social and politico-business networks" (Hutchings & Weir, 2006, p. 143). Wasta and

positive interpersonal relationships are mutually reinforcing elements: wasta provides access

to resources and opportunities as such there is strong motivation to create and maintain the

positive interpersonal relationships from which wasta is derived. Abdulla (2005) likened

wasta to Granovetter's (1983) notions of social networks and strong and weak personal ties to accomplish personal and professional goals. In the UAE, the power of wasta to 'get things done' and the need for positive interpersonal relationships coalesce with notions of protection, honor/shame, and privacy in the workplace to create a culture in which criticism (of ideas, work, employees) verges on the taboo.

Female leadership. In his study of UAE leaders Yaseen (2010) stated, "[F]indings suggest that Arab women's leadership styles tend to be more democratic than Arab men" (p. 68) and "Arab women exceeded men on inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration as well as on the contingent reward scale of transactional leadership" (p. 68). Similarly, Mujtaba and Kaifi (2010) concluded, "Women might show more empathy toward people and lead with a care orientation, but it is evident from modern research that males and females will be equally effective in leadership roles (Jones & George, 2009)" (p. 39). Emirati women have been noted to enact leadership differently from their male peers in other ways. Bouraoui (2010) concluded women draw "on a wide repertoire of leadership practices and deploying them based on the situation" (p. 12). A 2009 report by the Dubai Women Establishment asserted women to be "[l]ess aggressive than men on the whole, Arab women leaders employ negotiation and mediation tactics in their approach to conflict resolution" (p. 26). The same report also noted "Arab women tend to view themselves as better communicators and team-players and stronger in relationship-building in their organisations. Women inherently tend to adopt a more collaborative approach in the workplace" (Dubai Women Establishment, 2009, p. 26).

The differences between male and female Emirati leaders is not coincidental. The Dubai Women Establishment report noted the importance to female leaders of retaining their female identities, "They are comfortable enough and do not feel the need to behave in a similar manner as their male counterparts. Women feel that they are highly respected in the

region and hold a privileged place in society" (2009, p. 22) and "[t]hey are enormously proud

of their femininity and do not try to adopt male characteristics in order to compete or prove

themselves" (p. 24). It continued,

> [W]omen leaders perceive themselves as being filled with a sense of
> femininity much more than their international counterparts. As leaders,
> these women exhibit their inherently feminine traits and are respected for
> doing so, unlike in the west, where women in leading positions often feel
> pressured to behave like men. (Dubai Women Establishment, 2009, p. 26)

Al Jenaibi (2010) and Martin (2006) are amongst those who have noted that gender is not left

at the office door. Female Emirati leaders retain their feminine identity in the workplace

through various mechanisms such as language use[49] and attire (Omair, 2009). In the UAE,

the *abaya* and *shela*[50] are the preferred attire for Emirati women in public contexts. Omair

(2009) noted the wearing of the abaya and shela in the workplace to be a gendered

performance symbolizing "identity as a Muslim, identity as an Emirati, identity as a woman

and identity as a manager" (p. 420). Emirati females' fronting of their femininity should not

be confused for a transgressive act posited by Fournier and Kelemen (2001) or as a form of

counteridentification as proposed by Katila and Merilainen (2002).

  Chapter summary. Leadership has been posited to be a socially-based (e.g., Rost,

1993), culturally-mediated (e.g., Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2007), power-oriented (e.g.,

Northouse, 2007), and status-contingent (e.g., Eagly, 2005), influence relationship (e.g.,

Yukl, 2002) enacted via communication (e.g., Barrett, 2006). This chapter summarized an

array of scholarly literature detailing each of these concepts and explicating their interactions

with regard to the enactment of leadership as well as to show support for the soundness of

this proposition. The last section of this chapter grounded these concepts in the Emirati

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[49] The linguistic relativity hypothesis (Carroll, 1997; Gumperz & Levinson, 1996; G. Lakoff, 1987; Sapir, 1929) supports the contention made by Mernissi (1987) and anecdotes from Bristol-Rhys (2010) that the highly genderized structure of Arabic creates, maintains, and reinforces social and cultural gender divisions.

[50] The abaya is a long black cloak that covers the body from the neck to the feet and fully covers the arms. It is worn over clothing. The shela is the cloth that covers the hair.

context—as transferability from the cultural perspectives in which they were originally proposed should not be assumed and in several instances is invalid—in order to elucidate choices concerning the methodology employed, the manner the data were presented, and the way analysis was conducted and understood in this study. The review of literature highlighted those areas that the data and analysis brought to light as relevant to this study and its participants. These included (a) channel use including considerations and contextual factors underlying the channel selection decision-making process, (b) influence strategies employed by female managers and their relation to culture, (c) 'Western' and local conceptualizations and enactments of leadership, and (d) threats to the leadership of the participants and proposed strategies to surmount these threats.

Chapter III: Methods

The purpose of this exploratory study was to identify the communication channels six Emirati females, concurrently employed in organizations in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, recalled using with their direct reports to enact leadership. All six women held positions in their organizations that included supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles. In particular, the study attempted to ascertain the reasons for their selection of communication channels when engaged in downward communication with organizational subordinates.

Two questions anchored this study: Think about a time in the past when you influenced a direct report to perform a task. What did you say or do to accomplish this? Why? Think about a time in the past when a direct report refused to perform a task you assigned. What did you say or do to get her/him to comply? Why?

Data were collected via three interviews with each participant over a four-week period. Interviews were conducted both face-to-face and via telephone. Open-ended questions applied in a semi-structured format were utilized to garner participants' experiences and opinions.

Participant responses were analyzed for thematic content in a continuous, simultaneous, dialectal, and iterative process. The goal of the analysis was to identify themes, patterns, and/or trends in the communication channels selected by the participants and the reasons for selection of these channels when engaged in downward communication with direct reports.

This chapter begins with a discussion of issues encountered by researchers when conducting research in a host culture, including those surrounding cultural sensitivity and methodological fit. This is followed by a review of interview-based research methods. The

chapter concludes with a presentation of the methods employed in this study including data collection, instrumentation, coding and analysis, and ethical concerns.

Cultural Sensitivity and Methodological Fit

Researchers such as Said (1978) and Linda Smith (1999) have expounded the difficulties of conducting research in a host-culture context and detailed the damage done by research undertaken without regard – purposeful or not – for the personal, social, political, economic, linguistic, religious, and/or educational norms and values of their hosts. Linda Smith (1999) in *Decolonizing Methodologies* wrote of "cultural protocols broken, values negated, small tests failed, and key people ignored" (p. 3) as examples of the breaches committed by guest-culture researchers.

Adler and Elmhorst's (2008) assertion may explain (in part) one cause of non-purposeful disregard, "Cultures are invisible to the people who are used to inhabiting them" (p. 41). In this situation, it may be difficult for researchers to bracket their assumptions and biases because they are not aware of them. Furthermore, it may lead researchers to erroneously assume epistemology, ontology, axiology, methods, data, language, analysis, and findings to be comparable and/or equivalent across groups. Limaye and Victor (1991) in their critique of cross-cultural communication research noted,

> [S]ome scholars' assumption of comparability where none may exist.
> Similarly, these researchers assume that theories and models developed in
> one social system may be applicable or operative in another. Some non-
> Western scholars trained in Western universities and Western methods of
> social research have arguably been influenced in many cases by Western
> modes of thinking (Hamnett & Porter, 1983). (p. 283)

In more general terms, Gilovich (1993) explained erroneous yet frequently commonly held beliefs "are products, not of irrationality, but of flawed rationality" (p. 3). Other times, researchers may be purposeful in their assumptions of compatibility and equivalence which may be due to the researchers' desire for "a coherent framework" (Dickson, Den Hartog, & Mitchelson, 2003, p. x) on which to base research, analysis, and findings. Or as noted by

Bacon in the 1600s, "The human understanding supposes a greater degree of order and equality in things than it really finds; and although many things in nature be sui generis and most irregular, will yet invest parallels and conjugates and relatives where no such thing is" (*Novum Organum* as cited in Gilovich, 1993, p. 9). It may also be due to prejudice and ethnocentricism. This may take the form of the researcher perceiving the knowledge of the host-culture as being inferior or inadequate (i.e., Foucault's, 1980, concept of subjugated knowledge) causing "a danger that the voices of particular groups, or particular forms of knowledge, may be drowned out, systematically silenced or misunderstood as research and researchers engage with dominant academic and public concerns and discourses" (Ribbens & Edwards, 1998, p. 2).

The ramifications of cultural insensitivity are evidenced in research in various ways. In some instances, researchers may not recognize pertinent data. For as noted by Linda Smith (1999),

> [T]o a large extent theories about research are underpinned by a cultural system of classification and representation, by views about human nature, human morality and virtue, by conceptions of space and time, by conceptions of gender and race. Ideas about these things help determine what counts as real. (p. 7)

Consequently, "[r]esearch is one of the ways in which the underlying code of imperialism and colonialism is both regulated and realized" (L. Smith, 1999, p. 7).

The perspective of the researcher is not the only cultural factor that impacts research; the points-of-view of the participants are also significant. Thomas (2008) noted "the extent to which researchers can be considered as being in- or out-group members" (p. 84) affects the research process. Thomas, like Dimmock whom he cited, explicated this sentiment noting the difficulties in (a) obtaining access to "relevant in-groups" (p. 85) and (b) garnering the participation of appropriate groups, in particular in Arab cultures. Thomas noted the role of primary and secondary sources of trust as a means of gaining entry to in-groups. He went on

to explain the additional complexity of conducting research in host-culture environments, "[A] second problem arises, that is, if there is poor communication between researchers and respondents due to unrecognized cultural values, ignorance of nuances of interpersonal communication and relationships (Loosemore 1999)" (Thomas, 2008, p. 85).

To mitigate the negative impact culture can have on research, Thomas (2008) advocated qualitative methods because, "Research is carried out with people as opposed to on them" (p. 87) consequently "minimalizing the impact of a researcher's values on the study, and how it is conceptualized, enacted and analysed" (p. 87). Winslow, Honein, and Elzubeir (2002) advised researchers, "More attention needs to be paid to the development of culturally appropriate research methods. Researchers cannot automatically assume that data collection techniques used successfully with Western populations are transferable across cultures" (p 574). Thomas (2008) also noted the importance of the researcher's "ability to share reference frames" (p. 84) and cautioned researchers, "Trust between in-group members is seen as central to collective groups and must be established before business (or research) can be furthered (Hofstede 1997)…This may be especially relevant for the researcher working within a culture different to his/her own" (p. 84). Ribbens and Edwards (1998) posited it is the responsibility of researchers working in "cultures and discourses that are peripheral to predominant Western knowledge forms and 'translate; them into a discourse recognizable to Western public audiences" (p. 3) because "[o]ther voices cannot be heard by a Western public audience without the researcher as 'interpreter'" (p. 3).

Even with culturally-sensitive preventive measures in place, researchers have noted the difficulties of conducting research in a host-culture environment cannot be completely avoided,

> Problems remain: for example the extent to which researchers recognize
> their own subjectivity and ethnocentrism; the extent to which they
> recognize cultural differences and similarities within other cultures; the

appropriacy of research tools, levels of analysis, treatment of data; and associated ethical concerns in cross-cultural settings.
(Thomas, 2008, p. 87)

Ribbens and Edwards (1998) explicated the finer points of the dilemma,

Even as the researcher may seek to make herself apparent as the translator, via self-reflexivity, she risks making herself more central to the discourse, again pushing the voice of the Third World narrator out to the edge (Hale, 1991, discussed by Wolf, 1996). Nevertheless, to suggest anything else may be to create an illusion, since in reality the Western researcher is inescapably at the centre of the research account. Patai (1991, discussed by Wolf 1996), thus argues that the relationships between the first world feminist researchers in Third World subjects will inevitably be exploitative, whatever the good intentions of the researchers. (p. 3)

While the assertion made by Ribbens and Edwards (1998) may be unavoidable, researchers can take steps to mitigate the impact of the disparity and the 'exploitative' nature of the relationship. These steps may include the use of cultural confederates and member checking, such as were used in this study and which will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

Interview-based Methods

Individual, one-to-one face-to-face and telephone interviews were the primary method of data collection employed in this study. The interview method was selected, in part, because as noted by Holstein and Gubrium (1995) interviewing is a "universal mode of systemic inquiry" (p. 1). Hartman (2004), and Fontana and Frey (2005) posited interview-based methods to be well suited to exploratory research. Similarly, Edmondson and McManus (2007) noted "nascent theory" (p. 1158) research to 'fit' well with research questions, designs, and methods, like interviews, that employ "[o]pen-ended inquiry about a phenomenon of interest" (p. 1160) and seek "[q]ualitative, initially open-ended data that need to be interpreted for meaning" (p. 1160) with the aim of "[p]attern identification" (p. 1160).

Bentz and Shapiro (1998) stated that as a form of ethnographic inquiry, interview-based methods are well-suited for "capturing, interpreting, and explaining" (p. 117) lived

experience. Krueger and Casey (2009) stated interview-based methods "can provide insight into complicated topics when opinions or attitudes are conditional or when the area of concern relates to multifaceted behavior or motivation" (p. 19). Marshall and Rossman (1999) noted interviews provide in-depth information on the topic on inquiry.

Amongst the assumptions that underpin interview research are "(a) people are valuable sources of information; (b) people are capable of discussing themselves and articulating their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; (c) the moderator can help people retrieve information" (Lederman as cited in Hartman, 2004, p. 403).

Interview-based method researchers endeavor "to promote self-disclosure among participants" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 4), to tap into participants' experience and knowledge, to see the issue "through the eyes and hearts of the target audience" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 8), to ascertain their perceptions of the issue, "to better understand peoples' interpretations of their experiences" (Hartman, 2004, p. 402), "to learn how a target audience sees, understands and values a particular topic" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, pp. 8-9) so the researcher can gain understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Kvale (1996) noted the interview as a mode that allows participant impressions and ideas to be illuminated via gentle probing. R. Kahn and Cannell (1957) referred to interviews as purposeful conversations. Krueger and Casey (2009) noted interview-based methods "work when participants feel comfortable, respected and free to give their opinions without being judged" (p. 4).

Strengths of the interview method are many and varied, including (a) encouraging participants' intellectual and emotional involvement (Byers & Wilcox, 1991; Fontana & Frey, 2005), (b) resource efficiency (Byers & Wilcox, 1991; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Stokes & Bergin, 2006), (c) transferability of findings (Morgan & Spanish, 1984), and (d) breadth and contextuality of data (Litosseliti, 2003; Stokes & Bergin, 2006). Three aspects of the

interview method salient to interview-based research conducted in honor-based cultures such as the United Arab Emirates are: psychological safety, depth, and flexibility.

Psychological safety. It has been noted that the context of the one-on-one interview can provide participants with a sense of psychological safety that allows them to share information that otherwise may have been withheld in more public environments, due to perceived social pressure (Kazmierska, 2004); participants who may feel reticent to speak (authentically) in a larger group may be encouraged to do so within the confines of the privacy and safety of the individual exchange. The use of the telephone as the channel of communication for interviews has been noted to encourage participant disclosure (Janofsky, 1971). The 'facelessness' of the telephone as the channel of communication as well as the privacy of the one-to-one structure can create a "comfortable, permissive environment" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 6) in which participants feel safe to disclose information they may otherwise be reticent to divulge in a more public setting.

Depth. The individualization of the interview provides sufficient time for the participant to share and explain thus extending both the quality and the quantity of contributions. Schnurr (2009) noted interviews "contribute to the emergence of a more complete picture of the participants' working environment and their everyday practices" (p. 18). Similarly, McNamara (1999) posited interviews allow the researcher to get the participant's 'story' in that they allow in-depth probing of ideas, context, and experiences. While Greene and Caracelli (1997) proposed the use of interviews to explore data in "greater detail" (p. 28).

Flexibility. Byers and Wilcox (1991), Fontana and Frey (2005), and Gillham (2000) noted the flexibility of interview methods to rapidly adapt to contingencies. And when the study employs non-directive interviewing, open ended questions allow "individuals to respond without setting boundaries or providing them clues for potential response categories.

