Leadership Development in Egypt: How indigenous managers construe Western leadership theories

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# ABSTRACT

This research examines the ways in which Egyptian managers make sense of the leadership theories they are exposed to in their work interactions and their in-house leadership development training. This empirical study utilizes Personal Construct Theory to uncover how the indigenous managers construe Western evolved leadership theories.

The research strategy follows a phenomenological paradigm, based on a comparative case study centered on an international design consulting firm headquartered in the Middle East region. The data collection tools, i.e., the Repertory Grid Technique (RGT), Personal Value Statements and Storytelling are consistent with an inductive, constructivist approach.

The findings illustrate differences in how leadership theories are construed by indigenous managers compared to their UK counterparts and consequently which theories are more and less favoured. An emergent finding that evolved from this enquiry was the differences between Egyptian managers' espousals and actual day to day leadership practices. This finding raises greater awareness of the role that cultural values play in the cross-cultural arena of leadership. The ethnographic technique of Storytelling brought to light the influence of national culture when leadership is enacted.

The findings and results of this thesis throws some much needed light onto a geographical area that recent political events have brought to prominence as well as making a contribution towards understanding the potential barriers of transferring knowledge between cultures that differ in several important ways. The results are also useful from the perspective of Training and Development. Western trainers working in the Middle East region in addition to indigenous trainers seeking to provide effective leadership development programs will be able to discern which Western leadership theories to focus on, adapt and or disregard.

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**GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS**

| Term | Explanation |
|---|---|
| Islamic Work Ethic (IWE) | A set of moral principles, observed and adhered to in working life, positioned in the fundamental tenets of Islam (Ali, A., 2008) |
| Personal Construct Theory (PCT) | PCT was developed by George Kelly (1955) as a constructivist form of psychology. It is composed of a fundamental postulate and 11 corollaries, which form the basis of Personal Construct Psychology (PCP). |
| Repertory Grid Technique (RGT) | The Repertory Grid Technique is an interviewing tool which evolved from PCT (Kelly, 1955) and is applied as means of eliciting personal bipolar constructs. |
| Elements | The basic components of a person's attention when s/he construes an issue; the constituents being construed (Fransella et al, 2003; Jankowicz, 2004). |
| Constructs | A construct is the basic unit of meaning, which the individual uses to make sense of experience. |
| Sense-making | Sense-making is the mental processes by which we attribute meaning to our experiences (Weick, 1995). It starts with the personal perceptions individuals form to interpret events that surround them (Tan and Hunter, 2002). |
| Storytelling | Storytelling is a non-intrusive, organic research technique that communicates complex, tacit knowledge (Snowden, 1999). It is the collection of narrative accounts which are used in order to convey experiences from which the listener is invited to draw a conclusion about the topic in question. |
| Knowledge Transfer | Knowledge transfer is a process consisting of four components; an idea, an object, an action, an institution that undergo three stages, i.e., embedding, dis-embedding and re-embedding (Czarniawska and Joerges 1996). |
| Middle East Region | The term 'Middle East' is defined, by its socio-political and cultural expanse (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2007), which includes all territory extending from Morocco to Turkey alongside the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean as far east as Iran, and south to Sudan and Yemen (Ahmed, 2008, cited in Budhwar and Mellahi, 2007: 406). |

**CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides an overview of the research topic, the reasons why the study is being carried out and how the research is to be conducted in order to answer the questions that evolved from the literature research.

**1.1 Background**

The author's interest in the research topic originated whilst working in the Middle East and Gulf Region in the field of human resource management. Questions surfaced about the relevance and appropriateness of the predominantly Western derived leadership theories. These are premised on Western values and norms and thus focused on developed rather than developing nations, (Metcalfe and Murfin, 2011), that produce a limiting set of assumptions (House and Aditya, 1997) and thus provide restricted application to different cultural contexts (Hofstede, 1993; Smith et al, 1989).  Such constraints resulted in a leadership phenomenon difficult for managers operating in non-Western environments to interpret (Zhang et al, 2012).

The starting point and inspiration for this study was the personal motivation emanating from a professional interest in the effectiveness of leadership development programmes. This was due to the author having worked in the Middle East region for more than two decades developing and delivering leadership development programmes (endorsed by international institutes) to indigenous managers. Consequently this evoked a fundamental question, i.e., how do indigenous managers make sense of these extant leadership theories that have evolved from a Western context and which do they find more or less applicable to their cultural identity and circumstances? In other words how effective are these leadership theories when extended beyond

Western cultures and how does knowledge, developed and disseminated in a Western culture transcend and transfer to Egyptian managers' work situations? '*Examining implications of a model in different cultures presents one of the most compelling reasons for conducting cross-cultural research*' (Pillai et al, 1999: 764).

The topic of this thesis addresses the extent to which leadership is culturally contingent, focusing on the Arabic cultures in particular. This applied research addresses the concerns and related issues that arise from indigenous managers' construal of the leadership phenomena. A phenomenon that has evolved from a predominately Western perspective resulting in theories and instruments which fail to incorporate or capture substantially different contexts and cultural settings (Hofstede, 1993; Smith, et al, 1989; Zhang, 2012). This research intends to identify the strengths and weaknesses (as perceived by indigenous managers) of the various leadership theories that have evolved and been advanced through a Western lens.

Pertinent to the research questions is understanding how Egyptian managers respond to and construe these leadership theories, by utilizing Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955, 1963) to uncover factors such as values and beliefs that contribute to determining acceptance and internalization of the concepts (Kelman, 1986) of various leadership theories.

Numerous studies have been conducted over the years with the central aim of defining aspects of leadership that contribute to organizational performance to answer the question of what constitutes effective leadership, in other words; under what circumstances are some leaders more effective than others? An extension to this notion would be to consider leadership as a cross-cultural phenomenon.

The vast majority of leadership research and ensuing theories have been conducted and tested within Western contexts (Ali, A., 2011; Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2005; Hamlin et al, 2010; Metwally, 2014; Smith and Peterson, 1988; Yukl, 2010). House and Aditya (1997) stated that as much as 98% of empirical research was Western oriented. However there is a growing interest in a leadership paradigm that transcends these geographic and cultural boundaries (Avolio et al, 2009; Hofstede, 1993; Parnell and Hatem, 1997; Zhang et al, 2012). More recently, cross-cultural studies have progressed to expanding research efforts that include the Middle East region (Shahin and Wright, 2004; Smith, et al, 2007). Kabasakal and Bodur, (2002) postulate that some Western management techniques are widely used in the Middle East; others may be effective if adapted (Shahin and Wright, 2004), however some would face cultural impedance (Kabasakal and Bodur, 2002). Whilst managers in the Middle East region apply some Western techniques, they continue to retain some of their traditional values (Badawy, 1980).

Researchers in the academic community have remarked on the dearth of research undertaken outside of Western regions (Gordon and Yukl, 2004; Metwally, 2014; Smith, Dugan and Trompenaars, 1996; Smith and Peterson, 1988). Furthermore, the Middle East is a particularly under-researched region (Kabasakal, et al, 2012; Leat and Kott, 2004; Metcalfe and Murfin, 2011; Metwally, 2014; Mohamed, S., 2012; Parnell and Crandall, 2003; Parnell and Hatem, 1999; Ralston et al, 2012; Sidani and Jamali, 2009; Weir, 2001) which has only recently started to gain increased attention in the international management literature (Ralston et al, 2012). According to Ali, A., (1998) indigenous management research is still at an inchoate stage; consequently, a paucity of empirical research is prevalent (Bakhtari, 1995; Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012; Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E., 2012; Leat and Kott 2007; Parnell and Hatem, 1999, 1997; Sidani and Jamali, 2009). A factor that may have contributed to this is reticence of indigenous

researchers in repressive nations (Ali, A., 1998; Parnell and Crandall, 2003). Hamlin et al (2010) state that their cross-national comparative analysis, of UK and Egyptian managers, offers a unique insight into leadership in the Arab world. There is a serious lack of management research conducted in Egypt (Brown and Ataalla, 2002; Parnell and Crandall, 2003; Parnell and Hatem, 1997; Ibrahim, 2014; Sidani and Jamali, 2009) in particular on transformational / transactional leadership (Metwally, 2014; Shahin and Wright, 2004). This has important consequences in a country such as Egypt, which differs in many ways to its Middle Eastern neighbours (Parnell and Crandall, 2003) and is considered an economic and political catalyst in the Middle East region (Sidani and Jamali, 2009).

Nevertheless, pre-Western notions of leadership demonstrate that authoritarian, autonomous and consultative approaches to leadership were dominant. Ancient Egypt, for example was ruled by omnipotent leaders, i.e., the pharaohs (Brown and Ataalla, 2002: Hassan and Saker, 2014; Javidan et al, 2006). Pre-Islamic concepts of leadership emphasized authoritarianism and were an amalgam of traditions, local norms and values (Sidani and Thornberry, 2009) which were in fact in contradiction to the later, Islamic principles (Branine and Pollard, 2010). Features of Arabic leadership can be found in early Islam under its first leader, the Prophet Mohamed, who emphasized the notion of shared influence (Ali, A., 2011; Mohamed, S., 2012). Throughout his lifetime and governance the importance of consultation known as 'shura' was evident in matters that the Prophet Mohamed sought guidance on (Ali, A., 2011; Beekun, 2012; Branine and Pollard, 2010; Mohamed, S., 2012). Both participation and consultation are still considered preferred values in the Middle East (Savvas et al, 2001).

Leadership was based on positional (legitimate) and personal (referent) power (Al Sarhi et al, 2014: 48; Beekun and Badawi, 1999) the cornerstone of which was justice rather than democracy (Muczyk and Holt, 2008).

By the 1950s Egypt had become a presidential state which culminated in total political and state authority (Shahin and Wright, 2004). It is at this juncture that the rise of modern Western cultural influences in the region began to permeate. Different areas of the Middle East were exposed to these Western cultural influences in varying intensities and from several sources (Fromkin, 2001, cited in Ralston et al, 2012).

Interest in cross-cultural leadership research has been accelerated by the impetus of globalization that stimulates corporate diversity (Avolio et al, 2009; Erez and Gati, 2004; Fang, 2005; Hamlin et al, 2013; Hsieh, 2010; Leat and Kott, 2005; Morrison, 2000; Qamar et al, 2013; Schmidt et al, 2007; Zhang et al, 2012). The globalization debate has an enduring history of which the extant literature can be divided into two distinct standpoints. The endorsers of globalization interpret the phenomena as the triumph of capitalism, whilst the opposers' view it as a dominating force, annihilating the nation state's autonomy (Amin, A., 1997). This thesis is situated between the two aforementioned positions, which views globalization as positing an unconventional corollary (Amin, A., 1997 and Giddens, 1999) which ignites rather than extinguishes local culture.

Furthermore there is a school of thought postulating the universality of leadership (Arvonen and Ekvall, 1999; Hamlin et al, 2010). This notion asserts that leadership theories can be immersed into cultures beyond their place of origin (Yukl, 2013:361) for example, Transformational Leadership (Bass, 1997; Muczyk and Holt, 2008). According to Pillai et al, (1999) Transformational Leadership is salient in the Arab world, despite the paucity of scientific

research on the theory in that region (Abu-Tineh et al, 2008; Metwally, 2014). Researchers have drawn attention to the fact that whilst some leadership concepts and notions may be exported to other countries the embedded contents of knowledge may not necessarily retain the same meaning when transferred to the recipient cultures (Brown and Ataalla, 2002; Humpheys, 1996; Muczyk and Holt, 2008; Parnell and Crandall, 2003; Zhang et al, 2012). Knowledge transfer has received increasing attention in the research community in recent decades and is undergoing rapid change, spurred on by improved communication technologies (Bhagat et al, 2002).

The analysis of the cultural factors entrenched in the knowledge transfer process and the individual construal of meaning, by the indigenous managers, will facilitate the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the various leadership theories (as viewed by the indigenous managers) presented in this research enquiry. This study focuses attention on how knowledge that evolved in one culture, i.e., Western, characterised by individualism (Hofstede et al, 2010) is received and interpreted in a region in which the culture is predominately collectivist (Hofstede et al, 2010). Jankowicz (1997) draws attention to the construal of ideas when transferred to other cultures and points out from a linguistic perspective translation of language presents an additional challenge. Thus one cannot assume that the term leadership in one culture will convey the same meaning or represent the same concepts as those in which it originated (Brown and Ataalla, 2002). Czarniawska and Joerges's model (1996) reinforces the notion that ideas travelling from one culture to another depend largely on the perceptions of the recipient culture and this defines the degree of receptivity. The aforementioned model introduces the notion of social embeddedness, which will be related to the concept of cross-cultural construal of various leadership theories in order to explore the levels of receptivity among indigenous managers.

This empirical research is based on a case study (Yin, 2014). Clearly, the outcomes of such attention could have professional implications for organisations like the one in which the present research was carried out. The company, hitherto referred to as Company X, was founded more than 50 years ago and is headquartered in the Middle East Region. It is managed by approximately 40 Middle Eastern managing partners. Its core business is design consultancy in the energy sector. The majority of the workforce is in the professional fields of engineering and architecture. It has an international presence is more than 40 countries around the world with a manpower count in excess of 6,000. It maintains a strong presence in the Middle East the UK and Eastern Europe. Minor details that would serve to identify it have been adjusted at the company's request; these changes make no difference to the results of this study or their interpretation.

This research enquiry will contribute to the knowledge base on several levels as it incorporates literature from a number of overlapping disciplines, i.e., leadership theories, social psychology in the form of personal construct psychology, cross-cultural studies, knowledge transfer and sense-making. A more in-depth understanding of indigenous leadership will contribute to refocusing the distorted lens from which leadership is commonly viewed; provide stakeholders with a more informed perspective of how knowledge is transferred and ideas travel to other, more culturally diverse settings than those in which they originated; and develop leadership theories that are underpinned with local cultural values.

## 1.2 Research Aims, Objectives and Questions

The intent of the study is to understand how Egyptian managers make sense of Western originated leadership theories that dominate the academic and general practice community (Yukl,

2010) doing so from an international standpoint, as viewed from the perspective of a particular culture.

In order to achieve the aforementioned, the research aim is:

**Aim**: To understand how Egyptian managers construe Western evolved leadership theories.

**Objective**: To identify the role and impact that Egyptian national culture has on the receptivity and acceptance of Western evolved leadership theories. This will involve assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the aforementioned theories from the perspective of the indigenous managers and the differences that exist in comparison to their British counterparts.

**Research Questions:**

1. *Which theories are more or less culturally attuned to Egyptian managers?*

2. *What role does national culture play in terms of how the indigenous managers construe Western evolved leadership theories?*

## 1.3 Research Methodology

As this thesis is concerned with how Egyptian managers construe Western evolved leadership theories the researcher has chosen a phenomenological paradigm from a social constructionist stance in which sense-making is a central component. Social constructionism is premised on people being active interpreters of their own social worlds so that reality is perceived to be a social construction, built out of meanings which are social in origin and enduring (Berger and Luckmann, 1991; Pye, 2005).

Personal Construct Theory (PCT), (Kelly, 1955, 1963) and the ethnographic approach of Storytelling provide the framework for this empirical study in terms of identifying how knowledge is construed and transferred to the local managers; which leadership theories are more and less preferred. From the perspective of PCT, there is paucity in the literature on cross-cultural research, although it has been asserted that personal construct concepts are well suited such research (Scheer, 2003).

The Repertory Grid Technique (RGT) is the primary data collection tool utilized to reveal how the indigenous managers construe the leadership theories with which they are acquainted. Personal construct-related methods of research are a combination of two somewhat paradoxical techniques; semi-structured exploration which incorporates highly structured data outcomes (Scheer, 2003).

'*RGT is a way of capturing what theories people are using to make sense of something and quantifying that qualitative feedback*' (Rogers and Ryalls, 2007: 596).

A key strength in utilizing RGT as the principal data collection technique for this empirical study is its aptness for providing a value-free approach to cross-cultural research (Scheer, 2003; Hunter and Beck, 2000).

The RGT interviews (initial grid interview and follow up interview) take the form of face to face meetings in a single embedded case study (Yin, 2014). The case study is based on an international design consulting company based in the Middle East. The indigenous managers are based in the Egypt office and their Western counterparts, in the UK office.

Storytelling, a data collection technique founded in the ethnographic paradigm, involves gathering narrative accounts to convey experiences from which the listener draws conclusions

about the topic in question. This data collection technique was utilized to identify and describe factors embedded in the national culture that shed light on how leadership is enacted by the indigenous managers. It serves multiple purposes, i.e., to elicit tacit knowledge and convey norms and values (Snowden, 2000 a; Sole and Wilson, 1999) and to compensate for the lack of migratory knowledge (Castro and Neira, 2005). Migratory knowledge is tangible i.e., it exists in the form of artifacts (Castro and Neira, 2005). In this case study migratory knowledge resides in the training manuals, handbooks and resources produced in the leadership development courses. Tacit knowledge on the other hand is more elusive and less easy to define. Furthermore, this additional data collection technique will provide a means of triangulation to the main data collection technique.

## 1.4 Significance

The Middle East region has a population of almost 300 million (CIA Fact book, 2016) which considering recent and ongoing political, social and economic turmoil in the region (since the Arab Spring of 2011) it is timely that research into this region explores the topic of leadership, albeit in a corporate context. The recent political overthrow of the Mubarak regime, March 2011, in which 'the strong man' was toppled (Rice, 2011: 254), has resulted in a power vacuum with two elected presidents in as many years. This evokes many unanswered questions at an institutional level in addition to the implications for the corporate arena of leadership development in Egypt.

The emphasis on Western evolved leadership research has resulted in a type of 'cultural myopia' Weir (2001: 2). The paucity of leadership studies in the Middle East region (Metcalfe and Murfin, 2011; Weir, 2001) and Egypt in particular (Leat and Kott, 2004; Parnell and Crandall,

2003; Parnell and Hatem, 1999;  Sidani and Jamali, 2009) means that research on indigenous leadership will contribute to the knowledge base and furthermore it is hoped that other researchers will be encouraged to broaden the scope of this empirical work as the transitions taking place in the region provide an unprecedented opportunity for researchers to examine theories and frameworks (Zahra, 2011). The recent political uprisings in Egypt have led to major social changes (Ibrahim, 2014; Nafie, 2012) in which a shift in work related values appear to be emerging (Ibrahim, 2014).

Kabasakal, et al (2012: 519) assert that the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) is one of the least known, under-researched areas of the world, in terms of management and leadership research, particularly in the case of Egypt (Leat and Kott, 2004; Parnell and Crandall, 2003; Parnell and Hatem, 1999; Sidani and Jamali, 2009). Egypt is considered a noteworthy country in the region (Rice, 2011), historically the vanguard of academic and scientific discovery; a hub for exporting professional, skilled and unskilled labour to serve the region and beyond (Sidani and Jamali, 2009) with an accumulation of Nobel laureates and in most recent times, a country undergoing unusual and extensive change (Ibrahim, 2014).

This empirical research will further contribute to the call for a better understanding of how leadership is influenced by culture. Furthermore it will identify which aspects of leadership are culture-specific and more importantly, from a corporate perspective, how companies might reduce cultural leadership differences in their ultimate progress towards the goal of globalization (Morrison, 2000).

**1.5 Outline of the thesis**

This thesis is composed of 7 chapters, including the above. These chapters include:

Chapter 2 is the Literature Review. As a point of departure this chapter presents the context of this study with a critical review of topics germane to the research questions. These include the globalization debate, knowledge transfer, sense-making, cross-cultural studies and Egyptian national culture (with respect to the construal of indigenous managers' interpretations of specific leadership theories). Personal Construct Theory is also included in this chapter as it directly relates to the research question. The final section provides an overview of a range of leadership theories that have evolved within the academic and general practice communities, as these theories are pertinent to the main study (for rationale, refer to Chapter 2).

The literature is synthesized and subsequently a gap in the literature is identified. A further review and critical analysis of the literature is conducted, which leads to the formation of the research questions.

Chapter 3 is the Research Methodology. This chapter provides specific details of the research paradigm, research design, research methods, techniques and rationale with regards to the research questions.

Chapter 4 is the Pilot Study. As both the pilot and main study observed the same methodology the pilot study has been presented prior to the Finding and Analysis of the main study. This includes the rationale for conducting a pilot study and subsequent aims of the researcher. The details of data collection and analysis provide a framework for reflection in consideration of the ensuing main study.

Chapter 5 is the Findings and Analysis of the Main Study. This chapter presents the findings and introduces the emergent findings. An in depth analysis is provided to answer Research Questions

1 and 2 via the analysis generated from the 3 data collection tools (i.e., The Repertory Grid, Personal Values Statements, obtained by means of follow up interview, and Storytelling).

Chapter 6 is the Discussion and Interpretations. This chapter provides a discussion and interpretations of the findings from this empirical study in relation to the literature synthesis and the knowledge gap that was identified from the literature review.

Chapter 7 is the Conclusion. This chapter provides a summary of the research; details of the significance of the research; its contribution to the knowledge base and its limitations. It concludes with suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

The literature review is composed of several interrelated topics commencing with an overview of the globalization debate; the two contending views and consequences of globalization and the position this thesis takes within these two extremes. The proceeding sections of the review introduce knowledge transfer across-cultural boundaries and the associated linguistic concerns; sense-making as a phenomenon that indigenous managers contend with; cross-cultural research and the depiction of Egyptian national culture. The concluding topic provides an evaluation of the historically relevant and contemporary theories and notions of leadership. This will serve to ascertain the current state in the field, in addition to bringing to prominence specific leadership theories germane to the research aims and ensuing questions. A literature review begins with the critical analysis of similarities, differences and paradoxes of findings from a wide-ranging literature base (Eisenhardt, 1989). The way in which the aforementioned topics converge, as indicated by a critical review of the literature, will bring focus and contributing insights in the formulation of the research question (Yin, 2014: 14/15), thus providing an argument that justifies the research questions.

The globalization debate is the starting point for aligning this thesis to the ensuing research questions. Viewing the implications of globalization as either culturally heterogeneous or homogenous, the author asserts that this thesis is situated in neither extreme presented in the extant literature. This thesis draws attention to how the impact of globalization has offered an alternate view towards indigenous cultures, pertinent to the research questions. Furthermore it

extends this argument to a consideration of how cosmopolitanism has imbued the indigenous culture.

The next section discusses the topic of knowledge transfer in order to identify the driving and restraining forces when ideas travel beyond their place of origin. Czarniawska and Joerges model of 'Travel of Ideas' (1996) is an effective framework in which to observe the dis-embedding and re-embedding of ideas being transferred from one culture to another.

To produce a comprehensive and inclusive study in which a viable research question can evolve the linguistic aspect of knowledge transfer is necessary as '*sensitivity to language is essential in a social constructionist approach*' (Gaddefors and Cronsell, 2009: 1192). Languages are predisposed of their own discrete encoding systems which play a crucial role in comprehension (Jankowicz, 2002).

The next section introduces the topic of sense-making. The meanings leaders attach to their external realities and how these are internalized are central to understanding leadership (Avolio, 2007; Podolny, et al, 2005 and Smith and Peterson, 1989). Advancing the leadership phenomenon from the perspective of sense-making provides a more grounded understanding of leadership (Pye, 2005) as an alternative to re-defining leadership in the current field of research.

The leadership theories in this study are considered and reviewed from a cognitive standpoint which incorporates sense-making theory (Weick, 1995) and Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955, 1963) in terms of emergent answers about how indigenous managers construe the leadership theories emanating from Western nations they are exposed to, whilst managing in predominately Egyptian team environments. Despite the fact that Arabs, descendants of the Bedouin values system, (Ali, A., 1993) are quick to welcome technological innovations and

consumables, according to Sidani and Jamali's (2009), empirical study of Egyptian workers' beliefs, they show a reluctance toward embracing cultural ideas and lifestyles imported from abroad even though Egypt has been subjected to more intensive external influences over the last 30 years (Amin, G., 1999). Therefore the 'exact same' leadership behaviour may be perceived quite differently by both leaders and followers of differing cultural heritages (Lord and Brown, 2004).

The literature review progresses to the cross-cultural literature base to focus on the empirical studies of Hofstede et al (1980; 2010); Trompanaars and Hampton-Turner, (1998); the GLOBE Project (House et al, 2001; Javidan et al, 2006) and The World Values Studies (WVS), (Ingelhardt, 2011). The aforementioned studies consider culture as a contextual factor in leadership theories by questioning the transferability, compatibility and application of theories evolving from Western concepts and values. How these theories and associated values transfer from their place of origin to the recipient culture is best understood through an analysis of knowledge transfer and the mechanisms of sense-making.

The next section provides an analysis of the Egyptian national culture. In order to fully comprehend how indigenous managers construe the various Western leadership theories they encounter it is necessary to appreciate the influencing factors such as their cultural heritage, values and beliefs.

The final section provides a critical review of a range of specific Western evolved leadership theories in the light of the research questions. To provide a thorough enquiry, this section includes a leadership framework emanating from the indigenous society in question. Following

Kelly's (1955, 1963) theory of constructivism, it is appropriate to include a representative theory that amplifies the values and beliefs that the actors adhere to.

Figure 2.1 (below) was formulated to clarify the areas encompassed in this constructivist research endeavor. It visually highlights the overlap of the research areas within the scope of the research field to identify the position of the thesis topic, which leads to endorsing the research questions presented at the end of the literature review.

Leadership

Cross-cultural studies — Knowledge Transfer

Globalization — Egyptian National Culture
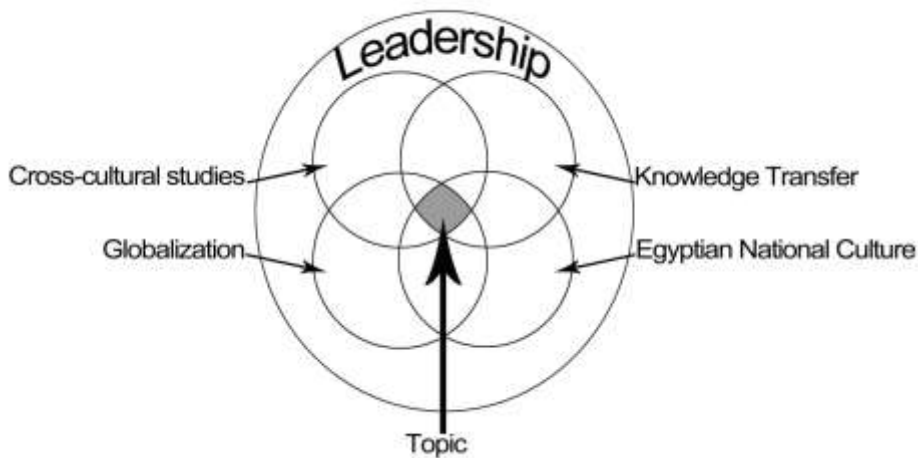
Topic

**Figure 2.1 The Research Field and Topic**

**2.2 Globalization**

**2.2.1 Two Contending Positions**

The globalization debate has remained a contentious issue for several decades. It can be divided in to two distinct camps. The stalwarts, i.e., the hyper-globalists, such as Omhae, (1995), as cited by Amin, A., (1997) postulate that the far reaching effects of globalization are responsible for transforming state institutions which will see an end to the nation states. The protagonists claim cultural homogeneity is the way forward (Wong, 2006). In his defense of globalization, Rothkopf

(1997) asserts that the homogenizing effects of globalization smooth over the cultural gaps and remove many of its negative dimensions thus refining and embracing a universal culture, oriented towards American culture, in which a common set of values prevail and at the same time allowing for cultural distinction. Culture is never static (Ali, M. et al, 2006; Erez and Gati, 2004; Ibrahim, 2014; Fang, 2005; Rothkopf, 1997).

In contrast, the traditionalist view is exemplified by authors such as Robinson (1996, cited in Amin, A., 1997) and Hirst and Thompson (1996, cited in Amin, A., 1997). The global sceptics postulate that there is nothing new or novel worthy of celebrating the notion of globalization. At best it represents an extension of the historically established trading activities as witnessed in the nineteenth century movement of goods, people and currency exchanges across continents (Amin, A., 1997; Giddens, 1999).

Along similar lines Amin, G., (1999) points out that Egypt has a long history of international trading links. Moreover, Amin, G., (1999) asserts that the process of interaction between states, groups and individuals throughout the world displays real and radical incidents of globalization with exceedingly important consequences. Egypt's integration into the world economy has been economically detrimental and eroded cultural identity. '*Globalization may pay lip service to local cultures or may even make concessions to it*', however any potential benefits to the indigenous culture are attenuated by commercial spinoffs (Amin, G., 1999: 22).

Egypt's economy opened up considerably under former Presidents Sadat and his successor, Mubarak who continued with the 'open door' policy by launching aggressive initiatives to stimulate economic reforms to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) (CIA Fact book, 2014). Flows from FDI rose strongly due to privatization (Rice, 2011) as the country opened up to, in

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particular, telecommunications and banking (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012; Rice, 2011). About a third of Egypt's trade is with the European Union. Within its own borders, Egypt has followed a slow but steady plan to meet its WTO commitments.

**2.2.2 Conceptualizing the Global-Local Tensions**

Both Amin, A., (1997) and Giddens (1999) position their arguments between these two opposing positions in the globalization debate. Foreign firms and local practices merge in the backdrop of a newly emergent, transparent and fluid national culture in which both parties stand to benefit Fang (2005). Globalization affects culture according to the level of acculturation (Erez and Gati, 2004). The aforementioned authors' multi-level framework is premised on globalization as a force that '*enhances cross-cultural alliance, knowledge sharing and technology transfer*' (Erez and Gati, 2004: 592) and dependent on the 'inner- outer' tensions the indigenous culture grapples with.

Just as culture at a macro level affects the various levels nested within it (i.e., national, organizational, group and individual culture) there is a reciprocal process by which the aforementioned levels affect the macro level of culture (Erez and Gati, 2004). In a similar vein, Fang's (2005) description of culture is one of incorporating, national, regional, organizational and global groupings.

Wong (2006) asserts that rather than eroding indigenous culture globalization has created an increasing interest in local cultures, such as the exportation of certain local cuisines and ethnic practices which have produced a hybridization of new cultural offerings. This form of globalization termed, 'glocalization' (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2000) is defined as the

balance between consistency and adaptation of standardization and indigenous market characteristics.

The author takes the standpoint represented by Giddens (1999) and Amin, A., (1997), Fang (2005) and Wong (2006) in which globalization is recognized as encouraging rather than diminishing or eradicating indigenous cultural development. It positively contributes to re-shaping a local cultural identity through self-expression, thus propagating features of traditions and customs in an innovative and unique way (Giddens, 1999). This proposition can be aligned to the concept of cosmopolitanism, which is '*an openness to other cultures, values and experiences'* (Woodward et al, 2008: 209).

*Cosmopolitanism as Positioned in the Middle East Region*

An emerging global landscape is generating cosmopolitanism by offering novel corporate cultures. This gives rise to the impact of cultural variability (Schmidt et al, 2007), mobility and cultural-symbolic competencies grounded in the form of 'code switching'. The notion of cosmopolitanism in the Middle East is not embraced (Freitag, 2010; Hanley, 2008). The fact that cosmopolitanism does not sit easily with Middle Easterners may be attributed to the 'inner-outer' tensions referred to above by Erez and Gati (2004) which threatens Arab and Islamic values (Freitag, 2010).

Globalization has produced an inadvertent corollary (Amin, A., 1997) Giddens, 1999) and Wong, 2006) rather than suppressing indigenous cultures, globalization has fueled cultural diversity by generating an amalgam of cultures. Wong (2006) postulates that local cultures have flourished in the current globalized setting via enlarged markets and progressive business management. Gaddafors and Crossnel (2007) concluded, from their empirical study that local

culture is recreated when an 'out there' (radical new idea) and the 'in here' (local customs) are actualized. Succeeding in today's global market is more likely to come about if standardization and adaptation strategies are combined, rather than treated as either or options (Hussain and Khan, 2013). A third subculture may be emerging in Egypt, propagating a newly acquired set of characteristics in which ethnic roots coalesce with novel managerial styles (Rice, 2011) due to the younger generation having  greater ease of access to Western education (Leat and Kott, 2005; Rice, 2011).

This cross-cultural amalgam presents new possibilities for local cultural autonomy and self-identity. The 'in here' phenomenon is how globalization is received and construed by the indigenous agents affecting their lives at both contextual and emotional levels, driving them to divorce from their conventional beliefs and values, to embrace a more open and reflexive stance generating a new form of self-expression (Giddens, 1999). Globalization is multi-dimensional, encapsulating the micro level of the individual and the macro level of the global culture explained by the reciprocal influences that develop from one level to another (Erez and Gati, 2004).

These changes have been driven by the acceleration effects of electronic communications, providing instant global communication altering both time and space (Giddens, 1999). An example of this was the momentous civil uprising and mobilization of anti-government groups, in Egypt, which saw the then president reluctantly step down after almost thirty years in power. The Arab Spring in Egypt, 2011 was galvanized into action by the influence of telecommunications, internet and in particular, social media (Rice, 2011). Social media played a crucial role in the popular uprising in the MENA region between the years 2009 and 2011, (Rice, 2011) allowing civilians to participate in communication discourse and marshal widespread

support and action (Shirazi, 2013). Furthermore, evidence of the impact of the indigenous culture leading to a cultural breakdown is currently evident in Egypt. Egypt is experiencing changes in its leadership culture. Younger business professionals, as they assume from prominent roles, are becoming more influenced by Western education and ideas. (Rice, 2011: 254). This view is supported by Elbanna and Ali, A. (2012) and Leat and Kott (2007). In the past Egyptians showed an openness to Western culture whilst retaining a strong sense of national identity (Amin G., 2004), but nowadays Egyptians are more susceptible to being Westernized (Rice, 2011). The magnitude of globalization is far reaching in respect of communications.

*'where information and images are routinely transmitted across the globe, we are all regularly in contact with others who think differently and live differently from ourselves'* (Giddens 2002: 4/5).

Despite the influence and various pressures of globalization in Egypt it would be incorrect to conclude that theories originating in Western cultures apply similarly in non-Western contexts (Leat and Kott, 2005). In fact Hofstede (1980) questioned whether or not US evolved theories are transferable beyond their country of origin. Central to this thesis is the need to understand how Egyptian managers construe Western leadership theories and the role and impact that national culture has. Therefore it is necessary to ascertain the degree of success that leadership theories yield and why some theories may be preferred over others. Thus, it is necessary to identify the conditions in which ideas are transferred across-cultural boundaries and the ensuing linguistic components. A framework to illustrate the process by which notions of leadership travel from one location (Western nations) to another, distinctly different location (Middle Eastern nations) will be elaborated in the next section. It will introduce and critically analyze the main issues and discuss how they are addressed in the literature.

**2.3 Knowledge Transfer Across Cultures**

The effects of globalization can be perceived as a dual process stimulating as opposed to stifling cultural diversity, which engenders cultural heterogeneity, propagating a distinct, 'home-grown' form of cultural identity. This is the position that this thesis has taken in order to understand how Egyptian managers construe the various leadership theories they encounter.

One direct effect of globalization is that organizations need to communicate with new and different countries, regions and cultures. Consequently managers are faced with a new set of challenges (House et al, 2001; Hsieh, 2010; Morrison, 2000; Yukl, 2013). Companies in the Middle East region need to connect to global innovation networks and reap the benefits whilst simultaneously upgrading employee skills, restructure operations, and redeploying their resources (Zahra, 2011). Egypt, in particular, faces a formidable challenge in improving and developing managerial skills (Leat and Kott, 2005) to stimulate economic progress (Rice, 2011). The inception of global trading relations promotes and produces trade and licensing agreements, mergers and acquisition all of which require conformance to international standards. The adoption of new skills and business processes, communication in a second / foreign language (English), differences in time and space all present formidable challenges to indigenous managers interfacing in a global business world (Hsieh, 2010). Knowledge is disseminated in complex ways across-cultural groups (Caulkins, 2004) and unlike information, it is contextually rich and broad in scope, with embedded norms and values (Bhagat, 2002). In fact embeddedness is an established feature of knowledge (Cummings and Teng, 2003), which constitutes tacit

knowledge; therefore the connection between culture and knowledge transfer is inevitable (Nafie, 2012).

To provide a detailed review of the literature on how ideas are transferred it is necessary to discuss this from the perspective of diffusion of ideas, which is traditionally how ideas-spreading is explained (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996). Section 2.2.2 pointed out that globalization has been redefined by MNCs opting for an adaptation strategy, as opposed to a standardization strategy. This has important implications with regards to diffusion of innovations. The reluctance in embracing cosmopolitanism in the Middle East (Freitag, 2010; Hanley, 2008) also has direct relevance to the diffusion of ideas. At this point several factors require highlighting, as follows:

**2.3.1 Diffusion of Innovation**

The term diffusion of innovation seeks to explain how new ideas and practices proliferate within and across organizations (Dobosz-Bourne, 2004). One of the most prevalent adoption models is Rogers (2003), (Sahin.2006). Rogers (2003) defines diffusion as

 *"the process in which an innovation is communicated thorough certain channels over time among the members of a social system'* (Rogers, 2003: 5).

This emphasizes that the driver of this communication is information shared in order to achieve mutual understanding (Rogers, 2005). Rogers' model possesses four components, i.e., innovation, communication channels, time and social systems, which each play a role in the five stages of knowledge transference (i.e., knowledge; persuasion; decision; implementation and confirmation stages; (Rogers, 2003, cited in Sahin, 2006).

*Innovation*: The perception participants hold about the newness of an adoption is connected to the decision making process through three distinct stages: i.e., knowledge, persuasion, and decision. The level of uncertainty surrounding the diffusion of an idea is a potential barrier to its adoption. This is an interesting point in relation to the research questions, which focus on how indigenous managers construe new and foreign concepts. Hofstede et al (2010) categorized Egyptians as high on Uncertainty Avoidance (see Section 2.5.3). Furthermore, Mostafa (2005) found that professional field of work and education are key determinants of innovation in Egyptian society.

*Communication Channels*: Interpersonal channels are the most impactful, the success of which largely depends on the similarity of characteristics (i.e., beliefs, education, socio-economic status etc.) possessed by the actors, i.e., homophily; communication problems are more likely among heterophilous agents (Sahin, 2006). This has relevance to this case study, i.e., cross-cultural transfer of ideas to Egypt, a country in which a high degree of homophily characterizes the culture (see Hofstede et al, 2010). Collectivist societies adopt an indirect communication mode (Qamar et al, 2013) and Egypt has been categorized as a collectivist society (Hofstede et al, 2010), (see Section 2.5).

*Time*: This concerns the length of time it takes to accept an innovation. Egyptians are categorized as synchronous (i.e., doing several things in tandem) in their perception of time (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998), a notion supported by an empirical case study of Egyptian engineers (Mahran and Geraedts, 2009).

*Social System*: This factor depends on the characteristics of the social structure which ultimately determines the type of adopter an individual becomes (Sahin, 2006).

In the last few decades Egypt has been exposed to a greater degree of external influences, (Amin, G., 1997), culminating in the adoption of innovations and ideas initially by the privileged classes of society before filtering down to the less privileged. In other words social status is a determining factor in Egyptian society.

*'Symbols of the good life', of greater power or of a rise in social status, have to be demonstrated first by the more successful members of a nation or social group before they can spread across a nation'* (Amin G., 1997: 20).

Interestingly, Elsaid, A. and Elsaid E. (2012) postulate that Egyptians are more inclined to adopt a leadership style that has gained widespread acceptance, within their society, rather than a leadership style originating in the West. This may well be an example of the influence that significant others have on maintaining our subjective reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1991) and certainly indicates the importance of societal peer-pressure.

## 2.4 Translation and Travel of Ideas

Rogers' (2003) diffusion model presents a linear model in which progressive stages of knowledge transfer result in various degrees of ideas adoption (Dobosz-Bourne, 2004, Sahin, 2006). Irrespective of the setting, the purpose of knowledge transfer is to impart source knowledge successfully to the recipient (Cummings and Teng, 2003). Knowledge transfer is frequently considered a one directional process, occurring when a concept is transferred from one site to another (Dobosz and Jankowicz, 2002). In fact knowledge transfer is a bi-directional process that encompasses interactions between both the sender and recipient.

There is substantial evidence in the literature (Cummings and Teng, 2003) that effective knowledge re-creation depends not only on the accessibility of the source knowledge, but equally

importantly on how the recipient converts, adapts or reconfigures this knowledge to be aligned at a localized level of comprehension. This argument has been elaborated by Latour, 1986, (cited in Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996) who differentiates Rogers' (2003) diffusion model from what may be called the translation model.

The translation model is premised on differing ways of construing ideas in which the actors energize ideas propelling them into a trajectory of travel (Latour, 1986, cited in Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996). Translation places meaning in;

'*displacement, drift, invention, mediation, creation of a new link that did not exist before and modifies in part the two agents'.* Latour (1993: 6, cited in Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996)

Considering this proposition in the light of knowledge being conveyed from one culture to another a more profound level of analysis is required, for which Czarniawska and Joerges, (1996) model is applicable.

When knowledge is conveyed across cultural domains it does so within the confines of the values and beliefs of the sender (Bhagat et al, 2002), which are not readily detachable (Jankowicz, 2001) and transmitted by recipient's culture-specific sets of values (Bhagat et al, 2002). In order to conduct an in-depth exploration of the manner in which ideas travel between national cultures, a specific framework was chosen, 'Travel of Ideas' (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996). This model deconstructs the various stages of the communication process across cultures and serves to track the process of dis-embedding of an idea and its subsequent re-embedding in a different location, time and space (see Figure 2.2 below).

moment/place B

AN IDEA... translated into - - - - → AN OBJECT... translated into - - - → AN ACTION... translated/
repeated/

(reembedding)

sent/
translated

moment/place A

AN IDEA... translated into - - → AN OBJECT... translated into - - - → AN ACTION... translated/ - - - - → AN INSTITUTION...translated into
(a text,                                    repeated/
a picture,                                  stabilized into.
a prototype)
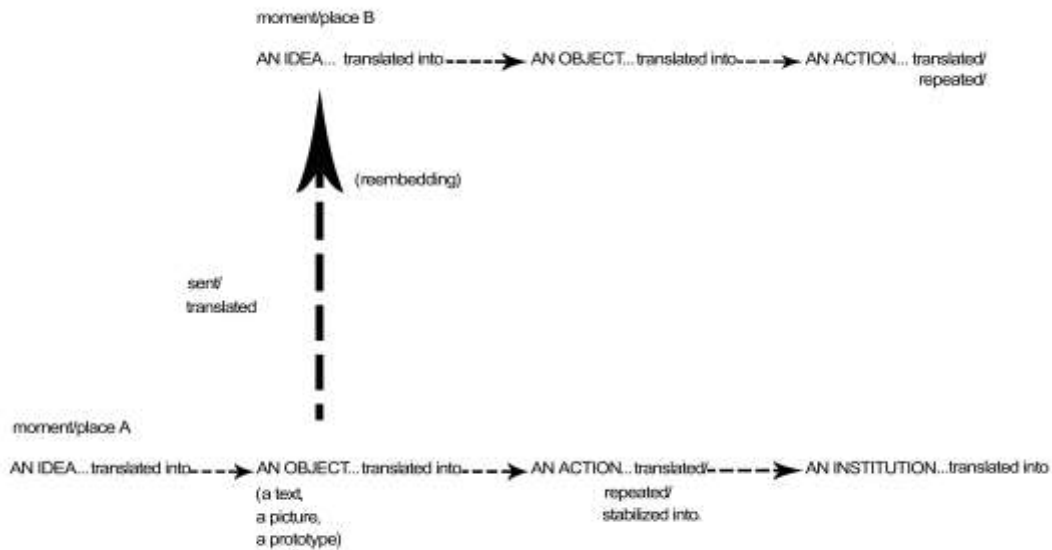
**Figure 2.2 Travel of Ideas (After Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996)**

The point of departure is the conception stage, i.e., 'an idea' is conceived and visualized. The

idea is then objectified, i.e., interpreted into an artifact of some kind before becoming mobilized

and finally institutionalized. Implanted in the model are the notions of time and space which are

considered when an idea moves through 'uncharted waters' i.e., a different cultural setting. The

idea (e.g., a leadership theory) that evolved in local time and space (i.e., in Western nations) is

then objectified (e.g., forming part of a training curriculum and incorporated in a leadership

development manual) prior to travelling to its new location, when it becomes dis-embedded as it

moves to a new 'foreign' location (i.e., the Egypt office of Company X) and arriving as 'an idea'

(a leadership theory). The aspects and characteristics of the idea are then subjected to a

translation process by the recipient culture, in this case, Egyptian managers. The idea is

construed within the confines of the indigenous culture before being reified, i.e., re-embedded.

Therefore, the focus of attention of this model is not the actual idea, per se (i.e., a leadership

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theory) it is the process of translation that the leadership theory undergoes by the recipients, that is central to answering the research questions. Furthermore, the 'Travel of Ideas' model acknolwedges the 'out there, in here' phenomenon that Amin, A., (1997) and Erez and Gati (2004) use in describing globalization.

The translation stage happens when the idea is subjected to re-embedding in a different time and space, i.e., a different culture. This involves an initial stage of categorizing the idea in question with the purpose of forming an identity 'typifications' transcending from life experience. In other words our perception of something is dependent on the familiar, which is why unfamiliar ideas are not readily absorbed. Thus Western leadership theories will be subjected to the recipient culture's pre-existing notions of leadership. Bruner (1961, cited in Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996) asserts that discovery is not the act of finding out something previously unknown it is a process of synthesizing (existing/known) evidence which is then merged with new insights. The notion of how one's personal constructs are intrinsically related to the level of acceptance of new experiences and ideas is further developed in Section 2.4.4 Personal Construct Theory.

At the translation stage ideas that have been selected and filtered out by the recipient are then transformed to quasi-objects before being objectified, which equates to re-embedding ideas in the new location. Czarniawska and Joerges (1996), postulate that converting ideas to linguistic artifacts, i.e., labels and metaphors is a method intended to reduce the associated displacement effects in the translation process. This 'local labelling' process is how the recipient makes sense of the idea and when successful it results in the institutionalization stage, i.e., the stage in which the idea gradually becomes absorbed into the stock of relatively unreflective and taken-for-granted customs and practices.

To fully comprehend how ideas travel from one culture to another the role and intricacies that language plays en route, are central to this understanding (Qamar et al, 2013). Furthermore language, talk and communication are pertinent issues of sense-making (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014: Weick et al, 2005: 409), which is a focal point of this research enquiry (see Section 2.4.3 Sense-making).

**2.4.1 Language as a Component of Knowledge Transfer**

Rogers (2003) asserts that there is greater success in diffusion of ideas that transpire between homophilous individuals, i.e., those with similar characteristics and this includes language. Language can be a serious barrier to effective communications (Feely and Harzing, 2003) and as a medium for communication is not transparent. It is in fact problematic (Gaddafors and Cronsell, 2009) and laden with potential ambiguity (Jankowicz, 1997, 2003; Scheer, 2003). Buried within this language barrier are a host of negative consequences such as uncertainty, suspicion, conflict, factions and cognitive divides (Feely and Harzing, 2003).

Despite the fact that an increasing number of a population is proficient in English, the individuals are not necessarily acculturated, nor do they possess the corresponding mindset (Usunier, 2010). As the Egyptian managers in this case study are second language speakers of English, it is necessary to provide a comprehensive review of the linguistic challenges such as the schematic perspective. This is particularly important as schematic knowledge is socially acquired (Alptekin, 1993) and internalized (Berger and Luckmann, 1991). Scheer (2003) asserts that language can convey idiosyncratic meaning as it embodies group cultural experience.

Schematic knowledge is arranged in a culture-specific manner and acts in the form of cognitive structures through which we interpret information (Alptekin, 1993: 136; Luna et al, 2008),

internalized and institutionally defined (Berger and Luckmann, 1991: 155), thereby creating our reality. A second or foreign language speaker of English who has never resided in Western nations may be unable to process the nuances and subtleties hidden within the contextual variables of the language itself (Jankowicz, 1997; Widdowson, 1990 cited in Alptekin, 1993). This phenomenon, known as 'cultural competence', is a profound combination of beliefs, knowledge, feelings, attitudes and behaviour (Wallace, 1988, cited in Alptekin, 1993). Jankowicz (1997) states that shared understanding is brought about when both parties (the Western native speaker and the non-native speaker) coincide in selecting the same meaning from the phenomenal flow according to

'*what they choose to give attention to and therefore, from what they are able to construe'* (Jankowicz, 1997: 2).

Differences in communication exist in cross-cultural language settings (Feely and Harzing, 2003; Jankowicz, 1997; Qamar et al, 2013; Zaharna, 1995) at several levels. Section 2.2 highlighted the impact globalization has had on Egypt and thus provided indigenous managers with greater exposure to Western management theories and frameworks. Furthermore, phrases may be culturally-bound, so that terminology in one culture may not hold the same meaning or represent the same values in another (Jankowicz, 1997) therefore, conferring and agreeing on common meanings is essential (Jankowicz, 1997, 2001, 2002).

This raises questions about how this impacts on Egyptian managers who communicate around the globe as well as with their peers and subordinates. According to Kabaskul and Bodur (2002: 45), '*Arab identity is primarily based on language'* and in respect of Arab culture, language

serves as a social conduit (Zaharna, 1995); in which case, a more detailed understanding of the Arabic language is necessary.

**2.4.2 Differences and Characteristics of the Arabic Language**

Arabic is spoken by approximately 200 million people to date (Ferghali, 1997). The major socio-historical dynamics that influenced the role of Arabic for the Arabs originates in the language's status as an art form, a religious phenomenon, and an identity tool all of which appear to have moulded the role of the Arabic language in a totally different fashion than that of English (Zaharna, 1995). Thus there is a distinct difference between Arab and Western argumentative discourse at a formal and rhetorical level (Koch, 1983).

Arabic speaking style is predisposed towards a more holistic form; and rather than presenting a case in the linear, sequential manner, evident in Western cultures the Arabic speaker prefers to deliver the entire global picture (Zaharna, 1995). Furthermore Egyptians, due to their intrinsic level of formality display less directness in their communication style compared to their US counterparts and have a propensity to talk around a subject (Husain and McMullen, 2010). When it comes to argumentation and persuasion, Arab interlocutors use ideas (as opposed to tangible facts) to persuade (Brown and Ataalla, 2002; Fergahli, 1997). As a technique for obtaining agreement, Arabic discourse is underpinned by rhetorical, elaborate paraphrasing, reverse paraphrasing (Koch, 1983; Ferghali, 1997) and repetition of lexical patterns (Brown and Ataalla, 2002: Koch, 1983; Ferghali, 1997). This is a particular vehicle for effecting leader-follower relations which is highly relevant to this thesis.

Pertinent to the topic of cross-cultural communications presentation is the prevailing style in hierarchical, autocratic societies (such as Egypt, Hofstede et al, 2010) where an absence of

critical analysis is evident and 'truths' are sacrosanct. In contrast democratic societies are characterized by equality that allows an element of doubt and the need to prove the truth (Koch, 1983).

Considering the issues of language as a communication vehicle for conveying ideas from two related aspects, i.e., English as a second language, in which people try to express themselves by compromising on the 'intellectual finesse' of their native tongue (Freitag, 2010) and the style of spoken Arabic, questions are raised as to how Egyptian managers, interpret and make sense of Western evolved leadership theories.

 '*The sense-making to the extent that it involves communication, takes place in interactive talk and draws on the resources of language in order to formulate and exchange through talk…symbolically encoded representations of circumstances* ' (Taylor and Van Every, 2000: 58 cited in Weick et al, 2005).

### 2.4.3 Sense-making

Communication is a key component of sense-making and organizing (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014; Weick et al, 2005) and is a continuous process of making sense of the situations and events people are exposed to and affected by (Taylor and Van Every, 2000, cited in Weick et al, 2005). Pertinent to this thesis is how indigenous managers construe various leadership theories emanating from the West, in so doing how they make sense of each theory through their cultural lenses. This involves both the process of sense-making as well as the mental processing of construing the various leadership theories.

Although this thesis is not seeking to define leadership, understanding leadership constitutes one aspect of the general research area in which the research question is situated. Furthermore, sense-

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making is a key leadership capability (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014). Pye (2005) postulates that an alternate and more fruitful endeavor, would be to reframe leadership from the perspective of a sense-making process; that would provide a more insightful and grounded account by which leadership can be understood (Higgs, 2003).

Sense-making is 'the making of sense' which states that the how, what and why of an event and its ensuing effects are essential properties of the process (Weick, 1995: 4). It is a notion grounded in identity construction about which we make retrospective sense, in a continuous process whilst creating a sense of stability from volatile environments in the backdrop, social and ongoing, focused on and extracted by cues in which plausibility takes precedence over accuracy. Sense-making is invoked when unusual, unfamiliar events of potential confusion threaten our expectations (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014: 57). Thus sense-making is a socially constructed process (Berger & Luckmann, 1991) as well as a cognitive process in which individuals attempt to interpret and explain sets of cues from their environments (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014).

There is a paucity of empirical research on sense-making (Weick, 2005), despite the fact that sense-making is often one of the initial stages managers undergo in their attempts to comprehend the context in which a company and its people operate (Ancona, 2012). It is generally overlooked in the leadership studies and training literature, being dwarfed by other topics (Ancona, 2012). Sense-making plays an integral role in leadership development, not only in assisting leaders to comprehend the dynamics of the volatile environment they operate in and evoking the sense-making practice among subordinates, but it also acts as personal level in the guise of self-appraisal (Ancona, 2012). Furthermore, Maitlis (2005: 22) asserts that the majority of research on sense-making generally overlooks the interactions and affective behaviours of the various actors' sense-making processes.

Ultimately the leadership theories the Egyptian managers encounter are designed to enhance their skills as leaders so sense-making in this case has a dual purpose of construal and development. Maitlis's (2005) qualitative research approaches the social processes of sense-making by considering two types of organizational actors, i.e., the leader and the stakeholders. Sense-giving is introduced as a conduit for identifying four distinct sense-making outcomes. Sense-giving is defined as

'*the process of attempting to influence the sense-making and meaning construction of others toward a preferred redefinition of organizational reality*' (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991: 442, cited in Maitlis, 2005).

There are parallels with Culturally Endorsed Leadership (see Section 2.6.3). Stakeholders participate in sense-making from several organizational perspectives, histories and personal backgrounds that produce divergent frames of reference which cause them to assume different roles in sense-making processes (Maitlis, 2005). As the indigenous managers attempt to process and internalize the various leadership theories, their interactions with the stakeholders, i.e., their subordinates, peers and reporting managers will contribute to the sense-making processes they undergo.

'*How they construct what they construct, why, and with what effects are the central questions for people interested in sensemaking*' (Weick, 1995: 4).

Thus, from a constructivist perspective of how indigenous managers construe the various leadership theories they are exposed to, it is necessary to consider Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955, 1963).

## 2.4.4 Personal Construct Theory (PCT)

PCT evolved from the work of psychologist George Kelly. *The Psychology of Personal Constructs* (Vol 1 and 2), 1955, presents his original theory of personal constructs, which is based on a fundamental postulate

'*a person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events*' (Kelly, 1955: 32)

and eleven corollaries. Jankowicz (1987: 482) advances that, combined '(*T*)*he 12 assertions are quite general in scope, being an approach to psychology as much as a succinct and major theory of personality*'. Kelly (1955) postulates that the value of a theory does not lie in its truth, per se, but in its utility. PCT is based on the premise of understanding and interpreting the meanings individuals attach to events, in order to make sense of their environments. Kelly (1955) proposes that individuals formulate a personal construct system, based on their interpretation of past experiences, allowing them to deal with current and anticipated events. According to Kelly (1955: 4), there is no epistemological difference between the lay individual making sense of day-to-day events and the more formal theorizing in which the scientist engages; his 'man-as-scientist' model states this explicitly.

Construing is defined by Kelly (1955: 35) as 'placing an interpretation' (i.e., the constructs) on what is being construed (e.g., for our purposes, the leadership theories). Along with the fundamental postulate of PCT (see Section 2.2.4) Kelly (1955: 55) identified 11 corollaries, of which the Experience corollary is pertinent to this study since it asserts that people will act on the basis of those constructs that have been shown to be effective, i.e., most worth their while,

'*A person's construction system varies as he successively construes the replications of events*'. (Kelly, 1955: 50).

Thus individuals construct mental templates which they attempt to fit over their perceptions of the realities they are confronted with in life. Kelly (1955) termed these mental templates as constructs by which individuals seek to try out as they interpret their experiences; '*They are ways of construing the world*' (Kelly, 1955: 7).

The Repertory Grid evolved from PCT as a practical tool in which to elicit personal constructs (Kelly, 1955). Its pragmatic utility allows individuals to make sense of their lives (Butt and Burr, 2004). Therefore the Repertory Grid Technique (RGT) can be considered an insightful means of understanding how Egyptian managers construe the Western evolved leadership theories they encounter and how they make sense of each theory within the context of their work environment in Company X.

Knowledge transfer activities are affected by national culture since knowledge is entrenched in individuals' values and belief system (Nafie, 2012) and this process can be hindered when cultural differences exist between the source and recipient (Simonin, 1999). Kitayama, (2002) asserts that culture plays a critical role in moulding an individual's psychological processes so an important consideration concerns the way in which indigenous managers articulate their mental models and explicate their ideas, values and emotions.

The notion that national culture may be one of the determining factors of cognitive styles (Savvas et al, 2001) is a further point of interest in this thesis and the empirical study carried out by the aforementioned authors (which included Egyptian and UK participants in the sample) gives credence to this. Thus an understanding of Western evolved leadership theories and the

values and beliefs that emanate from them, as they travel through time and space from one location to another that is different in language, societal culture and norms make it essential to review the literature on cross-cultural research.

## 2.5 Cross-cultural Studies

There are compelling reasons for exploring the impact that national culture has on leadership in order to understand what is and what is not effective leadership in the realms of varying cultural contexts (Triandis, 1993, cited in House et al, 2001). A manager's national culture plays a pivotal role in the ultimate success of international and global business being mediated by his or her cultural values on leadership style (Byrne and Bradley, 2007: 173). One of the principal reasons for conducting cross-cultural leadership research is to identify how leadership is construed in cultures that do not conform to the Western based leadership models (House et al, 2002; Sidani, 2008). Table 2.1 below highlights various ways in which culture has been defined in the extant literature base.

Hofstede et al's (2010) definition of cognitive embeddedness is indeed relevant to this thesis of how indigenous managers construe leadership theories evolving from a different culture.

The literature base has largely focused on the national level characterised by matching a cultural group with a nation-state; investigating cross-cultural differences in national values (Hofstede, 1980; House et al, 1999; Schwartz, 1992) in organizational practices and differences in effective leadership characteristics (House, et al, 1999, cited in Erez and Gati, 2004: 587).

**Table 2.1 Definitions of National Culture**

| Author(s) | Definition | Ontology |
|---|---|---|
| Kluckhohn, (1951: 86, cited in Parnell and Crandall, 2003). | '*patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts*;' | Anthropological perspective |
| Erez and Earley (1993) | Culture is a set of common characteristics that can be used to discriminate a group people. | As above |
| Hofstede et al (2010: 5) | '*Culture is 'software of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another*' | The cognitively embedded nature of culture |
| Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997: 6). | '*culture is the way in which a group of people solves problems and reconciles dilemmas*' | Commercial perspective |
| House et al (2001: 494/495). | '*shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations*' | Anthropological perspective |

There is no shortage of country specific and cross-cultural comparative studies examining the relationship between culture and management and leadership research in the literature (House et al, 2001). Against a background of so many cross-cultural studies that have been conducted (Kirkman et al, 2006) this section focuses on those pertinent to the research questions, i.e., research that has included Egypt.

The research question of how indigenous managers construe leadership theories originating from a Western culture Kitayami (2002) requires the use of a systems view of culture. This is premised on the notion that a person's psychological processes are systematized by proactively aligning individual behaviour to the relevant, surrounding cultural systems (Erez and Gati, 2004; Kitayama, 2002). This theory depicts culture as a dynamic system of loosely arranged factors, i.e., meanings, practices and concomitant mental processes and responses (D'Andrade, 2001;

Giddens, 1984, cited in Kitayami, 2002). Cultural meanings are manifested in historically

accrued public artifacts and affiliated mental processing and behaviours (Adams et al, 2001)

which implies that culture can be tacit in nature (Kitayami, 2002).

The cross-cultural literature has generally highlighted a distinct relationship between national

culture and workplace outcomes (Kirkman et al, 2006: 285) as well as leadership styles (House,

et al, 2001). The research has bifurcated into two contrasting opinions on the role and

significance of national culture towards leadership, i.e., the divergence versus convergence

argument (House et al, 2001). Those who postulate that leadership is culturally divergent, base

their case on the fact that different cultural groups might not share the same concept of

leadership. In other words culturally implied notions of leadership may dominate leader

responses producing atypical outcomes (Hartog et al, 1999); a form of cultural sensitivity termed

as Factor X by Kakabadse et al (2011). As national culture is associated with many facets of life,

it is highly plausible that every country will possess its own unique style of management

(Morrison, 2000; Nahavandi, 2006, cited in Hsieh, 2010) as national culture allows individuals to

think and act in similar ways (Humphreys, 1996). Furthermore, people in different countries do

not necessarily assess their leaders through the same lens (Javidan et al, 2006) nor do leaders'

behaviours have universal agreement (Smith et al, 1989; Parnell and Hatem, 1997; Zhang, 2012).

There are 4 major bodies of research relevant to the characterization of national cultures as they

relate to management and leadership;- Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions (2010), Trompenaars and

Hampden-Turner's Cultural Dimensions (1998), Project GLOBE (House et al, 2001, Javidan et

al, 2006) and The World Values Study (Inglehardt, 2011).

This section will elaborate on the 4 major cross cultural studies; their basic assumptions and their validity and limitations according to the research community, with reference to how Egyptian culture has been characterized and portrayed.

**2.5.1 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions**

Hofstede's seminal research (1980) was a starting point for further cross-cultural research (Kirkman et al, 2006; Smith, Dugan and Trompenaars, 1996, Tung and Verbeke, 2010) spanning more than two decades (Smith, 2006). According to Reis et al (2011), Jones (2007) and Kirkman et al (2006) Hofstede's research remains the most widely cited worldwide (Ali, M., 2005). Hofstede's model has been the most widely applied and remains widely used in the academic as well as the professional arena (Reis et al 2011; Shi and Wang, 2011) in comparative management and in cross-cultural studies (Weir, 2001). It has retained its position in the cross-cultural literature, due to its straightforward application (Kirkman, et al, 2006; Reis et al, 2011). Furthermore, large scale studies produced since Hofstede's work have sustained and amplified Hofstede's findings, rather than contradicting them (Smith and Bond, 1999, cited in Kirkman et al, 2006: 308)

The pioneering work of Hofstede has been the subject of much debate over the past two decades (for details see Fang, 2005; Javidan et al, 2006; Kitayama, 2002; Mc Sweeney, 2002; Smith, 2006; Smith et al, 1996). Nevertheless Hofstede's empirical research has stood the test of time (Kirkman et al, 2006) and retained a credible status in the research community, with reference to current cross-cultural studies (Weir, 2001) and future research implications (Kirkman et al, 2006) thus remaining just as relevant as ever for future cross-cultural research (Kirkman et al, 2006; Qamar, 2013).

Hofstede's (1980) landmark study of IBM employees obtained data from 40 countries (Kirkman et al, 2006), which initially identified four bipolar dimensions: Power Distance; Individualism/Collectivism; Uncertainty Avoidance; Masculinity/Femininity (Hofstede, 1980). This study was endorsed by determining the significance of the correlations of geographic, economic and social indicators (Smith et al, 1996). The connection between individualism and economic development indicated that collectivist nations experience a lower GDP per capita than nations categorized as individualist (Smith et al, 1996).This is particularly pertinent to Egypt, whose economic woes have been stated in Section 2.2.

Hofstede et al's (2010) more recent research included seven countries in the Middle East region, including Egypt, although the authors *did* point out that 'Arab countries differ among themselves', (Hofstede et al, 2010: 94). Furthermore, Egypt is considered different and unique among its Middle Eastern neighbours (Parnell and Hatem, 1997; Parnell and Crandall, 2003). Below, in Table 2.1, are the key components of the aforementioned research and the findings related to Egypt.

To conclude, Hofstede et al's (2010) study indicates that Egypt is characterized as a high power distance, collectivist society which is male oriented with a strong inclination to avoiding uncertainty with an emphasis on the past that disregards a concern for the future.

**Table 2.2 Cross-cultural Dimensions Pertaining to Egypt (Hofstede el al, 2010)**

| Dimension | Description | Rank (out of 76 country clusters) | Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| Power Distance (PD) | The degree to which less powerful individuals accept and expect the unequal distribution of power. | 12-14 | High |
| Individualism versus Collectivism (IC) | The degree to which individuals demonstrate independence as opposed to interdependence to powerful and cohesive in-groups. | 41-42 | Low on Individualism |
| Masculinity/Femininity (MF) | The degree to which commonly associated masculine traits (i.e., authority, assertiveness, performance and success) are preferred to traits considered feminine (i.e. personal relationships, quality of life, service and welfare). | 31-32 | High on Moderate masculinity |
| Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI) | The extent to which members of a culture by ambiguous or unknown situations. | 40-41 | High |
| Long Term verses Short Term Orientation | The extent that society prioritizes its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future. | 90-96 | Very Low on Long Term Orientation |

## 2.5.2 Trompenaars and Hampton Turner Cross-cultural Dimensions

This study identified a number of cross-cultural dimensions referred to as 'The Seven Dimensions of Culture' (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). These can be described as 'couples of opposing attitudinal dispositions' (Balan and Vreja, 2013: 95). Culture is defined from the perspective of problem solving and the reconciliation of dilemmas that occur in everyday life as well as in the context of business (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). The researchers' intentions were based on identifying cultural differences and their effect on conducting business and management (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998: 1). Although the authors acknowledged that much of their research base built on Hofstede's (1980) earlier

research (Trompenaars and Hampden Turner, 1997, Hofstede, 1997), one notable point which differentiates their study is that it provided an opportunity to investigate espoused values across a range of *different* multinational companies as opposed to one (Smith et al, 1996).

This cross-cultural study is considered a useful framework for understanding and dealing with cultural differences (Qamar et al, 2013). Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's model remains highly cited in *The Journal of World Business* (1993, cited in Reis et al, 2011).

The seven hypothesized dimensions delineating culture are explained in the table below which includes the research findings for Egypt.

Egypt is characterized as a society in which relationships surpass rules and regulations; gives precedence to  group over individual needs; emotionally expressive; work relationships extend and converge towards personal affiliations; interest and concern for the social standing of others rather than achievements; synchronous in time perception and inner focused, fatalistic society.

**Table 2.3 Cross-cultural Dimensions Pertaining to Egypt (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998)**

| Dimensions | Description | Dimension | Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| Universalism vs Particularism | The extent to which rules and regulations supersede relationships. Correctness is clearly defined and always appropriate. In contrast, particularist cultures give much more attention to relationships, obligations and exceptional circumstances | Particularism | Moderate |
| Individualism vs Communitarianism | The extent to which people prioritize individual needs over community needs. | Communitarianism | High |
| Neutral vs Emotional | The extent to which one's interactions are objective and detached, in contrast to being emotionally expressive. | Emotional | High |
| Specific vs Diffuse | The extent to how restricted the business relationship is with others. | Diffuse | High |
| Achievement vs Ascription | The emphasis an individual gives to accomplishments as opposed to ascribing importance to the status of birth, kinship, gender or age, connections and educational background etc. | Ascription | High |
| Sequential Time vs Synchronous Time | The perceptions and importance individuals have towards time direction, i.e.; sequencing disparate events or circular in which past, present and future merge. | Synchronous | Moderate |
| Internal Direction vs Outer Direction | The extent to which an individual perceives the environment as more or less controlling. | Internal Direction | Moderate |

## 2.5.3 Project GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness)

Project GLOBE was initiated by Robert. J. House (Graen, 2006, Shi and Wang, 2011), in response to the new and increasing demands on business leaders brought about by globalization and amplified by the notion that the managerial skills that allowed them to succeed in one country may not be replicable in other parts of the world. GLOBE is a multi-phase project investigating societal and organizational culture in addition to organizational leadership around the world (House et al, 2001:491). According to Dickson et al (2003) it is the foremost example of large scale cross-cultural research initiatives on leadership. The collaborative research effort,

which combines qualitative and quantitative data methods, amounted to one hundred and fifty social scientists and management scholars encompassing 61 cultures that represented all major regions of the world (House et al, 2001). GLOBE generated a set of nine dimensions, each measured twice, isometrically as practices and respective values (Shi and Wang, 2011: 94).

The Middle East cluster, MENA, of the GLOBE study comprised Egypt, Morocco, Turkey, Kuwait and Qatar. Although some commonalities exist within this cluster (Kabasakal et al, 2012) as Egypt, Kuwait and Qatar share a common language, religion and culture, differing socioeconomic, demographic and ethnic dynamics, may create a distinction between their cultural norms and related preferences (Kabasakal et al, 2012: 520; Smith et al, 2007). Although there are similiaries within the MENA cluster (Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E., 2012), important differences do exist (Sidani and Jamali, 2009). Furthermore Egypt is considered distinctively different to other Middle Eastern nations (Nafie, 2012; Parnell and Crandall, 2003). The data sample for Egypt comprised 201 managers and according to Smith et al (2007), some independent national analysis was done, however most of the results were aggregated across the Middle East cluster, which included non-Arab Turkey (Smith et al, 2007).

Despite the empirically driven approach of the GLOBE researchers the report was contested (Hofstede, 2006), and described as theory driven, based on a broad academic literature base (Shi and Wang, 2011). The project goals related to leadership were intended to determine if there are leader behaviours and attributes that are universally accepted and whether or not leadership behaviours and practices are culturally endorsed (House et al, 2001). This aspect of the GLOBE findings is particularly relevant to this thesis, as the case study targeted Egyptian managers interacting in an international environment. The design of the questionnaire responses was intended to differentiate between judgments (what should be) and common practices (what is),

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(House et al, 2001). GLOBE identified nine cultural dimensions the first six of which originated from Hofstede's dimensions (1980), (House et al 2001), although they differ in meaning (Hofstede, 2006).

The GLOBE project has generated considerable controversy in the research community (see Graen, 2006; Shi and Wang, 2011). Concerns related to GLOBE's terminology and definitions of practices ('as is') and values ('as should be') have questioned the pragmatic utility of GLOBE (Hofstede et al, 2010). However, in general, the GLOBE research has been subjected to less scrutiny than Hofstede's studies, possibly due to its entry into the research arena being more recent than Hofstede's research (Shi and Wang, 2011). Project GLOBE's dimensions (House et al, 2001: 495) are defined below in Table 2.3, along with the findings related to The Middle East cluster.

From the GLOBE analysis, Egyptian managers have a propensity to avoid uncertainty and concomitant future events; are moderately humane oriented, possessing an autonomous style of leadership that operate in male dominated society.

**Table 2.4 Cultural Clusters  Classified on Societal  Cultural Practices Scores Pertaining to the Middle East (House et al, 2004)**

| Dimension | Description | Cluster Ratings | Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| Uncertainty Avoidance | The extent to which members of an organization or society strive to avoid uncertainty by reliance on social norms, rituals etc. | 3.56- 5.19 | Low |
| Power Distance | The degree to which members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be unequally shared. | 4.5-5.39 | Average |
| Collectivism I | Societal Collectivism reflects the degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action. | 3.86-4.88 | Average |
| Collectivism II | The degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families. | 3.75-5.87 | Low |
| Gender Egalitarianism | The extent to which an organization or a society minimizes gender role differences and gender discrimination. | 2.95-3.84 | Low |
| Assertiveness | The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships. | 3.66-4.55 | Average |
| Future Orientation | The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying gratification | 3.38-4.40 | Low |
| Performance Orientation | The extent to which an organization or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence | 3.75-4.58 | Average |

Among the noteworthy cross-cultural studies of the 1990s that evolved, is the World Values Survey (Hofstede, 2006).

**2.5.4 The World Values Survey (WVS)**.

The WVS is a global research project designed to investigate global trends of individuals' values and beliefs within socio-cultural and political contexts through empirical research (Inglehart, 2011). In contrast to the three other research studies reviewed in this section, the WVS evolved

from the field of political science (Maselannd and Hoorne, 2009). According to Puranen (2013), this academically driven research programme, established in 1981, provides accessible data from 88 societies, constituting 90% of the world's population. Maselannd and Hoorne (2009) consider the WVS a less prevalent model in the international research community, although Hurtienne and Kaufmann (2011) postulate it is a well-recognized study and its distinctive quantitative approach gives WVS a strong standing in the social scientific community. Furthermore, Haller (2002: 139) postulates that the WVS has become one of the most influential approaches used in present day sociology. It has made a noteworthy contribution to the literature base (Abramson, 2011).

Criticisms of the WVS methodological approach include the measurement of the four values and levels of measurement (Haller, 2002). This author also asserted that a lack of consistency emanated from categorizing countries into 'cultural zones'. Flanagan and Lee's (2003, cited in Abramson, 2011) persistent critique of the WVS (Abramson, 2011) relates to one particular aspect of Ingelhart's theory; stating that Materialism/Postmoderism does not reflect the most up-to-date value changes in modern society.

Despite the disparity of opinions on its significance, one must consider the WVS's relevance to cross-cultural research and its distinctly different form of contribution. Its data set is composed of scores on specific items that can be more readily linked to practices than key dimensions (Maselaand and Hoorne, 2009: 5). Furthermore, in its favour is the fact that the data collection was carried out by a diverse team of an international magnitude, thus, minimizing research bias (Hurtienne and Kaufmann, 2011). The WVS methodology is administered by social scientists who conduct face-to-face interviews using detailed questionnaires.

The WVS is relevant to the cross-cultural study of Egypt firstly because from 2000 onwards the study was designed to give greater consideration to obtaining better coverage of non-Western societies (Hurtienne and Kaufmann, 2011) and secondly because Egypt has a profound affinity with religion (see Section 2.6.2) and as Haller (2002: 139) asserted one of the strengths of the WVS is that *'the findings prove the significance…. of religion in particular'*.

The WVS depicts 2 opposing cross-cultural classifications, i.e., 1. Traditional values versus Secular-rational values and 2. Survival values versus Self-expression values. Table 2.5 below presents key components and the findings related to Egypt.

**Table 2.5 WVS (Inglehardt, 2011)**

| Values | Description | Egypt |
|---|---|---|
| Traditional | Highlights the importance of religion, family bonds, conformance to authority and national pride | Egypt |
| Secular | Less emphasis on religion, family bonds and authority. | |
| Survival | Emphasis on economic and physical security. Characterized by an ethnocentric outlook with low levels of trust and tolerance. | Egypt |
| Self-Expression | High priority to environmental protection; tolerance towards foreigners; gender equality and desire for participative decision making. | |

The WVS depicts Egypt as possessing cultural norms based on traditional values with a dependence on both economic and physical security and a prevalence of low levels of trust and tolerance.

In summary, these four major cross-cultural research programmes have identified various socio-cultural and work place values along with leadership behaviours pertinent to Egypt. All of the 4 studies possess several commonalities in their depiction of Egyptian culture. The next section

will provide a critical review of the literature pertaining to Egyptian national culture with the intention of focusing further on identifying the role and impact national culture plays in determining the effectiveness of Western evolved leadership theories to highlight the causal effects of how the indigenous managers construe such theories.

## 2.6 Egyptian National Culture

Egypt, an Arab Republic, is the largest and most populous nation in the Middle East region (Javidan, et al, 2006: 68; Sidani and Jamali, 2009) and considered regionally (Leat and Kott, 2007; Sidani and Jamali, 2009) as strategically significant (Beekun et al, 2008) with a burgeoning population, currently in excess of 86,895,000 (CIA, 2016).

### 2.6.1 The Socio-Cultural Context

As documented in the literature, Egypt is considered a collectivist society (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012; Humphreys, 1996; Leat and Kott, 2007; Mostafa, 2005; Shahin and Wright, 2004). Collectivist societies are characterized through passive and submissive behaviour toward authority (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012: 10). Relationships hold great significance to Egyptians in which personal and professional issues are less clearly defined. The consequences of the overlap in relationships culminates in a lack of formal business relations and a prioritizing of personal relationships over task achievement (Ali, M. et al, 2006; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009; Mostafa, 2005; Mostafa and El Masry, 2008). This is corroborated in the findings of Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) which described Egyptians as diffuse in their business relations. There is evidence of high levels of personal attachment (Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E., 2012) which accords with Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1998) classification of Egyptians as an emotional (Ali, M. et al, 2006) as opposed to a neutral society. Furthermore, Egyptians possess high levels

of ascribed values (Elbanna and Ali, A. 2012), which correlates with Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1998) findings in which Egypt was identified as prioritizing ascribed values over achievements. The WVS (Inglehardt, 2011) categorized Egypt as a traditional society, as such there is strong adherence to religious convictions. Hofstede et al (2010) rated Egypt as high on uncertainty avoidance, which Parnell and Hatem (1999) postulate may be the result of the Muslim belief system, in which a fatalistic view of society has evolved.

## 2.6.2 The Religious Context

Religion has an all-encompassing, highly pervasive influence in Egyptian society (Elbanna and Ali, A.; 2012; Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E. 2012; Humphreys, 1996; Leat and Kott, 2007; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009; Nafie, 2012, Parnell and Hatem, 1999; Shahin and Wright, 2004; Sidani and Jamali, 2009). It  has a major impact on the management style of Middle Eastern managers (Ali, A. and Al-Owaihan, 2008; Bahktari, 1995; Beekun and Badawi, 2005). Egypt is deeply influenced by Islam, the dominant religion as more than 90% of Egyptians are Muslims, (Rice, 2011) it transcends every aspect of social norms, the political landscape and its economic infrastructure (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012; Humphreys, 1996; Leat & Kott, 2007; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009; Rice, 2011; Shahin and Wright, 2004). Furthermore, according to Beekun and Badawi (2005: 132), Egypt is moving towards greater 'Islamization' and considering economic Islamic partnerships. This may be a reaction to the growing perception that Egypt's traditional cultural values and norms are being superseded by Western values and practices (Husain and McMullen, 2010; Rice, 2011). This raises an interesting point about the 'outer inner' tensions that exist when we refer to Czarniawska and Joerges model (1996) of knowledge transfer; i.e., when an idea is manifest in a different cultural setting, different in time and space, local institutional tensions arise. This tension is rooted in the concern to preserve Arab and Muslim

values as globalization impacts on the Middle East region (Branine and Pollard, 2010; Freitag, 2010). The majority of employees at Company X's Egypt office are Muslims. Therefore it is important to consider the implications of the Islamic Work Ethic (IWE) on leader-follower interactions.