The open-ended approach allows the subject ample opportunity to comment, to explain and to share experiences and attitudes" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 3). Krueger and Casey (2009) noted interview-based data provide a "range of opinions" (p. 7) allowing the researcher to "compare and contrast data" (p. 7) and that interview-based data "work particularly well to determine the perceptions, feelings and thinking" (p. 8) of participants. These sentiments were similarly expressed by Fontana and Frey (2005), Gillham (2000), and Litosseliti (2003).

The limitations of interview-based research include (a) the risk of non-standardization between interviews (Wimpenny & Gass, 2000) thus risking comparability between data sets (Baker, Wuest, & Stern, 1992), and (b) conversely, over-structuring of the interview thus inhibiting the emergence of pertinent information (Charmaz, 1994), (c) lack of generalizability (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Krueger & Casey, 2009; Litosseliti, 2003; Stokes & Bergin, 2006), (d) volunteer/referral bias, (e) selection bias, (f) intervention/exposure bias (Stokes & Bergin, 2006), and (g) subject-effect bias (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Liosseliti, 2003; McMillan & Wergin, 2010; Stokes & Bergin, 2006). Subject effects, the respondent's desire to provide "socially desirable responses or actions that will help or please the experimenter" (McMillan & Wergin, 2010, p. 62), have been noted to increase in self-report designs. This is related to Goffman's (1967) concept of 'face' and Jourard's (1964) notion of the "public self" (p. 10). Recall bias (Dillard & Burgoon, 1985), "selective retrieval and reporting biases that distort the recall of actual tactics used" (p. 293), may also impact data and findings. Krueger and Casey (2009) noted the acceptance "of qualitative research methods in general, has been delayed in academic circles for a variety of reasons: a preoccupation with quantitative procedures, assumptions about the nature of reality and a societal tendency to believe in numbers" (p. 3).

Summary of methodological fit. The interview was deemed to be the most appropriate method for this study because it was congruent with the aims of the study as well

as sensitive to the cultural needs of the participants. This study sought to use the participants' own experiences and insights to gain understanding of how Emirati female leaders use communication to enact leadership with direct reports, and in doing so, to identify patterns in the participants' communication choices in two common workplace interactions with organizational direct reports. A review of the literature showed interview-based methods to be supportive of these aims. The one-to-one, researcher-respondent interview was identified as being congruent with the socio-cultural needs of participants from honor-based cultures such as Emirati females because of the psychological safety, depth, and flexibility it offers.

Method of this Study

This study employed one-to-one[51], semi-structured, participant-investigator interviews as the method of data collection. Six female, Emirati leaders comprised the participant group. Data content were analyzed qualitatively to ascertain themes, patterns, and/or trends. Theoretical saturation and generalizability of results were not sought.

Participants. The screens for participant eligibility were (a) ability to participate in English; (b) willingness to complete the demographic information questionnaire; (c) current employment in an Abu Dhabi business(-like) organization in which the participant has supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and a positional leadership role; (d) willingness to participate in three face-to-face and/or telephone interviews; and (e) willingness to have contributions aggregated with those of other participants and publicly disseminated. All participants were legally adults.

The participant group consisted of six Emirati females employed in organizations in which they had supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles. The small size of the participant group was a function of two elements.

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[51] Two participants preferred to participate in the first interview together.

First, as Patton (2002) noted, "The validity, meaningfulness, and insight generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information-richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size" (as cited in Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 205).

And second, legal and cultural limitations concerning privacy and information sharing (e.g., public availability of the dissertation document, UAE laws regarding speech acts) significantly reduced the number of eligible female Emiratis who were willing to participate[52]. Emirati society is very small (less than 20% of the nation's population) and very connected (the ideal marriage is within the tribe) (Bristol-Rhys, 2010) consequently anonymity amongst Emiratis is nearly impossible (Bristol-Rhys, 2010); this, coupled with legislation that criminalizes criticism of the government and/or ruling families (Dajani, 2011; Human Rights Watch, 2009)[53] as well as Emirati traditions concerning the protection of knowledge (Thesinger, 1959) and Islamic admonitions about privacy, creates a highly developed sense of vigilance and reticence to disclosure on the part of Emiratis. The difficulty in obtaining random samples when conducting research in the Arabian Gulf was noted by Robertson, Al-Khatib, and Al-Habib (2002). Prior to the study, I had long-term (five years or more) relationships with all but one of the participants. The sixth participant was referred by one of the other five; consequently, I had trusted status with her by referral. The existing relationship between me and the participants mitigated anxieties surrounding trust and privacy issues—although it did not seem to reduce overall hesitation to participate.

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[52] Over a three week period, 110 eligible Emirati females were contacted to participate in the study, this yielded six who finally agreed to participate. The first cultural consultant (see page 114) had warned that garnering participation would be difficult in light of the aforementioned legal, religious, and socio-cultural aspects of the UAE as well as a general lack of familiarity with academic research, fears of exploitation, scheduling priorities of possible participants, and the time of year relative to holidays.

[53] Davidson (2005) noted the prevalent synonymy between the ruling families and business.

While, it is arguable that enlarging the participant group may have strengthened the perceived validity and transferability of the findings, Krueger and Casey (2009) acknowledged that when conducting research it is necessary to compromise in order to strike a balance between the ideal and the practical—provided the cultural, religious, and legal parameters of the research context, a participant group of more than six was not feasible.

Research site. The physical location of the interview is an important element to consider, for as noted by Robert Merton, "[P]eople revealed sensitive information when they felt they were in a safe, comfortable place with people like themselves" (as cited in Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 3). Litosseliti (2003) and Hartman (2004) expressed the same. For this reason, the interviews took place in a variety of locations suggested by the researcher but selected by the participants.

Design. Gillham (2000) and Litosseliti (2003) noted design selection to be a function of the study's purpose. The design utilized for this study sought to (a) ascertain consistent trends and/or patterns across time and context with regard to participant channel selection when engaged in downward communication with direct reports for the purpose of enacting leadership, (b) stimulate participant awareness and thought concerning their channel selection when engaged in downward communication with direct reports for the purpose of enacting leadership, and (c) provide multiple opportunities and contexts for participant contributions in order to garner authenticity, breadth, and depth of contributions. Given that all instruments have an inherent measurement bias, the suggestion that data collection be broad and varied is merited (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Creswell, 1998).

Cultural considerations. The interview method was selected for this study for three reasons. First, it has been used successfully in the United Arab Emirates (e.g., Abdulla, 2005; Al Jenaibi, 2010; Al Kaabi, 2005; Al Oraimi, 2004; Sohb et al., 2008). Second, the individual interview is a culturally appropriate data collection method when collaborating with Emirati

respondents because the method is congruent with socio-cultural and religious mandates for the protection of honor, face, and privacy. And third, the individual interview is a flexible and interactive data collection method which permits instantaneous adaption and feedback. This is useful when conducting research in a host-culture environment because the adaptability of individual interviews can be used to mitigate the cultural frictions (Shenkar, Luo, & Yeheskel, 2008) that may result between western research paradigms and research participants from non-western cultural traditions.

Accepting the perspective (a) leadership is a socially-based (e.g., Rost, 1993), culturally-mediated (e.g., Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2007), power-oriented (e.g., Northouse, 2007), and status-contingent (e.g., Eagly, 2005) influence relationship (e.g., Yukl, 2002) enacted via communication (e.g., Barrett, 2006); (b) confidentiality and participant privacy needed to be ensured; (c) qualitative research methods are congruent with 'Arab' populations, and (d) interview-based methods are valid means by which to study complex and dynamic phenomena (Litosseliti, 2003) such as leadership and communication (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Hartman, 2004), the selection of the interview method was warranted in this study.

Alternatives. Although the interview method has been identified as appropriate for the objectives of this study, other methods were considered. Schnurr (2009) advocated the use of multiple data collection methods when investigating leadership, including focus groups, recordings of group interactions, review of organizational documents, and participant observation.

Focus groups were not used because garnering respondent participation proved unfeasible. Organizational documents were not reviewed due to privacy stipulations that barred this—and while, a review of this sort may have proved useful by providing further context that may have enhanced overall understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, this type of data was not central to answering the research questions.

Participant observation, while ideally suited to research that seeks to identity actual behavior, was not viable given the cultural environment.

In addition to participation in the interviews, participants were requested to complete a demographic questionnaire in order to provide consumers of the final research report with the contextual information required to determine transferability of the findings.

Data collection. I employed non-directive, semi-structured interviewing utilizing open-ended questions to garner participants' recall of their experiences and opinions with respect to their selection of channel(s) of communication when engaged in downward communication with their direct reports when enacting leadership.

Phases. The study consisted of six phases: foregrounding, the pre-interview, first data collection, second data collection, member checking and final data collection, and a cultural sensitivity review.

Foregrounding. In order to guide and inform the research, approximately 18 months before data collection I began to bring to the foreground my ten years experience living in Abu Dhabi and working with Emiratis. This was accomplished through (a) focused reflection; (b) research on topics associated with, but not directly related to, the focus of inquiry of this project; (c) and targeted conversations on, and around, the topic of inquiry of this project with educated third-parties (e.g., Emirati colleagues). Chenitz and Swanson (1986) and May (1991) noted the value of topical conversations/informal interviews in gathering information to situate and validate study data.

Pre-interview. Prior to finalization of the questions for the study, I conferred with a trusted cultural confederate[54]. She offered insight on question phrasing and provided insight into micro-and macro-level factors that may have impacted participants' interpretation of the

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[54] An Emirati female with whom I have had a close professional and personal relationship for nearly a decade. Demographically she aligns with the participant group. She also has social and professional relationships with several of the participants.

questions and responses. She also identified areas of potential socio-cultural and religious sensitivity. Lastly, she provided advice on participant recruitment.

First data collection. Prior to interviewing, the participants were sent the demographic questionnaire and the questions to be asked during the interview. Initial interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes per participant (ranging from 24 minutes to 45 minutes). Five of the six initial interviews took place face-to-face, the sixth participant was not in Abu Dhabi so the interview took place by telephone[55].

Second data collection. Approximately 10-14 days after the participant's initial interview, I contacted the participants and the second interview took place. Interviews took place via telephone. The purpose of the second interview was to garner contemporaneous data on the topic under investigation. It was also to allow the participants to make (self-initiated) additions or amendments to their responses from the initial interview; the awareness participants developed as a result of the initial interviews stimulated additional contributions. These interviews lasted on average approximately 15 minutes each (ranging from six minutes to 32 minutes).

Member checking and final data collection. After the preliminary data analysis was completed, the complete data set and analysis were provided to all the participants for member checking. Gordon (1996) highlighted the importance of reflexive collaboration between researcher and participant(s) in the knowledge creation process. Approximately one week after the participants received the preliminary findings – sufficient time for the participants to review and consider the findings, I contacted the participants by telephone to get their feedback on the accuracy of the findings and to note new or amended contributions they wished to make. The awareness the participants developed over the course of the

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[55] The difference in channel did not appear to impact the quality, quantity, breadth, depth, or orientation of the participant's responses; her responses aligned in content and depth with those of the other participants.

approximately four-weeks in which they were involved with the study stimulated further

contributions as did interaction with other participants' responses (i.e., reading the

preliminary report of findings). This is similar to the focus group dynamic described by

Krueger and Casey (2009), "[R]esponses spark ideas from other participants. Comments

provide mental cues that trigger memories or thoughts of other participants—cues that help

explore the range of perceptions" (p. 35) and Morgan (as cited in Hartman, 2004), "[T]his

interaction tends to stimulate ideas that would not have been available otherwise" (p. 402). It

is also congruent with Weick's sensemaking phenomenon "in which members continually

reaffirm to one another the "truth" of reality" (Parry, 2003, p. 243).

Cultural sensitivity review. After the third research interaction with participants,

contributions were reviewed and integrated, and the findings were finalized. The finalized

findings were then reviewed by a second cultural confederate[56] for cultural congruence and

sensitivity.

Due to input from the two (pre-and post-study) cultural consultants and requests from

the participants as well as insights from regionally-based researchers (and my own

understanding of Emirati culture), it was decided to omit some data and analysis from the

published write-up of the study[57]. Previously mentioned socio-cultural, political, and legal

considerations surrounding privacy, honor, ownership, identity, and image underscored the

ethical and legal imperatives of this decision.

Questions. Two interview questions anchored this study: Think about a time in the

past when you influenced a direct report to perform a task. What did you say or do to

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[56] Like the first cultural confederate, the second cultural confederate was also demographically congruent with
the participant group. This cultural confederate has advanced education (including academic research training)
and extensive professional experience in cross-cultural management and leadership.

[57] None of the omitted data or analysis were central to the research question. This adjunct information was
presented at the oral defense of this dissertation on 30 October 2011 in London, England.

accomplish this? Why? and Think about a time in the past when a direct report refused to perform a task you assigned. What did you say or do to get her/him to comply? Why?

The goal of the line of questioning was to identify which communication channels six Emirati female concurrently employed in organizations in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in which they have supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles recalled using with their direct reports to enact leadership. In particular, the study attempted to ascertain the reasons for the selection of communication channels when engaged in downward communication with organizational subordinates.

During the interviews, I employed the questioning route, "a sequence of questions, in complete, conversational sentences…often preferred in the public and nonprofit and academic environments" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 38). One benefit of the questioning route is internal consistency, which allows data to be more accurately compared and improves analysis. An additional benefit is derived from the forethought required by the researcher. The questioning route requires the researcher to consider each question in detail, including the type of answer (e.g., content/logical/rational or relational/emotional/affective) desired from the participants (Krueger & Casey, 2009). This type of questioning may be classified as a form of structured interviewing (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Litosseliti, 2003) or more precisely, a "*moderately structured* interview structure" (Hartman, 2004, p. 404).

Questions were structured and sequenced "to keep the interview focused" (Krider & Ross, 1997, p. 441), but flexible to allow "participants opportunity to explore experiences in as much depth as desired" (Krider & Ross, 1997, p. 442). The goal was to allow participants to explain their reasons for the channels they selected. Questions were also situated in the past or in actual present events or actions to mitigate answers based on conjecture (Krueger & Casey, 2009). As noted by Kupritz and Cowell (2011), "The open-ended structured interviews emphasized personal constructs of participants to establish authenticity and

trustworthiness through the nature and format of the questions asked, followed by content

analysis techniques (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999)" (p. 66).

Questions were purposefully phrased to facilitate participant understanding. This was

accomplished in part during the pre-interview cultural confederate consultation – she

provided locally employed terms as substitutes for my phrasing (i.e., 'direct reports' was

replaced with 'juniors'). This continued during the interview process as the language

produced by the participants in their responses was used to frame and phrase follow-up

questions[58] (phrasing of primary interview questions remained constant across interviews).

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) noted this strategy promotes maintenance of conceptual

authenticity, which is then carried through analysis. In justifying their own use of the method

in ethnographic-based business communication research, Kupritz and Hillsman (2011) stated,

"Interview questions and content analysis procedures emphasize personal constructs of

participants by using stimulus materials that are respondent generated and data respondent

categorized. This procedure preserves the language and conceptualizations of participants

(Harding & Livesay, 1984)" (p. 163) and "Domain Definition interview questions are

designed to exhaust the range of participant perceptions for the variables being examined to

decrease the likelihood of overlooking significant chunks of a domain (LeCompte &

Schensul, 1999; Spradley, 1979; 1980)" (p. 163).

Sequence of questioning. Questions were arranged in a natural, logical sequence

(Gillham, 2000; Litosseliti, 2003) with questions at the start being more general then

gradually telescoping to become more focused. Questions can be classified as either opening,

transition, key, or ending (Gillham, 2000; Krueger & Casey, 2009; Litosseliti, 2003).

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[58] This strategy is a common elicitation and comprehension technique and is advocated by proponents of the heuristic elicitation method (HEM) interview (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). "The HEM consists of several elicitation phases. However, any elicitation phase can be used individually and stand alone as a separate investigation (Harding, 1974). The methodology is predicated upon the idea that "language provides a powerful entry to cultural meaning structures" Harding & Livesay, 1984, p. 75)." (Kupritz, 1999, n.p.)

Because of my existing social relationships with the participants, each interview began with an informal 'catching-up' session. Participants who had questions about the study asked them at this stage.