The following section looks at material on the religious context under two headings, i.e., The Islamic Work Ethic and Organizational Behaviour and Leadership Style.

*Islamic Work Ethic (IWE)*

There is a dearth of literature on the association of Islam and management, in particular in the field of ethics (Beekun and Badawi, 2005) and empirical research (Rice, 1999). Consequently, IWE is generally misunderstood (Ali and Al-Owaihan, 2008; Branine and Pollard, 2010). Islam, not only provides a source of spiritual fulfillment for its followers, it provides specific guidelines of adherence in all facets of life (Ali, A. and Al-Owaihan, 2008; El Garah et al, 2012; Hassi, 2012), unlike Western secular societies (Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E., 2012; Humphreys, 1996). Its tenets are based on a believer's relationship with God to whom one is accountable for every aspect of their life's deeds (Ali A. and Al-Owaihan, 2008; Rice, 1999).  Islamic leadership features charismatic and visionary approaches, justice and consultation as exemplified by the Prophet Mohamed (Mohamed, S., 2012). The relationship between Muslims is characterized as familial, i.e., 'equal relationships of brotherhood and sisterhood' (Rice, 1999: 347). Islam aspires to abhor inequality, injustice, exploitation and oppression (Rice, 1999), despite the fact that some of those qualities are embedded in authoritarian, hierarchical leadership styles which prevail in Egypt (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012; Shahin and Wright, 2004; Leat and Kott, 2007).

The concept of work in Islam is a central tenet of faith and is considered an integral part of life (Ali, A. and Al-Owaihan, 2008: 7). Islam stresses the importance of hard work (Leat and Kott, 2007). Furthermore, in Muslim societies the holy book, i.e., the Quran and the sayings of Prophet Mohamed (hadith) form a fundamental part of socio-political discourse (Ali, A. and Al-Owaihan, 2008; Alsarhi et al, 2014; El Garah, et al, 2012; Rice, 1999). Social change should be introduced gradually (Leat and Kott, 2007) and only when willingly accepted (Rice, 1999) through consultation, again, however some of these IWE concepts are in contradiction to the pervasive, authoritarian style in Egypt (Beekun and Badawy, 2005).

## 2.6.3 Organizational Behaviour and Leadership Style

National culture has a profound effect on the way business is conducted in Egypt (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012; Nafie, 2012). Leadership is deeply attached to culture (Hamlin et al, 2010; Parnell and Hatem, 1997; Shahin and Wright, 2004) and as such, it is a determinant of which leadership style Egyptian leaders embrace (Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E., 2012). The prevailing social norms are the main influence as to which leadership style Egyptian leaders aspire to (Amin, G., 1997; Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E., 2012). This latter point is pertinent to the constructivist perspective which underpins this thesis as it alludes to the social process of reality maintenance in which our 'significant others' have a pivotal role (Berger and Luckmann, 1991).

Parnell and Crandall's, (2003) study of Egyptian managers found that there is a perception that subordinates are not to be trusted. Egyptian subordinates tend to be submissive and compliant (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012: Humphreys, 1996; Rice, 2006). This is also evident in how Egyptians approach conflict resolution as their desire for a harmonious work environment make them reluctant to openly to confront issues (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012; Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E.,

2012; Humphreys, 1996; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009; Murrell, 1981). These aspects accord with the findings of Hofstede et al, (2010) and Javidan et al (2006), who identified Egypt as being a high power distance society. However, Ibrahim (2014) contests the latter point, asserting that leadership practices in Egypt are not necessarily indicative of high power distance behaviours, according to an empirical case study conducted on 2 multinational companies based in Egypt.

Of particular relevance to the leader-follower relationship in this case study is Implicit Leadership Theory (ILT). ILT (Lord and Maher, 1991, cited in Javidan et al, 2006) is based on the notion that differences and similarities of follower perceptions' among nations are embedded in their cultural assumptions as to how they construe leadership (Javidan et al, 2006). Javidan et al (2006) empirically identified six global leadership dimensions, pertaining to ILT. The Culturally Implicit Leadership Theory (CLT) dimensions and finding regarding the Middle East cluster are outlined in Table 2.6, below.

In summary, the below table indicates that indigenous managers are low on motivating others and do not practice participative decision making as they demonstrate high levels of self-protection. Consequently team work is not high on the indigenous managers' agenda. Autonomous leadership and humane orientation were considered salient factors in the Middle East cluster.

**Table: 2.6 CLT Leadership Dimensions (Javidan et al, 2006)**

| CLT | Description | Middle East Cluster (out of a 7 point scale) | Egypt's Rank (out of 62 societies) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Charismatic/ Value Based | The ability to inspire, motivate others towards high performance outcomes. | 5.35 | 53 (lowest score) |
| Participative | How much or little leaders include others in the decision making process | 4.97 | 43 (lowest score) |
| Team Oriented | Emphasis on team building and team efficiency. | 5.47 | 52 (lowest score) |
| Humane-Oriented | Reflects a supportive and considerate stance to others | 4.80 | 19 (mid-range score) |
| Autonomous | The extent that a leader is independent and demonstrates individualist behaviour | 3.68 | 5 (mid-range score) |
| Self-Protective | Defines the level of ensuring individual safety and security | 3.79 | 4 (high score) |

In conclusion, the socio-cultural aspects of Egypt are typical of a traditional society (Inglehart, 2011). The various aspects of Egyptian society are embedded in Egyptian culture and have direct implications for the indigenous manager in their leader follower relationship. Furthermore members of the same culture are more likely to construe situational events as similar, than individuals from another culture (Shahin and Wright, 2004: 501; Humphreys, 1996: 36).

As highlighted in Section 2.6 management behaviour is deeply embedded in culture (Leat and Kott, 2007; Shahin and Wright, 2004; Parnell and Hatem, 1999), thus cultural values, beliefs and expectations are intrinsically linked to leadership behaviours (Jogula, 2010).

To provide a comprehensive and in-depth response to the research questions it is necessary to elaborate on the leadership theories that have evolved within Western contexts which the

indigenous managers of this case study are exposed to and familiar with. The next section will critically evaluate the extant literature on 9 leadership theories from the standpoint of the research questions. The subsequent sections will consider the ways in which each theory may be viewed as relevant to the Egyptian manager as reviewed above.

**2.7 Leadership Theories**

This section reviews a number of Western originated leadership theories that have evolved over the last half century, with particular relevance to the research aim of investigating how Egyptian junior managers construe the Western leadership theories they encounter. The indigenous managers are exposed to these theories at a number of levels, i.e., through in-house training and development programmes, their substantial interactions with Western stakeholders and the effects of globalization (see Section 2.2). A brief overview of the key tenets of each of the 9 leadership theory will be followed by an in-depth analysis of the various driving and restraining factors that underpin each theory in the light of the reviewed cross-cultural literature and Egyptian national culture.

As discussed, in Section 1 an important consequence of interacting in a global economy is that our sense-making processes attempt to construct a blend of the external and internal in order to be effective as individuals at the particular local level we work in (Amin, A., 1997). What is particularly relevant in this case study is that, when situations occur that fail to 'fit' our mental templates we resort to a reappraisal of our construing. If this process involves constructs that are fundamental to our understanding we will initially experience an emotional upheaval (Butt and Burr, 2006). Thus, a critical analysis of the Western originated leadership theories that deal with the way in which the leadership role is understood both by indigenous leaders and followers

alike, as they work toward performance standards and organizational goal achievement is provided. The particular leadership theories reviewed in this section form part of the empirical investigation of this research enquiry (see Section 3.3).

As this study intends to evaluate the effectiveness of Western evolved leadership theories the RGT was chosen as the principal research technique (see Chapter 3). The RGT interviews will elicit from the participants the similarities and differences of each leadership theory. This will lead to an understanding how the indigenous managers make sense of the various theories thus identifying which theories they most and least favour in answer to the research questions.

The enduring debate in which opposing views are held about leadership theories; i.e., convergent versus divergent leadership (Arvonen and Ekvall, 1999; Hamlin et al, 2010) is highlighted in this section. This view emanates from the geocentric view of management in which it is believed that the attributes and behaviour that made a manager succeed in one country can be replicated in another. Some theorists hold the opinion that some aspects of leadership transcend cultural boundaries and have universal application (Bass, 1997; Bass and Riggio, 2012; Hamlin et al, 2010; Morrison, 2000). The latter view is premised on the belief that common technological imperatives, common industrial logic and global institutions and practices all work towards harmonizing management practices and structures (House et al, 2001). House and Aditya (1997) assert a compelling case for the notion of 'universality' of leader effectiveness (Hamlin et al, 2010). Their view contrasts sharply with the cultural contingency theorists who question the generalizability and transferability of US management and leadership research to non-US cultures (Hofstede, 1993; Humphreys, 1996; Kakabadse et al, 2011).

The divergence argument supports the notion of Implicit Leadership Theory (ILT) – a set of inherent beliefs individuals possess regarding the behaviors that are characteristic of their perception of an effective leader (Ali, A., 2011; House et al, 2002). As discussed in Section 2.4.3 individuals construct symbolic representations of their environments based on their construal of events and they utilize these 'mental models' in directing their actions (Kelly 1955). ILT is based on this same reasoning; individuals' perceptions, interactions and reactions to leaders guide their sense-making processes (Lord, 2005; cited in Schyns and Meindl, 2005). Abdalla and Hamoud's (2001) empirical study conducted in the Arabian Gulf region found that leaders embraced ILT and this Ali, A. (2011) postulates, is a leadership style that is underpinned by ideal Islamic values.

### 2.7.1 Traits Theory

Early leadership theories such as those described by Stogdill, and by Mann, were viewed exclusively from the standpoint of the leader (Avolio, 2007; Yukl, 2013). The leadership construct involved a sense-making process in which individuals explained causality with an emphasis on a 'heroic' set of personal ,heritable, immutable attributes (Lord, 2005) possessed by the singular authority of the privileged few (Lester, 1975; Yukl, 2013; Zaccaro, 2007), i.e., the 'Great Man' theory (Zaccaro, 2007). This is present in early Islamic leadership accounts, i.e., those who possessed natural leadership traits showed concern for the welfare of the followers (Ali, A., 2011) who, in return offered unquestioning allegiance to the leader (Abdalla and El Hamoud, 2001). It also accords with Khadra's (1990) Caliphal and Prophetic model which is a manifestation of the Great Man theory (Sidani and Thornberry, 2009). A preponderance of studies have been conducted on Traits Theory (Yukl, 2013) and despite its various entries and exits within the research community, (Zaccaro, 2007) in varying guises, (Northouse, 2010) it has

prevailed as an important paradigm that contributes toward a better understanding of leader effectiveness.

The unremitting question in the minds of individuals, 'Are leaders born or made' (Bass, 1997: 130) suggests that junior managers may revert to Traits Theory in an attempt to make sense of their leadership role, as asserted by Ancona (2012), (see Section 2.4.3) by identifying 'local heroes' and attempting to emulate their qualities. In high power distance countries (such as Egypt), depending on powerful people is a basic need that can be a real motivator (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998, cited in Rice, 2006: 239). Furthermore, Egyptians have a bias towards following a charismatic leader rather than following a system (Brown and Ataalla, 2002), which suggests that Traits Theory may be preferred.

### 2.7.2 Managerial Behavioural Grid

Central to this theory is leader behaviour, i.e., what leaders do and how they act (Northouse, 2010). Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1982) is based on two dimensions; 'Consideration verses Initiating Structure' (Ohio State University studies) and 'Employee Centered versus Job Centred' (University of Michigan studies). The five possible leader approaches in the grid are premised on identifying 'one best way' to lead and encouraging its adoption it is assumed that different individuals may have an inherent, personality-related preference to emphasizing task versus relationships, or vice-versa (Smith and Peterson, 1989).

Egypt is characterized as a society in which relationships surpass rules and regulations, is emotionally expressive (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) with work relationships extending and converging into personal affiliations (Javidan et al, 2006; Mehran and Geraerdts, 2009; Mohamed, S., 2012; Trompenaars and Hampden Turner, 1998). Thus the conflict facing

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indigenous managers may be when and how to differentiate between a task and people oriented approach.  This may be exacerbated by the fact that, as mentioned in the previous section, Egyptians prioritize familial relations which extend across organizational life, having a preference for harmony thus avoiding confrontation and are submissive (Humphreys, 1996; Javidan et al, 2006). The literature portrayed Egyptian organizations as hierarchical and highly centralized so 'one best way' may appeal to indigenous managers. Furthermore managers do not solicit feedback from subordinates (Parnell and Hatem, 1999), so followers might accept 'the boss is always right' ethos, in such an environment. However as this theory is in contradiction to principles of IWE, which promotes consultation, 'shura' (Ali, A. and Al-Owaihan, 2008; Beekun, 2012; Branine and Pollard, 2010; Mohamed, S., 2012), potential conflict could arise for indigenous managers choosing to emulate aspects of this theory. Therefore the appeal of this theory could be in a society that prioritizes relationships over task achievement (Mohamed, S., 2012), i.e., Egypt (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) in which paternalistic leadership is prevalent (Metwally, 2014) with a high humane orientation (Javidan et al, 2006). Consequently this could lead to dysfunctional leadership, i.e., '1.9: Country Club' style (Blake and Mouton, 1982). An comparative study by El Masry et al (2005) of Egyptian and non-Egyptian general managers found that differences did exist in terms of the leadership styles adopted by both groups. The Egyptian managers scored higher on the 'Laissez faire' style.

### 2.7.3 Situational Leadership

Situational Leadership Theory (hereafter referred to as SLT) is considered one of the most widely known theories in the domain of management (Butler and Reese, 1991, Thompson & Vecchio, 2009). Smith and Peterson (1989) postulate that its appeal can be attributed to the fact that it 'makes sense'. It is this sense-making process which is closely aligned to how events are

construed and causal inferences are made (Smith and Peterson, 1989), which may further explain the widespread popularity SLT has achieved (Butler and Reese, 1991).

SLT is premised on leaders adapting their styles to the needs and abilities of their subordinates. It contends that effective leadership is defined when leader behaviour is incorporated with situational variables, especially the readiness/maturity and his or her ability (Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson, 2010). The two dimensions produce four possible styles for managers to select; Directing; Coaching; Supporting and Delegating (Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson, 2010).

Leadership behaviour is culturally endorsed (Rice, 2011; Humphreys, 1996; Javidan et al, 2006; Kabasakal et al, 2012; Kakabadse et al, 2011; Parnell and Crandall, 2003; Parnell and Hatem, 1997; Leat and Kott, 2007; Shahin and Wright, 2004) and culture is closely aligned to decision making (Beekun et al, 2008, Mahran and Geraedts, 2009). Innovation is a vital component of decision making though it is sparse in Egyptian organizations (Murrell, 1981). This is highlighted in Mostafa's (2005) empirical study of predominately senior Egyptian managers. Decision making is highly centralized in Egyptian organizations and Egyptians display submissive behaviour in such situations (Javidan et al, 2006; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009). Moreover, Rice's (2006) empirical study on the creativity of Egyptian employees verified that forming a creative work environment required the presence of supportive and consultative supervision, which Egyptian organizations do not give precedence to (Humphreys 1996; Parnell and Hatem, 1999). Despite the latter points, one recent study conducted by Dorgham and Al Mahmoud (2013) in Egyptian and Saudi Arabian hospitals confirmed that Egyptian head nurses applied Situation Leadership, although it did not indicate to what extent.

So how does this affect the indigenous managers as they attempt to identify the stage the followers are at and what leadership approach to apply in novel and specific situations, in view of the fact that upward feedback is not encouraged (Parnell and Hatem, 1999)? Parnell and Hatem's (1997) empirical study concluded that, if Western management constructs are to be effective, they must be adapted. How do the indigenous managers construe and demonstrate 'directive' behaviour and how do they decide on the level of readiness of the subordinate? The extreme opposite, i.e., 'delegation' in which the manager delegates full authority to the followers, may cause concern for indigenous managers, due to the risk averse environment (Hofstede et al, 2010; Javiadan et al, 2006). Furthermore, a low tolerance for mistakes encourages passing on the blame to absolve oneself (Mostafa, 2005; Shahin and Wright, 2004), which accords with Inglehardt (2011) categorization of Egyptians in the 'Survival' dimension.

### 2.7.4 The Leadership Continuum

The theory is based on two mutually exclusive factors, i.e., the leader's and followers' power and influence, producing seven differing approaches to the leader-follower interaction, within the organizational and societal parameters (Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1973). The theory highlights employee involvement and participation in decision making.

Authoritarianism is situated at the extreme end of the paradigm, which may appeal to the indigenous managers due to the structure of Egyptian organizations, previously mentioned. This accords with the paternalistic leadership style familiar to Egyptian employees (Javidan et al, 2006; Quigley et al, 2005, cited in Rice, 2011; Mohamed, S., 2012). Paternalistic leadership is '*a style that combines strong discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence*' (Farh and Cheng, 2000:91, cited in Pellegrini and Scandura, 2008), although, it is worth noting that,

autocratic and authoritarian styles of leadership are not considered desirable in the Arab world, according to Sevvas et al (2001).

The continuum moves towards reducing leader power and influence which allows greater freedom for followers, as the leader 'sells' decisions. The leader moves towards consulting the followers (with varying degrees and limitations) in the decision making process. This resonates with early Arab leadership and that of the exemplar leadership style of the Prophet Mohamed (Beekun, 2012) in which a consultative style ('shura') emerged as a way of making decisions (Ali, A., 2011; Beekun, 2012; Branine and Pollard, 2010; Mohamed, S., 2012; Mostafa, 2005).

The extant literature related to decision making and consultation in the Middle East highlights somewhat conflicting and disparate views. This is corroborated in a number of empirical studies, however it has been noted that the generalizability of constructs such as 'participative decision making' require cultural adaptation if they are to be effectively utilized in cross-cultural research (Parnell and Crandall, 2003; Parnell and Hatem, 1997). Ali, A., (1993) found that Arabs have a preference for consultative decision-making; however consultative leadership in the Arab world was depicted as a pseudo-participative style in which managers pay lip service to the consultative approach in order to appease others. This was corroborated by Branine and Pollard (2010) who asserted that consultation is more controlled in the Middle East. Parnell and Crandall's (2003) empirical study of Egyptian managers' propensity for participative decision-making indicated a positive relationship towards organizational commitment when subordinates are involved in decision making; however from the managers' perspective the study was unable to indicate how the managers' concern with potential power loss was manifest.

Humphreys' (1996) comparative study of Egyptians and their UK counterparts revealed that Egyptian managers have a preference for employees who are submissive and such employees are considered real assets to the organization. This study also supported the notion that Egyptian managers are adverse to consultative decision making which concurred with Murrell's (1981) study. This author postulated that decision making is generally pushed up the hierarchical chain of command and can become a slow and lengthy process (Brown and Ataalla, 2002).

An additional point of concern was raised in Parnell and Hatem's (1999) empirical study of Egyptian managers. The study found that soliciting participation in decision making was perceived as a sign of managerial weakness by those subordinates and raised doubts about the manager's ability to lead.  In contrast, a more recent study conducted by Ibrahim (2014) found that Egyptians display a strong preference for greater participation in decision making. Mahran and Geraedts's (2009) cross-cultural study of Egyptian engineers found they are more likely to allow emotions than logic to guide their decisions, compared to their Western counterparts.

When individuals are faced with making decisions they engage in a mental evaluative process that seeks accord with their values and the decision is made as a result of identifying and prioritizing the constructs that are most important (Butt and Burr, 2004). The latter point may help explain some of the ambivalence surrounding this issue.

The extreme right of the paradigm in which the manager delegates full authority to the followers, may cause concern for Egyptian employees who work in a risk averse culture (Elkhordy, 2013; Hofstede, et al, 2010; Javidan et al, 2006; Mostafa, 2005) with a low tolerance for mistakes, passing blame to exonerate oneself (Mostafa, 2005; Shahin and Wright, 2004), with a strong

desire to avoid conflict in favour of harmony and maintaining positive personal relations (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012).

**2.7.5 Path Goal Theory**

The underlying assumption of Path-Goal theory originated from motivation- expectancy theory, (Smith and Peterson, 1989). The leader's approach is contingent on two variables; the task structure and the employee's ability level. As Path Goal theory hinges on the ability of the leader to motivate the followers (House, 1971), the challenge for the manager is to select a leadership style that best matches the subordinates' motivational needs. This may prove challenging for both leader and follower alike. Years of economic strife and uncertainty along with autocratic political rule has resulted in Egyptians being indecisive, procrastinators and indifferent (Rice, 2011; Sidani and Jamali, 2009). This leaves little room for nurturing motivation. Furthermore, Nafei 's (2013) empirical study of a range of teaching hospitals found that a lack of trust and a high degree of cynicism existed among Egyptians, which are not conducive to motivating others.

As mentioned previously, authoritarian leadership style dominates Egyptian organizations which is not conducive to motivating subordinates to go beyond their expectations nor does it encourage aspirations such as those relating to the satisfaction of higher order needs (Shahin and Wright, 2007). Furthermore,

'*in a culture that endorses an authoritarian style, leader sensitivity might be interpreted as weak, whereas in cultures endorsing a more nurturing style, leader sensitivity is likely to prove essential for effective leadership*' (Hartog et al: 1999: 225).

In addition, if a leader is to identify the motivational drivers of the subordinates, a degree of creativity will be necessary. Creativity requires the production of novel and useful ideas

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(Amabile, 1988, cited in Rice, 2006: 233), which are not a standard component of the Arab managers' repertoire due to the limiting effects of the highly structured and rigid work environment that characterize Egyptian organizations (Mostafa, 2005). Substantial differences in approaches to creativity between Egyptian and British marketing students were highlighted in Mostafa and El Masry's (2008) cross-cultural case study suggesting that this theory may prove challenging for indigenous managers to articulate.

Thus, this theory presents potential challenges for the indigenous managers as well as for their subordinates. As cross-cultural studies indicate Egyptians demonstrate passive behaviour in the work place and are less likely to voice their opinions within the hierarchical structure they operate in (Parnell and Hatem, 1999) and in response to the coercive style that prevails in Egyptian organizations (Mostafa, 2005). Furthermore junior managers are inhibited by the work environment and less likely to excel in performance (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012). Moreover, Egyptian employees perceive their leaders as an elite, distinctive and transcendent group (Mohamed, S., 2012: 15). All of this impacts on the leader-follower interactions, for example, in discussions of personal goals and motivations.

### 2.7.6 Contingency Theory

This theory's basic premise is that effective group performance depends on accurately matching the leader's style and the amount of control and influence in the situation (Smith and Peterson, 1989). It differs from other theories which emphasis leader adaptation. Fiedler (1965) postulated that it is not possible for a leader to adapt due to embedded personality traits. Instead the manager should be assigned to the work environment most compatible with his/her leadership style (Arvonen and Ekvall, 1999; Fiedler, 1965).

The theory is operationalized by the Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) measure (Smith and Peterson, 1989) to determine the manager's actual stylistic preference. High LPC leaders are classified as task oriented while low LPC leaders are classified as relationship oriented. Each leadership situation is evaluated in terms of three contingencies, which when combined produced eight possible situations that are either favorable or unfavorable for the leader (Fiedler, 1965).

Since leader-follower relationships are particularly important in an Egyptian context (as mentioned previously) distinctions between personal and work relations are unclear, determining an LPC may be too equivocal for the indigenous managers. Furthermore, determining the level of task structure in the backdrop of an autocratic work environment (in which the leader's power position is revered) may present additional challenges for these managers. Seymour and Elhaleem's (1991) empirical study of Egyptians demonstrated that position power was the dominant variable, in that particular setting, more so than Fiedler's theory indicates (Seymour and Elhaleem, 1991). As with the aforementioned theory a level of creativity is required by the leader in order to correctly assess the situation, which could be impaired by the work environment (Mostafa, 2005).

### 2.7.7 Transactional and Transformational Leadership

This leadership paradigm was initially advanced by Burns (1978, cited in Bass and Riggio, 2012) who hypothesized that transformational and transactional leadership approaches were mutually exclusive (Bass and Riggio, 2012; Judge and Piccolo, 2004). Whereas transactional leadership concerns the facilitation of employees in utilizing existing resources effectively in return for appropriate compensation (Bass, 1999) transformational leadership aims to encourage employees to develop existing resources and reprioritize personal goals in favour of organizational interests

(Avolio et al, 2009; Bass, 1997). The constituents of transformational leadership are: idealized influence or charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass and Riggio, 2012; Judge and Piccolo, 2004).

Bass (1997) and Bass and Riggio (2012) assert that some aspects of the transactional transformational paradigm are universally applicable, which Bass (1997: 130) in terms of explanatory constructs defines as explanatory constructs appropriate to all situations in general. Bass and Riggio (2012) further assert that the universality of transformational leadership evolves from the corollary that, irrespective of the country, when people construe 'leadership their prototypes and ideals are transformational' (Bass, 1999: 135). Although the original research and theory evolved in the United States, an individualist culture (Hofstede et al, 2010), Bass (1999) postulates that it is possibly even more relevant in the collectivist societies, of which Egypt is one (Hofstede et al, 2010) and is relevant to the Arab world (Pillai et al, 1999). Collectivist cultures allow leaders to become transformational leaders (Bass, 1999) although Elkordy (2013) postulates that the high power distance and risk aversion prevalent in Egyptian organizations may discourage or negate transformational leadership. Furthermore, the Egyptian manager is perceived as the 'benevolent autocrat' (Elkordy, 2013; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009; Metwally, 2014) an attribute of paternalistic leadership, which from a Western cultural perspective is seen as an unlikely component of transformational leadership (Pellegrini and Scandura, 2008). Nevertheless, the empirical study conducted on Egyptians by Mohamed, S. (2012) was supportive of the universality of the transformational-transactional leadership paradigm. In contrast, according to Nafei's (2013) empirical study Egyptians are not predisposed to embrace change and transformational leadership requires leaders to possess high level of trust and optimism (Judge and Piccolo, 2004). Indigenous managers may experience difficulty attempting

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to construe this theory, especially so if one is to consider that Egyptian managers place low levels of trust in their subordinates (Parnell and Crandall, 2003).

However, as there is a dearth of research on transformational leadership particularly in Egypt, (Elkordy, 2013; Metwally, 2014; Mohamed, S., 2012; Shahin and Wright, 2004) the extent to which transformational leadership exists there is not immediately obvious. Metwally (2014) asserts that transformational leadership requires an emotional attachment between leader and follower, which suggests that this theory may show some appeal for the indigenous managers in this case study given the fact that personal relationships are prioritized by Egyptians. Metwally (2014) also asserted that transformational leadership has a gender bias, i.e., women are predisposed of traits more conducive to transformational leadership whereas their male counterparts are more effective as transactional leaders. This is a point of interest, since all but one of the indigenous managers in the case study are male, as well as more than 80% of the total staff in the Egypt office of Company X. Furthermore, more mature individuals are more likely than their younger counterparts to embrace the components of transformational leadership, which may be a point of contention for the junior managers in this case study. Another attribute associated with transformational leadership is that of being self-sacrificing (Metwally, 2014), which is not conducive to the 'Survival' (Inglehardt, 2011) tactics of Egyptians.

Some recent empirical studies, conducted in Egypt, provide evidence that transformational leadership exists in Egypt and they are indicative of the positive outcomes of transformational leadership related to job satisfaction and performance (see Elkordy, 2013; Metwally, 2014; Mohamed, S., 2012; Shahin and Wright, 2004; Shusha, 2013). Furthermore some aspects of transformational leadership accord with Islamic principles (Ali, A., 2011; Mohamed, S., 2012) that were highlighted Section 2.6. Shahin and Wright (2004) postulate that transformational

leadership in Egypt takes on a different guise. Their empirical study on a range of companies in Egypt defines transformational leadership as 'pseudo-transformational' which Bass (1999: 15) describes as 'immature, self-aggrandizing charismatic'. This 'false Messiah' (Bass, 1994) stance is intended to influence subordinates to carry out their normal duties, thus displaying aspects of transactional leadership.  Contrary to some of the characteristics identified previously, the study (Shahin and Wright, 2004) identified that inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration were discernible as components of Bass and Avolio's theory (1993). The authors also concluded that the expected passive management-by-exception and laissez-faire styles were either wholly or partially replicated. This was corroborated by Jones and Saad's (2013) small scale survey which concluded that Egyptian leaders have a propensity to engage in transactional leader behaviours, which may be a consequence of the Egyptian organizational setting described in Section 2.6.

In conclusion, effective transformational leadership in Egypt requires adaptation to the indigenous culture (Shahin and Wright, 2004) and a fundamental shift in values and beliefs (Metwally, 2014).

**2.7.8 The 5 Leadership Practices**

This theory incorporates five practices, i.e., 'Model the Way'; 'Inspire a Shared Vision'; 'Challenge the Process'; 'Enable Others to Act'; 'Encourage the Heart' (Kouzes and Posner, 2012), a theory which embraces aspects of transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1997).

The theory is based on the notion of exemplary leadership which could resonate with the Egyptian managers whose socio-cultural processes are influenced by their Islamic beliefs (see Section 2.6.2). Based on a study conducted by Beekun and Badawy (1999, cited in Rice, 2011)

Kouzes and Posner's theory has similiarities to the Islamic work ethic (Rice, 2011). In this way the indigenous managers may draw some parallels from the exemplary leadership of the Prophet Mohamed, which Beekun (2012) defines as character-centred leadership. The charismatic style of leadership which is underpinned in this theory may bear relevance to indigenous managers as charismatic leadership has been identified in Egyptian organizations (Quigley et al, 2005, cited in Rice, 2011). Charismatic leadership from an indigenous perspective may hold different properties from that of Western societies, i.e., personalized charismatic leadership' (Shahin and Wright,2004: 504). This requires unquestioning trust and obedience from followers. This accords with the point mentioned in Section 2.6: when discussing Egyptian national culture that Egyptians, are mindful and respectful of seniority, which is in contradiction to Kouzes and Posner's (2012: *pages unnumbered in the source document*) exhortation that, '*titles are granted, but it's your behaviour that earns you respect*'.

As Egyptians were described as passive and submissive to authority in the hierarchy of organizational life (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012; Javidan et al, 2006; Parnell and Hatem, 1999) challenging the process may indeed be a challenge in itself, as it requires experimentation and risk taking. Egyptians are adverse to uncertainty (Hofstede et al, 2010; Javidan et al, 2006) and interact in a blame society (Mostafa, 2005; Shahin and Wright, 2004) with a degree of cynicism (Nafei, 2013). Risk taking requires a level of innovation which Mostafa (2005) asserts is not characteristic of Egyptian society. An empirical study conducted by Rice (2006) confirmed that a supportive, caring and consultative work environment was a pre-requisite to enhancing creativity among Egyptian employees. As consultation is a key component of the IWE (Beekun, 2012; Branine and Pollard, 2010) and as Egyptians are deeply influenced by Islam creativity could prosper to some degree. 'Challenging the process' requires an environment that encourages

feedback this is less likely to occur among Egyptian employees whose work based values and leadership styles are outlined in Table 2.7 (below).

There is evidence that Egyptian managers view themselves as an elite cohort of leaders, with a clear distinction between themselves and subordinates (Javidan et al, 2006; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009), in which case, 'Enabling Others to Act' and 'Encouraging the Heart' within the confines of the organizational behavioural factors highlighted in Table 2.7 (below) are all indicative that empowering others and motivating subordinates are unlikely to be common in such an environment. Despite this, the longitudinal study conducted in a range of diverse Egyptian organizations, by Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E. (2012) found there was a strong desire to reduce power distance, which may allow aspects of Kouzes and Posner's (2007) theory to flourish in addition to the charismatic leadership style present in Egypt (Mohamed, S., 2012; Shahin and Wright, 2004; Quigley et al, 2005, cited in Rice, 2011). A further point in favour of this theory is the 'Model the Way' tenet as there is an expectation of Egyptian managers that they should lead with high levels of self-assurance and confidence (Javidan et al, 2006). However, the fact that Egyptians place a premium on age, may obfuscate the junior managers' leader-follower interactions.

To provide a summary of the extant literature on Egyptian leadership and organizational behaviour, Table 2.7 below highlights key characteristics pertinent to the Egyptian manager.

**Table 2.7 Summary of the Referenced Studies Characterizing the Egyptian Manager**

| Characteristic | Author | Type of Study |
|---|---|---|
| Authoritarian | Elbanna and Ali, A. (2012) | Empirical |
| | Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E. (2012) | Empirical |
| | Brown and Ataalla (2002) | |
| | Hassan and Saker (2014) | Empirical |
| | Mostafa (2005) | Empirical |
| | Shahin and Wright (2004) | Empirical |
| | Sidani and Jamali (2009) | Review |
| Autocratic | Javidan et al (2006) | Empirical |
| | Ibrahim (2014) | Empirical |
| | Mahran and Geraedts (2009) | Empirical |
| Elitist and Status Oriented | Ali, M. et al (2006) | Empirical |
| | Mohamed, S. (2012) | Empirical |
| | Murrell (1981) | Review |
| | Nafie (2012) | Empirical |
| | Rice (2006) | Empirical |
| | Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) | Empirical |
| Hierarchically oriented (High Power Distance) | Elsaid, A. and Elsaid. E. (2012) | Empirical |
| | Brown and Ataalla (2002) | Empirical |
| | Hofstede et al (2010) | Empirical |
| | Humphreys (1996) | Empirical |
| | Ibrahim (2014) | Empirical |
| | Mahran and Geraedts (2009) | Empirical |
| | Mostafa (2005) | Empirical |
| | Murrell (1981) | Review |
| | Parnell and Hatem (1999) | Empirical |
| | Rice (2011) | Review |
| | Savvas et al (2001) | Empirical |
| Evidence of Transformational Style | ElKordy (2013) | Empirical |
| | Metwally (2014) | Empirical |
| Evidence of Transactional Style | Bakhtari (1995) | Empirical |
| | Jones and Said (2013) | Empirical |
| | Shahin and Wright (2007) | Empirical |
| Centralized decision making | Hassan and Saker (2014) | Empirical |
| | Ibrahim (2014) | Empirical |
| Bureaucratic | Leat and Kott (2007) | Empirical |
| | Mostafa (2005) | Empirical |
| | Parnell and Hatem (1999) | Empirical |
| | Rice (2011) | Review |
| | Shahin and Wright (2004) | Empirical |

| Paternalistic | Brown and Ataalla (2002) | Empirical |
| | Javidan et al (2006) | Empirical |
| | Hassan and Saker (2014) | Empirical |
| | Mahran and Geraedts (2009) | Empirical |
| | Metwally (2014) | Empirical |
| | Mohamed, S. (2012) | Empirical |
| | Quigley et al (2005, cited in Rice, 2011) | Review |
| Loyal with strong belief in team cohesion | Leat and Kott (2007) | Empirical |
| | Parnell and Hatem (1999) | Empirical |
| | Rice (2006) | Empirical |
| Consultative | Ali, A. (1993) | Empirical |
| | Parnell and Hatem (1970) | Empirical |
| Traditional / Conformist | Elbanna and Ali, A. (2012) | Empirical |
| | Humphreys (1996) | Empirical |
| | Ingelhardt (2011) | Empirical |
| | Sidani and Jamali (2009) | Review |
| Risk averse | Ibrahim (2014) | Empirical |
| | Ingelhardt (2011) | Empirical |
| | Hofstede et al (2010) | Empirical |
| | Mostafa (2005) | Empirical |
| Self-protective | Javidan et al (2006) | Empirical |
| | Mostafa (2005) | Empirical |
| | Shahin and Wright (2004) | Empirical |

## 2.8. The Indigenous Manager

It is important to examine the theories considered hitherto to identify which appear more and which less readily usable by Egyptian managers. The above sections have brought to light the prevailing tensions experienced by indigenous managers in their attempts to overtly recognize aspects of the 8 Western leadership theories that they see as deserving of public espousal, conflicting with what they are predisposed to do within the confines of the culture, i.e., being an Egyptian Arab national, as outlined in each sub-section. The investigation of how Egyptian managers construe leadership theories that have evolved from cultures substantially different to their own has the potential to provide insights to their construal process and values.

### 2.8.1 Arab Leadership

Arab leadership theories share the same epistemological status as the more formal theories found in the academic literature base. As this research is positioned within a constructivist paradigm which concerns how people construe their 'theories-in-use' it would seem appropriate to include a theory that is indicative of the Middle East region.

Ali, A. (2011) postulates that over the centuries, in the Middle East region, individuals and regional groups have constructed into cognitive groupings their own notion of leadership based on leader-follower interactions. Weir (2001) developed a framework that reflects a leadership style common to the Middle Eastern culture which contains components previously identified in Chapter 1 which reviewed literature pertaining to the historical origins of Middle Eastern concepts and in Section 2.6 on Egyptian national culture .

**Table 2.8 Arab Leadership. After Weir (2001)**

| Society | Organization | Ownership | Key Discipline | Culture |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arab | Familial | Autocratic Consultative Participative Paternalistic Leader | Ethical Interpersonal relationships | Universalistic Collectivist Network (tribal) |

The organization structure described in the preceding sections (see Section 2.5 on Cross-cultural studies and Section 2.6 Egyptian national culture) portrays Egyptian organizations as familial (Mahran and Geraerdts, 2009; Metwally, 2014), with leaders displaying signs of paternalistic leadership prevalent in the Middle East region (Pellegrini and Scandura, 2008). Farh and Cheng (2000, cited in Pellegrini and Scandura, 2008), define Paternalistic Leadership as possessing three components, i.e., authoritarianism, benevolence and morality, which have been discussed in Section 2.6 as salient aspects of Egyptian society and of the IWE.

Egyptians demonstrate strong group loyalty and interdependence (Rice, 2006), which correlates with Weir's (2001) thesis along with maintaining harmony and personal relations. Ethical behaviour is identified as a key component of Weir's (2001) theory, which accords with the IWE observed in the Middle East (Ali, A., 2011), and, as mentioned on Section 2.6, is evident in Egyptian organizations. Weir's (2001) model depicts Arab leadership as universalistic, which accords with the Trompenaars and Hampton-Turner (1998) categorization of Egypt and is corroborated by numerous empirical studies conducted on Egypt and other cultures (Hofstede et al, 2010; Javidan et al, 2006). The existence of feudalism in Egyptian society concurs with Beekun et al's (2008) description of Egypt.

All of the aforementioned 9 leadership theories have underlying factors that may affect the knowledge transfer process. Culture has the potential to impede the knowledge transfer process (Nafie, 2012). Ideas that evolved in a Western context and travel to cultures that are substantially different implies that the recipients, i.e., the Egyptian managers will face challenges in attempting to fully embrace these theories in the same manner as their Western counterparts. Verbal communication in the Arabic language differs considerably from Western styles of communicating (see Section 2.4.2), and so theories developed in the latter environment may present challenges for indigenous managers. Linguistic implications means that Egyptian managers may misinterpret some key terminology prevalent in the leadership theories, e.g., 'Directive' may contain different connotations and concomitant leader behaviours that are different in Middle Eastern culture compared to the Western cultures. Other causal factors include differences in cognitive skills that are related to learning and development (Savvas et al, 2001) and the sense-making processes that the indigenous managers utilize to construe (Kelly, 1955) leadership theories.

In conclusion, in order to understand how the indigenous junior managers in this case study construe and make sense of the leadership theories they encounter in organizational life and as part of their training and development programme an assessment of their personal constructs requires an in-depth inquiry and exploration, which will be based on each of the theories examined in Sections 2.7.1 to 2.7.8 together with the theory examined in Section 2.8.1.

The next section comprises a synthesis of the literature reviewed. It identifies gaps in the existing literature and further critical analysis of the literature is also expanded upon.

## 2.9 Literature Synthesis and Further Critical Analysis of the Literature

### 2.9.1 Literature Synthesis

The following discussion is a synthesis of the literature review which leads to identifying the gaps in the extant literature and provides further critical analysis of the literature.

The referenced literature highlighted a concern regarding the paucity of empirical research in leadership beyond Western nations. The dearth in the literature extends more than two decades in the Middle East region (see Chapters 1 and 2). Furthermore, Weir (2001: 2) points out that this obvious neglect is the culmination of a type of 'cultural myopia' in which advances and sophistications of Middle Eastern countries have been generally overlooked by Western commentators. At the same time some researchers indicated that as the Middle East Region, Egypt in particular is of growing importance and recently attracted more attention from other researchers.

Moving from a general overview of the Middle East culture and focusing on the extant literature pertinent to Egypt several parallels and notions were uncovered in previous cross-cultural studies

in addition to some equivocal research findings and conclusions. The concepts of knowledge transfer, sense-making and PCT were discussed to provide a framework for how indigenous, junior managers' construal of leadership theories will subsequently can identified and understood.

The globalization debate provided an introduction to the formidable challenges that indigenous managers face as they are exposed to Western leadership theories (Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E, 2012; Hsieh, 2010; Kabasakal et al, 2012; Leat and Kott, 2007; Nafie, 2012; Rice, 1999). The referenced literature highlighted the bifurcation of views as to how globalization has impacted the Middle East region and Egypt. The literature highlighted an unforeseen consequence of globalization, and how cosmopolitanism has impacted on Egypt ,the latter concept being the stance taken by the present thesis. The merging of global initiatives with local practices has produced cosmopolitanism in the form of a novel blend of concepts and exhortations for indigenous managers to contend with.

As a result of the aforementioned points, the way in which knowledge (i.e., leadership theories) is transferred from Western nations to cultures that differ in several important ways has raised concerns pertinent to this cross-cultural study.

In order to achieve the research aim the construal and sense-making of indigenous managers has been positioned within the field of knowledge transfer. This includes Rogers' (2003) diffusion theory and the notion of sense-making (Weick et al, 2005; Maitlis and Christianson, 2014). This will be operationalized by Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) framework 'Travel of Ideas' to understand how knowledge transfers across cultures. This is pivotal to the position of this cross-cultural research. This framework takes into consideration the knowledge transfer process of the

*'displacement, drift, invention, mediation, creation of a new link that did not exist before and modifies in part the two agents'* (Latour, 1993: 6, cited in Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996). Furthermore, the gaps in the extant literature and further critical analysis of the literature are included.

The associated challenges presented in cross-cultural communication highlighted issues pertinent to the research topic, such as the differences between Arabic and English languages and the nuances pertaining to how language is construed by non-native speakers. National culture was depicted as a cognitively embedded notion (Savvas et al, 2001), tacit in nature, thus necessitating an in-depth investigation via PCT.

As this thesis is positioned within the broader field of leadership attention is given to the ongoing debate related to cross-cultural leadership, i.e., the divergence versus convergence argument (House et al, 2001). This thesis takes the perspective of culturally endorsed leadership. The postulations of many cross-cultural commentators indicated that as national culture is interconnected to several aspects of life individuals will possess their own notions of leadership (Kakabadse, et al, 2011: Morrison, 2000; Nahavandi, 2006, cited in Hsieh, 2010), and furthermore leadership behaviours are also subject to local interpretations (Humphreys, 1996; Leat and Kott, 2007; Shahin and Wright, 2004; Smith et al, 1989; Parnell and Hatem, 1997; Zhang, 2012).

The four major reviewed cross-cultural studies, i.e., Hofstede et al's, (2010) Cultural Dimensions; Trompenaars and Hampden- Turner's Cultural Dimensions (1998); The GLOBE Report (House et al, 2001) and The World Values Survey (Inglehardt, 2011) provided a comprehensive review of the literature pertinent to the research questions and highlighted many

similar themes as to how Egypt is depicted. Section 2.5 highlighted the various debates within the cross-cultural research community. Research methodology in particular is a major point of contention in such critiques (Maseland and Horne, 2009). As Hofstede's research had attracted the most criticism in the research community his rebuttals (2006, 2010) questioned the credibility of the GLOBE report (Javidan et al, 2006) which came under additional criticism from Graen (2006). Hofstede's (1997) reproaches of cross-cultural research efforts also included Trompennars and Hampden Turner's research (1998).

Several themes transpiring from the reviewed literature on Egyptian national culture, i.e., socio-economic, religion and organizational behaviour were consistent with the findings of the 4 major cross cultural researches (see Section 2.5). However there were also differing opinions and interpretations in some aspects, such as teamwork. The GLOBE report (House et al, 2004) and Javidan et al's CLT (2006) indicated that teamwork was low in the Middle East region (which included Egypt in that cultural cluster). This is in contrast to Leat and Kott's (2007) empirical study that found teamwork in Egypt to be prominent and in fact not dissimilar from that in the UK.

Further anomalies are evident in the literature regarding Egyptian organizations which many of the referenced researchers portrayed as centralized and hierarchical with indigenous managers typically seeking possession of authority and demonstrating high power distance. There is disparity in the literature on this point, as Hofstede et al (2010) categorized Egypt as High on Power Distance whereas the GLOBE Report (House et al, 2004) categorized it as Average. Recent empirical research is indicative of contradictions in the literature. Ibrahim (2014) challenges the high power distance category that Egypt has been placed in by the majority of the referenced studies. Furthermore Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E. (2012) found in their extensive research

that Egyptians demonstrate a genuine desire to equalize the balance of power in organizations. This is contrary to earlier research which indicated that Egyptian organizations are characterized by ascribed values and status conscious managers revered by their subordinates.

There is also considerable ambiguity in the literature related to consultation and decision making. A number of theorists postulate that as consultation bears the hallmarks of IWE aligned to Arab traditions it is practiced by indigenous managers and is desirable in Egyptian organizations although it is sometimes unclear in the literature as to whom it is desirable, i.e., manager, subordinate or both. Other assertions of reviewed researchers contradict these findings stating that indigenous managers and subordinates alike are reticent in encouraging participative decision making. This claim is based on the fact that Egyptians are reluctant to express their views within a high power distance, status conscious work environment. If the assertion that Egyptian values are changing, due to the influence of Westernization (Ibrahim, 2014; Rice, 2011) is accepted then the aforementioned contentions may be explained by the 'inner- outer' struggles (see Section 2.2) of the influencing effects of globalization and cosmopolitanism in particular. The above point is closely linked to the notion that some of the reviewed researchers postulate that Egyptians and their work environment are profoundly influenced by religion, the IWE in particular. Yet, it was postulated that there is a gap between Islamic beliefs and practices (Ali, A., 2011) with which Beekun et al (2008) concurred in their empirical comparative study of Egyptians with their USA counterparts. As mentioned in Chapter 1, leadership in the Middle East region is characterised as an amalgam of historic, tribal and religious traditions which obfuscate a definitive leadership paradigm. In addition questions surrounding the extent that religion, i.e., Islam has on the Arab values system (Sidani and Thornberry, 2009) are still open to debate in the research community.

Egypt has been described as a collectivist society which is characterized by concern for group needs and the subsequent blurring of professional and personal relations; however a number of researchers, spanning several decades, assert that Egyptians are individualistic in the sense that their own needs dominate those of the group (Bakhtari, 1995; Khadra, 1990; Metwally, 2014). This is somewhat puzzling and is not widely supported in extant literature. It may well exemplify the conflicting values systems that exist in Arab societies (Sidani and Thornberry, 2009) as well as a consequence of the enormous change that Egypt is currently undergoing (Ibrahim, 2014). The latter author postulates that Egypt can no longer be characterized as a high power distance, male dominated society, which introduces further disparity in the literature since this assertion has yet to be either corroborated or questioned.

Section 2.7 reviewed the extant literature on a range of selected Western evolved leadership theories and described the key principles and approaches that they underpin in order to explore the driving and restraining forces in the context of the local culture. This latter point is particularly relevant to the research questions as it was noted that knowledge transfer faces cultural impedance (Nafie, 2012), thus ideas traveling to different locations, through time and space, as depicted in the Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) framework are likely to undergo some form of metamorphosis as described earlier in this section.

Section 2.7 provided a review of leadership theories that the Egyptian managers in this case study are exposed to in the context of the research question. This section examined the various assertions of each theory and highlighted the anomalies brought about by the underlying cultural values and beliefs of the indigenous managers and raised awareness to the challenges presented to these managers as they attempt to make sense of these theories in their day to day leader-follower interactions.

Although it was pointed out that transformational leadership may transcend cultural boundaries (Bass and Riggio, 2012, Muczyk and Holt, 2008) its enactment may well be more likely to differ from culture to culture (Muczyk and Holt, 2008). The literature found that transformational leadership is particularly appropriate to collectivist societies (such as Egypt). The reviewed literature raises several concerns which are not consistent with the central tenets of transformational leadership. This is despite the fact that the referenced research indicates there is evidence of transformation leadership in Egypt. Charisma, which underlies transformational leadership was scored low in the GLOBE findings for Egypt (House et al, 2004) and Javidan et al,'s CLT (2006) despite the assertion that charismatic leadership prevails in Egypt (Mohamed, S., 2012). Moreover against the backdrop of the aforementioned organizational structure and organizational behaviour, that dominates Egyptian organizations (see Section 2.6) transformational leadership in Egypt was described as pseudo –transformational (Shahin and Wright, 2004), which Bass (1999: 15) describes as '*immature, self-aggrandizing charismatic'* and concluded it to be *'a false Messiah'*.

The final section (see Section 2.8) depicted Arab leadership in a framework adapted from Weir (2001), the central tenets being consistent with the referenced literature on Middle Eastern and Egyptian national culture. Including this particular theory is important to this cross-cultural study as it will serve a specific purpose in the empirical work by enabling the identification of indigenous managers' values and beliefs in the context of their day to day leader-follower interactions.

## 2.9.1 Gaps and Further Critical Analysis of the Literature

This thesis is positioned within the globalization debate, specifically that of cosmopolitanism. This is a concept that has been both misinterpreted and not fully conceived of in the Middle East according to Hanley (2008). This thesis provides a detailed understanding of the knowledge transfer process across-cultural boundaries in order to evaluate the effectiveness of leadership theories emanating from Western cultures. The research builds on the extant research specifically in the field of cross-cultural studies. This provides an in-depth appreciation of cultural values that may disrupt, distort or prevent knowledge transfer to the recipients' culture, thus rendering less effective leadership knowledge acquisition. A number of researchers have identified the need for further cross-cultural research in order interpret the leader follower interaction in non-Western cultures as many of them point out there is a dearth in the literature in the Middle East region and Egypt in particular.

Transfer of knowledge was focused on in the literature review and Gaddafors and Cronsell (2009) highlighted the important role that cultural embeddedness plays in impeding the process. Effective knowledge re-creation depends not only on the accessibility of the source knowledge but also on how the recipient converts, adapts or reconfigures this knowledge aligned at a localized level of comprehension (Cummings and Teng, 2003). From an Egyptian context Nafie's (2012) empirical study emphasized the cultural restraining factors that knowledge transfers undergoes, however the study did not extend to describing how the actual knowledge transferred to the indigenous agents.

Rogers' (2003) diffusion theory raised some pertinent points related to Egyptian national culture however the Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) 'Travel of Ideas' as an operating framework

potentially provides a more detailed understanding of the stages and processes that knowledge undergoes by considering the recipients' cultural values and beliefs.

Making sense of the Western originated leadership theories draws on Weick's (1995) studies on sense-making of which there is a paucity of empirical research (Weick et al, 2005; Maitlis and Christianson, 2014) and the reviewed literature related to Egypt did not uncover such studies in an Egyptian context. As non- native speakers make sense of phenomena through their cultural schemas which act as cognitive structures through which meaning is interpreted (Alptekin, 1993; Luna, 2008), there are direct implications for how Egyptian managers make sense of Western originated leadership theories. Savvas et al (2001) asserted that cognitive learning is culturally dependent although their empirical research concluded that further research is required to help close the extant knowledge gap.

Many of the cross-cultural empirical studies in the referenced literature have concluded that leadership is culturally contingent and some theorist have proposed adaptive models, for example, Ibrahim, 2014; Shahin and Wright 2004 with regards to Egypt specifically. Despite the similarities in the reviewed cross-cultural literature, gaps remain as a result of the contradictions regarding research methodologies and disparities in research findings and conclusions. Some theorist, in an attempt to better describe aspects of Middle Eastern culture have identified typologies of characteristics pertaining to Middle Easterners (Ali, 1991; Sidani and Thornberry, 2009) and Egyptians in particular (Sidani and Jamali, 2009), whereas others eschew such classifications (Ryan and Tipu, 2014).

Whilst much of the referenced literature was in agreement with the four reviewed major cross-cultural studies some researchers' empirical findings contradict the cultural clusters and

classifications emanating from those studies (Fang, 2005; Muczyk and Holt, 2008). An example

of this is Leat and Kott's (2007) empirical study which indicated that team work in Egypt was

not dissimilar to that of the UK, despite the findings of Javidan et al (2006). The studies

conducted by Hofstede et al, (2010) and Javidan et al (2006) were indicative of high power

distance prevailing in the Middle East cluster and this was corroborated by a number of

empirical studies that depicted Egyptians as submissive and reluctant to express opinions. Much

more recent empirical studies, yet to be further critiqued, challenge some of the findings of the

aforementioned researchers asserting that Egypt is not a high power distance culture (Ibrahim,

2014) nor is it essentially male dominated (Ibrahim, 2014). A number of researchers postulate

that Egypt is an individualistic society, which is in direct contradiction to the findings in the

reviewed cross-cultural studies. Egyptians have been depicted as change resistant, which was

corroborated in the empirical studies, in particular of Mostafa (2005) and Mostafa and El Masry

(2008). However, other commenters assert that Egypt is currently going through unprecedented

change and as a result workers' perceptions of leadership and their associated values are

undergoing change (Ibrahim, 2014: Nafie, 2012)  To some extent this 'unusual' change (Ibrahim,

2014) may account for the disparities in the reviewed literature. Thus a gap in the literature is

evident in terms of characterizing the Egyptian national culture, leadership perceptions and work

place values.

The cross-cultural research conducted in Egypt has culminated in calls for further research to

address the obvious gap in the literature. Nafei (2013) for example, asserts that more research

into organizational behaviour needs to be conducted. ElKordy (2013), Shusha (2013), Metwally

(2014) and Shahin and Wright all postulate that leadership research in Egypt is currently

insufficient and unable to provide an informed understanding of indigenous leadership. Another

gap in the literature is that identified by Parnell and Hatem (1999) who state there is a need for the re-evaluation of Western management constructs in the cross-cultural literature.

The empirical studies conducted on Egypt have covered a diverse range of industries, including multinational, international and local companies, public service and academic institutes. A number of comparative studies of Egyptians and non-Egyptians have been conducted (see Table 3.1 for further details), however, to the author's knowledge none of the extant studies have been carried out specifically in the design and consulting sectors of Egypt.

The referenced literature of empirical studies has been largely dominated by research designs utilitizing structured or semi-structured questionnaires, which are considered the most common tool of field studies (Yukl and Gordon, 2002). Furthermore, Parnell and Hatem (1999) point out the need to take account the local culture when designing research instruments and some researchers have raised concerns about the limiting effects of questionnaires (ElKordy, 2013; Metwally, 2012, 2014) in the data collection process. In addition the majority of the extant research studies have followed a positivist paradigm, which unlike phenomenological studies, does not provide the thick rich description of human behaviour (see Chapter 3 for further details), which highlights the limitations in the literature. A further limitation of the reviewed literature relates specifically to their external validity. External validity is the extent to which a study's findings can be generalized (Yin, 2014).

With reference to data collection techniques, the literature reviewed the advantages of utilizing the RGT, a tool emanating from Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1955). There is a paucity in the cross-cultural literature related to Personal Construct Theory (Scheer, 2003) and from the reviewed literature related to Egypt, that gap is further evidenced, although one such study

conducted by Shouman et al (2009) utilized a hybrid model of the RGT to uncover knowledge acquisition among Egyptians. Requests to extend cross-cultural research efforts to overcome this gap in the literature continue to be expressed by the research community, as mentioned above.

All of the aforementioned factors have been considered as identifying a gap in the extant literature since we need to know how indigenous managers assume leader follower relations bearing in mind some of the contradictions that have been identified. Determining how the indigenous managers construe and make sense of these leadership theories is central to this aim. This aim can be best achieved by conducting a phenomenological comparative case study of Egyptian and British managers working in two different locations for a regional company, i.e., Company X and utilizing a tool that has evolved from Personal Construct Theory, i.e., the Repertory Grid Technique (RGT) as the principal data collection tool.

This thesis will contribute to a better understanding of the effectiveness of Western leadership theories in cultures that differ from where they evolved. Furthermore it will contribute to the literature on cross-cultural research with a view to supporting the divergence theory and adapting Western theories to be culturally contingent in order to positively influence leadership development in Egypt, which has been highlighted in both Chapters 1 and 2 as an area of importance, however an under-researched region of the world.

### 2.9.3 Research questions, framework of analysis:

The aim of the study is to understand how Egyptian managers construe Western evolved leadership theories. The objectives of this empirical enquiry are to identify the role and impact that Egyptian national culture has on the receptivity and acceptance of such theories. This will involve assessing the aforementioned theories in relation to the indigenous managers and the

differences that exist in comparison to their UK counterparts. In order to achieve the aim and objectives the research questions are as follows:

1.     *Which leadership theories are more or less culturally attuned to Egyptian managers?*

2.     *What role does national culture play in terms of how the indigenous managers construe Western evolved leadership theories?*

The reviewed literature specifies a variety of causal effects emanating from the cross-cultural nature of leadership and how the knowledge transfer process is affected. The literature review indicates that sense-making theory, and particularly, Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory provides an effective way of revealing how these indigenous managers in this case study construe leadership theories as these theories undergo the transfer of knowledge process and navigate the barriers of cultural embeddedness. Throughout the relevant sections of the reviewed literature, it has been asserted that the various anomalies that have been highlighted may be a result of the 'out there, in here' tensions discussed by Amin A. (1997), supported by Erez and Gati's (2004) model of culture elaborated in an Egyptian context. This raises concerns of compatibility regarding the knowledge transfer of ideas and as such how the leadership theories that evolved in the West are received and construed in a different location (Egypt) as they travel through space and time. Therefore, as a result of the literature synthesis and identification of the gaps in the extant literature the above research questions have been formulated.

In summary, the first research question is designed to assess the leadership theories' level of cultural compatibility as the indigenous managers' 'theories in use'. The second research question is designed to understand how the local culture affects Egyptian managers' construal and sense-making processes when considering the various leadership theories they are exposed

to. These leadership theories are underpinned by values and beliefs emanating from a different cultural environment.

**2.10 Chapter Summary**

This chapter aimed to provide focus to the research topic. The literature review identified a number of issues that are central to the topic of this thesis, which investigates how Egyptian managers construe Western originated leadership theories. The globalization literature highlighted how recipient cultures have produce a blend of local and 'foreign' initiatives, of novel outcomes that accord with and preserve cultural values, which is where this thesis is positioned.

Central to the research aim is a review of the literature on knowledge transfer within a cross-cultural context and how it is diffused (Rogers, 2003). The Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) 'Travel of Ideas' framework was utilized to analyze how ideas are diffused, translated and received in the recipient nation i.e., Egypt, and consequently how they are made sense of with reference to Weick et al (2005).

This led on to a brief introduction to PCT, (Kelly, 1955), in order to provide an insight into the constructivist approach this thesis is based upon as well as highlighting that PCT is a working theory that helps people make sense of their lives (Butt and Burr, 2006).

Cross-cultural studies were critically reviewed, focusing on four major studies that included Egypt. The literature on Egyptian national cultural was critically reviewed to determine the extent to which national culture impacts on how knowledge is diffused and ideas travels beyond their cultural peripheries.

The final section of the literature review focused in on the precise issue raised by the research question, against an accumulation of reviewed literature on the associated topics of the thesis outlined in Figure 2.1. The literature synthesis provided the groundwork for identifying the various gaps in the literature and the 2 resultant research questions.

**CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, DESIGN AND METHODS**

**3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provided a critical review of the literature from which the research questions evolved. Linking the emergent theory to the extant literature will enrich internal validity, generalizability and the theoretical level of the theory building of case study research (Eisenhardt, 1989) which is the chosen method of data collection for this thesis (see Section 3.2.2).

As there are no perfect research designs (Patton, 2002: 223) a discussion of the various strategies and trade-offs (Patton, 2002) will be presented in this chapter. A detailed explanation and justification for the research design, methods and methodology that have been selected for data collection, analysis and findings is provided for the main study. Both the pilot and main study adopted the same methodology.

**3.2 Research design and methodology**

As presented in Figure 2.1 this study is situated within the field of leadership, specifically cross-cultural leadership.

**Aim**: To understand how Egyptian managers construe Western evolved leadership theories.

**Objective**: To identify the role and impact that Egyptian national culture has on the receptivity and acceptance of Western evolved leadership theories. This will involve assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the aforementioned theories in relation to indigenous managers and the differences that exist in comparison to their British counterparts.

**Research Questions:**

1. *Which leadership theories are more or less culturally attuned to Egyptian managers?*

2. *What role does national culture play in terms of how the indigenous managers construe Western evolved leadership theories?*

### 3.2.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm is a particular standpoint from which we view the world and organize our observations. It is important that research is conducted with a clear understanding of the paradigm so that research findings make sense in the real world (Babbie, 2005; Patton, 2002).

Based on the aim of this study and the ensuing research questions the chosen research approach has adopted the epistemological position of the phenomenological and constructivist paradigms. The phenomenological paradigm takes the perspective that the facts about the world as established by positivists are not fully aligned with the reality of the world that we experience (Patton, 2002). It attempts to explicate the meaning, structure, and core of the lived phenomenon for a person or group of people (Patton, 2002: 482). Phenomenology is

'*understanding the 'constructs' people use in everyday life to make sense of their world.*' (Snape and Spencer, 2003: 12).

The aim of research from a phenomenological paradigm is to interpret the context, meanings, values and attitudes of the social world as a set of subjective experiences. The phenomenological researcher endeavors to understand the full context of how things happen as they are observed (Neuman, 2007) and attempts to understand individuals' 'constructs', i.e., their interpretation of events as part of their sense- making process (Butt, 2003; Snape and Spencer, 2003: 12). This

allows a focusing on personal meaning and construing (Butt, 2003). In the approach adopted in this study these personal constructs are formulated into bipolar abstractions represented as two poles with opposing ends (Epting et al, 1971). This is indeed pertinent to this research paradigm as it seeks to uncover how the indigenous managers construe the various leadership theories. Snape and Spencer (2013: 12) describe the research activities carried out using a constructivist approach as:

*'Displaying 'multiple constructed realities' through the shared investigation (by researchers and participants) of meanings and explanation'.*

This latter point explores how indigenous managers construe the various leadership theories in order to make sense of them within the context of their 'theories in use'. Of particular importance is how they construe their leadership roles pertaining to their regular leader-follower interactions. People tend to perceive situations and events according to the parameters that their constructs will allow and consequently they choose to deal with the most familiar first (Xiao and Boyd, 2010). One's constructs are of limited use in interpreting cross-cultural situations because of the gap between the constructs of one's own culture and those required in a different cultural situation (Xiao and Boyd, 2010). The analogy here is to the leadership theories emanating from Western cultures, travelling through time and space and how they are construed by Egyptian managers whose 'mental maps' may obfuscate the tenets and values on which the aforementioned leadership theories were developed (i.e., in Western cultures).

Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) and the theory emanating from this, Personal Construct Theory, (PCT) developed by psychologist George Kelly (Kelly, 1955 and 1963) are founded within the constructivist paradigm, as Kelly (1955) asserts in his fundamental postulate that

individuals construe their reality of the world they operate in by recording and internalizing their interpretations of the phenomena they encounter.

'*From a phenomenological point of view, the client – like the proverbial customer – is always right.*' Kelly (1995: 322)

Furthermore this form of construction results in anticipating future scenarios as reminiscent of the past (Kelly, 1955). The construction corollary is one of the basic tenets of PCP and PCT (Butt and Burr, 2004) that individuals utilize in terms of sense-making. As this thesis is concerned with the sense-making process (Weick et al, 2005) of indigenous managers it is aligned with the epistemological position of phenomenology and constructivism.

The Repertory Grid Technique (hereafter referred to as RGT) evolved from Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory. One of the salient aspects of utilizing the RGT is that it generates both qualitative and quantitative data which provides for a comprehensive research methodology (Rogers and Ryals, 2007). Whilst a quantitative approach is effective for identifying differences, a qualitative approach has the potential to capture the complexity when studying organizational behaviour (Dahles and Wels, 2002, cited in Xiao and Boyd, 2010: 551), which is imperative to the nature of cross-cultural research (Xiao and Boyd, 2010). Despite the fact that PCT was developed in the USA and initially spread throughout English speaking countries its increase in recent times can be considered a world-wide movement (Scheer, 2007). Table 3.1 below provides a brief overview of how PCT has been extended to cross-cultural research in which the RGT is utilized in investigating personal constructs of various cultural individuals and groups.

**Table 3.1 PCT in Cross-cultural Empirical Studies Utilizing the RGT**

| Nationalities included in the research samples | Referenced Details | Cultural Background of Researcher(s) | Key features |
|---|---|---|---|
| Egyptian; Greek; Irish Indian; Turkish and British | Hogan, T. and Hornecker, E. (2012) | British and German (respectively) | Examined the user experience and in particular the affective responses to data representation. |
| Egyptian | Shouman et al (2009) | Egyptians | Utilized a hybrid RGT model to reveal knowledge acquisition in expert systems. |
| Saudi Arabian nationals | Hamad, E., O. (2012) | Saudi Arabian | Identified personal constructs of students at a Canadian university |
| Turkish | Balyer, A. (2012) | Turkish | Leadership behaviors of school principals based on teachers' perceptions. |
| Chinese/Hong Kong nationals | Wright, R.,P. (2004) | Western/Malaysian | Mapping cognitions to uncover attitudinal and behavioral responses toward performance appraisals. |
| Chinese | Xiao, H. and Boyd, D. (2010) | Chinese and USA (respectively) | Learning from cross-cultural problems in international engineering and construction projects. |
| Japanese | Hadley, S. (1996) | British | Identify personal constructs of Japanese students of English as a foreign language (EFL). |
| Canadian and Singaporeans | Hunter, M., G., Beck, J., E. (2000) | Canadians | Conducted cross- cultural research of information systems. |
| Dutch and Japanese | Tomico et al (2009) | South African; Greek; Japanese | Study of cultural differences |

### 3.2.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The primary source of data collection is, in fact, the researcher (Patton, 2002). Interviewing skills are essential during field work, when both formal and informal data can be captured through informal conversations. Therefore the interviewer must be skilled in interpreting nuances of participants and managing the interviewer-interviewee interaction and relationship (Patton,

2002). It is therefore most appropriate that the sample frame and selection is of participants who attended the leadership development programmes delivered by the author. Logistical arrangements such as where to conduct the face to face meetings are an important consideration to ensure interviewees feel familiar and relaxed in readiness to explore their tacit knowledge (Whyte and Classen, 2012), a factor that was considered in both the pilot and main study.

### 3.2.2.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Data

This research utilized both qualitative and quantitative data, which offers considerable potential in terms of social research (Eisenhardt, 1989; Ritchie, 2003). Although qualitative and quantitative data belong to quite different ontological and epistemological bases, using a combination of both approaches has an appeal in terms of the potential value that such an approach can yield (Fox and Tan, 1997; Ritchie, 2003). Both forms of enquiry are complementary rather than conflicting strategies and together have the potential to produce a more profound level and range of data (Fox and Tan, 1997; Snape and Spencer, 2003). Qualitative research encompasses an interpretive and naturalistic perspective of the world. This allows the qualitative researcher to observe phenomena in their natural settings and emphasizes and values the human perspective of interpretation via a sense-making process (Snape and Spencer, 2003.) A key feature of employing qualitative methods is their utility in depicting phenomena in the vernacular (Ritchie, 2003). All three functions of Ritchie's (2003: 27) typology of qualitative data are present in this thesis, as illustrated in Table3.2 below.

**Table 3.2 Classification of Qualitative Data. After Ritchie (2003)**

| Feature | Description | Relevance to this thesis |
|---|---|---|
| Contextual | Describes the form or nature of what exists. | 'Theories in use', i.e., Western originated leadership theories practiced by Egyptians in day to day work setting. |
| Explanatory | Examines the reasons for, or associations between, what exists. | The underlying factors, influences, values and beliefs in the construal process. |
| Evaluative | Appraises the effectiveness of what exists. | Evaluate the leadership theories to identify which are the most and which are the least culturally appropriate. |

Utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data is essential in evaluative studies (Ritchie, 2003) such as this research enquiry which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of Western evolved leadership theories in a cross-cultural setting. The purpose of harnessing qualitative and quantitative data is to create an extended understanding that neither method alone can offer (Ritchie, 2003: 43). Qualitative research will address values and beliefs the indigenous managers' possess and how these are articulated. Meanwhile, quantitative research will capture the degree of variance their constructs contain as well as assist in the identification of similarities and differences in the respondents' construing.

At a very basic level, research requires some measurement of outcome (requiring quantitative methods) accompanied by an enquiry into the process (requiring qualitative methods) (Ritchie, 2003: 42). Furthermore Yin (2014) cautions against using only qualitative data in case study research. Case studies allow for an abundance of data collection methods (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003) and interviewing is by far the most widely used data collection method (Yin, 2014). It is also particularly well suited to research of complex, deeply rooted phenomena (Ritchie, 2003).

### 3.2.3 Research Methodology

The following section is an overview of the methodology which includes the supporting rationale for the choice of data collection methods, techniques and subsequent data analysis. The term methodology refers to the overall approaches and perspectives of the research process as a whole and is concerned with the why, what and how data are collected and analysed (Collis and Hussey, 2003: 55).

### 3.2.3.1 Case Study Method

This study adopts a case study approach with the aim of answering the research questions emanating from the literature review, synthesis and pilot study, to explore causal linkages and explanations (Yin, 2014). A case study is:

*'....an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the 'case') in depth and within its real-world context.'* (Yin, 2014: 16)

The case study method is most appropriate when phenomenon and context are not always clearly definable in real world situations (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Patton and Appelbaum, 2003; Yin, 2014: 17). The case study method applies to a number of circumstances including situations of an exploratory nature (Yin, 2014), with the provision of in-depth and rich insights that capture the nuances of life (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This makes it particularly well suited for phenomenological studies (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 2014). Furthermore, in situations where the researcher has little control over events and or phenomena, the case study approach is recommended (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003). The aforementioned points are particularly relevant to this cross-cultural research in which the indigenous managers' construals are the focus of attention.

Although case study research can provide much more compelling support for a theory than empirical quantitative research can yield (Siggelkow, 2007) there are contending views in the research community on the effectiveness of case study research as a method of theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2014; Flyvbjerg, 2006). Whilst case studies have traditionally been considered as 'soft' research, Yin (2014) postulates that they are in fact quite the reverse, when properly designed (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003) and carefully selected (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Concerns related to the methodological rigour of case studies within the realms of the social science studies are a main source of contention in the extant literature (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Patton and Appelbaum, 2003; Yin, 2014), which can be countered by a precisely designed research protocol (Yin, 2014) and the inclusion of explicit reliability checks and data triangulation. Eisenhardt (1989) produced a protocol to observe when building theory from case studies highlighting the codified procedures that Miles and Huberman (1984, cited in Eisenhardt, 1989) devised for qualitative data collection and analysis in a way that enhances methodological thoroughness. In this case study the principal data collection technique is the RGT which depends on a detailed and well-codified procedure (Jankowicz, 2004) thus further supporting the choice of research method.

Other criticisms include lack of representativeness (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Patton and Appelbaum, 2003). This questions the potential generalizability of case studies (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 2014), however Yin (2014) points out the rationale of case studies includes the researcher's goal of expanding and generalizing existing theories, which he terms 'analytical generalization' as opposed to 'statistical generalizations'. Walsham (2006: 322) postulates that generalizations from single case studies can be expanded to include concepts, theories, specific implications as well as rich insights.

Generalizability is determined by the level of detail and depth of descriptive context which also serves to support the representativeness of the case study (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003). In fact some case studies, including the case study of this thesis, are selected precisely because their appeal lies in the uniqueness of the company (the case) (Flyvbjerg, 2006) and the ability to gain access to certain insights not possible to achieve through other companies (cases) (Siggelkow, 2007). Concerns regarding generalizability and representativeness can be countered by the fact that case study research allows for the utilization of multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2014) which enables researchers to reach a coherent interpretation of a particular case (Scapens, 1990, cited in Hassan and Saker, 2012).

Researcher bias emanating from potential subjectivity of the researcher and field informants (Patton and App 2003) is also cited as a concern, which is offset by the considerable advantageous position of the researcher, i.e., s/he can get closer to theoretical constructs (Siggelkow, 2007). Furthermore, the very nature of qualitative research requires the researcher to be in the field, making observations, judgments and interpretations (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003) all of which are strengths of the phenomenological paradigm in which this thesis is positioned.

To conclude, the strengths of case study as an effective and appropriate research method outweigh their inherent shortcomings and the key features of case studies are compatible with this applied cross-cultural research.

**3.2.3.2 Case selection**

Yin's (2014) typology of case studies identifies the use of single and multiple cases. Single case studies have been considered as inferior however this has been refuted on the basis that single

case studies potentially offer multiple forms of inter-related evidence (Ragin, 1992: 225, cited in Flyvbjerg, 2006). Dyer and Wilkins (1991) provide a compelling argument in favour of the classic case study, i.e., single case study, asserting that the potential for rich description and more revealing nature of single case study research places it in a superior position. Furthermore a greater level of focus and accuracy occur due to the researcher's proximity to the unit of analysis, i.e., the case (Dyer and Wilkins, 1991). This makes single case studies appealing to this particular research project in which articulating and documenting the construals' of indigenous managers requires a trusting relationship with the researcher. Essentially, depending on a rigorous research protocol (Dyer and Wilkins, 1991) single case studies can be effective (Patton and Appelbaum, 2003).

A 'two cases' case study (Type 2: embedded units of analysis), is potentially more fruitful and poses less risk (see Yin, 2014: 50). Making generalizations from single case studies needs care and cannot be assumed. Replication is helpful in strengthening support of a theory or model (Yin, 2014). The prospect of direct replication in which analytical conclusions emanate independently from the two cases is likely to be more powerful than those generated from a single case (Yin, 2014: 64). This thesis is based on this Type 2 approach in order to allow for comparative analysis. Furthermore, as a central topic of this thesis is cross-cultural research an important feature to draw on is how individuals from different cultures interpret their experiences differently than the shared understanding that exists among individuals of a single culture (Jankowicz, 2004: 362).

The units of analysis (from the ontological perspective) are the Egypt and UK based offices of Company X headquartered in the Middle East.  Figure 3.1 (below) illustrates the type of case study selected for this cross-cultural research project.
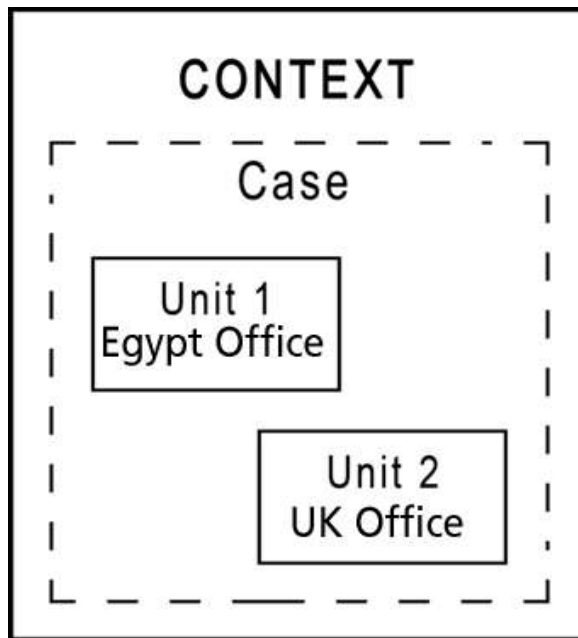
**Figure 3.1 Type 2, Embedded (multiple units of analysis). After Yin (2014)**

The two offices in question, both report into the head office in a Middle Eastern country (not Egypt), have been selected to generate a cross-cultural comparative case study. This same approach has been adopted by other researchers who conducted case studies in Egypt and/or related to Egyptians, details are provided in Table 3.3 (below).