Once the interview began, I allowed participants to speak as long and as freely as possible. First, to allow all ideas an opportunity to be shared – I was afraid if I interrupted a participant, ideas would be 'lost'. And, second, as noted by Abdulla (2005) interrupting is "viewed as a sign of disrespect in Emirati culture" (p. 69). Adhering to Seidman's (1998) injunction, leading questions were avoided. Participant responses were clarified through the use of elicitation techniques (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Nolan, 1999)

The purpose of the opening question was to get each participant comfortable speaking (Krueger & Casey, 2009)—to counteract apprehension the participant may have had about the interview format. The opening question was 'What's going on at work?'

Transition questions bridged the conversation by bringing the discussion closer to the key questions. This phase called for more in-depth thought and responses than the opening question (Krueger & Casey, 2009). There were two transitions questions: 'What is your favorite part of your job?' and 'What is the most difficult part of your job?'

Two key questions were at the heart of the study: 'Think about a time in the past when you influenced a direct report to perform a task. What did you say or do to accomplish this? Why?'(interview question 1) and 'Think about a time in the past when a direct report refused to perform a task you assigned. What did you say or do to get her/him to comply? Why?' (interview question 2).

The interviews each concluded with the end question: 'Is there anything that we should've talked about but didn't?'. As an exploratory study conducted in a host-culture environment, it was important to ensure all relevant information had an opportunity to be

presented. I did not assume the questions, although drawn out of the literature and reviewed

by informed third-parties, fully covered all pertinent aspects of the topic of inquiry.

During each interview with each individual participant follow-up probes were employed to

gain greater depth and clarity of answers provided. These probes served to position the

participants, situate the interactants, and contextualize responses. The probes centered on the

impact of (a) age of the interactants, (b) the language employed during the communication

event, (c) the gender of the interactants, and (d) the physical context/limitations in which the

communication event was located[59]. As these probes elicited additional areas of inquiry,

questions were then added during subsequent discussions with other participants to garner

their input on the topic and provide consistency across the study. For example, one

participant mentioned the impact of marriage on her communication choices – in subsequent

interviews with other participants, I probed to see if/how they saw the impact of marriage on

their communication choices. Because of this, 'Are you married?' was later added to the

demographic questionnaire. Referencing Walters, Wimpenny and Gass (2000) noted,

"Heideggarian hermeneutics continue in a state of development and refining as new insights

emerge. This may assume that development and refining occurs between interviews as the

researcher's exposure to the phenomenon increases" (p. 1489).

    Answers. Jourard (1964) warned researchers to be cautious with participants' answers.

Jourard (1964) coined the term 'public self' to describe "the concept of oneself which one

wants others to believe" (p. 10), this is similar to the sociological notion of 'face' (Goffman,

1967) and the research concept of subject effects. Comparison of individual participant's

answers across the three data collection points as well as comparison of different participant's

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[59] Physical context is known to impact communication including channel selection (e.g., Adler & Elmhorst, 2008). In instances in which I was unable to see for myself the physical environment(s) in which the communication events described took place, participants were asked to draw and/or described them in detail in order to enhance understanding of the communication event and the rational for channel selection. This was of particular importance for this study as many workspaces are officially-mandated or employee-chosen gender segregated.

answers at a particular data collection point, and across data collection points (i.e., horizontal, vertical, and longitudinal comparison) served as an internal check of consistency and credibility of response data.

In accordance with Khaleeji socio-cultural mores, the findings were associated with the group as a whole rather identifiable to a particular individual participant thus protecting the reputations of individual participants and their families. Like Al Jenaibi (2010), when reference was made to the contribution of a specific participant, this was done via a two letter code that bares no relation to the participants' actual names or other identifying characteristics. In further regard to local norms, some data and analysis were not included in the written dissertation document but were presented during its oral presentation.

Instrumentation. In light of the skepticism some research consumers have about the validity of qualitative research in general, and interview-based methods in particular, I heeded Gee (as cited in Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007),

> Analytic credibility depends on the coherence of the argument: Readers
>
> will judge the trustworthiness of the process by how the analyst uses
>
> evidence from the interviews to support main points and whether the
>
> building tasks of language converge toward a convincing explanation.
>
> (p. 1376)

Robson's (1993) suggested use of the "audit trail" (p. 406), a record of the development and route of the researcher's thinking to establish credibility, was warranted as a means of supporting analytic credibility. One method for the creation of an audit trail is field notes.

Field notes. Data were collected via field notes. Field notes are records made by researchers that document observations of the phenomenon under investigation (Glesne, 2006). Field notes are commonly used in ethnographic studies, including academic research (Krueger & Casey, 2009). The primary merit of field notes over other data recording methods

is their price, ease, and reliability in the field: no expensive equipment to purchase, no gear to locate or to set up, no complex equipment failures. The disadvantages of field notes are located in the observer/researcher. These include faulty or incomplete recall and observer bias. Krueger and Casey (2009) noted many "don't know how to take effective field notes. They record impressions, interesting ideas, perhaps a few choice words or notes…These notes are fragmented and incomplete for analysis" (p. 94). Referencing both the difficulties of taking valid and reliable field notes and the source of those difficulties, Krueger and Casey asserted "[e]ffective field notes require work" (2009, p. 94). I refined my field note skills during a similarly designed study conducted in Qatar with Qatari nationals in the spring of 2011.

According to Glesne (2006) and Krueger and Casey (2009), there are at least two variations on how to format field notes: "record notes and quotes" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 94) and "capture details and rich descriptive information" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 94). In the former, the researcher records key words and ideas on one side of the page and quotes on the other. When an idea is repeated, a check mark is a made. The page is clearly delineated for each question. This formatting facilitates organization and later referencing.

I recorded the field notes for this study in the "notes and quotes" format. Out of respect for socio-cultural norms related to privacy, audio or video recording did not take place. Al Lamky (2006), in her study of Omani female leaders, did not tape record interviews to encourage openness although she did take hand-written notes. Al-Oraimi (2004) noted this same injunction. Bristol-Rhys (2010) noted the same phenomena, "[W]hile the women I have talked with have all expressed their opinions quite openly, none wanted to be identified in the book, or indeed to be identifiable" (p. 23). Similarly, Al-Jenaibi (2010) stated, "Conducting research in the UAE is often difficult because…doing interviews with many employees must be completely confidential. For example, many females will not provide their names and

work places in order to be able to speak freely" (p. 72). This assertion was previously observed by Abdulla (2005) "[I]n the Middle East…there is a strong emphasis on the preserving the dignity and privacy of the family to all outsiders and avoiding any critique" (p 72). Al-Oraimi (2004) wrote, "It is not easy to conduct interviews in the UAE because people do not like to express themselves openly, especially before strangers" (p. 96).

Before analysis and review by third parties (i.e., mentors, academic supervisors) field notes and other research artifacts (e.g., surveys, questionnaires) were sanitized to mitigate the possibility of participant identification. Field notes and all other research artifacts have been kept on the Antioch University server (secure) and locked by key in my home office.

Interviewer. Byers and Wilcox (1991), referencing Goldman, cautioned interview-based researchers to "refrain from contributing to the discussion as much as possible and monitor his or her actions carefully" (p. 69) since the researcher-interviewer is the "instrument" (Sorrell & Redmond, 1995, p. 118) of data collection. Jasper (1994) noted the need for researchers to develop skills that enable the collection of data without "contaminating" (p. 311) it in the process. Polit and Hungler (1991) disputed Jasper's (1994) perspective arguing the researcher's subjectivity can inform research. They did agree however that interviewing requires the ability to reflect, clarify, and elicit description and examples through the use of listening (Jasper, 1994). Gillham (2000) and Hartman (2004) supported this assertion, noting the interviewer is responsible for encouraging breadth and depth of contributions. Krueger and Casey (2009) asserted, "The interviewer encourages comments of all types—positive and negative. The interviewer is careful not to make judgments about the responses and to control body language that might communicate approval or disapproval" (p. 6). In order to do this, the interviewer must be reflective, self-aware (Gillham, 2000), and bracket (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998) her/his assumptions, for ultimately, all humans are "culturally based and culturally biased" (Varner & Beamer, 2005,

p. xv). Or as stated by Scheurich (as cited in Fontana & Frey, 2005), "[T]he interviewer is a person, historically and contextually located, carrying unavoidable conscious and unconscious motives, desires, feelings, and biases - hardly a neutral tool" (p. 696).

Krueger and Casey (2009) noted the employ of a cultural confederate may be necessary in some cross-cultural research situations because participants may not be comfortable disclosing to a member of an out-group. Accessibility issues such as language or specific cultural and/or historical references may also necessitate the non-host culture researcher partner with a bi-laterally trusted cultural insider. In other situations, the naiveté and outsider status of the non-host culture researcher may prove beneficial. Participants may be more explicit/didactic with responses and/or may feel less inhibited to share with an 'outsider' because of the psychological safety derived from the perceived anonymity (Krueger & Casey, 2009). In this study, both researcher naïveté and cultural consultants were used to strengthened the perceived validity of data collection and analysis.

As participation was voluntary, respondent involvement in the interviews and completion of the demographic questionnaire were construed as consent. Participants were informed of the voluntary nature of participation (and the right to withdraw, refrain from contributing) when invited to participate and before commencing with the research activity (i.e., interviews, demographic questionnaire).

Coding and analysis. Following the advice of authors such as Krueger and Casey (2009) to those undertaking data analysis, I was cautious to keep the purpose of the study central: "[T]he purpose is not to teach, to provide therapy, to result differences or to achieve a consensus, but to obtain information in a systematic and verifiable manner" (p. 195). The goal of this study was two-fold: (1) identify the communication channels six Emirati females concurrently employed in organizations in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in which they had supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles

recalled using with their direct reports to enact leadership, and (2) ascertain the reasons for the selection of those communication channels when engaged in downward communication with organizational subordinates.

This study analyzed the content of participants' responses to meet the research goals. Krueger and Casey (2009) noted that during analysis, not all questions or answers are of equal value because different types of questions (i.e., opening, transition) have different functions (i.e., promote participation, stimulate thought) and the quantity of time and attention given to each should be relative to its importance to the central purpose of the study. In fact, some questions, such as opening questions, do not warrant analysis (Krueger & Casey, 2009). In this study, only the two key questions were analyzed – although data collected via other questions (in particular the end question) enhanced my background knowledge and contextualized overall understanding.

Gillham (2000) noted participant discourse can be analyzed to determine content, "Content analysis is about organizing the *substantive* content of the interview…there are two essential strands to the analysis: identifying those key, substantive points; putting them into categories" (p. 59). In order to accomplish this, I applied an emergent "Key Concepts" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 125) framework in a continuous, simultaneous, dialectal, and iterative process. Analysis of the data was conducted sequentially (i.e., question-by-question) and continuously (simultaneous to data collection) (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Litosseliti, 2003),

> Collection and analysis are done iteratively. The goal of exploration, the
> absence of significant literature about the question, and the use of
> interviews argue for a style that is unstructured, fosters intimate contact
> with the text, and minimizes perceptual filtering in the initial analysis.
> (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 305)

This is similar to the dialectical approach suggested by Greene and Caracelli (1997) and the hermeneutic spiral as presented by Bentz and Shapiro (1998) in which data are analyzed, a

theme or concept emerges, the researcher returns to the literature to ascertain deeper meaning and then returns to the data for further analysis until saturation is achieved. Or, as posited by Stake (1995), the researcher seeks "refinement of understanding" (p. 7). Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommended a similar approach and noted the identification, coding, and categorization process to be completed when there were sufficient categories to encompass all the data. The primary undertaking of the key concept framework was "to identify a limited number of important ideas, experiences, preferences that illuminate the study" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 125).

Following Lincoln and Guba's (1985) recommendation, data from the interviews were analyzed inductively by identifying key concepts and themes via a thorough reading and re-reading of notes. In an iterative process between the data and the literature, I identified key concepts. The key content concepts were then coded and compiled into categories.

In an interactive process, descriptive coding and categorization was completed for each participant, channel, and interview question until a précis was constructed for each one (Charmaz, 2003). As noted by Seidman (1998), the creation of profiles is important because it allows the contributions of each factor to remain distinct—which facilitates identification and understanding of its essence and positionality—and which later aids comparison between and across participants, questions, and channels. Identification, coding, and categorization was the first level of analysis. To facilitate analysis, responses were placed into two matrices: channel use by research question and channel use by respondent. These were compared to ensure all data were accounted for.

The question and channel categories were then aggregated; this produced a rank order of channel use under each interview question condition. Channel use (and justifications provided) were then able to be compared across conditions. This was the second level of analysis. The third level of analysis entailed more complexity as it linked channel use (and

justifications) with findings from related research and theory in the literature. It sought

theoretical explanation for channel selection.

During analysis, I relied upon (a) extant research and literature on the topics presented

by the participants; (b) a review of the data, analysis, and interpretation by the participants

(i.e., member checking); (c) review by an informed cultural consultant; and (d) my own

knowledge and understanding of the issues presented to make assertions (Erickson, 1986 as

cited in Stake, 1995), "For assertions, we draw from understandings deep within us,

understandings whose derivation may be some hidden mix of personal experience,

scholarship, assertions of other researchers" (p. 12).

In this study, qualitative thematic content analysis rendered specific trends of channel

selection; these were reported qualitatively. The findings in this study are reported in

narrative format organized by question and channel.

Ethical considerations. With respect to studies conducted in host-cultures, Graen,

Hui, Wakabayashi, and Wang (as cited in Dickson et al., 2003) posited researchers

> need to be people who are not only open to the differences they encounter
> when interacting with other cultures. They must also show respect for
> cultures very different from their own, be able to overcome their own
> enculturation, and recognize what aspects of their personal values systems
> are a result of their own cultural experience. (p. 758)

Two areas were of primary concern in undertaking this study: researcher bias and cultural

sensitivity.

I self-monitored for bias to ensure to the greatest degree possible that it is the ideas of

the participants that emerged, not my own. Sayed (2004) cautioned, "[W]e must make all

attempts to uncover reality while understanding that our biases and perceptions will

relentlessly invade us (p. 4). More succinctly, Varner and Beamer (2005) noted all humans

are "culturally based and culturally biased" (p. xv). In order to accomplish this I needed to

engage in self-reflection and bracket my assumptions (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998). In addition, I

had educated, third-parties (including two different cultural confederates) review my work and I employed member checking. But perhaps most importantly, I stayed centered on the aim of the research "to accurately represent the range of views" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 126). Ngunjiri (2010) elucidated the ultimate reason for researchers to continue to be culturally aware: to benefit the local consumers of research. She wrote, "[Y]ou want to make sure they can connect then to their own cultural rules, and it doesn't sound so foreign that they can't apply it" (Ngunjiri, 2010, p. 14). Bristol-Rhys (2010) and Villenas (1996) noted the consequences of research conducted by those who do not take steps to mitigate the impact of their biases and assumptions. Bristol-Rhys (2010) wrote of "derision, gross ethnocentrism and downright scorn" (p. 29) while Villenas asserted, "Researchers are also implicated as colonizers when they claim authority of interpretation and description under the guise of authority" (p. 713).

Out of respect for the personal preferences of the participants, and with a heightened awareness of socio-cultural (Khaleeji) and religious (Islamic) norms vis-à-vis privacy and honor, (a) participation was voluntary at all times, (b) participants were allowed to withdraw at anytime, (c) at no time were participants required to answer a question, (d) participants were not electronically recorded, (e) data were presented in a manner that mitigates identification of individual participants, and (f) before public dissemination of data interpretation, participants had the opportunity for review and comment. The three primary outcomes of the participant review were (a) assurance of data accuracy, (b) expansion, augmentation, and detailing of prior participant contributions which enhanced conceptual clarity, and (c) deletion from the final written report of analysis which was perceived to be socio-culturally sensitive and in violation of Emirati values.

Superimposed on the safeguards I implemented to mitigate bias and to ensure cultural sensitivity (i.e., self-monitoring, review by educated, third-parties including cultural

consultants, member checking) was the Antioch University Institutional Review Board (IRB)

ethics regulations and codes of conduct (See Appendix A).