**Table 3.3 Referenced Literature of Comparative Case Studies of Egypt**

| Brief Details | Author(s) | Key Findings/Conclusions |
|---|---|---|
| Egyptian and UK organizations approaches related to CRM. | Ali, M. et al (2006) | A framework of cultural dimensions for management of CRM systems was devised for application in multinational work environments. |
| Egyptian and American approaches to ethics in a business context. | Beekun et al (2007) | Differences in ethical considerations exist in decision making between the two cultures. |
| Egyptian and Western managers to review the culturally adaptability of expatriate managers. | Brown and Ataalla (2002) | Management is culturally contingent. The mean scores identified that cultural respect obtained the highest score, whereas cultural adaptability scored just 54%. |
| Egyptian and Saudi Arabian hospital staff (including Philipino and Indian nurses) approaches to decision making and leadership styles. | Dorgham and Al Mahmoud (2013) | Situational leadership is evident in both countries (Egypt and Saudi Arabia). Saudi Arabian nurses demonstrated statistically higher levels of autonomous decision making. |
| Egyptian managers working in local firms compared to Egyptian managers working in US firms in Egypt to examine ethical positioning and budget systems. | Douglas et al (2007) | Significant differences in ethical orientations and budgeting systems between the two cases. |
| Egyptian and non-Egyptian managers in a single case study based on the hospitality industry. | El Masry et al (2004) | No observable difference in leadership effectiveness, however differences *do* exist in leadership styles between the two units of analysis. |
| Comparison of Egyptians to the nationalities included in the GLOBE report (House et al, 2001). | Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E. (2012) | Egyptians are most interested in reducing power distance and increasing the future orientation aspects of their societal culture. |
| Egyptian, American, African and Arab executives' value systems. | Elsayed-Elkhouly and Budda (1997) | Substantial differences exist among all four. The values of the Egyptian executives were least similar to American executives and to a lesser degree. |
| Egyptian and British managers' styles in the health care field. | Hamlin et al (2010) | A high degree of commonality in managerial behavioural |

| | | styles between the two cultures. |
|---|---|---|
| Egyptian and British managers' styles in the field of technical education. | Humphreys (1996) | Cultural differences exist which require Western leadership paradigms to be culturally adapted. |
| Egyptian and Dutch engineers' differences in work approaches in a single case study based on the construction industry. | Mahran and Geraedts (2009) | Differences in cultural values underlie the differences in time orientation; negotiations; hierarchies and protocols and approaches to conflict. |
| Egyptian and British post graduate marketing students comparison to identify differences in creativity styles. | Mostafa and Al Masry (2008) | Egyptians differ from their British counterparts regarding their attitudes towards organizational creativity barriers. |
| Egyptian and American managers' behavioural styles. | Parnell and Hatem (1999) | Managerial styles are deeply culturally embedded. Perceptions of management behaviour as being positive or negative is judged according to one's cultural lens. |
| Egyptian, Greek, Hong Kong nationals and British cognitive styles of business studies undergraduates. | Savvas et al (2001) | No statistically significant differences in undergraduate sub-sample; however in the post graduate sub-sample a statistically significant difference between UK and Egyptian cognitive styles exists. The UK sub-sample was found to be the most intuitive. |

### 3.2.3.3 Case Study Sample

One of the most important design decisions is respondent selection (Jankowicz, 2006: 3/46). As random sampling may not be entirely appropriate for case study research (Eisenhardt, 1989) other approaches were considered and purposive sampling was selected as the most appropriate for this thesis.

*Purposive Sampling*

Purposive sampling is appropriate when the individuals chosen,

'*have views that are relevant to your study and which typify important varieties of viewpoint within the population*' (Jankowicz, 2006: 3/41).

This sampling method was utilized in Ibrahim's (2014) case study of Egyptian managers' perception of leadership, and in Whyte and Classen's (2012) study of tacit knowledge, through Storytelling, as being the most appropriate method in view of the research aim and objectives. It is considered one of the most robust types of sampling options (Ritchie et al, 2003). Purposive sampling typically focuses on selecting a small sample which has the potential to generate rich, in-depth information that produces insights of the phenomenon in question (Patton, 2002: 46; Ritchie et al, 2003). Thus, purposive sampling bears the hallmarks of the phenomenological paradigm as phenomena can only be understood within the context in which they are studied (Patton, 2002). Furthermore, as the research design should observe the questions emanating from the literature review and synthesis (Patton, 2002) gaining insights into the values and beliefs of indigenous managers will be best achieved through purposive sampling.

Conducting research in a company in which one currently is employed can be an effective way of generating a sample frame for groups which are less easily identified through conventional methods (Ritchie et al, 2003). Therefore, the sampling frame chosen was composed of participants of the leadership development training in the Egypt and UK offices. As there are no specified rules for sample size in qualitative research (Patton, 2002) 18 managers from each office were approached and invited to participate in the data collection process. This number is based on the results of the pilot study (see Chapter 4). The practice of conducting RGT

interviews should make it possible to elicit at least 8 constructs per participant. A total of 36 managers generating a (minimum) average of 8 constructs per grid interview would mean that 288 constructs, could achieve close to a saturation point of around 300 constructs.

The sample selection from both Egypt and UK offices was carried out on participants from the in-house leadership programme. An informed consent form was emailed to reassure potential participants of the confidential nature of the study.

## 3.4 Overview of the Data Collection

Three techniques were used for data collection: the Repertory Grid; a follow up to the RGT interview, i.e., Personal Values Statements and Storytelling. The first is the main technique and the other two amplify it, providing a form of triangulation.

Triangulation can be described as involving '*the use of different methods and sources to check the integrity of, or extend, inferences drawn from the data.*' Ritchie (2003: 43).

Triangulation strengthens a study (Patton, 2002: 247) as studies that are restricted to using one technique are vulnerable to the shortcomings of that particular technique (Patton, 2002). The research design has included triangulation of the RGT interviews, Personal Values Statements (PVS) and Storytelling (for details see Section 3.2.1 Data Collection and Analysis). Data triangulation (Patton, 2002) i.e., utilizing multiple data sources to develop convergent evidence is recommended by Yin (2014) as this type of data triangulation will help strengthen the construct validity of the case study (Yin, 2014: 121).

Another type of data triangulation is investigator triangulation (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2014). This will be utilized during the content analysis stage in which content analysis reliability procedures

(see Jankowicz, 2004: 155-163) require an external evaluator to find agreement on the themes

and classifications emanating from the repertory grids and Storytelling (see Section 3.4 Data

Analysis).

### 3.4.1 Repertory Grid Technique (RGT)

Kelly (1955) depicted personal constructs as notions, bipolar in nature, encompassing thoughts,

feelings and actions that can be perceived as a kind of gestalt (Epting & Paris, 2006; Rogers &

Ryals, 2007). The RGT will be utilized to collect data in alignment with the constructivist

approach in which this research is situated. The RGT is the practical application of Personal

Construct Theory (Fransella, 2003). Although the RGT was initially used in clinical

psychotherapy its pragmatic utility means it can now be found in a broad range of fields (Boyle,

2005), which include education, politics, market research, organization (Fransella, 2003;

Jankowicz, 2004), business applications (Brophy, 2003; Fransella, 2003; Jankowicz, 2004),

management development research (Easterby-Smith et al, 1996), training and occupational

applications (Jankowicz, 1990)  and cross-cultural research (see Table 3.1; Xiao and Boyd,

2010).

The RGT can be described as a cognitive mapping tool (Tan and Hunter, 2002; Wright, 2004)

that allows articulation of an individual's personal constructs (Easterby-Smith et al, 1996;

Jankowicz, 1987; Wright, 2004). It can be applied as a method to facilitate exploration of an

individual's ideas and values in greater depth than other psychological techniques (Easterby-

Smith et al, 1996; Wright, 2004). Furthermore it generates a large amount of rich, in-depth

qualitative and narrative data (Hunter and Beck, 2000). Cognitive mapping is considered a

highly effective tool of exploration in the field of cognition research (Wright, 2004).  In Section

2.4 it was asserted that our cultural schemas act as cognitive structures through which we filter and interpret information (Alptekin, 1993; Luna, 2008). Savvas et al's (2001) empirical research indicated that cognitive learning is culture dependent, which further supports the argument that the RGT is an appropriate tool for this cross-cultural research enquiry.

Utilizing a tool with the above properties is particularly pertinent to this research of Egyptian managers as Sections 2. 5 and 2.6 depicted Egyptians as submissive; reluctant to being expressive; less able to discern professional from personal matters; possessing low levels of trust; with a propensity for being self-protective, all of which may inhibit responses through more conventional techniques. Furthermore, building and maintaining trust in cross-cultural environments can be challenging (Xiao and Boyd, 2010), thus the need to minimize researcher bias being particularly important. The latter is a further strength of utilizing the RGT, as depicted in Table 3.4 (below). This table summarizes the rationale for choosing the RGT as the principal data collection technique for this applied research project and its pertinence to the research questions.

**Table 3.4 Advantages of Utilizing The Repertory Grid**

| Feature(s) | Referenced Authors |
|---|---|
| Provides for sense-making and cognition | Butt and Burr (2004); Cassell and Close (2000); Hayes and Allinson (1998); Marsden and Littler (2000); Rogers and Ryals (2007) Wright (2004) |
| Captures tacit knowledge/nebulous/hard to define topics | Goffin and Koners (2011); Fransella et al (2003); Jankowicz (2001); Raja et al (2013); Rogers and Ryals (2007); Shouman et al (2009); Wright, (2004) |
| Identifies values and beliefs of interviewees | Brophy (2003); Fox and Tan (1997); Honey (1979); Jankowicz (2004); Raja et al (2013) |
| Provides for in-depth exploration of personal worlds of respondents | Cassell and Close (2000); Easterby-Smith and Aston (1975); Fox and Tan (1997); Tomico et al (2009); Rogers and Ryals (2007); Wright, (2004) |
| Accomodates reflexivity | Cassell et al (2000); Butt and Burr (2006); Raja et al, (2013) |
| Appropriate when the research method does not include large quantities of data | Stumpf and Mc Donnell (2003) |
| Appropriate for cross-cultural research | Bayler (2012); Cassell and Close (2000); Hunter and Beck (2000); Scheer (2003); Tomico et al (2009); Xiao and Boyd (2010); Wright (2004) |
| Appropriate for research of an interpretive stance and of a phenomological paradigm | Marsden and Littler (2000) |
| Contributes to construct and internal validity of the research methodology | Goffin and Koners (2011) |
| Effective for qualitative research | Aranda and Finch (2003); Bayler (2012); Easterby-Smith et al (1996); Hunter and Beck (2000); Tomico et al (2009) Rogers and Ryals (2007); Xiao and Boyd (2010) |
| Accomodates both quantitative and qualitative data collection | Boyle (2005); Bell (2003); Raja et al (2013); Rogers and Ryals (2007); Shouman et al (2009) |
| Reduces researcher bias to minimal level | Boyle (2005); Easterby-Smith and Aston (1975); Fox and Tan (1997); Hayes et al (1998); Hunter and Beck (2000); Raja et al (2013); Rogers and Ryals (2007); Wright (2004) |
| High level of accuracy and truthfulness in respondents' responses | Easterby-Smith and Aston (1975); Fox and Tan (1997) |
| Potential to generate levels of analysis that are statistically rigorous | Wright (2004) |
| Stimulating and novel for respondents | Fox and Tan (1997); Wright (2004) |
| Avoids pre-determined responses characteristic of questionnaire limitations | Easterby-Smith and Aston (1975); Raja et al, (2013); Rogers and Ryals (2007); Shouman et al (2009); Tomico et al (2009); Wright (2004) |

Despite the advantages above, there are a few shortcomings associated with RGT. Sampson (1972) asserted that conducting RGT interviews required a trained psychologist, although others have argued that a trained and or experienced interviewer would suffice (Easterby-Smith and Aston, 1975 and Easterby-Smith et al, 1996). One other concern is that of ensuring the respondents are fully conversant with all the Elements of the repertory grid to ensure in-depth and exact data is produced (Hunter and Beck, 2000). Wright (2004), too, has emphasized the importance of preparing participants in advance of the RGT interviews.

All grid interviews start with defining the topic. In this research the topic was defined as Leadership Development Theories. Then the Elements (i.e., the 9 leadership theories) are introduced.

*Elements*

Elements are examples of the overall topic of the RGT interview (Jankowicz, 2004) and they can either be supplied by the interviewee or the interviewer (Jankowicz, 2004). Element selection is central to the RGT activity (Bell, 2003). An important consideration for Element selection is that they fall within 'the range of convenience' of the constructs used, i.e., are representative of the RGT topic (Jankowicz, 2004).

As the RGT is the tool to uncover indigenous managers' construal of various leadership theories it is important that the Elements selected should be based on the in-house leadership development programme (described in Sections 2.7 and 2.8). Therefore the researcher chose the Elements as the sample population was conversant with them.

This research arrangement is in line with the notion of constructive alternativism (Kelly, 1955), which allows individuals to investigate and assess new forms of explanation without abandoning the old (Butt and Burr, 2006).

The author included an additional Element (i.e., a non-Western leadership theory) to provide further insights in to the construal of leadership theories. This additional Element (see Table 3.2 below, Element LT9) characterizes Arab leadership style (for further details see Section 2.8). It was also considered a potentially fruitful endeavor in terms of diffusion of innovation (Rogers, 2003). Company X is headquartered in the Middle East so there may be potential insights pertaining to the UK based managers that are elaborated on in Chapters 6 and 7.

There are no specific guidelines on the optimum number of Elements; however 5 or less may be too few whilst more than 12 may be too many (Jankowicz, 2004). 9 is an adequate number for managerial purposes (Wright, 2004: 346). In the referenced literature Tomico et al, (2009) used 6 Elements; Hunter and Beck (2000) used 8 Elements in their repertory grids investigating cross-cultural perceptions; Shouman et al (2009) used 8 Elements in their research on knowledge acquisition of Egyptians; Honey's (1979) RGT interviews related to perceptions of organizational management style was composed of 9 Elements as was Wright's (2004). A total of 9 supplied Elements were used as the basis for the RGT interviews as has been discussed in detail in Sections 2.7 and 2.8 (see Table 3.5 below).

**Table 3.5 The Nine Elements of the RGT Interviews**

| Code | Element |
|------|---------|
| LT1 | Traits Theory |
| LT2 | Managerial Behavioural Grid |
| LT3 | Situational Leadership |
| LT4 | Leadership Continuum |
| LT5 | Path Goal Theory |
| LT | Contingency Theory |
| LT7 | Transformational / Transactional Leadership |
| LT8 | Five Practices of Leadership |
| LT9 | Arab Leadership (After Weir, 2001) |

Whilst Elements disclose *what* a person thinks, constructs uncover *how* a person thinks about a particular topic (Jankowicz, 2004).

*Constructs*

As Kelly's (1955: 55) Individuality Corollary asserted that people differ from one another in how they construe events, it would be consistent with PCT that the RGT interview allowed the interviewee to provide the constructs by construing the various leadership theories from their perspectives.

*The Supplied Construct*

One supplied construct was introduced, by the interviewer, when no more constructs could be elicited. This was worded as '*Overall, is most/least culturally appropriate to managing my team*'. For analysis purposes the rationale for including a supplied construct is firstly, to provide a succinct overall view of the interviewees' understanding of each Element and secondly, to allow for data analysis as described in Section 5.6.2.1.

### 3.4.2 The Study of Values

The second data collection tool utilized a follow up to the RGT interview, i.e., laddering up (Jankowicz, 2004). As a technique, Personal Values Statement's (PVS) epistemology emanates from Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955), in particular from the Organization Corollary, i.e.,

'*Each person characteristically evolves for his convenience in anticipating events, a construction system embracing ordinal relationships between constructs*' (Kelly, 1955/1991: 39).

This alludes to the fact that constructs do not operate in isolation (Jankowicz, 2004). In this way a structure evolves that includes super-ordinate constructs identified by using a process called 'laddering up' in order to arrive at the greatest level of abstraction, i.e., a (personal) value. The PVS interviews formed the basis of identifying the way in which meanings are organized in the Egyptian and UK managers' construct systems.

The PVS interviews followed the guidelines and procedure documented by Jankowicz (2004). The laddering up process was achieved by referring to the constructs elicited previously (in the RGT interview) and asking the interviewee questions related to both the emergent and implied poles and establishing which side (left or right) was preferred. The laddering up process began with questions such as 'Why is that important to you: Why do you value that? repeated iteratively to reach the highest level of abstraction. The aim is to uncover the values that the interviewee possesses which underpin their original construals. Such an in-depth exploration of values is pivotal to understanding the notion of knowledge transfer. The 'Travel of Ideas' framework (Figure 2. 2) highlights the fragmented journey ideas undergo when they travel to foreign lands. The embedded values of the indigenous managers in this case study may be

uncovered as factors that delay, prevent or distort their receptivity towards Western evolved leadership theories that these managers are exposed to in their training and development courses. Kelly (1955) postulated that when individuals, in this case the indigenous managers are faced with re-appraisal, a re-construal, their superordinate construct will subsume others. Therefore when the Egyptian managers make decisions, assess situations etc., they do so with reference to their internal constructs systems, i.e., their mental templates (Butt and Burr, 2006) which is manifest in their 'theories in use'. PVS interviewing was the data collection technique utilized by Dobosz-Bourne (2004) in her ethnographic study of knowledge transfer in a cross-cultural environment.

The inclusion of PVS in the research design came about on reflection of the pilot study. During the RGT interviews the Egyptian managers expressed a preference for some of the leadership theories which appeared incongruous to their actual day to day management practices and leader follower interactions, identifiable by uncovering the values they possess.

PVS provide an additional form of triangulation as the interviewees are asked to choose which side of their previously elicited bipolar constructs they prefered in the light of their leadership role. This is a way to corroborate the responses given in the RGT grids and is a non-intrusive way of validating their constructs and preferences.

Whilst triangulation is commonly used as a means of investigating the convergence of both the data and the conclusions derived from them (Ritchie, 2003) it should also be kept in mind that triangulation can be illuminating from a different perspective, i.e., it can be used as a tool to identify inconsistencies in findings across different forms of inquiry (Patton, 2002), which is important to the phenomenological researcher and thus relevant to this thesis. Walsham (2006)

postulates that interviews should be supplemented by other forms of field data and Mair (1987) drew a direct parallel between PCP and the epistemological implications of Storytelling. In fact Storytelling is considered a standard form of grid data triangulation (Jankowicz, 2004). Although utilizing the RGT to access the managers' constructs is the principal data collection technique in this study other forms of capturing meaning of individuals exist, such as observation (including non-verbal behaviour) and Storytelling (Jankowicz, 2004). Storytelling is positioned in the ethnographic paradigm as outlined in the next section.

### 3.4.3 Storytelling - An Ethnographic Approach

This ethnographic approach was included to provide an additional perspective and understanding of the sample population by observer immersion in their working world in order to describe them, their culture and beliefs (Snape and Spencer, 2003: 12). This was appropriate from a cross-cultural research aspect and furthermore from a practical point of view as the author works for Company X and provides training and development programmes for the Egypt and UK offices. This approach would offer a non-invasive form of research and yield rich, thick description. When deciding to apply an ethnographic stance Richardson's (2000: 253) criteria, namely, substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, impact, and expression of a reality, were considered important in preserving the integrity of Storytelling as a research technique.

### 3.4.3.1 The Value of Storytelling

As a result of the RGT interviews conducted in the pilot study (see Chapter 4) in which semi-structured interviews examined the participants' construals of the various leadership theories, the interviews extended well beyond the elicitation of bipolar constructs. Stories were revealed to be an important factor (Snowden, 1999), during the pilot data collection phase. Participants

elaborated on specific work experiences regarding the leader-follower interactions using metaphors and Stories to reinforce past incidents; these became a salient feature of the interview. It was at this point that the researcher realized that such thick, rich description could be captured and operationalized via the formal use of Storytelling technique (Gabriel, 2000). Applying mixed techniques is an approach that can prove fruitful by allowing insights particular to each technique to increase and enhance the data (Ritchie, 2003).

As Stories provide thick description and a solid descriptive foundation of data allows for a greater level of analysis and interpretation (Miles et al, 2014: 162) it was decided that this data collection technique would be advantageous. Storytelling has become a more frequently utilized research tool in recent years as it has the potential to gather authentic data (Snowden, 2000 b). Research indicates that sharing experiences though narratives transfers tacit knowledge (Reamy, 2002; Sole and Wilson, 1999) and is a non-intrusive, organic means of doing so (Snowden, 1999). Tacit knowledge is neither easily detectable nor articulated (Whyte and Classen, 2012; Goffin and Koners, 2011; Harlow, 2008; Jankowicz 2004). It is highly personalized and hard to formalize, making it difficult to communicate or share with others (Nonaka and Konno, 1998). It is entrenched in an individual's actions and experience as well as in the ideals, values, emotions and the schemata and mental models an individual possesses (Nonaka and Konno, 1998). Furthermore Reamy (2002) postulates that Stories are conducive to the brain's organizing mechanisms. Storytelling allows the researcher to get inside the participant's head (Jankowicz, 2001, 2004) to obtain an understanding of how Egyptian managers construe Western evolved leadership theories in comparision to their Western counterparts' construals.

As a research tool, Storytelling transcends traditional barriers of culture (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2000) and language (Roche and Sadonsky, 2003; Snowden, 1999), which is of

particular importance to this research enquiry. It is positioned within the ethnographic approach and aligned to the phenomenological paradigm of this thesis.

Storytelling as a process involves listening, collating and comparing different accounts from the narrators (Gabriel, 2000) and is compatible to the constructivist approach (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014) of this thesis.

*'Story-telling has long been a feature of human societies, groups and organizations'* Gabriel (2012: para. 3).

Storytelling is a way of making sense of the world (Reamy, 2002, Weick et al, 2005; Whyte and Classen, 2012). In the corporate community it can be considered as the institutional memory system of the organization (Boje, 1991). Stories are central to the manner in which self and group identities are constructed, nurturing community bonds with whom Stories are shared (Snowden, 1999, Gabriel, 2012).

It is important in Storytelling research to establish how Stories get constructed during in situ performance, '*who takes ownership, and how they are reconstructed in subsequent tellings'* (Boje et al, 1999: 342). The Storytelling process is in a constant state of construction and re-construction, largely influenced over time by the selective memory of the story teller, the co-constructive influences of the audience and the context, all of which shape the content and path of the story re-telling ritual (Boje et al, 1999). In this respect, Storytelling as a technique incorporates the fundamental assumptions of the constructivist paradigm.

Metaphors and Stories provide a way to express experiences that are unable to be communicated via conventional channels (Goffin and Koners, 2011). Metaphors serve to amplify ideas as they travel across cultures, through time and space (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996). Along with

creative metaphors and analogies, Storytelling forms part 'of the rich fabric of oral tradition' in the Arab world (Zaharna, 1995), which makes the Storytelling technique particularly pertinent to this cross-cultural study enquiry into indigenous managers' sense-making.

'*Individually and collectively, Stories help us make sense of our past and understand possible futures*' (Sole and Wilson, 1999: 1).

In other words, the utility of Stories lies in helping individuals to understand a phenomenon (Snowden, 1999) in the context of developing their own personal accounts and histories (Snape and Spencer, 2003). Storytelling is a cognitive process (Roche and Sadonsky, 2003) which allows individuals to seek, explore and understand their own values, ideas and norms (Gold and Holman, 2001).

The literature indicates a number of researchers who utilized Storytelling as a data collection tool (see Boje 1991, Whyte and Classen, 2012) in addition to research conducted in Egypt (El-Amir and Butt, 2008; Ibrahim, 2014). It was also utilized by Laaksolahti (2008) in conjunction with the RGT for exploring the interactive nature of Storytelling.

Storytelling can transcend the cultural and linguistic barriers that surround other forms of oral communication and successfully convey complex information (Snowden, 2000 a). Including Storytelling as a data collection technique in this phenomenological study has the potential to produce a profound level of data and at the same time reduce researcher impact (Snowden 2000 a). Genuine inquisitiveness generates higher levels of elicitation (Snowden, 2000 a: 150). Given that Egyptians are categorized as a collectivist society with a high level of in-group values and concern for others (Hofstede et al, 2010) this notion of inquisitiveness when merged with

Storytelling could encourage the indigenous managers to articulate and reveal their experiences and thus uncover their values in a unique and illuminating way (see Gabriel, 2000).

In contrast to some instances in the literature in which the terms narrative and Story are used interchangeably (Whyte and Classen, 2012) the author has chosen the latter for the purposes of this thesis.

## 3.5 Data Collection of the Main Study

This section provides details of the data collection procedures for all 3 techniques (i.e., RGT, PVS and Storytelling) of the main study.

### 3.5.1 RGT Interview Procedure

The sample population was sent file cards (Appendix B) summarizing each of the 9 leadership theories to be used in RGT interviews, along with an informed consent form. The standard multistep procedure was used for completing the grids sheets. The grid sheet was set up with one supplied construct '*Overall, is most/least culturally appropriate to managing my team*'.

All interviews observed the Interview Protocol (see Appendix C) which specifies the procedure followed and the script that was used. This ensured greater consistency and contributed to reliability at the data collection stage, which is one of the four components to achieve a level of quality of data in the research design process (Yin, 2014).

*Step 1*: The topic for the grid was identified, i.e., leadership development theories. Each interview started with a brief explanation of the study and the aims of the meeting. Time was given for any clarification of the file card contents, when required, all of which allowed for rapport building at the outset. This was an important stage for the RGT interviews in the Egypt

office in particular as building rapport and establishing trust are essential when conducting face to face research in Egypt, particularly for female researchers (ElKordy, 2013) in a male dominated society (see Hofstede et al, 2010).

*Step 2:* Constructs were elicited from triadic elicitation of the Elements through the researcher's qualifying statement '*In which way are two theories similar and different from the third in terms of cultural appropriacy of managing your team*?' This involves random selection to elicit feedback on ways in which two are similar and different from the third. Constructs denote meaning, which is the result of finding similarities and differences (Jankowicz, 2004), hence the utilization of file cards. Triadic elicitation produces bipolar constructs (Caputi and Reddy, 1999) which is recommended by Jankowicz (2004), however both dyadic and triadic elicitation are common in the literature, though the latter has been found to generate greater variation in construct type (Caputi and Reddy, 1999).

Laddering is a technique which allows for greater and richer detail of the elicited construct (Butt, 2003; Fransella, 2003) and generates superordinate constructs (Fransella, 2003), which Jankowicz (2004) discriminated further in the following terms; laddering down and laddering up. Laddering down was used at this stage as it is a technique that provides more precisely detailed and specific constructs (Easterby-Smith et al, 1996; for details see Jankowicz, 2004). Questions such as 'How do you mean? In what way?' are appropriate for laddering down (Jankowicz, 2004: 34).

*Step 3*: The construct was recorded and then each respondent was asked to rate each of the Elements on a scale of 1 to 5, as prescribed by Jankowicz (2004). Rating scales of between 5 and 7 are considered the normal standard in RGT interviews (Easterby-Smith et al, 1996). The rating

procedure reflects the closeness of each Element in relation to each construct, thus identifying how the respondent construes the topic in question (Jankowicz, 2004: 14).

*Step 4:* This process involved repeating steps 2 and 3 to generate new constructs until no further constructs can be elicited. Results were transferred and computed on to a grid sheet (see Appendix A) using Microsoft Excel (2013).

Each interview was scheduled to take approximately 50 minutes, however the Egyptian sample took considerably longer, approximately 75 minutes. This can be attributed to inclusion of the Storytelling activity.

Almost all of the Egyptian interviewees provided Stories as they progressed through the RGT interview, in contrast to the UK interviewees, who had to be prompted at the end of the first and second interviews. This interesting finding is discussed further in Chapters 5 and 6.

The Stories were recorded by the researcher and then sent to the interviewees for editing to ensure accuracy and provide an efficient and convenient data collection approach. This allowed for reflection (Richardson, 2000, see Section 3.4.3)

**3.5.2 Personal Values Statements (PVS)**

This data collection technique served multiple purposes. Firstly, it is a technique that adheres to the constructivist approach, evolving from PCT (which in this thesis is in the form of RGT interviews). Secondly, it enabled identification, via in-depth exploration of the values entrenched in national culture, which might otherwise not have emerged (Dobosz-Bourne, 2004). The literature highlighted how Egyptians have an inclination to be indirect and are reticent to express

their views. Thus, the PVS interview was a valuable tool for capturing underlying and hidden values. Finally the PVS interview allowed for data triangulation against the RGT analysis.

The follow up interviews, were in the form of PVS meetings. Initially the researcher had anticipated conducting these within a working week of the RGT interview, however, unlike the UK interviewees this proved to be impossible in the Egypt office. 10 of the 18 interviewees in the Egypt office postponed the follow up meeting on more than one occasion, in sharp contrast to their UK counterparts (none of whom postponed their agreed appointments). The PVS interviews were concluded over a 6 week period in Egypt, compared to a 3 week period in the UK.

### 3.5.2.1 PVS Interviews

The PVS interview focused on eliciting personal values emanating from the constructs of previous interviews. The objective of this process was two-fold; firstly to uncover the values underpinning the interviewees' construals and secondly, to provide a form of triangulation to the grid interviews and the Storytelling findings (see Section 5.5).

Each interviewee was asked to identify the values underlying each construct, using an iterative process, known as 'laddering up' (see Jankowicz, 2004). This technique encourages respondents to be more forthcoming about stating their values (Easterby-Smith et al, 1996; Jankowicz, 2004). This is particularly pertinent to the Egyptian respondents characterized as possessing inhibited behavior (see Section 2.6). Furthermore, Egyptians are hesitant to provide information that may be considered sensitive from a cultural perspective (Parnell and Hatem, 1999).

The laddering up process observed Jankowicz's (2004: 196) guidelines and Fransella's (2003: 114) example. These interviews comprised of asking the interviewee a series of questions related

to each construct that had been elicited and recorded in the RGT interview. The procedure was as follows:

*Step 1:* The interviewee was referred to each of their previously elicited constructs (in the grid interview) one by one. Questions such as 'which end of the construct do you prefer?' (which related to the emergent and implied poles) were asked. The details were recorded in the left column of the PVS Laddering up template (Appendix S).

*Step 2:* When the preferred pole was established the laddering up process began with questions such as '*Why is that important to you; Why do you value that?*' and further prompts when necessary '*In which way?* The responses were recorded on the left side PVS template. The interviewer posed questions such as '*What would be the opposite of that (value)?  What would that be like / look like*? The responses were recorded on the right side of the template.

*Step 3*: The interviewer returned to the elicited value in the left side of the PVS template and repeated the questions above to prompt the interviewee to elicit a further value. This process was repeated iteratively to reach the highest level of abstraction. Figure 4.1 below exemplifies the procedure for laddering up and recording of values.
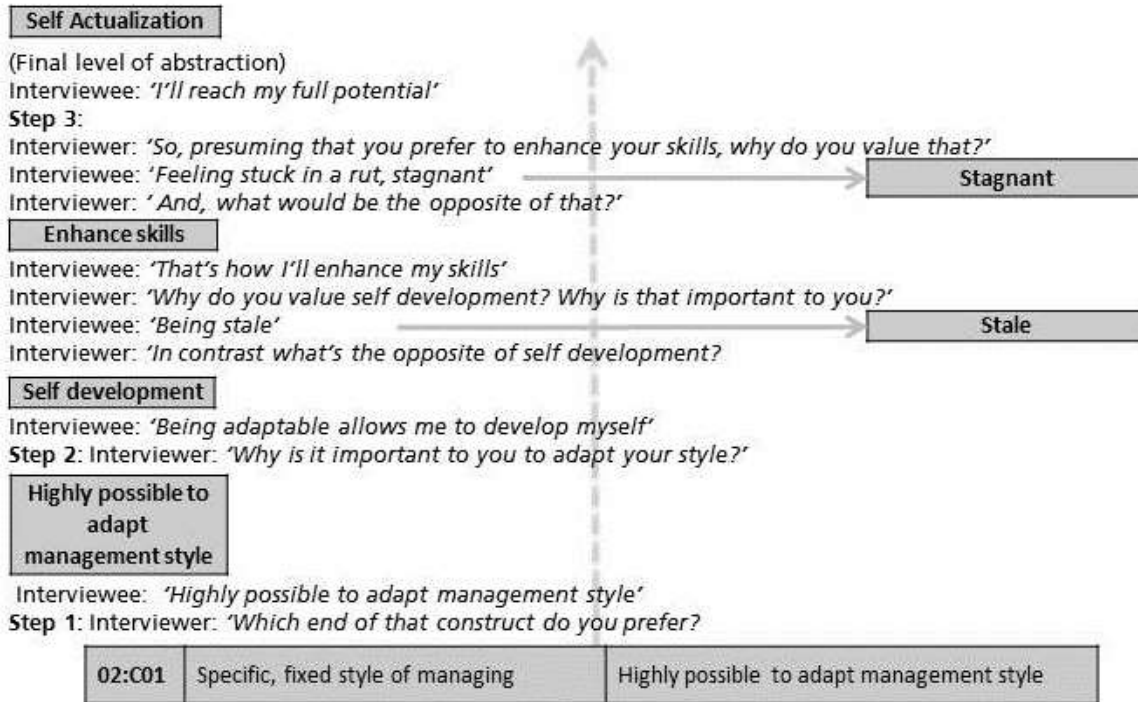
**Figure 3.2 The Process of Eliciting and Recording Values**

To conclude, the interviewee's values were captured and recorded until no further iterations were offered. The values identified personally more/less central core values of the interviewees (Wright, 2004) as described by Jankowicz (2004). This follow up interview was thought through at the research design stage considering that the literature is indicative of reluctance and reticence on the part of Egyptians' level of self-expression.

### 3.5.3 Storytelling

At the end of the aforementioned interviews the researcher recalled and recorded the work related Stories and anecdotes that 17 of the Egyptian interviewees had disclosed during the grid interviews.

The Stories were dictated by the interviewees. Next and in line with Richardson's (2000) guidelines (see Section 3.4.3) the Stories were written up by the researcher and the final step in the procedure included a review of the Stories by the interviewees to ensure accuracy prior to the next stage of data analysis. The latter procedure was built into the research design to keep to a minimum the possibility of any researcher bias. With regards to the UK interviewees the follow up interview, i.e., the PVS interview was an opportunity to ask them to recall incidents and experiences pertinent to the context of leadership, which had been alluded to in the grid meeting. The researcher recorded Stories from 15 of the UK interviewees following the same procedure as above which also ensured that the data collection was both practical and reasonable (Patton, 2002).

When the RGT interviews and PVS interviews were conducted and the grids, personal values and written Stories were completed in both locations (i.e., Egypt and UK offices) the next stage in the research commenced, i.e., data analysis.

**3.6 Data Analysis**

Data analysis comprises examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing or other forms of recombining the data that will generate the findings (Yin, 2014: 132). With regards to qualitative data analysis there are no specific rules or guidelines to follow (Patton, 2002; Spencer et al, 2003; Yin, 2014), however as Yin (2014) points out having an analytical strategy is a pre-requisite to effective data analysis. Out of the four strategies suggested by Yin (2014), working data from the 'ground up' (an inductive approach) was the most appropriate to this thesis.

The repertory grid analysis focused on an aggregate grid analysis. As this case study is comparative the grid analysis has the potential to identify cross-cultural differences and

similarities in how leadership theories are understood in both the Egypt and UK offices. Cross-case analysis would serve a much more profound purpose providing a level of generalizability related directly to the research questions themselves, following the design arrangement described above.

### 3.6.1 RGT Content Analysis

Content analysis is described as

'*a family of analytic approaches ranging from impressionistic, intuitive, interpretive analyses to systematic, strict textual analyses*' (Rosengren, 1981, cited in Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

Pertinent to the data collection methods of this research enquiry the content analysis allows the interviewees' constructs to be pooled and categorized according to the meanings they express (Jankowicz, 2004: 148) permitting identification of how the various leadership theories are construed; by indigenous and British managers in this case study; how the indigenous managers make sense of the leadership theories and which ones are the most and least culturally compatible.

Content analysis involves identifying both the content and context units of analysis, which in a repertory grid is each elicited construct. The content analysis categories are devised directly from the data rather than by using a pre-existing set taken from the literature.

Each construct is compared with the other constructs and this process continues until all the constructs have been categorized. Any that are unable to be classified are grouped into 'miscellaneous'. A reliability check was carried out, in accordance with Jankowicz (2004) procedures (see Jankowicz, 2004, Chapter 7) by a second, independent researcher who

conducted the same process as mentioned above and a reliability table was composed to indicate agreement and differences between the two researchers. This approach was utilized by Goffin and Koners (2011) in their empirical study when analyzing the results of the repertory grids. Any significant variance is discussed with the aim of 90 percent, or above, agreement to be reached as recommended by Jankowicz (2004: 161).

**3.6.2 Content Analysis (Honey's technique, 1979)**

As the unit of analysis is the elicited construct this section focuses entirely on the total of 310 constructs elicited based on the interviewees' interpretations of the various leadership theories in question noting which ones were similar and different from each other. This notion of same or different is a key premise of sense-making (Weick et al, 2005).

The content analysis described above aggregates constructs provided by individuals into a set of categories that describe the themes present in the sample as a whole, and indicates which kinds of meaning are frequent in the group, and which less frequent. What is omitted in that account is any indication of which constructs are felt to be important by the individuals who provided them.

Although a less widely applied and reported technique, Honey's (1979) content analysis (Raja et al, 2013) is an effective procedure for multiple grid analysis (Jankowicz, 2004; Raja et al, 2013). The advantage of utilizing this technique is that it is provides a way in which constructs can be identified as particularly important to the individuals in the sample.

It indicates the relative importance of a person's constructs by comparing the ratings on each construct with the ratings that individual provided on the supplied construct, *Overall, is most / least culturally appropriate to managing my team*', computing a Percentage Similarity Score between each construct and the supplied construct. Thus each respondent's *own* definition of

cultural appropriateness is utilized to characterize each construct; a powerful addition to the group aggregation obtained from the content analysis categories and their frequency, and serving to answer Research Question 1. A 'global' summary of the interviewees' construals of each of the 9 leadership theories (Elements) can thus be obtained.

*Stage 1*- Grid Analysis: this procedure followed Jankowicz (2004) guidelines. The sum of differences between the ratings of the Elements of each construct against the supplied construct was computed on Microsoft Excel 2013. As constructs are bipolar dimensions (Fransella et al, 2004) reversal of the supplied construct was also computed against each construct.

*Stage 2* - Percentage Similarity Score: this is based on noting the values (above) of smallest sum of differences (between the, aforementioned, unreversed and reversed calculations of each construct). The smallest sum of difference, which indicates closeness to the supplied construct, was then converted to a value known as Percentage Similarity Score, also calculated on Microsoft Excel 2013. This calculation is based on a 200 point scale (see Jankowicz, 2004) whose range varies between -100 (maximum match between reversed constructs) and 100 (maximum match between unreversed constructs). The next stage concerned each constructed annotated with the Percentage Similarity Scores of each construct (highest Percentage Similarity Scores indicate closest in meaning between the elicited and supplied constructs, see Jankowicz, 2004; Raja et al, 2013).

*Stage 3* – H-I-L (High, Intermediate, Low): to take account of the interviewees' 'personal metric'. Some individuals consistently generate high values of Percentage Similarity, others offer a wide range of Percentage Similarity Scores. This can be taken into account by indicating whether a particular score is High, Intermediate, or Low *for that individual*.

Constructs that were categorized as H (high) were coded for further data analysis. (For further details see Appendix E).

*Stage 4*- Core Categorization: this procedure involved categorizing the 310 constructs provided by all 36 interviewees, deriving the categories by 'bootstrapping' from their content (Jankowicz, 2004) rather than by using a pre-existing set of categories taken from the literature.

Bootstrapping has been widely used in empirical studies in the case of RGT data collection (see Goffin and Koners, 2011; Honey, 1997; Jankowicz, 2001; Raja et al, 2013; Tomico et al, 2004). The process involved comparing each construct with the others to generate groups of similar categories. The aim is to have no more than 5% of the constructs unclassifiable, i.e., 'miscellaneous' (Jankowicz, 2004).

*Reliability*

*'Reliability is the extent to which different methods, research results, or people arrive at the same interpretations or facts'* (*Krippendorff, 2011: 1*).

It is a procedure included in research design particularly in the case of content analysis in which human coders are involved in data collection and analysis (Krippendorff, 2011).

The reliability of the Core-Categorization Procedure was determined by the assistance of a collaborator. The collaborator is a post-doctoral Egyptian national, whose credentials in the field of indigenous leadership research made her an appropriate choice for this cross-cultural study. Although the author remains unconvinced of Zhang et al's (2012) postulations that cross-cultural research necessitates indigenous researchers, the author did realize the potential value a local researcher could bring to this stage of the content analysis. The author and collaborator reviewed

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50% of the 310 bipolar constructs together which resulted in identifying and agreeing on 14 core categories. From that point on the researcher and collaborator worked independently on assigning the 310 constructs to the 14 agreed categories. An inter-rater reliability table (see Appendix F) was drafted at this stage to assess the level of agreement, which resulted in 85.48% and a Cohen's kappa of 0.84. In an attempt to achieve an agreement recommended in the literature (see Jankowicz 2004; Miles et al, 2014) the researchers conducted a lengthy discussion on the constructs that there were differences on. The next stage in the process involved the researcher and collaborator working independently on a second attempt. The results (see Appendix G) were a percentage agreement of 96.1% and a Cohen's kappa agreement of 0.96. The final stage determined that the categorization table of the researcher should be utilized as recommended in the literature (see Jankowicz, 2004) as the researcher has the overall advantage of being more familiar with the constructs that were elicited in the face to face interviews.

### 3.6.3 Personal Values Statements (PVS) Analysis

A total of 172 values emanating from the 36 face-to- face follow up interviews were obtained through the laddering up procedure (Jankowicz, 2004). The aim was to uncover the values that the interviewee possesses which underpin their original construals'. The elicited values were recorded on to a Personal Values Laddering up template (see Appendix N)

Great care was taken in defining the various categories and classifying the values that were the result of the 'laddering up' (Jankowicz, 2004) procedure. Each personal value was coded and then cataloged according to a set of 16 categories (and 1 miscellaneous) (see Appendix O). These categories were extrapolated from the Values elicited from interviewees and were separated into the Egypt and UK sample data (see Table 5.8).

**3.6.4 Storytelling Analysis**

The results of the Storytelling data collection serve to amplify the findings of the grid analysis (the principal method of data collection) as a form of triangulation. The findings of this data analysis are pertinent to answering research question 2. The fact that the data capture was based on the written accounts of the interviewees' themselves contributes to a greater level of reliability. The Stories that the interviewees submitted in the RGT and PVS follow up interviews were coded for content analysis. Several levels of analysis were conducted on the Storytelling data as their multiple themes and thick description provided in-depth analysis in a cross-cultural context.

The data collection endeavor resulted in a total of 55 Stories collected over a 3 month period, which is reasonable when considering Whyte and Classen's (2012) empirical study was comprised of a total of 64 Stories collected over a one year period. Capturing and recording a critical mass of between 20 -30 anecdotes is considered sufficient (Snowden, 2000 a).

Some ethnographic studies have utilized singular themes of the Stories (see Whyte and Classen 2012). In contrast other studies have analysed Story data in multiple themes (see Goffin and Koners 2011). This study has followed the latter approach in order to fully exploit the ethnographic potential that Stories can provide.

A core categorization process was initiated to illustrate similarities and differences in tacit knowledge from a cross-cultural perspective of leadership of the Egyptian and UK managers. The categorization technique used was Process Coding (Miles et al, 2014), which aims to identify key themes and catalogue them utilizing gerunds that best reflect the inferred meaning embedded in the Stories. This form of coding is especially relevant to qualitative studies

particularly for data that is extracted from participants' actions, incidences and consequences (Miles et al. 2014: 75).

An inter-rater reliability table (see Appendix L) was drafted at this stage to assess the level of agreement, which resulted in 74.5% agreement and a Cohen's kappa of 0.71. In an attempt to achieve a level of agreement recommended in the literature (see Jankowicz 2004; Miles et al, 2014) the researchers conducted a lengthy discussion on differences. The next stage in the process involved the researcher and collaborator working independently on a second attempt. The results (see Appendix M) produced a percentage agreement of 90.9% and a Cohen's kappa agreement of 0.90. The final stage determined that the categorization table of the researcher should be utilized as recommended in the literature (see Jankowicz, 2004).

*The Cultural Differences*

Out of the 18 Egyptian interviewees, 17 of them recalled Stories and anecdotes, all of which were the result of the discussions in the RGT interviews. A total of 31 Stories were generated. In contrast, the UK interviewees were less forthcoming in providing Stories and had to be prompted at the end of the 1st interview and reminded in the follow up interview. A total of 15 interviewees submitted Stories. A total of 24 Stories were gathered. This is indicative of how Storytelling in the Arab world is considered a natural activity (Zaharna, 1995, see Section 3.4.3 Storytelling) and will be discussed further in Chapter 6. The principal forms of analysis were; Process Coding categorization (Miles et al, 2014: 75) and extrapolation of various themes cross referenced to the cross-cultural literature.

The Storytelling analysis directly related to the four major cross-cultural studies referenced in Chapter 2. As 10 of the 55 Stories contained themes related to cross-cultural issues (most Stories

were multiple themed) it was decided to exploit this data even further by co-relating the data to the various findings in the cross-cultural literature related to Egypt and the Middle East Region (see Section 3.2). This involved careful analysis of the Stories to identify anecdotes and then reviewing the key findings in the four cross-cultural studies referenced in Section 2.5 and cross-referencing accordingly.

## 3.7 Ethical considerations

The research observed the required standards in accordance with the ethical policies of Heriot-Watt University. Initially, the three main issues that the researcher was cognizant of were; consent, confidentiality and trust (Ryen, 2004). The author incorporated the first two factors by drafting letters of request; assurances of confidentiality and observational protocol that confirms anonymity and the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. The third factor that of trust was built up gradually as the author had established a reputation of integrity, through HRD assignments and training delivery. Research ethics refers to the entire research process and to the best of the author's knowledge and belief, the research process, from start to finish and the contents of the proposed thesis are original..

An important consideration in planning the research design is the author's positionality, i.e., assumptions and biases that could have an effect on the study and the participants selected for the study (Schensul, 2012: 71). As the researcher is the primary tool for data collection and works in direct contact with the sample population it was of prime importance to ensure reliability of procedures in the data collection stages. Although a researcher may be considered neutral, neutrality does not always guarantee unbiasedness (Walsham, 2006), hence the advantage of using the RGT as the principal research tool (see Table 3.3).

In terms of confidentiality, the identity of participants was known only to the researcher. All documents, i.e., interview records etc. were stored in a secured location. The company had opted to be anonymous, hence the pseudonym, Company X used to substitute the company name and remove any concerns related to commercial sensitivity.

## 3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a detailed account of the chosen research paradigm and research methodology in relation to the research questions. Referenced literature was included to provide a justification for the research methods and techniques to substantiate the chosen data collection and analysis. A detailed account of the data collection tools and procedures of all three techniques has been included. The particulars of the face to face interviews and the analysis of the data indicated cultural similarities and differences, which will be elaborated in the subsequent chapters.

Ethical considerations of the researcher were detailed with the referenced literature, to highlight the importance of research ethics when embarking on both the pilot and main study.

The next chapter provides a detailed account of the pilot study that was conducted 8 months prior to the commencement of the main study.

**CHAPTER 4 PILOT STUDY**

**4.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides details of the pilot study that took place in both locations of this embedded case study, i.e., Egypt and UK offices of Company X. It begins with a justification as to why a pilot study was included in the research and progresses to the specific details of the data collection and analysis. The small sample size is intended to provide a basis for consideration prior to the main study. The concluding section assesses the achievement of the aims and objectives of the pilot study along with the author's reflections with a view towards embarking on the main study.

A pilot study is generally considered a component of good research (Yin, 2014).  There are several reasons in support of conducting a pilot study. These include the development and testing of research instruments such as a questionnaire; to collect preliminary data and to trial the logistics of research (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). A pilot study can also be used in the form of an exploratory survey to gain a better insight into the subject matter of the research, to help define the scope for theory development and to design the research protocols (Neuman, 2007; Yin, 2014). Pilot studies can also uncover local politics or problems that may affect the research process (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001), which is an important consideration as some researchers have pointed out that the complexities of conducting research in Egypt can prove challenging (Parnell and Hatem, 1997, 1999; Parnell and Crandall, 2004).

A pilot study involving four managers (two Egyptian and two British) managers was conducted in the light of the aforementioned points, especially to assess the data collection and analysis techniques with particular attention to utilizing the RGT.

**4.2 Pilot Study Objectives**

To identify the types of constructs that are elicited from indigenous and Western managers as they construe the various leadership theories in question and specifically:

- To assess the supplied Elements and review the effectiveness of the file cards used in the RGT procedure.

- To assess the effectiveness and relevance of the supplied construct.

- To estimate the average number of elicited constructs.

- To develop an appropriate level of proficiency utilizing the RGT and conducting face to face interviews.

- To practice the procedures of content analysis.

- To record any procedural errors to consider in advance of the main study.

Details of the methodology, data analysis and results from the pilot study and the implications for the main empirical work of this study are stated below.

**4.3 Procedure**

The pilot study involved interviews with two Egyptian and two British managers from their respective offices. All four of the respondents were selected based on their willingness to participate in this study. The two Egyptian managers had previously attended training courses and therefore were known to the researcher. The selection of the pilot case accords with Yin's

(2014: 96) assertion that, generally convenience of resource, location and ease of access can be considered the most important factors when selecting a pilot case. The file cards (Appendix B) and letters of informed consent were sent to all four managers in advance of the scheduled interviews.

### 4.3.1 Data Collection

All interviews began with an overview and aims of the study and all interviewees were provided a set of file cards. All the interviews followed an interview protocol to ensure a level of consistency to enhance the reliability of the data collection phase. The RGT interview followed the procedures outlined in Section 3.5.1.

The results were recorded on a grid sheet (Appendix A) for the next stage in the procedure, i.e., data analysis.

### 4.3.2 Data Analysis

The grid sheets were analysed (on Microsoft Excel, 2013) to determine the Percentage Similarity Scores between each Element and each other Element; and between each construct, in each of the 4 grids, using the procedure given as stage 2 in section 3.6.2 above.

**4.3.3 Results.** The grid sheet results, including the elicited constructs, the rating of each Element on each construct, and the rating of the Elements against the supplied construct were processed on Microsoft Excel 2013 (see Appendix D RGT Pilot Study Interview 1).

A total of 31 constructs was generated from the four interviews (excluding the supplied construct) giving an average of 8 per interview. Based on these results it is realistic to estimate

between 8 and 10 constructs per interviewee would be achievable in the main study, which is considered acceptable (Jankowicz, 2004) in grid interviews.

**4.4 Content Analysis**

The elicited constructs were coded, aggregated and categorized by the researcher in accordance with the content analysis procedure described in section 3.6.1 above. Six categories were identified and defined and there were no miscellaneous constructs. Table 4.1 (below) provides the details.

31 constructs yielded a total of 6 categories. Within the 31 constructs there is some description of the leadership theories, e.g., 'Focus on Traits'. However, other constructs indicated ways of construing that are not implicit in the academic understanding of the theories, e.g. 'Focus on Adaptability'; 'Ease of Comprehension'.

Interestingly, 'Focus on Traits' included no Western respondents, while 'Focus on Adaptability' included no Arabic respondents. The small sample size of this pilot study is indicative of the potential of the differential analysis to be done in the main sample without offering any firm conclusions in this regard.

**Table 4.1 Content Analysis of RGT Pilot Study**

| Category | Description | Code* | Constructs | Sum % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Concern for subordinate needs' | The extent of consideration a leader gives to satisfying subordinates. | 101 | *Flexibility and considers subordinates' needs verses No flexibility and depends of leader's character* | 9 29 |
| | | 103 | *People oriented verses Task oriented.* | |
| | | 109 | *Subordinates will willingly accept you and be happy managed this way verses Subordinates may not feel considered as individuals.* | |
| | | 201 | *I need to assess in advance the team members before I decide how to manage them verses Disregarding/ignoring subordinate needs.* | |
| | | 202 | *It's important for me to assess employees to see how best to approach each person verses Neglect the strengths of individuals in the team.* | |
| | | 302 | Leader promotes professional development of subordinates verses Leader uses one particular / universal style to manage team. | |
| | | 401 | Empower and develop others to test out in the long term verses No opportunities for personal development or growth. | |
| | | 402 | Leader provides opportunities for subordinate career progress verses Leader depends on loyalty among 'actors'. | |
| | | 403 | Leader has to consider subordinate needs' in order to satisfy them verses Subordinates in inferior position and holds on to job security as a means of job satisfaction. | |
| Focus on the leader's traits | The importance of the manager's traits in effectively managing team. | 105 | *Broad minded manager who can work in different situations verses concern with power and authority only.* | 6 19 |
| | | 107 | *Requires and experienced manager who believes in his/her own professional development verses Easiest/least complicated theory to apply on my team.* | |
| | | 203 | *You are not focused on power and authority as you are inspiring the team verses Based on amount of power and authority I have.* | |
| | | 204 | *Being an inspiring role model verses Predicable static way of managing others.* | |

| | | 206 | *Allows me to be more resourceful in terms of how to motivate others verses Not being flexible and open to changing my style.* | |
| | | 301 | Leader utilizes and encourages creativity verses Leader doesn't utilize any creativity in his/her team. | |
| Focus on implications of results | How the task results will impact on the manager. | 102 | *Important to motivate subordinates to guarantee good quality work and get praise/rewards verses Job won't get done (properly) which will cause complaints from management and lead to blame.* | 6<br>19 |
| | | 106 | *Necessary to manage staff in a more broadminded way to deal with the change and challenges of management verses Focuses on the present issue not the future so you will fail in today's world.* | |
| | | 108 | *Subordinates work from the heart, but also afraid of punishment verses Subordinates are indifferent to how they are managed; don't give manager proper respect.* | |
| | | 205 | *Highly likely to succeed as a manager verses Less likely to succeed as a manager.* | |
| | | 404 | Subordinates are happy when their needs are considered and thus more productive verses Subordinates are dissatisfied and thus their productivity is low. | |
| | | 405 | Leader is proactive in order to promote positive outcomes verses Reactive management style that focuses on errors, mistakes and problems. | |
| Focus on leader's adaptability | The degree of flexibility the manager utilizes | 303 | Leader adapts style to the various factors within the situation verses Leader is unchanging, with a fixed style of managing. | 5<br>16 |
| | | 306 | Leader effectively utilizes resources verses Resources are ignored in the process of leading and managing subordinates. | |
| | | 307 | Leader is less conventional and less structured in how he/she achieves objectives verses Leader adopts structured way to achieve objectives. | |
| | | 406 | Individuality of leadership style with no restraints verses Managing the 'Company X way' and conforming to Company X culture. | |

| | | 407 | Innovator and advisory centered leadership when interacting with clients verses Following the client's brief, i.e. client focused. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Degree of subordinate involvement | The extent of subordinate involvement in decision making | 104 | *Participative and consultative when making decisions verses Autocratic and controlling.* | 3 10 |
| | | 207 | *Task and people oriented styles verses Total focus is on power/authority of manager.* | |
| | | 305 | Leader has ability to convince and sell ideas to his/her followers' verses Leader is an authoritative dictator in which subordinates' needs are not considered important. | |
| Ease of comprehension | The degree of simplicity / complexity in understanding the leadership theory | 208 | *Makes sense to me verses Most confusing and unclear.* | 2 6 |
| | | 304 | Easy to understand this leadership theory and easy to apply verses An unrelated set of characteristics that appear random, making it difficult to apply. | |
| Total | | | | 31 99 |
| *Code = 1st digit is participant code number; 2nd and 3rd digits are construct numbers. Legend: *Italicized constructs* = Egyptian managers | | | | |

## 4.5 Pilot Study Conclusion

The pilot study was conducted to test and refine the data collection and analysis techniques specifically the procedure for the RGT to be used in the main study. The outcomes of the pilot study objectives are detailed in Table 4.2 (below).

The research questions which emanated from the literature synthesis have been reviewed after conducting the pilot study and results and remain unchanged with regards to the main study.

**Table 4.2  Aims Achieved from the Pilot Study**

| No. | Aims | Achievement of Aims |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | To assess the supplied Elements; review the effectiveness of the leadership theories synopsis and file cards. | All interviewees were able to elicit similarities and differences of the Elements. |
| 2. | To assess the effectiveness and relevance of the supplied construct. | The supplied construct was appropriately articulated by all interviewees. |
| 3. | To estimate the average number of elicited constructs. | The mean average was calculated from the total number of elicited constructs from each location (i.e. Egypt and UK offices). |
| 4. | To develop an appropriate level of proficiency utilizing the RGT and conducting face to face interviews. | The author reflected on what worked well and what could be re-considered for the main study. |
| 5. | To practice the procedures of content analysis. | All 4 RGT grids were content analysed. |
| 6. | To record any procedural errors, to consider in advance of the main study. | The author reviewed the notes that had been recorded in which particular procedural issues/concerns were documented. |

With regards to the supplied Elements all four respondents found them wide-ranging and found the file cards explicit. Whereas the respondents from the Egypt office were fully conversant with the leadership theories (Elements) the respondents from the UK office required more prompting and explanation during the triadic elicitation stage. Therefore, it was noted that prior to the main study at the UK office brief recap sessions should be delivered by the researcher to ensure that the respondents were sufficiently prepared for the grid interviews.

Obtaining 31 constructs from 4 interviewees produced an average of 7.75 constructs per interviewee. It was felt reasonable to suppose that with more experience in conducting RGT interviewees it should be possible to elicit a minimum (average) of 8 constructs per interviewee. If the sample size was 36, this would result in 288 constructs which is close to a saturation point of around 300 constructs.

*Reflections*

As a result of the pilot study a number of issues came to light that were subsequently considered and incorporated into the main study at both the design stage and data collection stage.

During the RGT interviews the Egyptian managers in particular discussed past incidences in the form of anecdotes in support of their construals. These insights opened up the potential to investigate further through incorporating Storytelling as an additional data collection tool (see Section 3.5.3 Storytelling).

The experience of conducting RGT interviews equipped the author with an improved ability to elicit constructs. This would potentially allow for an increase in the number of constructs per grid, than the pilot study grids (7.75 average constructs per interviewee).

One other valuable lesson learned from the pilot study was that it highlighted the importance of soliciting an additional researcher/collaborator at the content analysis stage to provide for a more rigorous and reliable data analysis, and also to generate discussion and insights into potential content analysis categories.

## 4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided an overview and supporting rationale for conducting a pilot study. Details of the aims, sample population, procedure, results in the form of a basic content analysis and conclusions were provided. The chapter concluded with the author's self-reflections of the pilot study in anticipation of the main study and highlighted two lessons learned that would be included in the main study. The next chapter will provide details of the main findings and an extended analysis in the context of the cross-cultural paradigm underpinning this thesis.

# CHAPTER 5 MAIN STUDY FINDINGS

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter details the results arising from the interviews with 36 managers conducted at two offices (Egypt and UK) of Company X. The details of the three data collection tools (i.e., RGT, PVS and Storytelling) analysed in Chapter 3 are extended and elaborated on in order to highlight key findings related to this cross-cultural study. This includes the:

- *RGT aggregate findings*– the core categorization of the 310 constructs and a differential analysis between the Egyptian and UK interviewees; findings of the constructs that were scored as H (high); the Element analysis of the supplied construct, including a frequency count; a differential analysis of the two groups in the sample.

- *PVS findings* presented in a content analysis i.e., a differential analysis of the values of the 2 groups in the sample.

- *Storytelling findings*, including the difference in the number of Stories submitted by the 2 groups; a content analysis which includes a differential analysis of the aforementioned and a comparison of the Stories with the 4 referenced, major cross-cultural studies.

The last section includes and discusses the triangulation of the findings from all 3 data collection techniques which serves to illuminate consistencies in the aforementioned findings which can strengthen the findings.

**5.2 RGT Aggregate Analysis**

The constructs elicited from the 36 interviews produced a total of 310 constructs with an average of 8.6 constructs per interviewee. The minimum number of constructs from the interviews was 8 and the maximum 10. The data were analyzed in accordance with Honey's (1979) procedure. This stage identified which constructs were the most important to each individual in the two groups (i.e., Egyptian and UK sample) by the analysis of each grid, coding and computing the Percentage Similarity Scores for each construct compared to the supplied construct (see Section 3. 6.2). This resulted in categorizing the highest value (Percentage Similarity Score) of each construct into H-I-L values. This process produced a total of 93 (30%) constructs labelled as H (high). These constructs represent those closest to the supplied construct, i.e., '*Culturally most appropriate to managing my team'.* This analysis is relevant to answering research question 1, hereafter referred to as RQ 1.

**5.2.1 Construct Content Analysis**

The Bootstrapping technique (see Section 3.6.1) allowed identification of 13 Core Categories. The categories identified by the content analysis, and the coding of constructs to categories were found to be highly reliable as reported in Section 3.6.2.

Table 5**.**1 provides an overview of the frequency and percentage of constructs in each of the 13 categories; a summary defining each category is included along with the total number of constructs that were coded into each category. The percentages running across were calculated according to the total number of constructs in each group in the sample. In other words the percentages of each of the 13 categories for the Egyptian interviewees were based on their total number of constructs, i.e., 159 and on the total of 151 for the UK interviewees. Details of the categorization of all 310 constructs, on which Table 5.1 is based is presented in Appendix H.

**Table 5.1 Content and Differential Analysis of RGT Constructs**

| Category | Definition | Total | | Egypt | | UK | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % |
| 1. Considering subordinates/People oriented | The extent to which a manager considers and prioritizes the needs of subordinates when it comes to directing them and making decisions. | 50 | 16.1 | 28 | 17.6 | 22 | 14.5 |
| 2. Problem solving & decision making | The amount of concern and attention a manager gives to analyzing, resolving problems, being decisive and the level of involvement of subordinates. | 41 | 13.2 | 19 | 11.9 | 22 | 14.5 |
| 3. Motivating & developing subordinates | The level of encouragement, recognition and rewards a manager bestows on subordinates, in an attempt to develop their competencies and engage them. | 35 | 11.2 | 25 | 15.7 | 10 | 6.6 |
| 4. Management skills & traits | The competencies and characteristics a manager possesses within his/her leadership roles. | 34 | 10.9 | 20 | 12.5 | 14 | 9.2 |
| 5. Adaptability to the environment | The ability of a manager to assess environmental factors and change/adapt accordingly. | 33 | 10.6 | 16 | 10.0 | 17 | 11.2 |
| 6. Performance/Results oriented | The amount of attention and importance a manager gives to performance behaviour leading to goal achievement and focus on results. | 24 | 7.7 | 7 | 4.4 | 17 | 11.2 |
| 7. Appropriacy (company, national cultural 'fit') | The ability to behave and respond in a way befitting of the work environment and observing (national) cultural sensibilities. | 21 | 6.7 | 10 | 6.2 | 11 | 7.2 |
| 8. Communication patterns | The manner, method approach and frequency in which a manager engages with group members when communicating /relaying information. | 20 | 6.4 | 8 | 5.0 | 12 | 7.9 |
| 9. Role modelling | A manager who demonstrates exemplar behaviour and or attributes which can be emulated by others, i.e. subordinates/juniors in particular. | 13 | 4.1 | 9 | 5.6 | 4 | 2.6 |
| 10. Locus of control | The extent to which a manager believes he/she has control over events affecting him/her. | 13 | 4.1 | 9 | 5.6 | 4 | 2.6 |
| 11. Trust & security | The degree of stability and predictability provided in the work environment that a manager prefers to operate in. | 12 | 3.8 | 5 | 3.1 | 7 | 4.6 |
| 12. Future orientation | The degree to which a manager engages in behaviors that relate to the future such as planning, investing in long-term oriented activities as opposed to focusing on 'the here and now' deliverables. | 8 | 2.5 | 2 | 1.2 | 6 | 3.9 |
| 13. Self-development | The process of improving and/or developing one's skills/attributes to increase personal growth and potential. | 6 | 1.9 | 1 | 0.6 | 5 | 3.3 |
| Total | | 310 | 100.0 | 159 | 100.0 | 151 | 100.0 |

The findings shown in the above table will be discussed in conjunction with Table 5.2 below. Table

5.2 elaborates further on the findings by focusing on the constructs that were scored as H (high).

These are the constructs that the interviewees felt most strongly about (see Section 3.6.2). The 2nd column shows the number of constructs within each category of Table 5.1 whose Percentage Agreement Score was H. This value is then expressed as a percentage of the constructs in that category, in the third column. For example, in the sample overall, Table 5.1 indicates that 50 (16.1%) of the total 310 constructs were allocated to the 'Considering subordinates/People oriented' category; Table 5.2 reports that out of this 50, 17 (18.3%) received 'H' scores.

The remaining columns break down further by country, Egypt and UK, and have been calculated across the rows to show the difference in frequency of each group in each category. The last column shows the differences between the frequency of the each category by comparing the Egyptian and UK interviewees.

From Tables 5.1 and 5.2 the following provides details of the findings of each of the 13 categories (in order of the most to the least number of constructs in a category) with particular attention to similarities and differences within each of the 2 groups in the sample.

1. *Considering subordinates/People oriented*: The frequency of constructs in this category indicates that this was a priority for the sample. This category was rated as the highest out of all 13 categories for the Egypt group, i.e., 28 (17.6%), unlike the UK group whose constructs amounted to slightly less 22 (14.6%) and received the same level of frequency as category 2. Problem solving and decision making.

**Table 5.2  Differential Analysis of Egypt and UK Construct Scores of H (High)**

| Category | Total | | Egypt | | UK | | Difference Egypt minus UK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | % |
| 1. Considering subordinates/People oriented | 17 | 18.3 | 10 | 21.3 | 7 | 15.2 | 6.1 |
| 2. Problem solving & decision making | 14 | 15.1 | 6 | 12.8 | 8 | 17.3 | -4.6 |
| 3. Motivating & developing subordinates | 9 | 9.7 | 4 | 8.5 | 5 | 10.8 | -2.4 |
| 4. Management skills & traits | 7 | 7.5 | 5 | 10.6 | 2 | 4.3 | 6.3 |
| 5. Adaptability to the environment | 7 | 7.5 | 4 | 8.5 | 3 | 6.5 | 2.0 |
| 6. Performance/Results oriented | 7 | 7.5 | 2 | 4.3 | 5 | 10.9 | -6.6 |
| 7. Appropriacy (company, national cultural 'fit') | 10 | 10.8 | 5 | 10.6 | 5 | 10.9 | -0.2 |
| 8. Communication patterns | 8 | 8.6 | 3 | 6.3 | 5 | 10.9 | -4.5 |
| 9. Role modelling | 3 | 3.2 | 3 | 6.3 | 0 | 0.0 | 6.4 |
| 10. Locus of control | 3 | 3.2 | 2 | 4.2 | 1 | 2.2 | 2.1 |
| 11. Trust & security | 2 | 2.2 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.2 | -0.1 |
| 12. Future orientation | 2 | 2.2 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 2.1 | -0.1 |
| 13. Self-Development | 4 | 4.3 | 1 | 2.1 | 3 | 6.5 | -4.4 |
| Total | 93 | 100.0 | 47 | 100.0 | 46 | 100.0 | 0.0 |

Out of the total number 50 (16.1%) constructs, 17 (18.3%) were scored as H which makes this the most important category for the sample. 10 (21.3%) of these constructs were from the Egypt group which was also the category that was the most important to them. It was the 2$^{nd}$ most important category for the group as 7 (15.2%) of their constructs were rated as H.

2. *Problem solving & decision making:* This contained the 4$^{th}$ most frequent number of constructs of the Egypt group, i.e., 19 (12.0%). This is in contrast to the UK interviewees whose frequency of constructs was 22 (14.6%), which was the same frequency as the aforementioned category for this group.

Out of the total 41 (13.2%) constructs 14 (15.0%) were scored H making it the 2$^{nd}$ most important category for the sample. It was the 2$^{nd}$ most important category to the Egypt group, whose H score was 6 (12.8%) constructs and the most important category to the UK group, whose number of H scored constructs was 8 (17.4%).

3. *Motivating and developing subordinates*: This category contained 35 constructs (11.3%). It had the 2$^{nd}$ most frequent number of constructs 25 (17.2%) from the Egypt group and the highest difference in frequency between the 2 groups, i.e., 10 (6.6%) constructs were from the UK group. The latter group's constructs for this category made it their 8$^{th}$ most frequent category.

Out of the total 35 (11.3%) constructs, 9 (9.7%) were scored as H making it the 5$^{th}$ most important category for the sample. This category was of slightly less importance to the Egyptian interviewees as 4 (8.5%) of their constructs were rated as H, which made it the 8$^{th}$ most important category for the group. In contrast, the UK interviewees' number of constructs was 5 (10.9%) which made it the 3$^{rd}$ most important category in the group.

4. *Management skills & traits:* This category contained 34 (11.0%) constructs almost the same as the previous category. The number of constructs from the Egypt group was 20 (12.6%), which made it the category that contained the 3$^{rd}$ most frequent number of constructs for that group. The frequency of constructs from the UK group was 14 (9.3%) making it their 5$^{th}$ most frequent category.

Out of the total 34 (10.7%) constructs, 7 (7.5%) were rated as H making it the 6$^{th}$ most important category for the sample. It was the 3$^{rd}$ most important category for the Egypt group whose constructs totaled 5 (10.6%), compared to 2 (4.5%) of the UK group's constructs. It was the 9$^{th}$

most important category for the UK group. Furthermore this category showed the $2^{nd}$ greatest disparity in H scored constructs between the 2 groups, i.e., 6.3% difference in importance.

5. *Adaptability to the environment:* This category had 33 (10.6%) constructs in the sample. With respect to the Egypt group it had the $5^{th}$ most frequent number of constructs in the sample, i.e., 16 (10.1%). The frequency from the UK group resulted in 17 (11.2%) constructs making it their $3^{rd}$ most frequent number of constructs.

Out of the total 33 (10.6%) constructs, 7 (7.5%) were scored as H making it the $6^{th}$ most important category for the sample. It was the $5^{th}$ most important category for the Egypt group as 4 (8.5%) of their constructs were scored as H. The UK group's constructs were almost the same as the aforementioned group, 3 (6.5%) of their constructs were scored as H however this category was the $7^{th}$ most important category for that group.

6. *Performance/Results oriented:* A much lower frequency of constructs was from the Egypt group, 7 (4.4%). This category had the $10^{th}$ most frequently categorized constructs for this group. The frequency of UK constructs was noticeably higher, 17 (11.3%), making it the $3^{rd}$ most frequent category for this group.

Out of the total 24 (7.7%) the number of constructs scored as H was 7 (7.7%) for the sample, making it the $6^{th}$ most important category for the sample. It was the $9^{th}$ most important category for the Egypt group, whose total of H constructs was 2 (4.3%). This shows a noticeable difference between the 2 groups as the UK group found this category the $3^{rd}$ most important (the same as 3. Motivating & developing subordinates). Their total of H constructs was 5 (10.9%). This shows the highest difference of H scored constructs between the two groups of, i.e., -6.61.

*7. Appropriacy (company, national cultural 'fit'):* A total of 21 (6.7%) constructs were allocated to this category from the sample with no real difference between the two groups. 10 (6.0%) of constructs were from the Egypt group which indicates it had the 6th highest frequency of constructs in the group. It was the 7th most frequent category for the UK interviewees, whose number of constructs totaled 11 (7.3%).

Out of the total 21 (6.7%) of constructs 7 (10.8%) were scored as H, which made it the 3rd most important category to the sample. An equal number of constructs from both groups indicate that this category has the same level of importance. It was the 3rd most important category for the Egypt group (the same as 4. Management skills & traits). 5 (10.6%) constructs were from the Egypt group and the remaining 5, 10.9% were from the UK group. This meant it was the 3rd most important category for the latter mentioned group (the same as 3. Motivating & developing subordinates and 6. Performance/Results oriented).

*8. Communication patterns:* A total of 20 (6.5%) constructs were allocated to this category. Fewer constructs from the Egypt group fell into this category, 8 (5.0%) which made it the 9th most frequent category for the group. The number of UK constructs was 12 (8.0%) which placed it as the 6th most frequent category.

Out of the total 20 (6.4%) constructs 8 (8.6%) were scored as H which made it the 5th most important category for the sample. 3 (6.4%) of these constructs were from the Egypt group, indicating it was 7th most important category for that group. The remaining 5 (10.8%) constructs from the UK group indicated that this category was the 3rd most important category to that group (along with 3. *Motivating & developing subordinates, 6. Performance/Results oriented* and 7. *Appropriacy (company, national cultural 'fit').*

The remaining 5 categories contain fewer than 15 constructs in each category indicating less frequently elicited constructs.

9. *Role modelling:* This contained 13 (4.2%) constructs. The frequency of constructs from the Egypt group was 9 (5.6%) which resulted in this category being their 6th most frequent category. 4 (6.5%) of constructs were from the UK group which indicated this category had the lowest frequency for that group.

Out of the total 13 (4.2%) constructs, 3 (3.2%) were scored as H, which meant it was the 10th most important category in the sample. All 3 (6.4%) constructs were from the Egypt group, which meant it was the 7th most important category (the same as the aforementioned category). In contrast the UK interviewees' H scores, indicated it was the least important category to the group.

10. *Locus of control:* This category was composed of 13 (4.2%) constructs exactly the same frequency as the aforementioned category. 9 (5.6%) of the constructs were from the Egypt group, the same frequency as the aforementioned category. 4 (2.7%) of the constructs were from the UK group, the least frequent number of constructs, as was the aforementioned category.

Out of the total 13 (4.2%) constructs 3 (23.1%) were scored as H, the same as the aforementioned category's frequency, 2 (4.2%) of the constructs, which meant it was the 8th most important category to this group. The remaining 1 (2.2%) construct was from the UK group, making it the least important category for this group.

11. *Trust & security:* A total of 12 (3.8%) constructs were allotted to this category, 7 (58.3%). 5 (3.1%) constructs were from the Egypt group, which made it the 11th most frequent category for the group. The remaining 7 (4.6%) constructs were from the UK group which made it the 9th most frequent category for that group.

Out of the total 12 (3.9%) constructs 2 (2.2%) were scored as H, which meant it was the least important category for the sample. Both groups gave 1 construct each which indicates it was the least important category for the Egypt group and the 2<sup>nd</sup> least important category for the UK group.

12. *Future orientation:* With a total of 8 (2.3%) constructs in this category it is evident that it was considered a low priority.

Out of the total 8 (2.3%) 2 (2.2%) constructs were scored as H in the sample, which indicates it was the least important category of the sample (the same as the aforementioned category).  Each group had 1 construct scored as H and both groups considered this one of the least important categories.

13: *Self-development:* 6 (1.9%) constructs were allocated to this category.

Out of the total 6 (1.9%) constructs 4 (4.3%) were scored as H, which meant it was the 9<sup>th</sup> most important category in the sample. A noticeable difference in this small number of H constructs was that 1 (2.1%) of constructs were considered important to the Egypt group which meant it was the least important category along with category 11. Trust and security and category 12. Future orientation; whereas 3 (6.5%) of constructs were considered important to the UK group. This meant that it was the 7<sup>th</sup> most important category to the UK group.

In summary Table 5.1 indicates that overall four categories accounted for half the total number of constructs: 1. Considering subordinates/People oriented; 2. Problem solving & decision making; 3. Motivating and developing subordinates and 4.Management skills & traits. Approximately the same number of each group's constructs were allocated to these categories. The exception was category 3. Motivating and developing subordinates which had a noticeably higher frequency of constructs compared to the UK group.

Table 5.2 highlights the 3 categories that were the most important to the sample and that made up almost half of the number of High scored constructs, which were 1. Considering subordinates/People oriented; 2. Problem solving & decision making and 7. Appropriacy (company, national cultural 'fit'). The same 2 categories that were the most important to the Egypt group were also the most important to the UK interviewees, i.e. 1. Considering subordinates/People oriented and 2. Problem solving & decision making. The least important categories for the Egypt group were 11. Trust & security and 12. Future orientation. The categories that were of least importance to the UK group were 9. Role modelling; 10. Locus of control; 11. Trust & security and 12. Future orientation.

The findings of the grid analysis highlighted differences in priorities of categories within each group in addition to highlighting similarities and differences in the sample. The next section details the findings of the Element analysis. This focuses on *what* the indigenous managers think about the Western leadership theories which serves to answer RQ 1.

**5.2.2 Elements Analysis**

The grids included an overall supplied construct (Honey, 1979) i.e., one that summarized the way in which the topic as a whole was construed. For this cross-cultural study the supplied construct was 'Overall, is *most/least culturally appropriate to managing my team'* (see Section 3.4.1). The ratings of each Element on the supplied construct were calculated to provide an indication of which Elements were preferred more and which less, in the sample as a whole.

**5.2.2.1 Overall Preferences for the Different Leadership Theories**

The RGT interviews were based on the interviewees rating 9 leadership theories on a scale of 1, 'most culturally appropriate (the left/emergent pole) to 5, least culturally appropriate (the

right/implicit pole). A frequency count was conducted on the supplied Element. The median of

each Element has been calculated and tabulated below in Table 5.3. (see Appendix I).

**Table 5.3  Frequency Count of Ratings on the Overall Supplied Construct**  (Cultural appropriacy to managing a team)

| Ratings | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Median |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Element codes | Leadership theories | | | | | | |
| LT5 | Path Goal Theory | 16 | 12 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| LT8 | 5 Leadership Practices | 14 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| LT3 | Situational Leadership | 12 | 13 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| LT4 | The Leadership Continuum | 9 | 17 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| LT7 | Transformational/Transactional | 4 | 7 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 3 |
| LT6 | Contingency Theory | 2 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 3 |
| LT9 | Arab Leadership | 2 | 3 | 5 | 11 | 15 | 4 |
| LT2 | Managerial Grid | 0 | 6 | 7 | 13 | 10 | 4 |
| LT1 | Traits Theory | 1 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 19 | 5 |

The Elements that had ratings of 1 and 2, with median scores of 2, were:

- LT5: Path Goal Theory (28 counts).

- LT4: The Leadership Continuum (26 counts).

- LT3: Situational Leadership: (25 counts).

- LT8: The 5 Leadership Practices (21 counts).

The Elements that had ratings of 4 and 5, with median scores of 4, 4 and 5 respectively, were:

- LT9: Arab Leadership Theory (26 counts).

- LT2: The Managerial Grid (23 counts).

- LT1: Traits Theory (22 counts).

To conclude, the 4 Elements that were considered culturally most appropriate to managing others

were LT5: Path Goal Theory; LT4: The Leadership Continuum; LT3: Situational Leadership and

LT8: The 5 Leadership Practices. In contrast the 3 least culturally appropriate to managing the team were LT9: Arab Leadership, LT2: Managerial Grid and LT1: Traits Theory.

**5.2.2.2 Differential Preferences**

As this is a comparative case study the Egypt and UK interviewees findings above can be broken down to give a differential comparison and thus contribute to answering RQ 1. Table 5.4 (below) summarizes the 9 leadership theories according to their median scores for the 2 groups. (See Appendices J and K).