Chapter IV: Presentation of Data

The central purpose of this exploratory study as to identify the communication channels six Emirati females concurrently employed in organizations in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in which they had supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles recalled using with their direct reports to enact leadership. In particular, the study attempted to determine the reasons for the selection of communication channels when engaged in downward communication with organizational subordinates. Two interviews questions were employed to ascertain answers to the research question and as such anchored this study: (1) Think about a time in the past when you influenced a direct report to perform a task. What did you say or do to accomplish this? Why? and (2) Think about a time in the past when a direct report refused to perform a task you assigned. What did you say or do to get her/him to comply? Why? The goal of the line of questioning was to identify which communication channels six Emirati female leaders recalled using to enact leadership with their direct reports. In particular, the study attempted to ascertain the reasons for the participants' selection of communication channels when engaged in downward communication with organizational subordinates.

In order to obtain to the greatest degree possible (in light of the social, cultural, and legal constraints on data collection) accuracy, breadth, and depth of understanding concerning the topic of inquiry, participants described actual downward communication interactions with direct reports and explained the factors they consciously considered during channel selection. Questions were purposefully phrased so as not to lead the participants toward/away from certain responses and to capture as much information as possible from the participants. This questioning strategy provided structure while not leading or limiting responses, which was thought to be important due to the exploratory nature of the study.

From the array of responses garnered, data pertinent to this study were isolated for coding and analysis.

In aggregate, analysis of data related to the two interview questions found participant preference for face-to-face as the medium of communication with direct reports. In response to the first interview question (Think about a time in the past when you influenced a direct report to perform a task. What did you say or do to accomplish this? Why?), the participants' responses unanimously indicated face-to-face as the medium most commonly used—as well as the most preferred—when influencing a direct report to undertake a task. Overall, face-to-face engagement was also found to be most commonly employed when a direct report failed to comply with a legitimate request or directive from the participant (interview question 2: Think about a time in the past when a direct report refused to perform a task you assigned. What did you say or do to get her/him to comply? Why?).

The remainder of this chapter introduces the participant group and presents participant responses to the two interview questions.

Participants

Six female Emiratis concurrently employed in organizations in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in which they had supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles constituted the primary respondent group. They described their work responsibilities as including (a) assignment and coordination of tasks for direct reports, (b) supervision and evaluation of direct reports, (c) preparation and presentation of reports, and (d) provision of services to customers (both internal and external).

The average participant age was 27.5 years[60], with individual participants ranging in age from 24 to 34 years. Only one of the participants was married. She also has a child. Four

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[60] This puts the average year of birth to be 1983—situating the group as part of Gen Y also known as Millennials or the Net Generation.

had attended English-medium high schools and two Arabic-medium high schools (although their K-9 education was in English). All attended English-medium universities. Five of the six had matriculated in English-medium professional education (i.e., Masters or professional certification) after university graduation[61]. Since graduation from university, the average number of years of work experience was 5.5 with a range between two and 12 years[62].

At the time of data collection, two of the participants worked in private organizations (of which they were owners) and four worked in the government sector. They worked in a variety of fields in organizations ranging in size from 10 employees to an estimated 850+. Each participant stated her job title as 'manager'. The average time worked at their employing organization during the time of the study was 2.5 years, with a range of 11 months to four years. The average number of direct reports was three (with a range of between two and six)[63]. Only one participant had supervisory experience prior to her current position. Two participants self-reported total supervisory experience between seven and eleven months, three between one and three years, and one between four and nine years.

Interview Questions

In the next section, the field note data collected during the interviews are presented. Data and responses to the first interview question (I1) are offered followed by those for the second interview question (I2). First, the channels used by the participants are identified. Then, participant explanations for selection are offered. Data are presented in descending order of channel employed. Participant responses are presented in aggregate however

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[61] Blasco (2009) noted education to be a form of acculturation. While not investigated in this study, the possible acculturating impact of the English-medium, 'Western' education of the participants must be acknowledged and its impact questioned to the extent that the participants may be more 'Western' than Emirati in their professional cognitions and behaviors.

[62] Out of respect for cultural norms concerning privacy as well as the requests of several participants to safeguard anonymity, a full demographic profile of each participant is not provided. See Appendix B for participant profiles.

[63] See Appendix C for a descriptive list of the direct reports for each participant.

individual contributions (indicated by a two-letter code to protect participant anonymity) are provided to amplify, describe, and/or explicate combined data or when participant contributions differ from those of the rest of the group. Participant statements presented between quotation marks are verbatim quotes; those without quotation marks are paraphrased summaries of participant contributions.

Interview question 1. Think about a time in the past when you influenced a direct report to perform a task. What did you say or do to accomplish this? Why?

All the respondents stated a consistent use of, and preference for, face-to-face communication when influencing direct reports to undertake a task. All participants also recounted using written channels either simultaneous to, or soon after, face-to-face interaction as a means of reinforcing, clarifying, and/or managing the face-to-face interaction.

Face-to-face. Participants (i.e., the organizational superior) stated face-to-face to be the medium most frequently used when initiating an interaction to influence a direct report (organizational subordinate) to undertake a task. Participants indicated task allocation occurred in two ways. One, the participant assigned the task to the team member[64]. And two, a team member either volunteered or requested to undertake a task and the participant sanctioned this request.

The participants indicated three reasons for the preferred use of face-to-face interactions when initially influencing a team member to undertake a task. First, they felt, of the channels available to them, it was the fastest medium by which to communicate the message. Participants believed creating a message orally to take less time than composing the same message to be communicated via written media (i.e., email, SMS). Second, of the available channels, it provided the most safeguards against communication breakdown. The

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[64] The participants consistently referred to the organizational group for which they had supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership as 'the team' and the organizational direct reports who comprised it as 'team members'. This terminology will be used throughout the remainder of this chapter.

participants stated the immediacy as well as the richness of feedback (both verbal and nonverbal) provided in the face-to-face encounter allowed them to identify and correct areas of receiver (i.e., team member) confusion or misapprehension before the task was undertaken. They stated this preference to be of particular significance when the task could be described as complex or "not direct" (PI) – especially when the language of the interaction (i.e., Arabic or English) was not one in which the receiver possessed native-level performance (PD). And third, it allowed the participants the most control over the affective aspects of the communicative interaction. Maintaining control over the affective aspects of the communicative interaction was stated by the participants to be important because (a) the participants recognized the importance of team members having emotional "buy-in" (PJ) before undertaking a task and (b) the participants were able to influence the emotional orientation of the team member (this was of particular importance when the team member was in a negative frame of mind) to enhance the affective climate of the team. Several participants referenced negative affect caused by team members' inability to separate professional conduct from personal feelings as a source of conflict, diminished outcomes, and lowered productivity. PJ noted, "It's usually emotion that gets in the way because a lot of people don't know how to put their emotions aside in the workplace".

The social context in which the influence communication occurred was also identified by participants to be important. Participants stated most initial communications with the purpose of influencing a team member to undertake a task occurred during a regularly scheduled, usually weekly, team meeting. Participants identified this as important for five reasons. One, team members accessed the message simultaneously; there were no/minimal gaps in information dispersion within the team. Two, the discussion amongst team members allowed participants to gain a greater understanding of the team members suitability for a given task (skills, desire, questions) as via the discussion, participants were able to ask team

members probing questions on topics related to the task that may not have been discussed otherwise but were impactful to the participant's decision-making concerning task allocation. Three, the verbal and nonverbal actions of the participants during these interactions modeled leadership behaviors and thinking to the team members; thus, the interactions also functioned as a mode of professional development. Four, the public nature of the team meeting served to assuage misunderstandings that could have lead to a negative affective climate within the team. The participants explained that with all team members privy to information and discussions presented during meetings, the participants felt the rationale and decision-making concerning task allocation was transparent thus mitigating possible team member accusations and recriminations of bias towards and/or preferential treatment of certain team members. And five, the meetings—frequently described by the participants as 'informal' or "over coffee" (PJ)—provided opportunities for positive, interpersonal interactions amongst team members which increased familiarity leading to the development of trust.

The participants were keenly aware of the impact of the physical and social environments on direct reports in gaining cognitive understanding of, emotional buy-in for, and ultimately, compliance with, requests made during initial influence attempts. Participants manipulated environments to avail themselves of verbal and non-verbal communications that allowed cognitive and affective message transmission and reception. The participants understood communication to be an essential element in the creation of productive relationships between team members and positive team climate; these female Emirati leaders purposefully created the conditions for the emergence of a wide range of communication behaviors in order to successfully enact leadership with direct reports.

Written channels. All participants recounted using written channels either simultaneous to, or soon after, the face-to-face interaction as a means of reinforcing, clarifying, and/or managing the outcome of the face-to-face interaction. Email was the most

frequently cited written communication channel employed. Spreadsheets, either electronic or on whiteboards, were also utilized.

Email. The participants reported most frequently communicating with team members via email as a follow-up to face-to-face interactions. For example, the participants noted sending summaries of team meetings. The participants stated the most common purpose of email communication with team members was to reinforce, clarify, and/or manage the outcome of prior face-to-face interaction. The participants stated several benefits of email follow-up. One benefit was the creation of an archive of the meeting for those who may have missed it or to serve as a reference for those team members who may not have accurate recall. PJ quipped, "I can't rely on something oral. We are human beings who are bound to forget. We are bound to manipulate things and some people have the habit of adding their own sugar and spice. Documentation, documentation, documentation". Similarly, PI noted, "I like to keep things documented". It was also noted this archive function was later used by participants to complete organizational documents such as annual performance reports, by team members to complete activity reports, and by other organizational actors for activity audits. Three of the participants recounted incidents when they prevailed on the archiving function of email as a defensive mechanism when accused of wrongdoing. PJ stated, "I do rely on email. I never do anything without an email back-up. I learned the hard way. I've seen how things backfire". This practice was supported by PB and PA.

Another benefit of the use of email was to remind individual team members of duties assigned and the timeframe for completion. PI remarked, some team members "need reminding" as there is a risk the task will not be completed as required. From this perspective, participants perceived email as a management tool rather than a communicative medium.

Three, to provide supplementary information that was not provided during the team meeting.

Four, to provide clarity or more detailed information to team members in a manner that allowed them to save face[65].

Five, to allow team members who lacked proficiency in the oral language used by the team (i.e., English or Arabic) an opportunity to decode information communicated during the face-to-face interaction.

Six, to model standards expected of, and provide templates for, team member communications.

Seven, to enhance the affective climate of the team by increasing transparency.

Eight, to create an esprit de corps amongst team members through increased awareness of other team members contributions. PI noted all team members are copied "so everyone can know what's going on…this is very important to me".

Nine, to enhance productivity of the team through awareness of the activities of all team members which would allow them to identify areas of overlap and complementarity thus facilitating cooperation and task completion.

And ten, to provide efficiency when a message needed to be communicated to a large number of people—especially when those individuals were geographically dispersed.

Participants' reluctance to initiate influence communications with team members via email appears to stems from several factors. First, each participant clearly stated a personal preference for face-to-face interaction. Second, participants noted the susceptibility of breakdown in the affective domain endemic to email communications. For example, PB recounted an interaction via email in which the content message was straightforward, but the affective domain of the interaction broke down and continued to spiral downwards. After three days of back-and-forth email interactions, she called the other party via telephone and

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[65] Participants indicated the follow-up email would usually be followed-up with a private, individual face-to-face interaction with the team member.

"within about ten minutes" the matter was resolved. PB summarized the dilemma, "Email, it's up to the mood of the person how he is reading the information. Sometimes, they take offense and you mean nothing". PJ recounted a similar experience. The interactant was offended when PJ sent her a reminder email about an absence rather than contact her in a more personal manner (i.e., face-to-face or telephone). The receiver decoded the use of email to communicate the message to be impersonal and as such interpreted its use as PJ's lack of personal regard for her (the receiver). Subsequently, PJ avoids the use of individualized email with this person. Third, the asynchronicity of the channel means some team members access information before others. This was noted to have led to productivity errors (team members acted without full knowledge). In the experience of the participants, the use of email has been known to create problems where none previously existed. Lastly, participants found this communication medium to lack the subtly needed to explore and negotiate issues.

Although reluctant to use email as the channel of communication when initially influencing a team member to undertake a task, the participants did acknowledge doing so. PD and PI noted the use of email for tasks with which the team member has familiarity and experience when situational constraints (e.g., time) did not allow convenient face-to-face interaction. Cultural limitations on male-female Emirati physical interaction were also noted by participants to encourage the use of email. These injunctions were noted by the participants to range from strict avoidance of any direct interaction with any males via any means as noted by PD[66] (for example, who would email a female direct report who would then paste the message into her email and send it from that address with no reference, link, or connection to PD) to employees subtle self-segregation through selection of gender-grouped workspaces that minimized informal and coincidental face-to-face interaction thus promoting email as a convenient channel of communication (e.g., PC, PI, PJ).

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[66] Although this practice exists in the UAE, anecdotal evidence suggests it is very rare and nearly extinct.

An interesting caveat to the use of email was the language in which the message was written. Although the participants are all native Arabic speakers and four of the six had teams comprised predominantly, or exclusively, of native Arabic speakers, the participants noted many of the email messages they sent within their teams were in English. They noted three reasons for this. One reason they stated for using English was pragmatic. The two participants who were business owners noted English to be the lingua franca of their organizations while a third participant had an expatriate on her team who did not speak Arabic, consequently the intra-team language of communication was English. PD recounted using both spoken and written English with native Arabic speakers from other regions of the world due to dialect differences that inhibited comprehension[67]. Another reason participants stated for writing in English was convenience. All of the participants perceived writing in English to be faster and easier than writing in Arabic. They attributed this to the socio-pragmatic and grammatical complexities of Arabic, which caused them to take longer to compose the same message in Arabic than in English. PI stated, "It is easier to write informal English than informal Arabic. Arabic takes longer to write". In fact, some of the participants acknowledged apprehension to writing (and sometimes speaking) in Arabic due to a lack of professional-level communicative competence due to their English-medium, 'Western'-oriented educational backgrounds. PA and PB noted that due to their English-medium professional education, they lacked competence in Arabic-language professional rhetoric and as such PB stated, "I can get very offensive without meaning it". The last reason the participants stated for writing in English was tactical. Four of the participants worked in UAE government organizations in which the official language of communication is Arabic. They noted that communications in English would not be recognized by the organization as legitimate, as such, they availed

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[67] The Arabic dialect spoken in the United Arab Emirates (Khaleeji) varies from Modern Standard Arabic to the extent that it is unintelligible to many native Arabic speakers not from the Arabian Gulf region.

themselves of English as an unofficial, off-the-record, non-binding manner of conducting business. The participants and other organizational stakeholders knew the communications in English lacked authority as such they could explore ideas and make statements without formal organizational repercussions. The participants marked on-the-record, official statements for which they could be held accountable by the organization in Arabic. Participants used Arabic and English symbolically.

Spreadsheets. Two of the participants stated using spreadsheets (in addition to email) to communicate with team members about tasks after, or simultaneous to, initial face-to-face interaction concerning the task. PI noted after each team meeting a summary of tasks allocated and timeframes to be met were entered into a spreadsheet and placed in an electronic folder that was accessible to all team members. PC created spreadsheets on whiteboards. These whiteboards were placed in the communal team work area. The spreadsheet listed tasks to be completed, task allocation, and timeframes to be met. She saw the benefits of this medium of communication to include (a) transparency—team members learned of the work fellow team members were engaged in, (b) awareness—team members became conscious of the constituent elements of larger projects, their interactions, and the function of their own tasks within the whole, (c) team building—team members were able to determine if cross-over existed between tasks which promoted cooperation, (d) empowerment—team members had power and ownership since they controlled when information concerning their work was shared, (e) timeliness—any team member could change the board as needed and other members were immediately updated, and (f) productivity—team members were not enticed to disrupt their work process (i.e., open and read an email message) to get the information; while PC noted she did not need to interrupt team members to obtain status updates.

Other channels. The participants also recounted the use of other communication channels, including telephone and SMS. The participants stated several reasons for when and why they used these other channels. The participants indicated they were primarily used for follow-up with team members concerning progress on task completion. PJ stated "I try to balance between team meetings, telephone calls as well as [individual] face-to-face. Sometimes I'll visit them in their cubicles".