**Table 5.4 Comparison between Egypt and UK Managers Frequency Count on Ratings of the Overall Supplied Construct** (Cultural appropriacy to managing a team)

| Leadership Theory | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Median |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LT5: Path Goal Theory | **7** 9 | **6** 6 | **5** 5 | **1** 0 | **1** 0 | **2** 1.5 |
| LT8: Five Leadership Practices | **5** 9 | **4** 3 | **5** 3 | **2** 3 | **2** 0 | **2.5** 1.5 |
| LT3: Situational Leadership | **8** 4 | **6** 7 | **2** 7 | **1** 0 | **1** 0 | **2** 2 |
| LT4: The Leadership Continuum | **3** 6 | **7** 10 | **6** 2 | **2** 0 | **0** 0 | **2** 2 |
| LT7: Transformational/Transactional | **3** 1 | **2** 5 | **5** 5 | **6** 2 | **2** 5 | **3** 3 |
| LT6: Contingency Theory | **2** 0 | **6** 3 | **4** 5 | **4** 6 | **2** 4 | **3** 4 |
| LT9: Arab Leadership | **2** 0 | **2** 1 | **3** 2 | **5** 6 | **6** 9 | **4** 5 |
| LT1: Traits Theory | **1** 0 | **4** 2 | **2** 5 | **1** 2 | **10** 9 | **5** 4.5 |
| LT2: Managerial Grid | **0** 0 | 4 2 | **5** 2 | **4** 9 | **4** 6 | **3.5** 4 |
| Legend: **<u>Bold/Underscore</u>** = Egyptian managers | | | | | | |

The 4 leadership theories that received ratings (1 and 2) closest to *'culturally most appropriate to managing my team'* mentioned in Table 5.4 (above) are detailed below:

*LT3: Situational Leadership* was the most preferred theory of the Egypt group, i.e., it obtained a frequency count of 14. In contrast, it was the 4th most preferred theory of the UK group, i.e., it obtained a frequency count of 11.

*LT4: The Leadership Continuum* was the 3rd most preferred theory for the Egypt group as it had a frequency count of 10. In contrast it was the most preferred theory for the UK group, as it had a frequency count of 16.

*LT5: Path Goal Theory* was the 2nd most preferred theory for the Egypt group. It was given the highest ratings i.e., a frequency count of 13 by the Egypt group and a frequency count of 15 by their UK counterparts.

*LT8: 5 Leadership Practices* was the 4th most preferred theory of the Egypt group, i.e., it obtained a frequency count of 9 however it was the 2nd most preferred theory of the UK group, i.e., it obtained a frequency count of 12.

The leadership theories that received ratings (4 and 5) closest to '*Culturally least appropriate to managing my team'* were:

*LT2: The Managerial Grid* was one of the least preferred theories as it obtained a frequency count of 8 from the Egypt group in contrast to 15 from the UK group.

*LT9: Arab Leadership* was also the least preferred theory by the Egypt group as it obtained a frequency count of 11. It was the least preferred theory of the UK group as it obtained a frequency count of 15 as was the Managerial Grid.

*LT1: Traits Theory* received a total frequency count of 11, with no difference between the groups. It was the least preferred theory of the Egypt group and the 2$^{nd}$ least preferred theory of the UK group,

In summary, similarities and differences exist in how the indigenous interviewees favoured certain leadership theories more than others compared to their UK counterparts. The leadership theories (Elements) most favoured by the Egyptian interviewees were Situational Leadership; Path Goal Theory, The Leadership Continuum and the Five Leadership Practices (in that order of preference). The least preferred theories were Traits Theory, Arab Leadership and The Managerial Grid. It is worth noting that LT9: Arab Leadership did receive a total of 4 ratings (closest to 'culturally most appropriate to managing my team') of 1 & 2 from the Egypt group compared to 1 from the UK group. In respect of the UK interviewees, the most favoured theories were The Leadership Continuum, Path Goal Theory, 5 Leadership Practices and Situational Leadership (in that order of preference). Their least favoured theories were the same as their Egyptian counterparts.

*The Four Most Favoured Theories in Detail*

Further insights can be obtained by focusing on the four theories most favoured in the sample as a whole and showing how the most pertinent RGT categories relate to them. Table 5.5 shows the median scores of the RGT categories related to the 4 preferred leadership theories. This will offer further insights into how leadership is construed by indigenous managers, i.e., RQ 1.

Prior to presenting the findings in Tables 5.5 to 5.7 a brief rationale of the RGT categories related to the referenced literature on leadership theories (see Section 2.7) is provided below:

*LT3: Situational Leadership*: The 4 approaches to effective leadership identified in this theory, i.e., Directing, Coaching, Supporting and Delegating (Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson, 2010) involve

motivating and developing subordinates in order enhance their performance and achieve results. The 2 RGT categories that are correlated to this theory are Motivating and developing subordinates; Performance /results orientation.

*LT4: The Leadership Continuum*: This theory is based on the degree of the leader's delegation of power and authority to the group members. It pertains to the level of inclusion subordinates have in problem solving and decision making (Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1973). Therefore the RGT category Problem solving and decision making is pertinent. The RGT category Communication patterns is also relevant to this theory since the 7 stages of subordinate involvement in decision making require various forms and intensities of communication.

*LT5: Path Goal Theory:* The underlying assumption of Path Goal Theory originated from motivation- expectancy theory, (Smith and Peterson, 1989). Effective leadership depends on motivating subordinates towards goal achievement and the RGT categories Motivating and developing subordinates and Problem solving and decision making are obvious correlations to this theory. As with the aforementioned theory it is an adaptive leadership theory requiring the leader to select one of 4 possible approaches that depend on the environmental variables and directing subordinates towards goal achievement; therefore the 2 RGT categories Adaptability to the environment and Performance/results oriented are also pertinent to this theory .

*LT8: The 5 Leadership Practices:* This theory is premised on behaviours of outstanding leadership in the form of 5 practices (Kouzes and Posner, 2012). The 5 practices of these leaders are relevant to RGT categories; 1. Model the way (RGT category; Role modelling); 2. Inspire a Shared Vision (RGT category Future oriented); 3. Communicate the vision (RGT category Communication patterns) and 4. Enable others to act (RGT category Motivating and developing subordinates).

Table 5.5 summarizes the median scores of the above preferred leadership theories in relation to the

most pertinent RGT Categories.


**Table 5.5 Relationship Between the 4 Most Preferred Theories and the Most Pertinent RGT Categories, Total Sample**

| RGT Categories | Problem solving & decision-making | Motivating & developing subordinates | Adaptability to the environment | Performance results /orientation | Communication Patterns | Role Modelling | Future Oriented |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Leadership Theories** | | | | | | | |
| **LT5: Path-Goal Theory** | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | | | |
| **LT8:The 5 Leadership Practices** | | 2.0 | | | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.5 |
| **LT3: Situational Leadership** | | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | | | |
| **LT4: Leadership Continuum** | 3.0 | | | | 3.0 | | |

The median scores in Table 5.5 (above) range from 3.0 to 1.0.  The leadership theory that is most

closely aligned (i.e., with the lowest median score) is LT5: The 5 Leadership Practices. The 2 RGT

Categories related to the aforementioned theory, i.e., *Role Modelling* and *Future Oriented* show the

lowest scores. In contrast, LT4: The Leadership Continuum is the least closely aligned (i.e., median

score of 1.0 and 1.5 respectively). The 2 RGT Categories in the aforementioned theory show the

highest scores, 3.0.

Tables 5.6 and 5.7 (below) display the breakdown of the Egypt and UK groups. Table 5.6 shows

the leadership theories most closely aligned to the RGT Categories for the Egypt group.

**Table 5.6 Relationship Between the 4 Most Preferred Theories and the Most Pertinent RGT Categories, Egypt Group**

| Leadership Theories | Problem solving & decision-making | Motivating & developing subordinates | Adaptability to the environment | Performance results /orientation | Communication Patterns | Role Modelling | Future Oriented |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LT5: Path-Goal Theory** | 2.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | | | |
| **LT8:The 5 Leadership Practices** | | 2.0 | | | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 |
| **LT3: Situational Leadership** | | 3.0 | 3.0 | 1.0 | | | |
| **LT4: Leadership Continuum** | 3.0 | | | | 3.0 | | |

*LT8: The 5 Leadership Practices,* with median scores of 2.0 and 1.0.

*LT3: Situational Leadership*, with larger variation in median scores shows the most variance

between 3.0 and 1.0.

LT4: *The Leadership Continuum*, has a median score of 3.0, the least closely aligned.

Table 5.7 shows the leadership theories most closely aligned to the RGT Categories of the UK

group.

**Table 5.7 Relationship Between the 4 Most Preferred Theories and the Most Pertinent RGT Categories, UK Group**

| Leadership Theories | Problem solving & decision-making | Motivating & developing subordinates | Adaptability to the environment | Performance results /orientation | Communication Patterns | Role Modelling | Future Oriented |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LT5: Path-Goal Theory** | 3.0 | 1.5 | 3.0 | 2.0 | | | |
| **LT8:The 5 Leadership Practices** | | 1.5 | | | 3.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 |
| **LT3: Situational Leadership** | | 2.5 | 3.0 | 2.0 | | | |
| **LT4: Leadership Continuum** | 3.0 | | | | 2.0 | | |

LT8: The 5 Leadership Practices, which also shows the most variance (3.0 – 1.0 median scores). The RGT Categories with the closest alignment are Motivating and developing others and Role modelling (i.e., median scores of 1.5 and 1 respectively).

Path Goal Theory; Situational Leadership and The Leadership Continuum were less closely aligned to the RGT Categories, although LT5: Path Goal Theory had a median score of 1.5 for the RGT Category Motivating and developing subordinates.

Below is a summary of the findings of Table 5.6 and 5.7.

*Path Goal Theory* was the most favoured theory for the sample (see Table 5.3). The median scores of the constructs in the RGT categories are lower than Situational Leadership for the sample and for the Egyptian interviewees' constructs. 3 out of the 4 RGT categories had a median score of 2.0 for the aforementioned interviewees.

*5 Leadership Practices* was the 4th most preferred theory of the Egyptian interviewees and the 3rd most preferred of the UK interviewees. The 4 RGT category constructs showed the lowest of the median scores with one high median score of 3.0 (UK interviewees constructs categorized in Motivating and developing subordinates), however all other median scores ranged between 2.0 and 1.0.

*Situational Leadership* was the most favoured theory of the Egyptian interviewees, however the 3 RGT categories most relevant to this theory all have constructs that when calculated result in median scores mostly of 3.0 with the exception of the RGT category Performance/results oriented, which has a total median score of 2.0 and the lowest median score of 1.0 in the Egypt group.

*The Leadership Continuum* was the 3$^{rd}$ preferred theory of the Egyptian interviewees, but the most preferred theory of the UK interviewees. The median scores of the 2 RGT categories are predominately 3.0 with the exception of the RGT category Communication patterns which had a median score of 2.0 for the UK group.

To conclude, Table 5.5 highlights that 5 Leadership Practices shows the lowest and thus more favorable median scores for the sample as a whole, which is also the case in Tables 5.6 and 5.7.

This thesis is focused on how the Egyptian managers make sense of the various Western originated leadership theories. This section provided a thorough analysis of the findings of the most and least preferred leadership theories thus far and contributes to answering RQ 1.

At this juncture it is necessary to provide a more in-depth account pertaining to the indigenous managers' notions of the leadership theories they profess to prefer and those least preferred by providing details of the PVS and Storytelling findings. Both of the latter findings will contribute to answering research question 2, hereafter referred to as RQ 2.

**5.3 Personal Values Statements (PVS) Findings**

Since this thesis is positioned in the sense-making paradigm it concerns a person's construing. This construal process reflects the underlying values a person possesses. As mentioned in Section 3.4.2 the intention of conducting the PVS follow up interviews was to uncover the values that the interviewee possesses, in particular, those which underpin their original constructs. Therefore identifying values allows not only for an understanding of the constructs but in fact anything surprising or unusual about them, e.g., similarities and differences.

The Personal Values Statements obtained during the grid follow up interviews generated a total of 172 values. This was the result of the laddering up procedure in which the greatest level of abstraction was reached from the original elicited constructs (see Section 3.4.2 and Fig 3.1).

The entire set of 172 values was recorded and coded prior to being categorized (see Appendix O). The categorization was a direct reflection of the actual values elicited from the interviewees which resulted in 16 categories (plus one miscellaneous).

Table 5.8 (below) presents the findings in the form of the frequency and percentage of the values in the 17 categories. A differential analysis is presented of the number of values in each category and a breakdown of the frequency and percentage of the Egyptian and UK interviewees' values.

**Table 5.8 Content Analysis of the Values**

| Category | Total | | Egypt | | UK | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Freq** | **%** | **Freq** | **%** | **Freq** | **%** |
| 1. Achievement / Success / Self-actualization | 24 | 14.0 | 16 | 20.0 | 8 | 8.7 |
| 2. Satisfaction | 20 | 11.6 | 10 | 12.5 | 10 | 10.9 |
| 3. Ethics / Accountability / Control | 19 | 11.0 | 8 | 10.0 | 11 | 12.0 |
| 4. Survival/Security | 15 | 8.7 | 7 | 8.8 | 8 | 8.7 |
| 5. Valued / Rewarded | 11 | 6.4 | 4 | 5.0 | 7 | 7.6 |
| 6. Harmony / Peace | 11 | 6.4 | 3 | 3.8 | 8 | 8.7 |
| 7. Stimulation /Existence | 10 | 5.8 | 4 | 5.0 | 6 | 6.5 |
| 8. Perfectionism / Truth | 10 | 5.8 | 6 | 7.5 | 4 | 4.3 |
| 9. Communitarianism / Humanity | 10 | 5.8 | 3 | 3.8 | 7 | 7.6 |
| 10. Pride | 8 | 4.7 | 3 | 3.8 | 5 | 5.4 |
| 11. Purpose / Meaning | 7 | 4.1 | 4 | 5.0 | 3 | 3.3 |
| 12. Growth / Development | 6 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.8 | 3 | 3.3 |
| 13. Motivation / Challenge | 5 | 2.9 | 2 | 2.5 | 3 | 3.3 |
| 14. Future /Sustainability | 4 | 2.3 | 0 | 0.0 | 4 | 4.3 |
| 15. Optimism / Positivity | 2 | 1.2 | 2 | 2.5 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 16. Change / Diversity | 2 | 1.2 | 1 | 1.3 | 1 | 1.1 |
| 17. Miscellaneous | 8 | 4.7 | 4 | 5.0 | 4 | 4.3 |
| Total | 172 | 100.0 | 80 | 100.0 | 92 | 100.0 |

The key findings are as follows:

1. *Achievement/ Success/Self-actualization*: This category had the highest number of values, a total of 24 (14.0%) in the sample, in addition to having the greatest difference between the Egyptian and UK interviewees. 16 (20.0%) of the total values elicited by the Egyptian interviewees made this the highest value in contrast to 8 (8.7%) for the UK interviewees, placing it as 3rd highest value in the aforementioned group.

3. *Ethics / Accountability / Control*: This category had the 3rd most frequent number of values for the sample, 19 (11.0%). It was rated the 3rd most frequent value in the Egypt group, in contrast to the UK group in which it was rated as the most frequent value, 11 (12.0%).

6. *Harmony/Peace*: This category had a total of 11 (6.4%) rating it as 5<sup>th</sup> most frequent value. There was a difference between the two groups. The Egypt group had a total of 3 (3.8%) values making it the 5<sup>th</sup> most frequent value (the same as 5. Valued / Rewarded), whereas the UK group of 8 (8.7%) values made it the 3<sup>rd</sup> most frequent value (the same as 1. Achievement / Success / Self-actualization and 4. Survival/Security).

9. *Communitarianism / Humanity*: This category had a total of 10 (5.8 %) making it the 7<sup>th</sup> most frequent number of values in the sample (the same as *7.* Stimulation / Existence and 8. Perfectionism / Truth).  3 (3.8%) of the values were from the Egyptian interviewees, making it the 10<sup>th</sup> most frequent value in the group, whereas the UK group had a total frequency of 7 (7.6%) which made it the 6<sup>th</sup> most frequent value in the group.

The least frequent values included:

15. *Optimism / Positivity:* This category had 2 (1.2%) values both of which were elicited from the Egyptian interviewees.

16. *Change / Diversity:* This category had the same as the aforementioned number of frequencies, with each group showing similar results.

In summary, although there are some values in which both the Egyptian and UK interviewees show the same degree of frequency, e.g. 2. Satisfaction (which was the 2<sup>nd</sup> most frequent value), differences do exist. Category14. Future sustainability, which had a frequency of 4, was a value offered by the UK interviewees only.

The table indicates which values are more and less important to both groups and can be used to understand the influences on the knowledge transfer process outlined in Figure 2.2 'Travel of Ideas'. The argument is made in Section 6.5.

The third data collection technique that was analysed with the intent to tap further into tacit knowledge was Storytelling. The next section presents the findings. Some of these findings support the referenced literature and others are in contradiction. This will be discussed further and elaborated in Section 6.6.

**5.4 Storytelling Findings**

Section 3.6.4 detailed the Storytelling procedures used to obtain and record a total of 55 Stories. A point of interest was the difference in willingness and number of Stories submitted from both groups in the sample. Table 5.9 (below) presents a breakdown of the number of Stories revealed by each group.

**Table 5.9 Details of the Total Number of Stories Submitted**

|  | Total Interviewees = 32 | Egyptian Interviewees = 17 | | UK Interviewees = 15 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | Frequency | % | Frequency | % |
| Number of interviewees who submitted Stories | 32 | 17 | 47 | 15 | 39 |
| Number of Stories | 55 | 31 | 56 | 24 | 44 |

The above table is indicative of how the Egyptian interviewees were more proactive Storytellers in contrast to their UK counterparts. More than 50% of the total number of Stories were provided by

the indigenous interviewees. In contrast to 1 of the Egyptian interviewees not providing any

Stories, 3 of the UK interviewees declined to do so.

In order to present the main categories of the Stories and how many there were in each category for

each of the two groups in the sample, a content analysis was conducted with a collaborator as

described in section 3.6.2. The next section highlights the key findings of this analysis.

### 5.4.1 Storytelling Content Analysis

The content analysis of 55 Stories resulted in a total of 10 categories. The differential analysis of

the Egyptian and UK interviewees is presented in Table 5.10 (below) the purpose of which is

twofold. First, to highlight similarities and differences within the two groups of the sample and

second to provide a more in-depth understanding of how leadership is enacted from the indigenous

perspective. This is particularly illuminating regarding the tacit knowledge the indigenous manager

possess about leadership as they have experienced it. This analysis makes an important contribution

to both RQ 1 and RQ 2. The table below displays the 10 categories, the total number of Story

themes that were allocated to each and a differential analysis of the two groups in the sample in

terms of frequency and percentage of each Story theme. Each category includes an illustrative

excerpt to provide the reader with a greater appreciation of the categories.

**Table 5.10 Content Analysis of Stories**
**(Process Coding, Miles et al, 2014)**

| Categories | Illustrative Excerpt | Total Stories | | Egypt | | UK | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % |
| **1. Differentiating on culture** | *Small difference between how to approach goals. Here in Egypt I am asked to work hard by working more hours. In the USA, I was asked to work smart, meaning how to make my job easier, for example using the right tools to finish the job' (15:S03)\** | 10 | 18.2 | 4 | 12.9 | 6 | 25.0 |
| **2. Ignoring/dismissing sub feedback** | *He referred to my line manager (more senior in age) and asked for his opinion, which wasn't in agreement with my suggestion. So the structural engineer ignored my suggestion and listened to my manager, which turned out to be a mistake later on in the project.' (06:S01)* | 8 | 14.5 | 8 | 25.8 | 0 | 0.0 |
| **3. Putting work/the client first** | *..we can't tell the client we are not going to meet him because the project manager is absent, someone has to meet the client, so get ready to meet him. Even if the person responsible is absent someone else is sent in his place, we can't possibly ever suggest postponing the meeting until the right person is available'.(01:S03)* | 7 | 12.7 | 5 | 16.1 | 2 | 8.3 |
| **4. Toeing the company line** | *He told me that if the dept. director had told me to take the initiative then it was absolutely fine to have done what I did, no problem at all. So I concluded that it's not about what you do, it's all about who has permission to use power and authority.' (01:S02)* | 6 | 10.9 | 4 | 12.9 | 2 | 8.3 |
| **5. Managing ineffectively** | *There was one particularly challenging project that myself & a team were working on & I noticed the Project Manager (PM) found it difficult to manage – he just couldn't control it.' (19:S01)* | 6 | 10.9 | 2 | 6.5 | 4 | 16.7 |
| **6. Damaging team morale** | *On that same project certain people were brought in and were then suddenly terminated without any explanation. That really effected team morale and created a lot of insecurity.' (29:S01)* | 6 | 10.9 | 3 | 9.7 | 3 | 12.5 |
| **7.Interfering/controlling head office** | *One time the Middle East office wanted to link the swipe in keys we have to gain access to the front building, lifts etc. with (our) attendance, more importantly with the payroll...The idea was heavily resisted.. (35:S01)* | 5 | 9.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 5 | 20.8 |
| **8. Considering subordinates** | *I have a high concern for my team members.. , one of my team, was pursuing her masters at the time..so she was working shorter office hours as she needed to study. She is a hard & dedicated worker, so I didn't want to demotivate her by asking her to work longer hours.. so I decided to make up for the lack of resources and avoid being late by working overnight.'(06:S01)* | 4 | 7.3 | 3 | 9.7 | 1 | 4.2 |
| **9. Managing effectively** | *One project manager I worked for, that I admired had a really strong managerial ability. He was a good problem solver & was able to match the individual team members to the right tasks within the project'. (05:S02)* | 2 | 3.6 | 2 | 6.5 | 0 | 0.0 |
| **10. Miscellaneous** | | 1 | 1.8 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 4.2 |
| Total | | **55** | **100.0** | **31** | **100.0** | **24** | **100.0** |

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It is important at this point to recall that both the Egypt and UK offices report into the Middle East head office. The key findings of the Table 5.10 are elaborated below:

1 .*Differentiating on culture* contains the largest proportion of Story themes, conveying a total of 10 (18.8%). This is not surprising since the Stories were elicited in the context of cross-cultural studies interviews. 6 (25.0%) of the total Stories were submitted by the UK interviewees.

The categories in which there was the greatest contrast between the two groups in the sample are:

2. *Ignoring/dismissing subordinate feedback* – all 8 (14.5%) Stories were from the Egyptian interviewees and it was the most frequent theme for this group. This indicates that ignoring and being dismissive of subordinates' feedback is experienced by Egyptian interviewees, in contrast to their UK counterparts, none of whose Stories expressed this theme.

7. *Interfering /controlling head office* - this theme resonated in the Stories of 5 (20.5%) UK interviewees in contrast to none of the Egypt group. It was the 2$^{nd}$ most frequent theme in this group.

9. *Managing ineffectively*- featured in 6 (10.9%) of the Story themes. 2 (6.5%) and 4 (16.7%) of the Stories came from the Egyptian and UK interviewees respectively.

Other key findings in the above categories include:

3. *Putting work/the client first* was the 3$^{rd}$ most common theme for the sample. It was more frequent in the Egypt group, i.e., 5 (16.1%) and the 3$^{rd}$ most frequent them. In contrast the UK interviewees' Stories mentioned this theme in 2 (8.3%) Stories, making it the 5$^{th}$ most important theme in that group.

4. *Toeing the company line* – out of a total of 6 Stories, 4 (12.9%) were submitted by the Egyptian interviewees making it the 3$^{rd}$ most frequently mentioned theme. 2 (8.3%) of the UK Stories mentioned this theme which made it the 5$^{th}$ most frequently mentioned theme.

10. *Managing effectively* was the least mentioned (excluding 10. *Miscellaneous*) by the sample, 2 (3.6%) Stories which were from the Egyptian interviewees.

In summary it can be seen that there are differences in the Storytelling themes between both groups. Although both groups mentioned Stories of a cross-cultural theme the most, Table 5.10 indicates that each group raises different concerns:

- Head office involvement bothered the UK interviewees more than their Egyptian counterparts.
- Being ignored by senior managers bothered the Egyptian interviewees more than the UK interviewees.
- the UK interviewees found more instances of ineffective than effective management, which was the reverse of the Egyptian interviewees.

The above themes highlighted in this section are further developed in Chapter 6 in relation to the referenced literature.

### 5.4.2 Storytelling from a Cross-Cultural Perspective

As many of the Stories related to cross-cultural incidences it was decided to exploit them further by co-relating the Stories to the 4 major cross-cultural research studies referenced in this thesis (see Section 2.5). Table 5.11 (below) provides a summary of the number (and percentage) of Story

themes relating to 9 categories of the 4 major referenced cross-cultural studies. The two rightmost

columns display a differential analysis of the 2 groups.

**Table 5.11 Summary of Story Themes Correlated to the Referenced 4 Cross-cultural Studies**

| Cross-cultural Category | Total % | Egypt Total % | UK Total % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. **Power Distance (high)** (Hofstede et al, 2010; GLOBE (House et al, 2004) Achievement versus Ascription  (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1998) Traditional (WVS, Ingelhardt, 2011) | 17 42.5 | 14 53.8 | 3 21.4 |
| 2. **Surviva**l (WVS, Inglehardt, 2011) | 2 5 | 2 7.7 | 0 0.0 |
| 3. Neutral vs **Emotiona**l (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) | 5 12.5 | 4 15.4 | 1 7.1 |
| 4. Sequential vs **Synchronous** Time (Trompenaars and , Hampden-Turner, 1998) | 4 10.0 | 1 3.8 | 3 21.4 |
| 5. Universalism versus **Particularism** (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) | 3 7.5 | 2 7.7 | 1 7.1 |
| 6. Specific versus **Diffuse** (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) | 3 7.5 | 0 0.0 | 3 21.4 |
| 7. **Uncertainty Avoidance**, (Hofstede et al, 2010); GLOBE, (House et al, 2004) | 1 2.5 | 1 3.8 | 0 0.0 |
| 8. Individualism **Communitarism** (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) Collectivism (ii) (GLOBE, (House et al, 2004) | 3 7.5 | 2 7.7 | 1 7.1 |
| 9. **Masculinity**/Femininity (Hofstede, et al, 2010)  Gender Egalitarianism (low) (GLOBE, House et al, 2004) | 2 5 | 0 0.0 | 2 14.3 |
| Total | 40 100.0 | 26 100.0 | 14 100.0 |
| Legend: underlined & **bold**  cross-cultural dimensions pertinent to the referenced literature for Egypt. | | | |

The above table highlights the fact that the Egyptian interviewees told more Stories related to

cross-cultural aspects of the organizational culture than their UK counterparts, as 26 Stories were

from the Egyptian interviewees compared to 14 Stories from the UK interviewees.

It also indicates that some themes are more or less important to each cultural group. For example,

category 1. *Power Distance (high)* was a theme that was mentioned in 14 (53.8%) of the Stories

from the Egyptian interviewees and just 3 (21.4%) from the UK interviewees making it the most

frequent theme for the aforementioned group.

This is in contrast to Category 9: *Gender Egalitarianism* which contains 2 (14.3%) Story themes from the UK interviewees and none from the Egyptian interviewees.

As an elaboration on Table 5.11 and for further insightful findings Table 5.12 presents details of the Story themes that were correlated to the referenced cross-cultural categories.  Due to the length, Table 5.12 (below) is abridged (see Appendix P for the entire set of Stories). The Stories highlight aspects of the organizational culture of Company X as revealed by both the Egyptian and UK Storytelling interviewees.

In summary the above table provides a large body of evidence that is indicative of the findings of the 4 major cross-cultural studies referenced in this thesis. The various finding will further advanced and discussed in the subsequent chapter and will answer RQ 2.

**Table 5.12 Stories Reflecting Aspects of the Organizational Culture of Company X in Relation to the 4 Major Cross-cultural Referenced Studies**

| Cross-cultural Research and Story Excerpt |
|---|
| **1. Power Distance (<u>high</u>) (Hofstede et al, 2010; GLOBE (House et al, 2004)** <br> **Achievement versus <u>Ascription</u>  (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1998)** <br> **<u>Traditional</u> (WVS, Ingelhardt, 2011)** |
| **Egypt Stories** |
| *'The …. director told me that I should fill any gaps that occur in the project… (I) decided to take the initiative that would prevent a potential problem happening if it got overlooked. The next day I received an angry email from the person, who was responsible for taking action complaining that I should not interfere, it wasn't my responsibility… When I replied to explain that I took the action to prevent a potential mistake and that was the important thing to consider, not who is responsible. He replied with another angry email informing me that it was not appropriate for me to comment on how someone should respond…The situation changed dramatically as soon as this manager found out that I was given the 'green light' to take the initiative by the …. director. He told me that if the … director had told me to take the initiative then it was absolutely fine to have done what I did, no problem at all. So I concluded that it's not about what you do, it's all about who has permission to use power and authority.'  01:S02* |
| *'It would be unforgivable to tell my boss 'I can't go because I don't know anything about this project'. He would simply tell me, we can't tell the client we are not going to meet him because the project manager is absent, someone has to meet the client, so get ready to meet him. Even if the person responsible is absent someone else is sent in his place, we can't possibly ever suggest postponing the meeting until the right person is available'.* <br> **01:S03** |
| **UK Stories** |
| *'I had been expecting to get promoted, so my expectations were quite different to the outcome of the appraisal meeting.  There is a lack of regular monitoring and communication between managers and their subordinates.'* <br> *26:S01* |
| *'X joined the team (as) a manager who didn't last long. X had been recruited to take up a post in Z (a Middle East country), however within 6 months he had fallen foul of the director there. Prior to that he was sent to Y (a Middle East country) and only lasted a few hours there as the director in Y sent him back.  Ultimately, he was terminated.  Relationships with…directors are critical for senior managers to succeed and this was a case of poor communication.'  26:S02* |
| **2. <u>Survival</u> (WVS, Inglehardt, 2011)** |
| **Egypt Stories** |
| *'..even my team members didn't fully appreciate the gesture as they generally prefer to keep a low profile; it makes them feel safer than to be highlighted in some way.'  11: S01* |
| *'..my manager took me aside and told me if I want to be successful in the company I need to… (give) feedback behind closed doors; don't make any comments about anyone or talk about the future.'  11:S03* |
| **3. Neutral vs <u>Emotional</u> (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998)** |
| *'I decided to make up for the lack of resources and avoid being late (for the project deadline) by working overnight. I did it on two occasions. Ms X (a subordinate) found out that I had worked overnight and she said she felt really bad, so she came in at the weekend, to try to make it up in some way.'   06:S01* |
| **UK Stories** |
| *'There seems to be a paternalistic management approach in the Middle East offices. I was in a meeting in a Middle East office….. with a director when one of his team burst in and  started explaining something to the director in a very emotional way…I surmised that the guy had some problem of a personal nature, which was bringing him close to tears. The director managed to placate him and seemed to be offering him some advice and support.…. in the UK we wouldn't volunteer advice to our subordinates on personal matters…. however in this particular instance it seemed that X  (the director) was totally comfortable in his role of 'advisor'. That shows how our cultures are quite different.  23:S01* |
| **4. Sequential vs <u>Synchronous</u> Time (Trompenaars and , Hampden-Turner, 1998)** |
| **Egypt Stories** |
| *'Here in Egypt I am asked to work hard by working more hours In the USA, I was asked to work smart, meaning how to make my job easier… using the right tools.'  15:S03* |

| |
|---|
| **UK Stories** |
| *'There was one particularly challenging project that myself and a team were working on & I noticed the Project Manager (PM) found it difficult to manage – he just couldn't control it. This impacted on the team directly as we ended up working round the clock.'* **19:S01** |
| **5. Universalism versus <u>Particularism</u> (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998)** |
| **Egypt Stories** |
| *'the new employer(Company X) agreed to extend the joining date….. This was an unusual situation for the new company (employer) to consider, however it was agreed as part of my joining conditions.'* **07:S01** |
| **UK Stories** |
| '*A few years ago the company put an advertisement to recruit staff in the local press in X (a Middle East country). On this particular occasion the company name was not included in the advertisement.  Apparently 75% of the local staff sent their CVs in response. That was quite a shock to everyone concerned. In response the company did review salaries and make some other adjustments to the remuneration policy in that particular office*.' **23:S02** |
| **6. Specific versus <u>Diffuse</u> (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998)** |
| **UK Stories** |
| *'On the X project there was a basic lack of coordination & lack of management. I got dropped in to it on return from leave. I was sent off to Egypt to work with the team, who were exhausted from the excessive hours of work they had put in. The deliverables were far too ambitious & what added to the stress of the whole project was that the client didn't really understand what they wanted. There was a lack of clarity of the goals & roles & responsibilities of everyone who was managing & coordinating.'* **21:S01** |
| **7. <u>Uncertainty Avoidance</u>, (Hofstede et al, 2010); GLOBE, (House et al, 2004)** |
| **Egypt Stories** |
| *'He (my manager) said the idea was to keep them (junior engineers) focused on a set of tasks and not deviate from that blueprint. He also added that growth and development of subordinates was not the focus nor will it be in the future.'* **04:S01** |
| **8. Individualism <u>Communitarism</u> (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998)** <br> **<u>Collectivism</u> (ii) (GLOBE, (House et al, 2004)** |
| **Egypt Stories** |
| *'When I asked one of the underperforming staff why they don't make more effort the reply was that they know his job is secure and his manager will never tell him to leave as this would be an inhuman thing to do – to make him unemployed when he has family responsibilities.'* **13:S01** |
| **UK Stories** |
| *'When the new employment contracts were sent to us from headquarters there was one particular clause that we took exception to. It stated that all employees were expected to be committed to the company at all times. That I thought was a telling statement. I responded by saying that they could expect me to be fully committed during working hours; however outside of that – it wasn't going to happen.'* **22:S01** |
| **9. <u>Masculinity</u>/Femininity (Hofstede, et al, 2010)** <br> **Gender Egalitarianism (<u>low</u>) (GLOBE, House et al, 2004)** |
| **UK Stories** |
| *'You will not find as many women working in the company as there should be as it's a company that doesn't give enough consideration to working mothers. Last year X who has a small child & husband, was given very little advanced notice about a project she had to be involved in that required her to travel to Egypt for several months…it was quite a hectic lifestyle. There are a lot of short notice travel plans that get made here, so if you have family commitments you are unlikely to be so easily available'.   29:S03* |
| **Legend: <u>underline</u> indicates the aspect of the cultural dimension highlighted in the Stories** <br> **Story codes:  First 2 digits: 01 – 18= Egyptian interviewees; First 2 digits: 19 -37 = UK interviewees** |

## 5.5 Triangulation of the Findings

This thesis is positioned in the constructivist paradigm in which presenting multiple constructed realities 'through the shared investigation of meanings and explanations' (Snape and Spencer, 2013: 12) can be aided by triangulating the findings.

The above findings of the 3 data collection techniques have been triangulated as follows, in order to provide further perspectives in support of the research questions. The triangulation is based on both groups of interviewees. The subsequent chapter will discuss the points most pertinent to the Egypt group.

Table 5.13 (below) contains the findings of the sample related to the following:

- Repertory Grid Content Analysis (of constructs see Tables 5.1 and 5.2)
- The Personal Values Statements deriving from the follow up grid interviews (see Table 5.8)
- Storytelling (Process Coding, Miles et al, 2014, see Table 5.10)

**Table 5.13 Triangulation of the Findings of the 3 Data Collection Techniques indicating Total of Constructs, Personal Values, and Stories Pertaining to each Category of constructs**

| 1. RGT | | 2. Personal Value Statement | | 3. Storytelling | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Core Category** | **Total** | **Value** | **Total** | **Category** | **Total** |
| 1. Considering subordinates / People oriented | 50 (17)* | Communitarianism/ Humanity | 10 | Considering subordinates | 4 |
| 2. Problem solving & decision making | 41 (14) | Purpose/Meaning | 7 | | 0 |
| 3. Motivating & developing subordinates | 35 (9) | | 0 | Damaging team morale | 6 |
| 4. Management skills & traits | 34 (7) | Ethics /Accountability /Control | 19 | Managing ineffectively | 6 |
| | | Part of Personality (Misc.) | 1 | Managing effectively | 2 |
| 5. Adaptability to the environment | 33 (7) | Change / Diversity | 2 | | 0 |
| 6. Performance/Results oriented | 24 (7) | Achievement/Success/ Self-Actualization | 24 | | 0 |
| 7. Appropriacy (company, national cultural 'fit') | 21 (10) | | 0 | Differentiating on culture | 10 |
| | | | | Toeing the company line | 6 |
| 8. Communication patterns | 20 (8) | | 0 | Ignoring /dismissing subordinate feedback | 8 |
| 9 .Role modelling | 13 (3) | | 0 | Managing effectively | 2 |
| 10. Locus of control | 13 (3) | Ethics/Accountability/ Control | 19 | | 0 |
| | | Independence (Misc.) | 1 | | 0 |
| 11. Trust & security | 12 (2) | Survival / Security | 15 | | 0 |
| | | Harmony / Peace | 11 | | 0 |
| 12. Future orientation | 8 (2) | Future/Sustainability | 4 | | 0 |
| 13. Self-Development | 6 (4) | Growth and development | 6 | | 0 |
| Legend: * H (High) scored constructs | | | | | |

The details below highlight the RGT, the principal technique of the data collection in this study

triangulated against the other two techniques. From the above table the most mutually supportive

findings include:

**RGT Categories correlated with values and Stories**:

- RGT category 1. *Concern for subordinates* had 50 constructs correlated with the Value: *Communitarianism and humanity* which had a frequency of 10 values. In addition there were 4 Story themes; *Concern for subordinates.*

- RGT category 4. *Management skills and traits* where 34 constructs were correlated with the value: *Ethics / Accountability/Control* which had a frequency of 19 items. An additional value, i.e. Part of my personality is also included in the triangulation. 6 Stories related to management skills and traits under the category *Managing ineffectively* and 2 mentions of *Managing effectively* were also included in the triangulation.

**RGT Categories correlated with values, but no Stories**:

- RGT category 6. *Performance/Results oriented* had 24 constructs. This was correlated with the value, *Achievement/Success/Self-Actualization* which had 24 mentions.

- RGT category 2. *Problem solving and decision making*, of which 41 constructs was correlated to the Value of *Purpose and meaning*, which had 7 mentions.

- RGT category 11. *Trust & security* had 12 constructs and was correlated with the Value, *Survival / Security*, which had a frequency of 15 and another Value *Harmony / Peace* which had a frequency of 11values.

- RGT category 13. *Self-Development* had 6 constructs and was correlated with the value, *Growth and development* which had a frequency of 6 values.

From the above table the least mutually supportive findings comprise:

**RGT Categories correlated with Stories, but no values**:

- RGT category 7. *Appropriacy (company, national cultural 'fit')* 21 constructs. It was correlated with 2 Story themes: *Differentiating on culture*, which had a frequency of 10 values and *Toeing the company line* which had 2 Stories with that theme.

- RGT category 8. *Communication patterns* had 20 constructs and 8 Stories in the category of *Ignoring /dismissing subordinate feedback.*

From the above table the least mutually supportive findings comprise:

**RGT Categories with no correlated values, but with 6 (10%) or less of the total number of Stories:**

- RGT category 3. *Motivating & developing subordinates* had 35 constructs which correlated with 6 Story themes.