These channels were occasionally employed by participants when initiating communication to influence a team member to undertake a task. The reasons participants recounted for using these channels included (a) geographic dispersion—the participant and the team member were unable to be physically present in the same location at the same time; (b) cost-benefit—the benefits of a face-to-face meeting did not outweigh the resource costs (e.g., time) of coordinating and conducting a face-to-face interaction (this was noted for simple tasks such letter writing or forwarding information); (c) team management—PJ stated, "I don't do everything face-to-face; I don't want to give them the impression of being spoon-fed all the time"; and (d) team member preference. Participants with team members who did not possess native-like fluency in English or Arabic indicated avoidance of telephone interactions. PI recalled team members explicitly requesting that she not enter the their work area, and in particular, to refrain from engaging in subordinating activities (e.g., giving directive, requesting information, providing feedback) in public environments. The team members requested her one-on-one interactions be limited to telephone or email

Channel multiplicity. As shown, the participants recounted using multiple, mutually reinforcing channels to ensure message delivery. Another reason for the use of multiple channels was impact. The more important a participant felt a task to be, the more channels she employed to send the message; participants directly correlated task gravity with channel quantity. This was exemplified in a story recounted by PJ. PJ wished for a team member to

complete a familiar and non-complex, but critical, task. First, she communicated with the team member during a face-to-face team meeting. Then, she sent a follow-up email. Next, she had a one-on-one, face-to-face meeting with the team member in the team member's workspace. Finally, she enlisted another team member to assist. The variety of channels and frequency of message repetition symbolized the importance of the task.

Summary I1. Although the participants indicated their personal preferences and general pattern when initially influencing a team member to undertake a task (initially face-to-face followed by a written channel), all acknowledged that ultimately the decision concerning the channel used when initially influencing a team member to undertake a task was primarily a function of two factors: the message and the receiver (i.e., team member).

Message elements that participants recalled taking into consideration during channel selection included the duration, urgency, and complexity of the task. Participants stated the more complex the task, the more compelled they felt to initiate communication about the task via a face-to-face interaction. In this respect, participants referred to both cognitive and affective complexity. PD noted cognitive complexity can be mediated in face-to-face interactions through the use of demonstration/modeling and examples. All participants noted the value of questioning and immediacy of feedback—verbal and nonverbal—in overcoming cognitive obstacles to task acceptance and completion. PC recounted meeting face-to-face with team members to conduct coaching sessions to assist them to overcome fear, nervousness, and apprehension.

Characteristics of the team member (e.g., skills, experience, familiarity with task, channel preferences, other responsibilities, channel accessibility) also impacted channel selection. PJ recalled a situation with a team member in which she elected to communicate face-to-face because she knew from past experience the team member had a negative attitude toward email, that using email as the channel of communication "would have made her

defensive". The participants acknowledged that even when communicating with the team as a group, the uniqueness of each team member must be considered; the channel that is most effective with one team member may not be so with another. All participants acknowledged their responsibility to adapt their communication to fit the needs and personalities of their team members—rather than expect the team members to re-align their communication preferences to the participant. PC stated "I will adjust myself to deal with people differently and have a different communication method if that's what's needed for the specific individual I'm dealing with". The participants referred to past communication experiences with the team member involved in the interaction as a guide for channel selection in future interactions with that team member (as was previously noted by PJ).

Interview Question 2. Think about a time in the past when a direct report refused to perform a task you assigned. What did you say or do to get her/him to comply? Why?

Interview question one (I1) demonstrated the participants' consistent use of the face-to-face channel when initiating influence communication with a team member to undertake a task. As a follow-up to interview question one (I1), the goal of interview question two (I2) was to ascertain the channel(s) employed by participants, and the reason(s) for channel selection, in situations when a team member failed to follow-through with a task as required. More plainly stated, when a team member did not complete an allocated task, which channels were then used by the participant to gain team member compliance?

Channel use in situations when a team member failed to complete a task as required was not consistent. In a situation of team member non-compliance, the participants all noted channel selection to be the result of the considered interplay and relative impact of task elements (e.g., importance, scale), message elements (e.g., complexity, urgency), characteristics of the team member (e.g., attitude, channel preferences, duration of non-compliance), and channel features.

Written channels. The participants stated the use of email, written performance evaluations, and letters as channels utilized to communicate with team members who failed to undertake tasks as required. Participants used written channels with non-compliant team members because they felt documentation (i.e., putting it into writing) (a) underscored accountability, (b) provided another occasion to give explicit directions, and (c) allowed feedback to the team member in a manner that aided task completion. The participants felt the use of written channels under such circumstances encouraged follow through on the task. First, the privacy of the channel allowed the team member to save face and to act before experiencing the shame of others' realization of her/his failure. And second, the team member's understanding that written messages can quickly and easily be shared with others which could bring about negative repercussions (e.g., embarrassment, public shame, or termination). The use of written channels was paradoxically believed to be simultaneously a source of psychological safety and a threat.

Email. In one episode PC told of a team member with a history of not completing tasks in a timely manner, past experience guided PC in her channel selection. PC sent email messages to the team member and then she followed up with a one-on-one, face-to-face interaction. PC stated, "I e-mailed it so she could see it written down and then she could remember that I asked her to do this today and I had spoken to her about it" and then, "I reinforced the e-mail with a nice talk so she understood what I wanted and to make sure she gets it done". PC explained the reason for selecting email, "I sent her an email to have some documentation of what I asked her to do and when I asked her to do it". PI recounted a similar situation with a team member; however, she noted sending follow-up email not only to the team member in question, but to all team members (even though they satisfactorily completed tasks) in order to allay face threat to the non-compliant team member. The reason PI stated for selecting email as the channel of communication rather than another channel was

that "he will feel more pressure by receiving a formal e-mail". PA also recounted using email

for this reason, noting written interactions are decoded as "being firm".

Performance evaluations. PI noted her use of performance evaluations as a means to

influence team member behavior, including task completion. In addition, to the

organization's required annual employee performance evaluation, PI conducts unofficial

quarterly performance evaluations. She records the evaluation in writing and then reviews it

with each team member face-to-face in a one-on-one meeting. The threat of the team member

receiving a less than desired grade on the organization's official annual performance

evaluation has consistently led the direct report to taking corrective action (before her/his

weaknesses are made public and the organization has documentation from which to proceed

with punitive action).

Letters. PD noted her use of a letter with a team member. She used this channel

because she refrains from first-degree interaction with men other than her father, uncles and

brother, yet she wanted to avail herself of the benefits of writing[68]—in particular, time. Time

was important during this interaction because the team member was not a native speaker of

Arabic or English; the channel allowed him the time and resources (e.g., dictionary, other

team members) he needed to accurately decode the message. PD noted an additional strength

of the time required to engage in written communications: precision. She noted written

channels allow the sender time to consider and refine the message before it is sent. The

benefits of the precision of written communications was alluded to by other participants

although not explicitly stated.

PI was very open about her reasons for aversion to interacting with non-compliant

team members via written channels. First, written communications are recorded. This

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[68] The participant emailed the letter to a female team member who printed it out. The female team member then gave the hardcopy of the letter to the male manager who signed it and gave it the team member in question.

recording results in an archived copy which may be accessed by others who may use it for evidentiary purposes in order to engage in punitive action against the team member, the team as a whole, and/or the participant herself. In most of the instances of resistance or initial non-compliance she recounted, PI felt the issue was not serious enough the warrant such potentially severe consequences.

Oral channels. The participants noted employing face-to-face and telephone as channels of communication with team members who failed to undertake tasks as required.

Face-to-face. In another incident with a different team member, PC chose to communicate exclusively face-to-face. She spoke one-to-one with the team member in a meeting room. PC noted the channel and location were purposefully selected to mitigate physical noise and distractions (psychological noise) as well as provide the team member psychological safety. The team member's sense of psychological safety was a priority for PC. PC knew that in order to resolve the problem she needed the team member to provide full, complete, and accurate information. PC wanted an "open and honest discussion" in a place "where she's comfortable". To alleviate face threat to the team member and to enhance the team member's sense of psychological safety, the interaction occurred in a private (away from other team members), (more) power neutral location (not PC's work space). Although the dilemma was not immediately resolved, PC continued to communicate face-to-face with the team member until the problem was settled. In problem situations, PC noted she always began with face-to-face (private, no permanent or official record) because she felt it was important to ascertain the nature and details of the situation before employing channels that could lead to negative or punitive results.

PB also acknowledged using the face-to-face channel when dealing with a problematic situation with team members. PB focused on the impact of non-verbal channels to encourage resolution. She noted that while speaking to one team member in a persuasive

manner she did so "smiling, peacefully". While with another, she was very directive and used her voice in a congruent manner (volume, cadence, and pitch). PB noted these differences in communication were a function of the intersection of multiple forces such as the physical, social, and chronological contexts. She was cognizant of the need for her message to be consistent in order to be effective; therefore, she worked to ensure her verbal and non-verbal communications complemented, rather than contradicted, each other, in order to affirm the message.

Telephone. PB recounted employing the telephone. She stated in the situation in question this channel provided instantaneous feedback in a private manner which allowed the direct report to save face. PA also recounted using the telephone. Like PB, PA availed herself of the immediacy of feedback offered by this channel. However, she also had other considerations when selecting it as she and the team member were on different continents at the time of the interaction. PI noted tactical use of the telephone to communicate with a non-compliant team member. Noting the team member to be unexplainably absent from his workstation, she called his phone. Upon his return, he immediately noticed the flash on the telephone sitting on his desk—unlike email or a note, there was no plausible deniability that the message was received. PI felt this channel enhanced the implied message concerning follow-through and accountability.

Multiple channel reinforcement. More often than not, the participants reported situations concerning a team member's failure to comply or follow-through with a task required the use of multiple communication channels to bring about the desired result. For example, PI shared a situation with a team member who failed to comply with an organizationally-mandated task. First, she spoke about the situation in general with the whole team during a regularly scheduled weekly team meeting. When the offending team member failed to comply, she spoke with him face-to-face in an individual meeting in her office.

When this channel failed to induce the team member to follow-through with the requirement, she coordinated with the Human Resources department to send out an official written reminder to the team about the situation. She selected this channel and audience for three reasons: (1) to mitigate negative feelings (e.g., anger, embarrassment) the team member may have felt if he alone had received the message (i.e., save face), (2) to stimulate the offending team member's esprit de corps, his feeling of honor and obligation towards other team members and the reputation of the team as a whole to induce positive action, and (3) to leverage the cognitive and emotional impact (power) of writing to encourage the team member to follow-through with the task as required. She reported a successful resolution to the situation.

Participants also noted using written channels in simultaneous conjunction with oral channels (in particular face-to-face); this was a tactical decision. The participants' past experience indicated that during oral communications with team members about non-compliance or failure issues, the team member will frequently attempt to derail the discussion from the topic at hand; participants viewed this as a self-preservation strategy. By actively referencing the written channel (e.g., email, evaluation), the participants were able to control the discussion and keep the conversation anchored to the purpose of the interaction.

Summary I2. The data indicated participant channel selection in situations when a team member failed to complete a task as required did not follow a consistent pattern. In instances of team member non-compliance, the participants all noted channel selection to be the result of the intersection of message elements (e.g., complexity, urgency), characteristics of the team member (e.g., attitude, channel preference), task elements (e.g., importance), and channel traits (e.g., affective impact).

The written channel most frequently mentioned by the participants in relation to team member non-compliance was email. PC was exemplary of other participants noting she

reserved the use of email to communicate with team members about non-compliance "only for very serious" issues. In terms of channel selection relative to scale of severity, PC stated in the least acute situations she employed face-to-face, then increasing in gravity, telephone, and for the most serious she availed herself of email. Several of the participants noted that in problem situations with a team member, email elicited a feeling of threat which delayed resolution (e.g., multiple lengthy and a-topical email exchanges) and exacerbated the situation. PC's responses were representative of those of the participant group.

Participants' responses concerning the selection (or non-selection) of channels in situations when a team member failed to perform an assigned task highlighted the push-and-pull factors of face saving and threat.

Face saving. The participants reported using telephone and face-to-face in one-on-one interactions in non-public settings (e.g., meeting rooms, participant's office) in order to safeguard the privacy of the team member. By conducting interactions in private, the participants safeguarded confidentiality; the interaction and its content would remain unknown to other team members. This saved the team member from public embarrassment. The participants also noted that oral communication allowed them to mediate the affective aspects of the communication; consequently, they were able to direct the interaction in a way that preserved the dignity of the team member. A final way participants indicated they worked to protect team member face was by sending the message to all team members so the non-compliant team member did not feel humiliated by being singled-out.

Threat. Participants felt team member non-compliance increased the gravity of the request situation. The participants unanimously felt non-compliance situations—in particular continued non-compliance—merited the use of channels that were perceived to exert force upon the team member. Without question, using a written channel to send a message in a non-compliance situation was perceived to have significantly more impact than messages

transmitted via oral channels. This is because written communicative interactions can be archived and later be made public or known to other organizational actors, and additionally the contents of the interaction are hard to dispute, which may result in negative action (e.g., loss of face, punishment) toward the team member. Three of the participants noted the competitive nature of the government sector and the use of written documents as weapons against colleagues. PB stated, "You have to always be careful about what you are saying because one word can cause you a problem and one word can take you up".

Additional Data

In addition to the trans-situational factors of (1) language of communication, (2) socio-cultural derived barriers on physical interaction, and (3) concern for the maintenance of positive relationships with, and amongst, direct reports, the participants also asserted chronological age to be a influential factor in channel selection. The impact of age was most notably made by PI. She recalled that not soon after she started in her managerial position, one of her (male) direct reports stated that her team (all male) were uncomfortable with her coming into their workspaces (open plan cubicles) and making requests and giving directives. They objected to the requests and directives being presented in a public context where others were able to witness the event. It was requested she communicate with them about such matters via (perceived) private channels such as email or telephone. PI amended the channels she used to communicate with her direct reports accordingly and found her direct reports to be "less angry and therefore they did the job faster". PI assumed the resistance of her direct reports was due to gender: she being female and they being male. When she directly queried her direct reports about this, she found, "[I]t's only in my head that they are embarrassed that their boss is a woman". Rather the resistance she encountered was due to her age—with her direct reports initially perceiving her youth and lack of experience as inability and unworthiness to lead. Having been a successful leader who had met the needs

of her direct reports, PI recounted they began ask her to accompany them to meetings with internal and external clients in order to take advantage of her position (power and authority) and her abilities and know-how. PB, PA, and PJ also acknowledged the bias they encountered due to their relative youth in relation to their positions and responsibilities. PB recalled a situation in which a direct report refused to comply with a request with the stated reason, "Don't tell me what to do, I'm double your age". In fact, the direct report was younger than PB. PJ noted staff thought she would be malleable and easily manipulated because of her age and that people stereotype and assume that youth and limited experience mean lack of knowledge and ability. PA and PB stated they dealt with age-related bias by being assertive (strong)—in order to counterbalance the perception of their age-related deficiency (weakness). Indicative of this approach PA stated, "You have to address these issues and show you are serious". PJ recalled using the opposite tactic. She did this through the use of face-to-face communication "because of the age barrier sometimes people perceive you as younger, less experienced so they won't necessarily buy what you say or abide by what you say so you choose to do it the nice softer way first. PI recalled using communication channels as both strong and weak tactics to overcome this barrier to her leadership.

Data Summary

Interview question one (I1) demonstrated the participants' consistent use, and preference, of face-to-face engagement when initiating influence communication with a team member to undertake a task. They felt face-to-face interaction allowed them to best gauge the team member's thoughts and feelings about the request which then enabled the participant to take swift action to promote compliance and a successful outcome. They indicated initial, face-to-face influence attempts most frequently took place in informal, team meetings. The participants believed this environment provided transparency which the participants

associated with the development of positive affective, cooperation, and solidarity within their teams resulting in effectiveness and efficiency.

As a follow-up to interview question one (I1), the goal of interview question two (I2) was to ascertain the channel(s) employed by participants, and the reason(s) for channel selection, in situations when a team member failed to follow-through with a task as required. Responses to interview question two (I2) did not show a consistent selection, or preference for, a particular channel; however, they indicated a heightened awareness of the paradoxical strengths and weaknesses of written channels in this circumstance. Influence attempts under the second condition were noted to occur predominantly in one-to-one social environments and private physical environments.

Data from both questions indicated the channel selection process employed by the participants to be a complex process. Participants recounted considering the impact of the interplay between and amongst channel features, the target, and the participant herself (i.e., the communication initiator), and contextual forces when selecting a channel for use in initial and subsequent downward influence attempts with organizational direct reports. The participants specifically recalled four trans-situational factors to have impacted channel selection and use: (1) the attention given to the language of communication and the rationale for the language employed, (2) the physical barriers constructed in response to socio-cultural norms concerning male-female interaction and the impact of these on channel availability and selection, (3) the impact of perceived and actual age-related bias, and (4) concerns for development and maintenance of positive relationships.

Analysis of these findings and discussion of how they relate to previous research in will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter V: Interpretation of Findings

This chapter begins with a review of the methods of data collection and analysis used to elicit findings from the data. It then offers four levels of descriptive analysis of the data: theoretical explanations of participant channel selection, influence strategies employed, associations to leadership theory, and evidence of leader legitimization tactics. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study.

Methodology and Data Collection Review

The six Emirati females concurrently employed in organizations in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in which they had supervisory responsibilities; formal, legitimate authority; and positional leadership roles were the primary source of data collected. The data collected from the three interviews conducted with each participant was supported by (a) bringing to prominence (i.e., foregrounding) informally collected primary and secondary data over the 18 months prior to the study, (b) the pre-study interview with the first cultural consultant, (c) my related experiences during ten years living in Abu Dhabi while teaching management and intercultural communication at a national tertiary institution as well as consulting with government and private sector businesses in these areas, (d) member checking of data for accuracy, (e) review of findings by a second cultural consultant, and (f) reference to pertinent literature on, primarily, but not limited to, the areas of leadership, the United Arab Emirates, and communication.

The data consisted of the participant group's recalled experiences, perceptions, and impressions related to the two interview questions that anchored the study: Think about a time in the past when you influenced a direct report to perform a task. What did you say or do to accomplish this? Why? (I1) and Think about a time in the past when a direct report refused to perform a task you assigned. What did you say or do to get her/him to comply? Why? (I2) The goal of the line of questioning was to identify which communication channels the six

Emirati female participants recalled using with their direct reports to enact leadership. In particular, the study attempted to ascertain the reasons for the selection of communication channels when engaged in downward communication with organizational subordinates. In order to obtain—to the greatest degree possible, in light of the socio-cultural and legal constraints on data collection—accuracy, breadth, and depth of understanding concerning the topic of inquiry, the participants described actual downward communication interactions with direct reports and explained the factors they consciously considered during channel selection as well as factors external to the communication event that impacted channel selection. Participants were asked to recall situations in which they were successful in influencing direct reports as well as situations in which they (initially) failed to do so. As a researcher, I selected this approach because, like Cramer (as cited in Stake, 1995),

> I have come to expect to become familiar with an entity by observing how it struggles against constraints, copes with problems….I don't think that it is a fixation on failure, rather a belief that the nature of people and systems becomes more transparent during their struggles. (p. 16)

I employed one-on-one face-to-face and telephone interviews over four-weeks in June and July 2011to collect the data. The participants related the data through orally narrated stories that brought forth the "description of events to bring out essential character" (Stake, 1995, p. 29). According to Stake (1995), "The strength of this method is the opportunity to focus on the particular details of a bounded situation (p. 16). I used guiding questions (etic) to keep the interview focused on the topic (*progressive focusing,* Parlett and Hamilton (as cited in Stake, 1995), but did not direct the primary participant's input (emic). Stake (1995) stated, "We enter the scene with a sincere interest in learning how they function in their ordinary pursuits and milieus and with a willingness to put aside many presumptions while we learn" (p. 1). I saw my role as interviewer and researcher to "examine meaning and redirect observation to refine or substantiate meaning" (Stake, 1995, pp. 8-9). During the interviews, I listened for recurring themes of importance to the participants. I also attempted to ascertain

the relative degree of importance of each theme to the participants. Although the two interview questions that anchored the study remained fixed and the primary focus of the interviews did not change, participant responses did stimulate the creation of secondary and follow-up questions (e.g., the impact of marital status on channel selection with male direct reports). In this regard, it may be stated that analysis began and was conducted (at least initially) simultaneous to data collection.

Method of Analysis

In-line with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) recommendation, the participants' responses were inductively content analyzed using a key concepts framework (Krueger & Casey, 2009) undertaken through multiple readings of the field notes with the goal of identifying, isolating, coding, and grouping data by participant, question, and channel. This was done in a continuous, simultaneous, dialectal, and iterative process until a précis was constructed for each participant, question, and channel (Charmaz, 2003); this facilitated comparison of channel selection and use across, and within, participants and interview questions. The goal of the analysis was to identify themes, patterns, and/or trends in the communication channels selected by the participants and the reasons for selection of these channels when engaged in downward communication with direct reports.

Findings are reported qualitatively in a narrative format organized by level of analysis.

Analysis

This study was predicated on a conceptualization of leadership as a socially-based (e.g., Rost, 1993), culturally-mediated (e.g., Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2007), power-oriented (e.g., Northouse, 2007), and status-contingent (e.g., Eagly, 2005) influence relationship (e.g., Yukl, 2002) enacted via communication (e.g., Barrett, 2006). The analysis of the data from

the study was anchored in the key concepts—social, culture, status, influence, relationship, and communication—that constitute this understanding of leadership.

The data suggested participants' channel selection and use be analyzed from four perspectives: theoretical explanations of channel selection, influence strategies employed, leadership orientation, and leadership legitimization.

Theoretical explanations of channel selection. The data indicated participants selected channels by matching channel features with message (e.g., complexity, urgency) and target needs (e.g., apprehension). This is congruent with the rational choice, or trait, theory of channel selection (P. Carlson & Davis, 1998; Donabedian et al., 1998; Minsky & Marin, 1999). In line with previous research, once the participants identified channels that matched the needs of the particular communication situation, they selected from amongst the channel options by prioritizing convenience (one of the frequently mentioned justifications for the use of face-to-face communication). The participants' implied definition of convenience was speed and ease of channel use. The participants indicated face-to-face to require the least amount of time to employ (of the channel options available to them) noting written communication (i.e., email) in Arabic to be difficult and time-consuming due to the complexities of Arabic grammar (PI) and its associated socio-pragmatic norms (PA, PB). PD noted this situation to be compounded by differences in dialects of Arabic[69]. This is congruent with the access/quality version of rational theory and with prior research concluding that information quality may be secondary to convenience in the minds of senders during the channel selection process (P. Carlson & Davis, 1998). There were also indications the participants valued (perceived) physical presence during communicative interactions.

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[69] The Arabic dialect spoken in the United Arab Emirates varies from Modern Standard Arabic to the extent that it is unintelligible to many Native Arabic speakers not from the region.

This is supportive of the feature approach to channel selection (P. Carlson & Davis, 1998).

The feature approach privileges uncertainty reduction in the channel selection process

(J. Carlson & Zmud, 1999; Minsky & Marin, 1999). Participants substantiated the use of

face-to-face interaction because they felt it mitigated communication breakdown due to the

richness, social presence, and immediacy of feedback provided by the channel. This was

exemplified in anecdotes offered by PB (telephone resolution) and PJ (recipient's perception

of lack of regard).

Accountings by PI and PJ provided direct support for the social influence theory of

channel selection (i.e., others explicitly requesting certain channels not be employed).

However, there was also broad indirect evidence of participant channel selection being an

outcome of social forces (e.g., culture) thus providing support for the theory. For example, all

the participants indicated a personal preference for face-to-face interaction; arguably, the

unanimity of this preference across the group is not coincidental. It has been established that

personality is partially constructed from the intertwining of socio-cultural and individual

identities (Bruner, 2002; Bruton & Lau, 2008; Church, 2000; Edwards, 2008; Freire, 2001;

Goby, 2007; Jameson, 2007; Kitayama et al., 2004; Roy & Dugal, 1998; Triandis, 2006;

Triandis & Suh, 2002); consequently, the socio-cultural traits the participants have in

common may have explanatory value concerning channel preference. The participants shared

a common national culture (Emirati), gender culture (female), and generational culture

(Gen-Y). Key characteristics of Emirati culture—collectivist (Hofstede, 1980), socio-centric

(Schweder & Bourne, 1984), 'feminine' (Hofstede, 1980), high context communication

(E. Hall, 1976)—are congruent with features of face-to-face interaction such as non-verbal

cues and immediacy. Some studies have noted female communication (e.g., Harper &

Hirokawa, 1988; P. Johnson, 1976) and leadership (e.g., Fletcher, 1999; Miller, 1991; Wade,

2001) to be relationally and interpersonally oriented; face-to-face has consistently been noted to be the most relational and interpersonal of media (Rice, 1993; Short et al., 1976; Trevino et al., 1990). Gen-Y has been characterized by a preference for channels which offer high interactivity and synchronicity (Walker, 2009), like face-to-face (direct or technologically-mediated) engagement. Barnard (1991) noted demographic variables have been shown to impact channel selection.

Data from this study found support for both the rational choice and social influence theories of channel selection. As such, this study provides overall support for channel expansion theory (J. Carlson & Zmud, 1999; D'Urso & Rains, 2008).

The channels employed by the participants do not vary considerably from those noted by the extant literature to be used by their peers in other parts of the world (e.g., Adler & Elmhorst, 2008; Barrett, 2006). However, the justifications and underlying socio-cultural motivations they provided in selecting channels may be unique. Given these seemingly paradoxical findings as well as the assertions of Blasco (2009) concerning the impact of 'foreign' education on learners, the possibility of cultural mixing (Emirati culture; English-medium, 'Western'-curriculum professional education and training) should not be dismissed.

Influence strategies employed. Applying the influence strategy taxonomy posited by Fu et al. (2004), analysis of the data indicated that during initial downward influence attempts with team members to encourage compliance with task requests (R1), the participants overwhelmingly utilized persuasive influence strategies—in particular consultation tactics—during face-to-face interactions. This assertion was evidenced in the participants' use of listening, questioning, and discussion during weekly team meetings as a means of garnering team member input before allocating tasks to direct reports or sanctioning direct reports requests for tasks. The tendency of female leaders to use democratic styles (such as consultation) was observed by Eagly and B. Johnson (1990).

Similarly, from his study of UAE leaders, Yassen (2010) stated, "[F]indings suggest that Arab women's leadership styles tend to be more democratic than Arab men" (p. 68). While O'Neill (2011) and D. Roberts, Al-Kuwari, and O'Neill (2011) noted the ubiquity of consultation in conceptualizations of the effective Khaleeji leader (regardless of gender).

Initial influence attempts were noted to be reinforced via written channels (email, spreadsheets); communicative repetition is evidence of assertive influence strategies (Fu et al., 2004). Putting task agreements and expectations into writing is perceived to be assertive because the archive feature of written channels enhances accountability. The participants underscored accountability as a reason for their use of written channels with direct reports, as explained by PI some direct reports "need reminding" or task completion may have been delayed while PJ remarked upon the propensity of people to forget what they have heard and thus to not follow-through with a task as required.

In situations of team member non-compliance after initial influence attempts, the participants indicated using opposing influence strategies: assertiveness and persuasiveness—sometimes in tandem. Unlike initial influence attempts, the participants indicated no consistent trend or pattern of channel use or influence strategy.

Participants indicated using written channels as part of an assertive influence strategy. The assertive strategy tactics that seem to have been most commonly employed were pressure (PD's use of the letter; PC's use of email) and repetition (PI's interim performance evaluations). Paradoxically, the participants appear to have simultaneously leveraged the privacy aspects of the written channel employed as an inspirational appeal tactic (persuasion strategy) as indicated by their awareness of saving the face of the non-compliant team member. This dynamic was detailed by PI. Participants used both threat (assertiveness)—written channels and repetition—and psychological safety (persuasiveness)—privacy of

email and interim performance evaluations—to encourage compliance under the second condition.

Alternately, participants also indicated the exclusive use of face-to-face interaction to encourage compliance when it was not forthcoming. As exemplified by PC, these face-to-face encounters appear to have avoided (face) threat by creating psychological safety for the team member and to have relied on persuasion, in particular inspirational appeal (saving face), to gain compliance.

However, oral channels were not always associated with persuasive influence strategies and the mitigation of threat. PI employed the telephone (missed call) to shame the team member (assertive strategy, persistence tactic).

In one instance of prolonged non-compliance, after the use of multiple channels and influence strategies, PI recounted employing the upward appeal tactic associated with the assertive strategy. This use of power and connections to gain team member compliance is not supportive of the contention that Emiratis rely on wasta[70] to accomplish goals (Hutchings & Weir, 2006) as it occurred within the authority framework of the organization's hierarchical structure rather than out of the power of personal relationships as proscribed by Emirati culture. However, it is consistent with Emirati cultural prohibitions concerning the shaming of others, in particular the leader's responsibility to protect the face and honor of followers (e.g., Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 2001; O'Neill, 2011).

Under both interview question conditions participants noted employing multiple channels. The use of multiple channels appears to have produced two beneficial outcomes vis-à-vis influence strategies: variety and magnification. First, multiple channels appear to have allowed participants to employ a variety of influence strategies (e.g., PC). And second,

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[70] Wasta is the power and influence one has as a result of informal, interpersonal connections.

the use of multiple channels appears to have magnified the effects of the influence strategies (e.g., PI).

The data did not indicate use of relationship-based influence strategies to gain team member compliance to undertake and complete a task. This omission is supportive of the assertion that the participants did not rely on wasta to achieve task compliance and completion.

The participants' responses indicated that they were aware not only of the importance of selecting situationally (e.g., PB—telephone directive) and culturally (e.g., PC—face saving inspirational appeal) appropriate influence strategies but also of conveying influence via congruent channels and contexts (e.g., consultation via face-to-face during team meetings). It also seems the participants were aware that influence attempts transmitted via unsuitable channels may have served to undermine or negate influence attempts (e.g., PJ email).

Leadership orientation. To the extent that leadership is a communicative act, the way communication is employed by a leader is indicative of her/his leadership orientation. The participants' focus on the affective impact of the communication channels selected was indicative of a relational orientation to leadership. The participants noted the perceived affective benefits of face-to-face interaction as a primary justification for its predominant use. The participants specifically mentioned benefits to include (a) direct report emotional buy-in towards tasks, (b) the positive affective orientation of interpersonal communications, and (c) an affirmative team climate. Additional support for the contention that the participants had a relational leadership orientation was found in the social context in which most initial task influence attempts took place (R1): the weekly team meeting. The participants listed five primary reasons for organizing weekly team meetings and initiating influence attempts at that time. Of these five, four (insight, team climate, growth, interpersonal relationships) were directly concerned with relational matters. PJ explicated the

importance of affective to the participants' successful enactment of leadership, "It's usually emotion that gets in the way because a lot of people don't know how to put their emotions aside in the workplace". The participants were also cognizant of the affective repercussions of the influence strategies they employed. They indicated employing influence (i.e., consultation) that marked respect and concern for the target, the participant's relationship with the target, and the team as a whole.

These considerations are congruent with key behaviors of relational practice as proposed by Fletcher (1998, 1999, 2004, 2006)—such as mutuality, interaction, empowerment, and facilitation—LMX (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), and in particular, the entity perspective of relational leadership theory as noted by Uhl-Bien (2006): "From this perspective, leadership can be seen as a two-way influence relationship between a leader and a follower aimed primarily at attaining mutual goals (Brower et al., 2000; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991, 1995; Hollander, 1978, 1979)" (p. 656). In *Disappearing Acts: Gender, Power, and Relational Practice at Work*, Fletcher (1999) described relational work, "While both mainstream and relational theories of growth encompass both individual and relational processes, it is the *preeminence* of connection and mutuality over individuation in the developmental process that marks relational theory" (p. 31). More specifically, Fletcher (1999) noted relational work is characterized by care, interdependence, collaboration, cooperation, and empathy. This description was supported by Uhl-Bien (2006). The characteristics were evidenced in the accountings of the participants. For example, PC showed care by conducting difficult interactions in physically private and psychologically safe spaces and she used whiteboards to aid team member collaboration and cooperation. PI and PJ demonstrated empathy in their descriptions of why they employed channels preferred by their direct reports. Fletcher (1999) posited the role of the leader in the relational dynamic to be mother-like and to involve fostering the success of direct reports through (a) the

elimination of barriers, (b) the development of "esprit de corps" (p. 76), and (c) the facilitation of intra-team relationships and dependencies. While the participants did not indicate seeing themselves in a mother-like role relative to their direct reports, the participants were proactive in facilitating direct reports' success. For example, the participants leveraged team meetings to (a) eliminate affective and informational barriers to successful task completion, (b) provide professional development, (c) nourish team members' esprit de corps, and (d) facilitate coordination.

It can also be argued the participants performed from a Khaleeji leadership perspective. The participants' target-orientation and concern for direct reports' psychological safety (in particular face saving) during communication channel and influence strategy selection and use were congruent with notions of the effective leader as described Khaleeji leadership (O'Neill, 2011; D. Roberts et al., 2011). Khaleeji leadership is characterized by an interpersonal orientation of personalized consideration; it is highly interpersonal and relationally-oriented. The participants demonstrated personalized consideration by adapting channel use to the preference of individual team members (when feasible) and they exhibited relationally-oriented behaviors by privileging team member's affective needs (e.g., PC's use of a private room). This is congruent with O'Neill's (2011) finding that Khaleeji females ranked personalized consideration as the most salient trait of the effective leader[71]. As evinced through the data, the participants enacted the Khaleeji leadership style through the practice of consultation (shura) and protection (qiwama). The participants practiced consultative behaviors by eliciting team member input (during weekly team meetings) before making decisions and they protected direct reports by avoiding placing negative or potentially harmful communications in writing. The role of the effective Khaleeji leader is similar to that of a coach of a professional sporting team, not that of father as posited in earlier regional

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[71] Khaleeji males ranked personalized consideration fourth in degree of saliency of leader effectiveness and team orientation first.

conceptualizations of leader effectiveness (e.g., Hutchins & Weir, 2006; Moran et al., 2007;

Yaseen, 2010).

Relational leadership (Fletcher, 1998, 1999, 2004, 2006; Uhl-Bien, 2006) and

Khaleeji leadership (O'Neill, 2011; D. Roberts et al., 2011) have much in common. Both

emphasize the centrality of relationships, mutuality, protection, care, and team solidarity.

However, they differ in fundamental ways. Whereas a central observation made of relational

work is that it is 'invisible' and predominantly the onus of females, consequently, it has been

devalued; the relational aspects of Khaleeji leadership are overt, shared by males and

females, and are tied to core cultural values. The importance of relational work can be seen in

the practice of wasta. Although not explicitly seen in this study, arguably, a key outcome of

the participants' creation and maintenance of positive relationships with direct reports may be

future gain. In line with the interconnected Emirati cultural values of collectivism, protection,

and honor that underpin the wasta system, the participants may have been cautiously

defensive in their relationships with direct reports (e.g., avoiding face threatening acts) to

ensure the maintenance of positive connections. They may have exercised this behavior not

only with those who currently hold positional power, but also with organizational

subordinates, as a form of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) insurance—should the subordinates

be in positions of power and influence in the future (as was noted by PA and PB). This

behavior is congruent with the suppositions of social network theory (Granovetter, 1983).

Legitimization. In addition to serving the functional needs of message transmission,

communicative clarity, task completion, and team building, the participants' contextually

appropriate (e.g., affective, chronological, social, cultural) selection and use of

communication channels and influence strategies (i.e., consultation as congruent with

Khaleeji expectations of effective leaders) also served to affirm the participants' legitimacy

as leaders. By communicating in ways that were congruent with direct report frames

concerning leaders and leadership (e.g., face saving, protective, demonstrating personalized consideration) direct reports chose to become followers. This was most clearly seen through PI's experience of direct report transition from resistance and avoidance to acceptance and recognition.

The variety of channels used and the redundancy of message transmission were not only multiple ways to transmit the specific message, but in that leadership is a communicative act (e.g., Schnurr, 2009), each was also an opportunity to enact, re-affirm, and legitimize the participants' authority as leaders. The communicative repetition recounted by the participants as a means to meet the need to continually re-affirm and legitimize their leadership is not unique to this study, these participants, or the region; it is, as previously noted by Mullany (2004) a reality for all leaders,

> Mills (2002:74) documents that, by following Foucault, language can be seen as 'an arena whereby power may be appropriated, rather than power relations being seen as frozen societal roles that are clearly mapped out for participants before an interaction takes place'. Meeting chairs should therefore be seen as constantly having to re-enact their power every time they engage in spoken interaction. Power over their subordinates is not something which they automatically possess as a consequence of their position on the institutional hierarchy. On every occasion where they attempt to gain compliance, they need to re-enact their power by performing their superior professional role identity. (p. 19)

Like all leaders, the participants encountered, and endeavored to counteract, threats to their leadership. As noted by Barrett (2006), Heifetz (1994), and Lipman-Blumen (2000) as well as numerous others, congruence with follower expectations is imperative to the attainment and maintenance of leader legitimacy. When asked directly about threats encountered, or perceived, to affirming their legitimacy as leaders, age was mentioned by 50% of the participants.

PJ, who led a staff of six employees all of whom were older than her, indicated she felt her age to be perceived by her direct reports as an illegitimating force on her leadership. PJ stated, "People stereotype and assume that youth and limited experience means lack of

knowledge and ability". PA noted the necessity to be "assertive because people tend to especially if they are older than you…they always have this idea that if you are young that you do not know what you are talking about…we have more experience than you". PB recalled only one instance of an employee explicitly resisting a mandate from her and indicating age as the reason: "Don't tell me what to do, I'm double your age". In fact, the employee was younger than her.

The perceptions of the participants (average age 27.5 years; average work experience 5.5 years) are in-line with extant literature from the 'West'. Although not featuring the same intractability as racism and other trait-permanent forms of discrimination (e.g., able-bodiness), age-related bias against younger workers is a force in organizations. Buccigrossi and Robinson (2003) remarked, "Young adults are not immune from the pressures of age discrimination. While their youthfulness is prized and coveted, very often their contributions to the workplace are muted by stereotypes of immaturity and inexperience" (p. 2-30) even though "[v]ery often, these same young people arrive to the workplace with superior education as compared to older colleagues" (p. 2-30).

Survey research conducted by Snape and Redmen (2003) found bias against younger workers is at least as pervasive as it is against older workers. This bias exists despite the fact that on an individual level, chronological age has not been found to be correlated to job performance (Cleveland & Landy, 1983). Loretto, Duncan, and White (2000) in a study of UK undergraduate business students found they encountered employment barriers due to stereotypes that they were not trustworthy.

Bias against younger workers is rooted in logic fallacies such as expectation states theory (Ridgeway, 2001), group homogeneity bias (Tajfel, 1982), and the belief perseverance effect (Nickerson, 1998); it is also culturally-mediated.

Limitations and Future Research

All research is bound by limitations and this study was no exception. Amongst the most salient limitations of this study were the use of participant recall and self-report as they relate to validity and reliability, the small sample size, the researcher's inability to employ multiple methods of data collection, and socio-cultural limitations on the presentation of some data and analysis in the written dissertation document[72].

McMillan and Wergin (2006) noted findings derived from qualitative analysis that demonstrate trends or patterns may be transferable; however, to be considered for transferability, issues of validity and reliability must be satisfactorily addressed. Validity and reliability are two issues of concern in research as they have significant impact on the usability of findings, and as such, threats to validity and reliability need to be considered when reviewing research (McMillan & Wergin, 2006). Sources of threat are many and varied. Threats include participants, confounding factors, analysis, and conclusions. One factor of considerable impact in human subject studies is the human participants. Issues of (a) volunteer/referral bias, (b) selection bias, and (c) subject-effect bias (McMillan & Wergin, 2010) may occur. In all studies where participation is voluntary, there exists some degree of referral bias. Simply, those who chose to participate in studies are different in at least one known way (and potentially many unknown ways) from those who do not (non-respondent bias). This in itself limits findings. Subject effects, the respondent's desire to provide "socially desirable responses or actions that will help or please the experimenter" (McMillan & Wergin, 2010, p. 62), may be increased in self-report designs. Moss et al. (2005) noted, "Previous research has shown that it is important to consider the source of the data (self-report versus raters' report) when collecting data" (p. 501) because "Eagly and Johnson

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[72] Analysis omitted in the written dissertation document was offered during the formal oral presentation of the dissertation on 30 October 2011 in London, England.

(1990) found that self-ratings were significantly more stereotypical for interpersonal style and task style than followers ratings" (p. 501). Other unanticipated and/or unacknowledged elements (confounding factors) can also affect research outcomes (Bartol et al., 2003; Kanter, 1977; Schermerhorn & Bond, 1991). Hirokawa et al. (1990) referring to their own study noted "an effect could have been present and gone undetected" (p. 44). A decade-and-a-half later, Moss et al. (2005) stated mixed results "might be attributable to untested moderating variables" (p. 508). While confounding factors are many and varied, common ones include (a) recall/memory bias, (b) experimenter effects, (c) experimenter expectation bias, (d) communicative competence or apprehension, and (e) absence of contextualization. With regard to recall/memory bias, Dillard and Burgoon (1985) noted, "Recall measures may result in selective retrieval and reporting biases that distort the recall" (p. 293) while T. Cook and Campbell (1979) asserted experimenter effects may "deliberately or unintentionally affect subjects responses" (n.p.). Researchers can take measures to mitigate the impact of observer bias by randomly presenting data to coders and withholding information about the informant from whom the data came (Hirokawa et al., 1990). Gillham (2000), Litosseliti (2003), and Krueger and Casey (2009) advocated the researcher be aware of her/his own biases, search out contrary/disproving evidence, obtain external third-party perspectives, and remain open to multiple perspectives in order to minimize the impact of experimenter biases.

Although, as previously noted by Patton (2002), the number of respondents participating in a given study may not in itself be problematic, McMillan and Wergin (2006) acknowledged factors such as sample size may impact the research consumer's ability to determine transferability and may call into question reliability. As discussed in Chapter 3, legal and cultural limitations concerning privacy and information sharing (e.g., the need for a second coder, public availability of the dissertation document, UAE laws regarding expression) significantly reduced the number of eligible female Emiratis who were willing to

participate. While data saturation was not a condition of this study, the convergence and similarity of participant responses with regard to channel and influence tactic use and selection arguably mitigate concerns stemming from the number of participants.

The use of a single method of data collection may also be perceived as a limitation of the study. Although the study was originally envisioned to employ both focus groups (as suggested by Khaleeji-based researchers such as Al Mansouri, Al Mazrouei, & Al Manaei, 2009; Al-Oraimi, 2004; Briegel & Zivkovic, 2008; Bristol-Rhys, 2010; Thomas, 2008; Winslow et al., 2002) and interviews, ultimately the factors that limited the number of participants similarly impacted method options. Due to socio-cultural, religious, political, and legal factors related to privacy, honor, and face, the respondents were unwilling or unable to participate in public data collection events such as focus groups. These same forces made data triangulation via observations, recording (audio/video) and/or document review unfeasible.

Lastly, the omission of some data and analysis from the written dissertation document may be considered a limitation of this study. However, this omission was not related to the two central interview questions that anchored the study, and as such did not impact the data, analysis, and findings concerning the participants' selection and use of communication channels when influencing a direct report to undertake a task. The extent to which the study is limited by this omission is contestable.

In order to enhance understanding of the relationship between channel selection and the successful enactment of leadership in the Emirati organizational environment, future studies may wish to (a) include the participants' male Emirati peers to ascertain if gender differences exist, (b) explore this topic at different hierarchical levels to see if channel selection varies with position in the organizational hierarchy, (c) include expatriate leaders in Emirati organizations, (d) convene participants who received exclusively Arabic-medium

educations, (e) replicate this study in Arabic, and (f) ascertain direct report (i.e., receiver) interpretations of , reactions to, and experiences with line manager channel use.

Implications for Leadership and Change

This study explored six Emirati female leaders' selection of communication channels employed in downward influence situations with direct reports in the organizational context. Findings indicated the participants' preferred channel of communication when engaged in downward influence with direct reports with the purpose of gaining compliance to complete a task was face-to-face engagement. Frequently face-to-face interaction was reinforced via written follow-up. Encoding negative messages via written channels was found to be vigorously avoided except in the most egregious cases. Cultural factors associated with Emirati concepts of honor, face, consultation, protection, and privacy were indicated to be influential in the participants' selection/avoidance of communication channel.

This study makes four contributions to the area of leadership and change. One, it adds to the extant literature on relational leadership. Two, it adds to the literature on the practice of leadership—specifically leadership and management communication—in non-'Western' contexts, in particular the English language literature concerning Arabian Gulf ILT (Abdalla & Al-Homoud, 2001), Islamic leadership (Yousef, 2000, 2001), and Khaleeji leadership (O'Neill, 2011). Three, it offers practical information for expatriate employees—specifically those in positional leadership roles—working with Emiratis in government organizations in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. It is envisioned the findings of this study may be used to inform the (a) pre-professional education and training of Emiratis who will enter into the workforce, (b) professional development of Emiratis currently in the workforce, particularly those currently in leadership roles in organizations in the United Arab Emirates (and those who aspire to this), and (c) expatriates who (will) work with Emiratis in government

organizations in Abu Dhabi. And four, it offers theoretical and experiential insight into the process of conducting qualitative research in the Emirati host-culture environment.

Relational leadership. In this study, leadership was assumed to be a socially-based (e.g., Rost, 1993), culturally-mediated (e.g., Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2007), power-oriented (e.g., Northouse, 2007), and status-contingent (e.g., Eagly, 2005) influence relationship (e.g., Yukl, 2002) enacted via communication (e.g., Barrett, 2006). Leadership was presumed to involve reciprocal (Wilmot & Hocker, 1998) and asymmetrical (Tannen, 1986) power (e.g., Yukl, 1981) and status (e.g., Tannen, 1986) relationships (Burns, 1978) between the positional leader and organizational direct reports (i.e., followers).

This study adds to the literature on relational leadership by demonstrating the prevalence of relational work in an Emirati organizational context. It expands understanding of relational practice by noting a cultural variation between relational work as proposed by Fletcher (1998, 1999, 2004, 2006), Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), and Uhl-Bien (2006) local manifestations. Whereas Fletcher (1999), writing from a 'Western' cultural perspective, posited relational work to be invisible, de-valued, and predominantly the onus of women[73], this study argued relational work in the Emirati context to be highly visible, highly valued, and the responsibility of both men and women. This finding is consistent with prior research on gender and employment conducted in the Arabian Gulf region (Al Lamky, 2010) and gender and leadership in the United Arab Emirates (e.g., Marmenout, 2009) as well as Islamic notions of gender equality (e.g., Mernissi, 1987).

Leadership practice. This study adds to the English language literature on leadership, specifically leadership communication in a non-'Western' (i.e., Khaleeji) context, by furthering understanding of how female Emirati leaders use communication to enact, affirm, and legitimize their leadership. It does this by explicating the relationship between (a)

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[73] Miller (1976) explicitly noted her original propositions of relational practice to be descriptive of the 'Western' cultural-gender context.

manager channel selection and direct report compliance under two different conditions common to the workplace, (b) channel selection and influence strategies, and (c) channel selection and legitimization of leadership. The finding of greatest significance related to this may be the injunction against putting negative messages (affective or content) about direct reports into writing due to cultural sensitivities concerning privacy, honor and the protection of face. Similarly, the seemingly paradoxical use of written channels as a way to safeguard the privacy, honor, and face of direct reports as well as the participants' use of it as a form of protection of direct reports was noteworthy.

The cultural aspects of this study may be of interest to leadership scholars in several ways. First, it may assist scholars seeking to ascertain culture-specific and universal aspects of leadership. Second, it may inform researchers interested in interpersonally-oriented leadership theories such as LMX and relational leadership. And third, it may contribute to a broader understanding of the intersection between gender and leadership, particularly in what Khoury and Moghadam (1995) and Omair (2009) have argued to be an under-explored region.

Findings from this study may assist educators, trainers, and other decision-makers with curriculum design and program resource allocation decisions. Neal (2010) noted the problems associated with the use of training materials that have not been adapted to the local context. Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) stated, "[S]trategies to increase the effective functioning of organisations cannot be based on management and practices imported wholesale from abroad but on indigenous practices that emerge from the specific cultural context of the particular society" (p. 507). Similarly, T. Weir (2008) asserted that in order to meet the unique needs of the cultural context "[i]t is time organizations in the region shift away from the notion of importing leadership" (p. 5) while Chen and VanVelsor (1996) remarked on the need to "break away from the currently dominant conceptions and models of

leadership and build indigenous prototypes from the literature and practice of a given culture" (p. 290) and to "identify authentic cultural leadership prototypes" (p. 290). Bjerke (1999) stated, "[T]he usefulness of Western (American) management and leadership thinking is doubtful in Arab culture" (p. 107).

Expatriate professionals. Three of the six participants in the study had expatriate direct reports. And in the United Arab Emirates where it is estimated that approximately 89% of the population (UAEInteract, 2011) and 90% of the workforce (UAEInteract, 2009) is comprised of expatriates, the interaction of female Emirati employees with organizational supervisors, subordinates, or peers from other cultures is inevitable which means culture-based frictions (Shenkar et al., 2008) and communication breakdown will occur. This is problematic because as noted by Picardi (2001), "[W]hen real communication stops, change cannot occur" (p. 27).

Expatriates professionals are frequently brought to the United Arab Emirates to be change agents. According to McNulty (2009), expatriates are brought into organizations to (a) fill a skill or knowledge gap; (b) address globalization requirements; and/or (c) oversee knowledge transfer. However, Graf (2004) noted that global failure rates (i.e., not accomplishing the goals of the assignment) for multinational corporation (MNC) expatriate workers to be estimated at 16-40% (Shaffer, Harrison, Gilley, & Luk, 2001) and 30-50% (Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991) with an average cost to the organization of somewhere from $200,000 to $1.2 million (Copeland & Griggs, 1986; Swaak, 1995). Studies by Schneider and Barsoux (1997) and Bonache, Brewster, and Suutari (2007) found adjustment to the local culture to be expatriates' most commonly cited reason for failure of the international posting. Tung's 1998 study found that the failure of U.S. expatriates to adjust was due primarily to lack of social skills, rather than professional incompetence. Korhonen (2002) stated that failure is not usually do to lack of professional competence. Shin,

Morgeson, and Campion (2007) noted the results of his study "partly supported the hypothesis that expatriates are required to adjust their behavior to be consistent with the local cultural values, which has implications for post-arrival behavioral training" (p. 64). A survey conducted by HSBC bank (Sutton, 2008) between February and April 2008 of 2,155 expats in 48 countries identified the United Arab Emirates as one of the most difficult countries for expatriate adjustment due to cultural differences that make integration difficult.

Cultural variations amongst and between followers and leaders can lead to differences in expectations vis-à-vis leader roles and behaviors including communication (e.g., Burgoon et al., 1982; Denning, 2007; Ting-Toomey, 1985). Clutterbuck and Hirst (2003) observed "the exponential rise in working in cross-level, cross-division, cross-function, cross-culture, cross-time zone teams and communication becomes even more difficult to manage" (p. 27). Yet, in the midst of, and with respect to, these incongruencies, Rost (1993) observed the purpose of leadership is, "to build consensus from diverse points of view without compromising end-values" (p. 185). Ineffective leadership communication can create and/or exacerbate divisions, divisiveness, and isolation (Rowe, 1990).

To work successfully with Emirati colleagues and clients, expatriate professionals, in particular those in leadership positions, must act appropriately for the Emirati context (Goby, 2009). An individual with positional power (French & Raven, 1959) who exhibits verbal and/or nonverbal behavior that violates stakeholders' expectations—who is unpredictable, who is unknown—is unable to create trust and affiliation with stakeholders (i.e., cannot gain personal power). This individual (i.e., the leader) comes to be perceived as an untrustworthy holding environment (Heifetz, 1994), a threat. Stakeholders, like most people, will actively seek to avoid that which they perceive as threatening (Lipman-Blumen & Couto, 2009). Under such circumstances, stakeholders do not choose to become followers (Bass, 1990).

Simultaneously, the positional leader is denied in-group membership (Tajfel, 1978),

the leader is relegated to outsider status because of these differences (Rowe, 1990).This social disconnectedness perpetuates the state of unknowingness, reinforces the sense of threat, and induces groups to compete for resources in a desire to obtain sufficient power to overcome the (perceived) existential threat created by those in the out-group (Kramer, 1999; Magee & Galinsky, 2008), the Other (Essed, 1996)[74].

As groups attain unequal access to resources[75] this leads to imbalances of power eventually creating a vicious cycle whereby out-groups may come to exist for the benefit of the dominant, in-group. Essed (1996) referred to the instrumental use of another's Otherness as tokenism. In line with the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), and self efficacy theory (Bandura, 1982), as groups, or individuals, believe their contributions are not valued (i.e., they have attained token status; they are marginalized) they may engage in social loafing (Jassawalla, Sashittal, & Malshe, 2009); stakeholders cease to collaborate and action, including the change for which the expatriate was brought in to lead, is stymied.

Follower alienation and leader marginalization are problematic because (a) stakeholders do not engage in common experiences and/or develop a common, semantically equivalent vernacular, and as such are obstructed from cultivating common cognitive patterns (culture) and (b) they do not have opportunities to learn the norms and behaviors (of the in-group), hindering the possibility of taking on those behaviors and meeting expected conventions of the in-group (i.e. becoming part of the culture) thus remaining unpredictable and unknown, continuing the sense of threat, barring acceptance by the in-group and ultimately preventing agreement by stakeholders to become followers. A self-perpetuating

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[74] Magee and Galinsky (2008) noted more powerful individuals (i.e., leaders) may shun stakeholders who are deemed to violate norms (i.e., different) in order to avoid affiliation with the out-group thus causing power leakage.

[75] The acquisition of resources may be the outcome to purposeful action or may occur as an unexpected result of change elsewhere in the system.

vicious cycle of unknowingness, perceived threat, alienation/marginalization propelled by complementary schismogenesis (Bateson, 1972) is created. Frequently, those who perceive the others (including positional leaders) as different, as outsiders, as a threat, will seek to eliminate the threat (e.g., Al Haddad, 2011; Varner & Beamer, 2005) [76]. The pervasiveness of this dilemma is well evidenced in local newspapers (e.g., Al Haddad, 2011; Al Subaihi, 2011; Hope, 2010), office break rooms, and coffee shops throughout the UAE.

Acting appropriately entails understanding and action (e.g., Barrett, 2006; Denning, 2007). Expatriate leaders must understand the various frames which Emirati colleagues and clients use to make sense of the world and apply this understanding to act in accordance with local[77] expectations (Mujtaba & Kaifi, 2010). This study aids understanding by ascertaining the contexts in which, and reasons why, the Emirati leaders who participated in this study selected the communication channels they did when attempting to influence direct reports to undertake and complete a task. This study also provides specific examples of actual leader behavior in authentic workplace situations – unlike many previous of studies which employed actors in laboratory situations (e.g., Kalkhoff, Younts, & Troyer, 2008; Trauth et al., 1984).

Emiratis and expatriates in positional leadership roles in Emirati organizations may wish to avail themselves of this study to guide their behavior in order to provide legitimacy for their leadership, to promote direct report compliance with initial influence attempts to undertake a task, to encourage compliance with such influence attempts when it is not forthcoming, and to avoid dynamics such as complementary schismogenesis (Bateson, 1972).

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[76] Threats may include struggles for political, social, and symbolic capital such as power, status, and attention (Clutterbuck & Hirst, 2003; Pettigrew, 1998) as well as (perceived) existential threats such as self-doubt, change to self-concept/identity, loss of group membership, and lack of certainty. Deary (2008, p. 15) wrote, "Change affects more than roles and skills; it alters power relationships (Foucault, 1977), makes trust issues salient (Morgan & Zeffane, 2003; Lines et al, 2005; Singh, 2006) and undermines existing pacts. Most important is that change "intrudes upon deeply rooted symbolic agreements, traditional ways, and ritual behaviour" (Bolman & Deal, 1991:375) and discourse (Foucault, 1977; Heracleous & Hendry, 2000; Fairclough, 2001; Francis, 2003)" (p. 15).

[77] Locals is the terms Emiratis use to distinguish themselves from other Gulf Arabs and long-term residents of the UAE.

For example, these leaders may wish to employ consultation as a primary mode of influence with direct reports and to convey this via face-to-face interaction in a semi-public social context (e.g., team meeting) in order to maximize positive affect which supports the understanding, cooperation, and coordination amongst team members that facilitates task completion and goal achievement. Similarly, positional leaders in the Emirati organizational context may wish to avoid communicating negative messages in writing as this may be decoded by direct reports as coercive and as a face threatening act resulting in negative outcomes such as social loafing, non-compliance, and task non-completion.

Expatriates may also use this study to assist understanding of the behavior of their Emirati colleagues and clients. It is hoped this will mitigate forms of cognitive bias— "fundamental attribution error, group homogeneity bias, ingroup-bias, trait ascription bias, and the belief perseverance effect" (Fontaine, 2007, p. 128) as well as that negatively influence relationships (cf. Pittinsky's Allophilia) between Emiratis and expatriates.

Research in the Abu Dhabi host-culture environment. As discussed in Chapter 3 of this document, to make quality contributions, guest- researchers must understand the ethics of conducting research in the host-culture environment while internalizing the reality that guidelines provided by their 'Western' training may be in opposition to the norms and values of the host-culture in which they wish to conduct the research[78]. For example, in this study, U.S. notions of informed consent (legalistic, signed documents) were threatening to, and at odds with, participants who wished to remain anonymous. This lack of understanding by Institutional Review Board members caused a significant time delay to the approval and start of the study which precluded several respondents who had agreed to participate from doing so. This in turn required the recruitment of new respondents who were not comfortable participating in focus groups, thus necessitating a re-design of the study.

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[78] See Smith (1999) for a detailed and eloquent exploration of the host-culture, guest-researcher dynamic.

Refusal to participate is another issue with which guest-researchers must contend. The prevalence of information via the Internet and cable television has made many young Emirati females acutely aware of the stereotypes non-Khaleeji people have of them. Several potential respondents declined to participate in this study for fear it would contribute to the perpetuation and re-enforcement of stereotypes of female Muslim oppression and Arab nations. In part to assuage participant fears concerning this, member checking was employed and the participants were given editorial approval over content in the final written dissertation document. This however may be interpreted by 'Western' study reviewers as a lack of transparency, dishonesty, and censorship—and as such, ethical violations—rather than the researcher exercising cultural sensitivity.

Related to concerns about stereotyping were participant fears of researcher insensitivity. For example, a recent study conducted in the Khaleeji region by a 'Western' researcher referred to the Persian Gulf, a highly inflammatory and geo-politically threatening term in the United Arab Emirates. Being familiar with studies, textbooks, and other media that perpetuate such insensitivity, respondents were reticent to participate.

To overcome these limitations, my experience has lead me to advise guest-researchers in Abu Dhabi to seek locally-based support and sponsorship so not place themselves in an ethical bind by being beholden to culturally incongruous research practices. I also suggest, the use of cultural confederates and member-checking to mitigate concerns surrounding stereotyping and cultural insensitivity. I also recommend immersing oneself in the culture by living and working in the area for several years and to develop friendships (not just social and professional relationships) with host-culture members. Only then can the researcher have the trust that provides participants the psychological safety to make themselves vulnerable and offer their full truth. And lastly, once the researcher has the support and trust of her hosts, it is

imperative for the researcher to realize with humility and modesty the limitations of her own ignorance and hubris before attempting to undertake research.

This study has practical implications for understanding and enacting effective leadership in organizations in the United Arab Emirates. It may also be used inform decision-making with regard to leadership training and education. However, the more profound contribution of this study may be the ways in which it can serve to overcome the misunderstanding, negative bias, and distrust that prevail between Emiratis and expatriates in the workplace, and which ultimately, inhibit mutual understanding and respect, change, and development.

Epilogue

I undertook this project with a specific objective: to obtain practical knowledge of immediate benefit to manager-leaders in the UAE—and to those who prepare them.

Throughout the process of this research, I collected insights into conducting research in the UAE. These insights came both from the literature created by locally-based national and expatriate researchers as well as my own experiences. Although not intentional, this understanding came to constitute an important part of the knowledge derived from this study, and as such, merits explication[79].

While my experiences and those of respected regionally-based researchers are mentioned throughout the dissertation, a few warrant repetition. Specifically, the principles of qiwama (protection) and shura (consultation) need to be respected and adhered to at all times. To undertake ethical research, these values need to remain the researcher's foremost consideration and the litmus test by which all decisions are made. In this study, for example, this meant following the guidance of the cultural consultants and accepting participants' input during member checking—to the extent that data and analysis that may have seemed innocuous, but were deemed threatening by the participants (and/or cultural consultants) were omitted[80] or framed in a non-threatening manner to mitigate jeopardy to the participants or other stakeholders. While some may take these measures to be akin to censorship or as dilutions of the validity, reliability, transferability, or integrity of the study, it must be acknowledged that no single project can hope to present the entirety of truth; by necessity all research highlights some areas (to greater or lesser degrees) and omits others. In this project,

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[79] While a body of literature does exist that cautions guest (foreign) researchers to proceed with care when undertaking research in a host-culture environment, these admonitions tend to be vague, theoretical, or applicable to regions or cultures other than the Arabian Gulf and the United Arab Emirates.

[80] No data central to the research question or the first three levels of analyses were omitted or required re-framing around socio-cultural, religious, or political sensitivities.

these omissions and the reasons for doing so were simply made more explicit than may be customary.

As a final thought on undertaking research in the United Arab Emirates and the Arabian Gulf (or anywhere for that matter), it is essential to remind ourselves that as foreigners, expatriates, or cultural outsiders, we are <u>guests</u>. It behooves guest-researchers to remain respectful and diffident in our own work and to support our host-culture peers to express that which only they have prerogative due to their knowledge, experience, understanding, and affiliation.

Appendix

Appendix A: Institutional Board Approval

<u>Demographic Information</u>

1. Age _____

2. Total years and months of work experience since graduation from university?

     _____years _____months

3a. Job title (manager, supervisor, etc…)

     _____

3b. Nature of department/division (finance, marketing, investing, etc…)

     _____

3c. Size of current organization _____

3d. Type of organization

     private_____   state-owned enterprise _____   government _____

3e. Time at current organization   _____years _____months

3f. Current number of direct reports _____

4a. Past job title (manager, supervisor, etc…)

     _____

4b. Nature of past department/division (finance, marketing, investing, etc…)

     _____

4c. Size of past organization _____

4d. Type of organization

       private____   state-owned enterprise ____   government _____

4e. Time at past position   _____years _____months

4f. Number of direct reports at past position _____

5. Total supervisory experience

       0-6 months   ☐   7-11 months   ☐   1 year-3 years   ☐

       4years-9 years   ☐   10-14 years   ☐

Application to IRB for Ethics Approval

Last Name	First Name	Title	Submit Date	Approved	Action Date	Action By
O'Neill	Kelly	COMMUNICATION SKILLS UTILIZED BY EMIRATI FEMALES TO ENACT LEADERSHIP	06/11/2011	Yes	06/12/2011	Lisa Kreeger

Appendix B: Participant Profiles

Participant	Age	Work Experience since University Graduation	Current Organization Type	Direct Reports	Time at Current Organization	Past Organization Type	Time at Past Organization
PA	26	4.5 years	Private	2	3 years	Government	2 months
PB	29	7 years	Government	3	1.5 years	State owned enterprise	3 years
PC	34	12 years	Government	3	4 years	Inter-governmental	4 years
PD	24	2 years	Private	4	2 years	N/A	N/A
PI	27	4.3 years	Government	3	3.3 years	State owned enterprise	1 year
PJ	25	3.3 years	Government	6	11 months	Government	2.5 years

Appendix C: Participant Team Members

Participant	Team Total	Female Team Members	Male Team Members
PA	2	2 Emirati	X
PB	3	2 Emirati	1 Emirati
PC	3	3 Emirati	X
PD	4	3 Indian	1 non-Gulf Arab
PI	3	X	2 Emirati; 1 German
PJ	6	5 Emirati	1 Emirati

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