- RGT category 9. *Role modelling* had 13 constructs which correlated with 2 Story themes.

To conclude, Table 5.11 illustrates that 6 of the 13 RGT categories were supported by the values and Story themes. The triangulation presents support for the findings that have emanated from the 3 data collection and techniques and usefully contribute to the study's internal validity.

**5.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has provided an overview of the main findings of the Repertory Grid Interviews, Elements, Personal Values Statements and narratives presented in the form of Storytelling. The findings of the content analysis of the RGT which included a differential analysis of Egyptian and UK managers were presented and discussed. The Elements (i.e., leadership theories) that formed

the basis of the RGT interviews were presented and highlighted differences and similarities in the form of differential analysis (frequency counts) on the supplied construct. A correlation between the preferred theories and the RGT Core Constructs was included. The Personal Values and Stories were presented in the form of a differential analysis. A triangulation of the findings resulting from the data collection and analysis concludes this chapter.

The results of the above findings will be examined further with reference to the extant literature and research questions in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

### 6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided details of the main findings of the 3 data collection techniques which resulted in 310 constructs elicited from the RGT interviews; 172 values (grid follow up) interviews and 55 Stories revealed and collected during the aforementioned interviews.

This chapter advances the preceding chapter's findings by highlighting and discussing the key findings with reference to the extant literature. This chapter will address the gap in the knowledge base, which evolved from the literature synthesis (see Section 2.9) by highlighting the main findings that answer RQ 1 and 2.

The chapter commences with a discussion of the RGT categories before proceeding to discuss the most and least preferred 9 leadership theories. As a result of this discussion emergent findings are expanded and interpreted in relation to the extant literature. The subsequent section discusses the values identified in the follow up grid interviews. The final section concludes with a discussion of the Storytelling findings.

This thesis is positioned in the cross-cultural paradigm and focuses on how Egyptian managers make sense of the various leadership theories they encounter as these theories traverse through local institutional barriers (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996). The literature review described how leadership is endorsed by indigenous managers; however this thesis provides an in depth understanding through the lens of Personal Construct Psychology (PCP), (Kelly, 1955) in the form of Personal Construct Therapy (PCT), (Kelly, 1955). The principal data collection tool, i.e., the

RGT, which emanated from the aforementioned, produced 13 categories, the major ones that are pertinent to RQ 1 and 2 will be discussed in relation to the extant literature.

**6.2 RGT Categories**

1. *Considering subordinates/People oriented*: This category contained the most frequent number of constructs in the sample. It had more constructs from the Egyptian interviewees compared to the UK interviewees. This is relevant to the extant literature which identified Egypt as a collectivist society (Hofstede et al, 2010; GLOBE, House et al, 2004), with a high concern for the group (Hofstede et al, 2010; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) and with a muddling of professional and personal relations (Ali, M., et al, 2006; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009; Mostafa, 2005; Mostafa and El Masry, 2008). Egyptians value relationships in particular (Elbanna and Ali, A. (2012). It is therefore not surprising that the Egyptian interviewees' construals would reflect this. An additional cultural factor to consider is that a feature of Arab Leadership (Weir, 2001), is the familial organization structure and the leaders' focus on interpersonal relationships with group members (see Table 2.8).

2. *Problem solving and decision making:* This category had fewer constructs elicited from the Egypt group and was less important to them than the UK group. The literature depicts Egyptians as low on participative decision making, in fact the lowest of the Middle East cluster (Javidan et al, 2006). However it has been asserted that concepts such as 'participative decision making' should be defined through a localized cultural lens in order to be effectively understood (Parnell and Crandall, 2003; Parnell and Hatem, 1997). A point of interest is how the notion of consultation features in early Islamic leadership ('shura') and furthermore is incorporated in Weir's (2001) Arab Leadership theory; yet does not appear to be part of the indigenous managers' repertory of leader-

follower interactions. It may be that consultation takes on a different form in the Middle East, i.e., more controlling and with less involvement from others (Branine and Pollard 2010).

The findings in this category support the extant literature which depicts indigenous managers as individualistic (Javidan et al, 2006), operating in high power distance environments (Hofstede et al, 2010; House et al, 2004) and characterised as indecisive (Rice, 2011). In addition, subordinates demonstrate submissive behaviour and are therefore reluctant to express their views and opinions (Parnell and Hatem, 1997). The aforementioned researchers' empirical study highlighted that Egyptian subordinates preferred leaders who were decisive and less inclusive and furthermore, managers prefer subordinates to be so (Parnell and Hatem, 1997). This is indicative of Culturally Endorsed Leadership Theory (CLT), (Javidan et al, 2006), which is a leadership style underpinned by Islamic values, according to Ali (2011).  Thus, CLT appears to be an underlying factor of the degree of involvement and feedback that Egyptian managers solicit from their subordinates.

3. *Motivating and developing subordinates*: This category showed the biggest difference in the totals between the 2 groups. It had the most frequently mentioned constructs in the Egypt group compared to the UK group. The referenced literature indicated that motivation is in short supply in Egypt (Javidan et al, 2006: Rice, 2011; Sidani and Jamali, 2009), yet it would appear from the findings that indigenous managers' are concerned with motivating and developing their group members. This could possibly be explained by the extant literature in which Egyptians being a collectivist society place importance on group needs.

4. *Management skills and traits:* This category had fewer constructs from the Egypt group than the UK group, but it was more important to the aforementioned group. The literature characterizes Egyptians as being status conscious, in which ascribed values are recognized most (Trompenaars

and Hampden-Turner, 1998). Indigenous leaders are portrayed as an elite cohort demanding a high degree of deference from their subordinates simply due to the privileged position they see themselves in (Javidan et al, 2006; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009). Leaders possessing traits that are culturally attuned and localized are more likely to be accepted by their peers and subordinates according to local researchers (Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E., 2012), thus emphasizing the importance of leadership traits. In such a distinct organizational culture (see Table 2.7) it would appear that Egyptian managers and followers conform to CLT (Javidan et al, 2006). This is a view supported in the empirical study of Mohamed, S (2012).

Egyptians have a propensity to follow leaders with charismatic traits rather than those who adhere to a system (Brown and Ataalla, 2002). Another trait pertaining to Middle Eastern leaders is endorsed in the Arab Leadership Theory (Weir, 2001, see Table 2.8) i.e., paternalistic leadership. Paternalistic figures are evident in Egypt at a socio-cultural level as well as in the work context (Brown and Ataalla, 2002; Javidan et al, 2006; Hassan and Saker, 2014; Maharan and Geraedts, 2009; Metwally, 2014; Mohamed S., 2012), and so a premium is placed on leaders' traits. It was also noted in the referenced literature that in collectivist societies (such as Egypt) being considered a powerful leader is one of the hallmarks of leadership (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998, cited in Rice, 2006: 239).

There is a debate in the extant literature regarding transformational and transactional leadership styles. A number of local commentators identified indigenous managers as transformational (albeit in a localized form), whereas others postulate that there is a predominance of transactional oriented managers (see Table 2.7). In conclusion it is apparent that leaders' style forms an important factor in how indigenous managers perceive the leadership theories.

5. *Adaptability to the environment:* There was a negligible difference in the number of constructs in each group and also the number of constructs that were considered important, i.e., High scored. The referenced literature indicates that Egypt being a traditional society (Ingelhardt, 2011) contributes to Egyptians reluctance to change; adaptability does require leaders to embrace change. Furthermore Egyptians have been described as self-protective (Ingelhardt, 2011) which may hinder adaptiveness

6. *Performance/results oriented:* This category had a noticeable difference in the frequency of constructs in the 2 groups. It had more constructs from the UK group than the Egypt group. This was also reflected in the constructs that received a High score indicating that it was more important to the UK group. The GLOBE report (House et al, 2004) categorized the Middle East region with an Average score for Performance Orientation which may explain why it was considered less important to the indigenous group.

7. *Appropriacy (company, national cultural 'fit'):* This category had similar levels of frequency and importance of the constructs elicited by both groups. As stated above indigenous managers demonstrate high levels of compliance with a clear demarcation between manager and subordinate. The literature also highlighted indigenous managers as displaying traits such as loyalty with a strong belief in team cohesion, which would encourage a more 'accommodating' approach and thus be a factor that the indigenous managers would take into account in their construals of leadership. In contrast, it should be noted that a conflicting belief was concluded in the GLOBE Report (House et al, 2004) in which Egypt was classified as Average in the Assertiveness dimension.

8. *Communication patterns:* This category had fewer constructs from the Egypt group than the UK group and was more important to the latter mentioned. Communication patterns are a critical aspect

of knowledge transfer, which is pertinent to the research question, in particular RQ 1. The extant literature indicated that communication style is culturally influenced (Qamar, 2013). These differences start at the fundamental level of linguistics as pointed out by Jankowicz (2003). Collectivist societies adopt an indirect communication mode (Qamar et al, 2013). The differences that distinguish the Arabic language were alluded to (see Section 2.4.2) which include being more holistic and using repetition to persuade (Koch, 1983; Zaharna, 1995). This is in contrast to the more linear and laconic style preferred in Western discourse (Koch, 1983).

The traditional nature of Egypt (Ingelhardt, 2011), may provide another reason for the differences in communication patterns. Also relevant is the fact that Egypt is characterized as being a high power distance culture, unlike Western nations, with a propensity to restrict the information flow to the powerful and elite resulting from centralized decision making (Hassan and Saker, 2014; Ibrahim, 2014; Leat and Kott, 2007). The fact that Egyptians prefer to avoid conflict in order to maintain harmony (Elbanna and Ali, A., 2012: Elsaid A. and Elsaid, E., 2012; Humphreys, 1996; Mahran and Geraedts, 2009; Murrell, 1981) and an absence of self-expression (Inglehardt, 2011) combined with social norms of indifference (Rice, 2013) all contribute to how communications are approached and affect the indigenous leader-follower interactions.

The remaining 5 categories contained fewer than 15 constructs in each category. This indicates that these categories were not major factors of the indigenous group or their UK counterparts.

9. *Role modelling*: This category had more constructs elicited from the Egypt group than the UK group. In fact it had the lowest number of constructs from the latter mentioned group, in comparison to the Egypt group. The constructs that were scored High were all elicited from the Egypt group.

The notion of role modelling can be traced back to the origins of Islam with the Prophet Mohamed (Beekun, 2012; Mohammad S., 2012). Religion has a highly pervasive influence in Egyptian society (see Section 2.6.2). This would explain why all of the constructs were elicited from the Egypt group. Furthermore, the extant literature highlighted the paternalistic characteristics prevalent in Middle Eastern society (see Section 2.8.1 Arab Leadership) as mentioned above.

One would assume that role modelling would take in an inspirational guise; however according to Javidan et al (2006) Egypt was classified as being low on the dimension, Charismatic /Value Based, which is somewhat puzzling. This might be explained by the differences in interpretation of Western concepts emanating from cross-cultural research, which was highlighted by Parnell and Hatem (1997).

10. *Locus of control:* This category had exactly the same frequency as the aforementioned category. There were more constructs from the Egypt group than the UK group. It was more important to the indigenous group.

The above findings indicate that with so few elicitations relating to locus of control it was not a major factor for either group. The referenced cross-cultural literature depicted Egyptian managers as inclined to hold on to power and wield authority over their subordinates. This accords with Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (1998) findings in which Egypt was classified as Moderate in terms of Inner/Outer Direction.

11. *Trust & security*: This category had slightly more constructs from the Egypt group. It was the least important category for the sample and more or less the same for both groups. The referenced literature indicates that the indigenous managers work in a low trust environment (Nafei, 2013;

Parnell and Crandall, 2003) and demonstrate high levels of self-protection (Javidan et al, 2006) thus passing on blame to others (Mostafa, 2005; Shahin and Wright, 2004).

In terms of employment security Egyptian organizations offer high levels of security as indicated in Leat and Kott's (2007) empirical study. This is due to institutional arrangements in addition to the influence of Islam and the familial aspect that is dominant in the work place (as discussed above).

12. *Future orientation:* This category was considered a low priority and one of the least important categories for the sample. The findings are in line with the referenced literature. The Middle East cluster received a high score for avoiding uncertainty (Hofstede et al, 2010) which concurs with Egypt receiving a low score in terms of their future orientation (Hofstede et al, 2010; House, et al, 2004). The fact that Egypt is a fatalistic society (Kabasakal and Bodur, 2002; Leat and Kott, 2007) would also be an influencing factor on how the indigenous managers' construe the leadership theories.

13. *Self-development:* This category had the lowest frequency for the sample. The findings indicated that it was of greater importance to the UK than to the Egypt group). As feedback is not encouraged by Egyptian managers this would suggest that self-development is not considered a priority to the indigenous manager, which is reflected in the very few construals elicited from the Egypt group. It is asserted that in developing countries the notion that human capabilities are limited and as a result human resource functions, such as training and development (Leat and Kott, 2007: 155) are not prioritized.

As religion has a profound influence on Egyptian society it may be the case that training and development is construed differently than in Western cultures. Hass (2012) asserts that Islam stressed the need to constantly acquire knowledge and that Islam prescribes constructive solutions

by promoting practical wisdom and pragmatic applications, which may take on a completely different guise to how individualistic Western cultures construe self-development.

By specifying the constructs involved it provides an answer to RQ1 in a way that highlights to the differences in the sense-making of Egyptians and Western managers.

As members of the same culture are more likely to interpret and evaluate situational events similarly compared to those of a different culture (Shahin and Wright, 2004: 501) the next section discusses the findings of the Element Analysis. This focuses on what the indigenous managers think about the Western leadership theories i.e., which theories they most and least prefer. This will further contribute to answering RQ 1.

**6.3 The Element Analysis**

The leadership theories (Elements) that scored closest to '*Most culturally appropriate to managing my team*' were (in order of highest frequency count); Path Goal Theory, 5 Leadership Practices, Situational Leadership and The Leadership Continuum all of which had a median score of 2 for the sample as a whole.

The Elements that scored closest to '*least appropriate to managing my team'* were Traits Theory and Arab Leadership Theory. Both theories had median scores of 4. Furthermore, both of these Elements received a low frequency on the highest rating (1).

In order to illuminate the leadership theories that were most and least preferred by the indigenous managers a discussion of the differential analysis is provided below.

**6.3.1 Indigenous Preferences of the Leadership Theories**

The leadership theories most favoured by the Egypt group were Situational Leadership; Path Goal Theory, The Leadership Continuum and 5 Leadership Practices in that order of preference based on frequency counts. Their least preferred theories were Traits Theory, Arab Leadership and The Managerial Grid. It is worth noting that Arab Leadership, whilst one of the least favoured, did receive a total of 4 frequency counts on ratings 1 and 2 from the Egyptian group compared to 1 count from the UK group. In respect of the UK group, the most favoured theories were The Leadership Continuum, Path Goal Theory, 5 Leadership Practices and Situational Leadership, in that order of preference based on the frequency counts. Their least favoured theories were the same as the Egypt group.

Below is a discussion of each of the most and least preferred leadership theories in the light of the relevant literature.

*Path Goal Theory:* This theory focuses on goal achievement underpinned the motivation of subordinates in various ways. The 2 RGT categories that are closely aligned to the tenets of Path Goal Theory are 'Performance / results oriented' and "Motivating and developing subordinates'. This could partly explain the appeal of this theory to the Egypt group as the former category was prevalent and important to them (which was not the case for the latter category).

*5 Leadership Practices:* This theory may be one of the 4 most preferred theories by the Egypt group based on the fact that it resonates with Islamic principles (Rice, 2011). The RGT categories included 'Role Modelling' which the extant cross-cultural literature identified as a prevalent factor in the Middle East (see Section 6.2). As for the practice, 'Inspire a Shared Vision' the extant literature indicated that future orientation was low in the Middle East Region (Hofstede et al, 2010)

and in respect of Egypt (House et al, 2004). 'Challenge the process' and 'Enable others to act' are practices of this theory which the extant literature revealed does not reflect indigenous organizational behaviour. The cross-cultural literature indicates that there is an absence of self-expression in Egypt (Inglehardt, 2011). Egyptian managers have a preference for submissive subordinates who also prefer to reserve their opinions against the backdrop of a high power distance culture (Hofstede et al, 2010; House et al, 2004). However the RGT categories of the Egypt group highlighted the prevalence and importance of motivating and developing subordinates. 'Encourage the heart' which is a component of Transformational Leadership (Bass, 1997) is evident in collectivist cultures (Pillai et al, 1999) though it may take on a different guise in the Middle East (Muczyk and Holt, 2008) and Egypt in particular (Shahin and Wright, 2004). The aforementioned associations contribute to an explanation of why the Egypt group construed 5 Leadership Practices as culturally appropriate to their work environment.

*Situational Leadership*: Despite being the 3rd most favoured theory in the sample based on frequency counts of ratings of 1 it was the most preferred theory of the Egypt group. The appeal of this theory could relate to the two leadership styles that are closest to the cultural values of Egyptians. Directive and Supportive approaches to managing subordinates may be construed as a means of controlling subordinates and ensuring a low risk environment. Egypt was classified as high on uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede et al, 2010; House et al, 2004).

*The Leadership Continuum:* Based on the review of the extant literature regarding Egypt, this theory may appeal as it accommodates the high power distance, authoritarian and paternalistic work environment at one end of the Authoritarianism-Participative dimension. Another reason as to why this theory was favoured by the indigenous managers could be that it features consultation. Consultation is a characteristic of Arab society, (Ali, A., 2011; Beekun, 2012; Branine and Pollard,

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2010; Mohamed, S: Mostafa, 2005) and has obvious parallels with the 'shura' notion in Islam. It was asserted that consultation is practiced in the Middle East however it is more controlled than in Western societies (Branine and Pollard, 2010). As mentioned above the notion of soliciting feedback, delegating and inclusiveness in decision making (i.e., the opposite end of the continuum) could be ignored in such a work environment.

*The 3 leadership theories least preferred by the Egypt group.*

*Traits Theory:* The RGT category "Management skills and traits' had a high frequency of elicited constructs and was important to the Egypt group. So it is perplexing as to why this theory was one of the least preferred. The extant literature highlighted the elitism of indigenous managers, the high power distance and dominance of ascribed values in Egyptian society. 'Role modelling' was another RGT category which could be associated with this leadership theory; although it had fewer constructs, all of those that were scored as High, were from the Egypt group.

*Arab Leadership:* Also puzzling is that Arab Leadership was one of the least preferred theories of the Egypt group. This theory encompasses many of the Middle Eastern values, emanating from Islam, as portrayed in the literature however Ali, A. (2011) asserted the Islamic Work Ethic and actual work practices in the Middle East are not in necessarily in alignment. A possible cause could be the inconsistency that characterizes Arab society due to the conflict between traditional Bedouin values and those associated with a more sedentary life (Sidani and Jamali, 2010). In addition to this, Ibrahim (2014) has asserted that work related values have changed in recent years due in part to the exposure Egyptians have to foreign companies operating in Egypt. This may explain why Arab Leadership is a less favoured theory.

*The Managerial Gri*d: This theory is considered a static approach to managing, which would be relevant to cultures high on resistance to change and on uncertainty avoidance however it was one of the least favoured theories of the Egypt group, despite having the aforementioned characteristics relevant to Egyptian organizations described in the literature.

*The 2 leadership theories which were neither most nor least preferred.*

*Contingency Theory*: A possible explanation as to why the indigenous group did not show a preference for this theory could lie in its basic assumption, i.e., that the Least Preferred Coworker score is a measure of leader personality (Smith and Peterson, 1989). Egyptians have been described as a collectivist society, protecting group interests to the extent that the boundaries between professional and personal relationships are blurred. Furthermore Egyptians were classified as emotional (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). Social integration is embedded in Egyptian society (Shahin and Wright, 2004), which could result in managers' reluctance to engage in a more pragmatic as opposed to socially conducive manner.

*Transactional / Transformational Leadership:* Bearing in mind the literature indicated that Transactional Transformational Leadership had gained widespread popularity in the Middle East it was surprising to find that it was not a favoured theory of the indigenous managers. According to ElKordy (2013) transformational leadership in Egypt positively effects job satisfaction and commitment. This is further supported by Shusha, (2013) and Mohamed, S. (2012) whose empirical studies found that subordinates responded positively to transformational style leaders. Metwally (2014) argued that for Transformational Leadership to be effective in Egypt a crucial shift in values is required. The referenced literature pointed out that this theory had taken on a localized guise, referred to as pseudo transformational leadership. Despite that, the Element

Analysis (see Table 5.4) indicated it was not a favoured theory (with a median rating of 3.0). Could it be that the indigenous managers construed this theory in its 'Western context', thus explaining the less than favorable ratings on the Element Analysis, as opposed to making sense of it in its more localized 'theory in use', i.e., pseudo-transformational?

There is indeed always a disparity between espousal and expression in manager's leadership practices, regardless of culture. However the emergent finding in this study has identified the particular way in which this is expressed in a Middle Eastern context.

To summarize, this section has discussed the leadership theories most and least preferred by the Egypt group and in so doing has raised awareness of the dichotomy between what the indigenous managers espouse and their actual 'theories in use' as portrayed by the extant cross-cultural literature.

This cross-cultural study has included the role of linguistics when ideas travel to different cultures in which English is not the first language. Language could play a role in how the indigenous group construe the above theories (see Section 2.4.1 which highlighted the differences between the Arabic and English language do exist) as language.

The above discussion leads on to the next section on Emergent Findings to investigate in greater detail how leadership theories are construed by Egyptian managers and thus provide a fully substantiated answer to RQ 1.

**6.4 Discussion of Emergent Findings: Espousals versus Enactment**

This section discusses the findings from the 4 preferred leadership theories (in order of preference) of the indigenous interviewees. The theories were correlated to the RGT categories most pertinent to each of those theories (see Table 5.5).

Situational Leadership (the most favoured theory of the Egypt group) did not have construals that were strongly correlated to the tenets of this leadership theory. Path Goal Theory had more constructs aligned to the category than the aforementioned theory. The Leadership Continuum had more construals associated with the tenets of the theory however 5 Leadership Practices had the most closely aligned construing.

The collated findings of the leadership theories thus far highlight that the construals do not strongly accord with the espousals of the indigenous managers. The 4th favoured theory, i.e., 5 Leadership Practices has been noted in the literature as possessing features reminiscent of Islamic values, which may explain why this is the most closely aligned theory of the indigenous group.

This thesis is concerned with how indigenous managers make sense of Western evolved leadership theories and utilizes the 'Travel of Ideas' (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996) framework to convey the fragmented journey the aforementioned leadership theories take and what happens when these theories are delivered to the recipient culture. Fig 2.2 highlights that ideas (leadership theories) are subject to various institutional hurdles among which are the prelevant cultural values. Consequently the next the next section discusses the findings about the values that resulted from the grid follow up interviews.

## 6.5 Values

The PVS interviews took the form of laddering up so that the interviewees could elaborate on each of their previous constructs thus assessing the interviewee's most central beliefs. As a result of this a total of 172 values were identified and then grouped into 17 categories. The key findings of the categories are discussed below in order of most to least frequent values.

*Achievement/ Success/Self-actualization***:** This category had the highest number of values for the sample and had double the number of values from the Egypt group. Despite this there is a notion that focusing on personal growth and achievement at work is not conducive, i.e., leading to the development of the Middle Eastern ethos (Leat and Kott, 2007)**.**

The cross-cultural literature has depicted Egyptians as indifferent and dissatisfied from decades of economic strife and an underperforming government (Hussien and Heshmat, 2010; Rice, 2011). Egypt has witnessed declining levels of happiness and satisfaction (Hussien and Heshmat, 2010). The aforementioned authors' empirical study showed a positive correlation between happiness, income level, age, marital status, health and satisfaction. These could be influencing factors pertaining to the Egyptian managers in this case study. Throughout this thesis the notion of affective factors of religion in relation to the indigenous culture has been noted. The aforementioned study also raised the role that religion plays as a determinant of happiness and satisfaction and that expressing dissatisfaction is an act of impiety. Interestingly Verme (2009) asserted that those who experience freedom of choice with the belief of having control over their future are happier than those who do not possess this experience and this belief. This is relevant to Egypt, a fatalistic society. On the other hand, it was also postulated that those who prioritize family

and religion are on average happier (Verne, 2009), which would apply to the indigenous managers in this case study.

*Ethics / Accountability / Control***:** This category had a higher frequency for the Egypt group than the UK group. Interestingly the indigenous group related 'ethics' to religious obligations in contrast to the UK group who related it to a more secular form of conscience. This may pertain to the notion of spirituality in the work place and how some cultures attach it to religion and other cultures relegate it to a secular context (Korac-Kakabadse et al, 2002). The difference in frequency of this value for each group accords with the literature as a number of empirical studies show that differences in ethics do exist between Egyptian and Western cultures (see Beekun et al, 2008). A point of interest asserted by Ali, A. (2011) was that the IWE and actual work practices in Middle East are not in necessarily in alignment.

An interesting issue was raised in an empirical study on the differences in the ethical orientations of 2 groups of Egyptian managers working in Egypt, with one group in a local firm and the other in a US firm (Douglas et al, 2007). This study's findings were that differences in the ethical perceptions of these two groups on indigenous managers did exist. This raises questions as to the determinants of national culture as opposed to organizational culture (which is beyond the scope of this thesis).

*Harmony/Peace:* This category had a notable difference in frequency in the sample, i.e., it was less frequent among the Egypt group than the UK group. The extant literature stated that Egyptians value harmony and good relations and are willing to maintain this at any cost. On the other hand, considering decades of economic woes and recent socio-political struggles resulting from the Arab Spring (see Chapter 1) it is perhaps not surprising that the indigenous managers did not articulate this value more than their UK counterparts.

*Communitarianism / Humanity*: This category had a higher frequency from the Egypt group than the UK group. As the extant literature portrayed, Egypt is depicted as a collectivist society with a high concern for group over individual needs. As previously mentioned Islamic values are an influencing factor on the indigenous culture which helps explain why this category was valued by the indigenous group.

The least frequent values included:

*Growth / Development:* There were an equal number of values elicited in this category for each of the 2 groups. A similar notion was expressed in the RGT categories, i.e., 'Self-development' which was considered of low importance to the indigenous group. Therefore it would appear that personal growth is not a dominant value.

*Future/Sustainability*: Values in this category were elicited entirely from the UK group, which is indicative of the referenced literature. Egyptians are not future oriented and management activities such as planning are not prioritized (Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E. 2012). The influence of Islam might be an influencing factor, i.e., Egypt is a fatalistic society.

*Optimism / Positivity*: Considering how the indigenous culture has been portrayed, it was not surprising that the only 2 elicitations in this category came from the Egypt group. Nafei's (2012) empirical study's findings concluded that Egyptians display a noticeable degree of cynicism.

*Change / Diversity:* This category had the same as the aforementioned number of frequencies, with each group showing similar results. Egypt has been described in the literature as being risk averse and change retardant (Badaway and Hadi, 2014: Nafei, 2013) so it is as expected that there would be few values in this category. Despite this, the RGT category 'Adaptability to the environment' was in fact the 5th most frequent category.

In summary although there are some values in which both the Egypt and UK groups show a similar degree of frequency, differences do exist. There are some instances (above) in which the interviewees' construals (RGT interviews) are not aligned to their values.

Uncovering the values of the Egyptian interviewees elucidates which values are more and less important to them and contributes to elaborating on the knowledge transfer process as illustrated by the 'Travel of Ideas' (see Figure 2.2). The next section discusses the findings of the 3rd data collection technique, i.e., Storytelling.

## 6.6 Storytelling

Boje (1994) described the constituents of Storytelling as re-historicizing in which the present unfolds into the past which becomes the focus of attention and through which the future can be re-visioned and anticipated. There are indeed parallels that can be drawn to Kelly's (1955, 1963) PCP these are elaborated at the end of this chapter.

Storytelling reveals tacit knowledge and the findings related to this data collection technique were insightful and make a direct contribution to answering RQ 2. The first point of interest was the difference in response to the requests for Stories from both groups. Table 5.9 highlighted that the larger portion of the Stories were provided by the indigenous interviewees. Despite the fact that a number of indigenous researchers have highlighted the challenges of conducting research in the Middle East (Zahra, 2011) and Egypt (Leat and Kott, 2007, Parnell and Hatem 1999: Rice, 2006), this particular data collection technique transcended such barriers. All but 1 of the Egyptian interviewees volunteered Stories whereas request had to be made (and in many cases repeated) to their UK counterparts. 3 UK interviewees declined to submit Stories. The number of Stories from the UK group, 44%, reflects their reluctance to engage in an activity that seemed more natural and

spontaneous to the indigenous group. This is consistent with the notion of Storytelling as a cultural

characteristic of the Middle East (Zaharna, 1995). Although the referenced literature characterised

Egyptians as submissive and reluctant to express their views, this was not evident in their

willingness to reveal their experience through anecdotes. It could be that the *oral* aspect of

Storytelling (in a more neutral environment) as opposed to written documented accounts associated

with formal feedback, transcended cultural barriers. The lack of enthusiasm among the UK

interviewees may be due to the cultural individualism which characterizes the UK, as mentioned in

the referenced literature.

### 6.6.1 Storytelling Content Analysis

This section discusses the findings of the 55 Stories that were submitted, then analysed in two

major formats (i.e., Content Analysis and a correlation to the 4 referenced cross-cultural studies) to

expound the rich in-depth findings. The content analysis highlighted similarities and differences

between the two groups illustrated in Figure 6.1 (below).  These similarities are based on

calculating the category percentages of each group from the total number (55) Stories. The key

findings that were presented in Table 5.10 (see Chapter 5) are discussed below (in order of most to

least frequent Story theme categories).
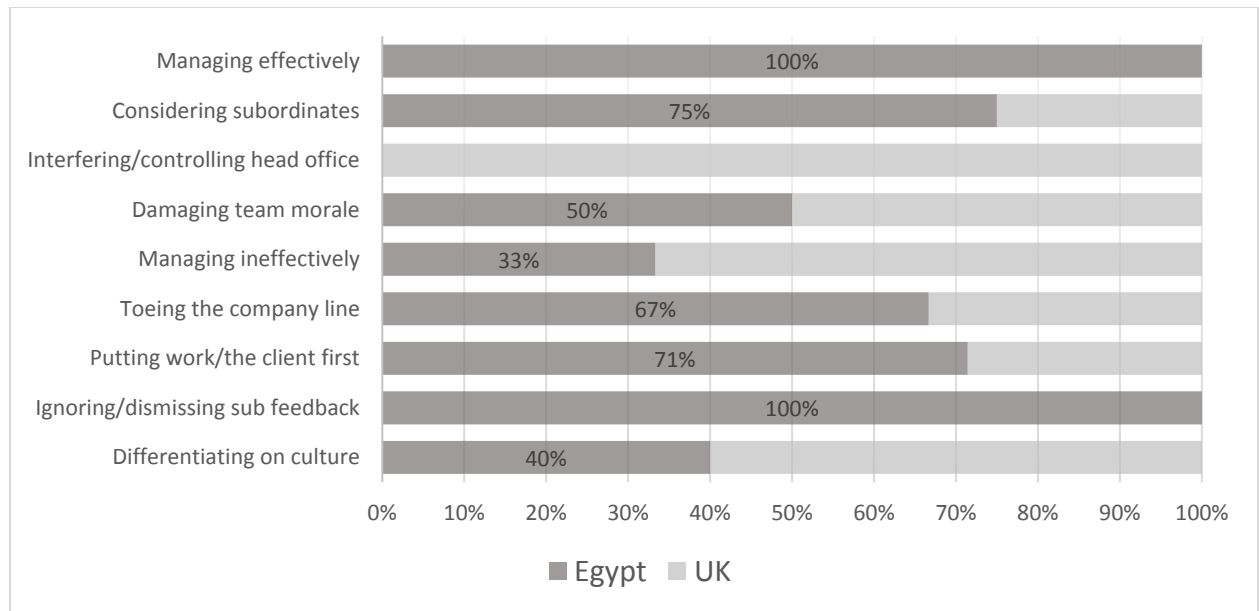
**Figure 6.1 Comparison Between Egypt and UK Interviewees' Story Themes**

*Differentiating on culture*: It is evident that the cross-cultural work environment is pervasive as this category had the most frequent number of Story themes in fact an equal number from both groups in the sample.

The discussion below addresses the categories in which there was the greatest contrast between the two groups in the sample.

*Ignoring/dismissing subordinate feedback*: All of the Stories were from the Egypt group and it was an important theme for them. The Savvas et al (2001) case study, which included Egyptians, indicated that participation and consultation are sought-after behaviours. However the findings in this thesis indicate that being ignored by supervisors who are dismissive of subordinates' feedback is an Egyptian phenomenon. It is possible that the fact that Egyptians' reticence in expressing their views, described in the literature, coupled with the high power distance status conscious culture in

which they operate, encourages Company X head office to disregard their views and value their input less than their UK counterparts (who are culturally more inclined to be expressive).

*Interfering /controlling head office*: All of the Story themes in this category were from the UK group and it was an important theme to them. The fact that none of the Stories in this category came from the Egypt group reflects the referenced literature which portrays Egyptians as lacking assertiveness and self-expression. Furthermore, in the midst of what the literature describes as a repressive work environment it is possible that the Egyptian interviewees construed the Middle East head office involvement in a less negative light than their UK counterparts.

*Managing ineffectively*: This theme occurred more frequently in the UK group. It may be related to the category above, as the UK group report in to and interact with colleagues at head office. This is in contrast to the category *Managing effectively*, which had the least mentions all of which were from the Egyptian group. It would appear that both groups construe management performance differently. There is a debate in the cross-cultural research community as to what extent institutional arrangements and culture influence pervade human resource practices (Leat and Kott, 2007). It may be that both factors are at play in the Egypt and UK offices.

*Putting work/the client first:* This category was a common theme for the sample and more frequently mentioned by the Egypt group. This may be reminiscent of developing countries in which fewer opportunities exist in the labour market. According to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) unemployment is high in Egypt (El-Badaway and Hadi, 2014). It is also indicative of Egyptians displaying high levels of in-group collectivism (Mohamed, S., 2012).

*Toeing the company line:* This category had more Story themes from the Egypt group. This may be indicative of Egyptians being more amenable to company rules and regulations (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) than their UK counterparts.

In summary the tacit knowledge revealed in the interviewees' anecdotes highlights the role of national culture in relation to the leadership role contributing and answering RQ 2.

As the Stories contained a high frequency of cross-cultural themes, a correlation with the 4 major cross-cultural studies (referenced in this thesis) was carried out. The next section discusses the findings from this comparison.

**6.6.2 Storytelling from a Cross-Cultural Perspective**

The Stories (presented in Table 5.12) are indicative of the cross-cultural literature related to the indigenous culture. The Stories depict leaders as autonomous actors set within a high power distance environment. There are several parallels with the Arab Leadership Theory (Weir, 2001) such as autocratic leadership and centralized decision making. However, consultation, a notion closely aligned to IWE, and incorporated in the Arab Leadership Theory is not evident in any of the Story themes neither is the notion of the benevolent, paternalistic leader (Mohamed, S., 2012). The aforementioned may be further evidence pertaining to the distinction between espousal and enactment among the indigenous managers.

The Stories highlighted the various cross-cultural factors that are determinants of leadership in Egypt thus answering RQ 2.

The 3 data collection techniques were triangulated (see Table 5.13) and served to illustrate a number of mutually supportive findings, and some less so, providing for a more rigorous research

and allowing a more comprehensive discussion on the findings. All but 4 RGT categories had values associated with them, which would indicate that the interviewees' construals were closely aligned with their values. There were some instances in which the interviewees' construing (RGT interviews) were not correlated to their values. Many of the Story themes were associated with the constructs of the leadership theories and values. The first 4 RGT categories were all (with 1 exception) consistent with Story themes, which was further support for the findings.

## 6.7 Conceptualizing the leadership theories and 'Travel of Ideas'

With reference to the knowledge transfer framework of Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) it is the translation stage that ideas (i.e., leadership theories) are selected and filtered out by the recipient. These ideas (and associated values) are then objectified re-embedding in the new location, i.e., the Egyptian organization. Parallels can be drawn in the context of the more general influence of Western management practices on Egyptian organizational life (Leat and Kott, 2007) as indigenous managers grapple with the impact of this 'cultural variability' (Schmidt, et al, 2007).

An example of this occurs when a leadership training course is sent over to Egypt from the UK. The trainer conveys the idea, which is then objectified in the form of the notes the trainees make (see Figure 6.2). This is the point at which the Egyptian trainees actively engage their construct systems. This is indicative of the inner outer tensions Erez and Gati (2004) refer to, i.e., how the indigenous managers convert, adapt or reconfigure the Western leadership theories to be aligned at a localized level of comprehension (Cummings and Teng, 2003). Converting ideas to linguistic artifacts, labels and metaphors are applied, is a way of reducing the associated displacement effects in the translation process. In this way the indigenous managers attempt to make sense of the leadership theories by attaching the less familiar 'foreign notions' to the more familiar' cultural

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notions'. The journey of the idea presented in the leadership theories terminates when recipients makes sense of it in their daily practice. The ideas gradually become institutionalized being absorbed into the stock of relatively unreflective and taken-for-granted custom and practice. At this point the values come into play, as constraints on which espousals (as reflected in the trainee's notes as s/he seeks to capture what was said) will end up being enacted, and which will not.

The emergent findings are an example of Latour's (1993: 6, cited in Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996) notion of 'displacement, drift, invention and mediation'. As mentioned above the pseudo form of leadership (Ali, A.1993; Shahin and Wright, 2004) involves embracing some aspects of the various leadership theories and adapting other aspects to a more culturally conducive form. Although cosmopolitanism is not embraced in Egypt (see Section 2.2.2) an existing concern is that Egypt's cultural norms and values are being superseded by Western values and practices (Hussain and Mc Mullen, 2010; Leat and Kott, 2007; Rice, 2011). This has an impact on how the indigenous managers convert, adapt or reconfigure the Western leadership theories to be aligned at a localized level of comprehension (Cummings and Teng, 2003).

The above issues may contribute to the potential perplexity of indigenous managers' espousals of leadership compared to its enactment in the work context. The distinction between indigenous managers' espousals about leadership, and how leadership is enacted during the process of institutionalization, can be illuminated further by drawing on Kelly's (1955) PCP as follows. Kelly's (1995) fundamental postulate states that,

 '*a person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events*' (Kelly, 1955: 32).

Two of his corollaries are pertinent to the above discussion:

The Choice Corollary:

*'A person chooses for himself that alternative in a dichotomized construct through which he anticipates the greatest possibility for the elaboration of his system'* (Kelly, 1955: 45), here is where our values are important; and

The Experience Corollary:

'*A person's construction system varies as he successively construes the replications of events'*. (Kelly, 1955: 50).

Future actions are governed by constructs that have been shown to be most effective, i.e., most worth our while.

In effect, by anticipating the consequences of applying Western leadership theories on their subordinates, indigenous managers become enmeshed in culturally endorsed forms of leadership. In other words, indigenous managers overtly recognize aspects of the Western leadership theories that they see as deserving of public espousal but this conflicts with what they are predisposed to do within the confines of the culture. Figure 6.2 'Travel of Ideas' shows an example of this process.
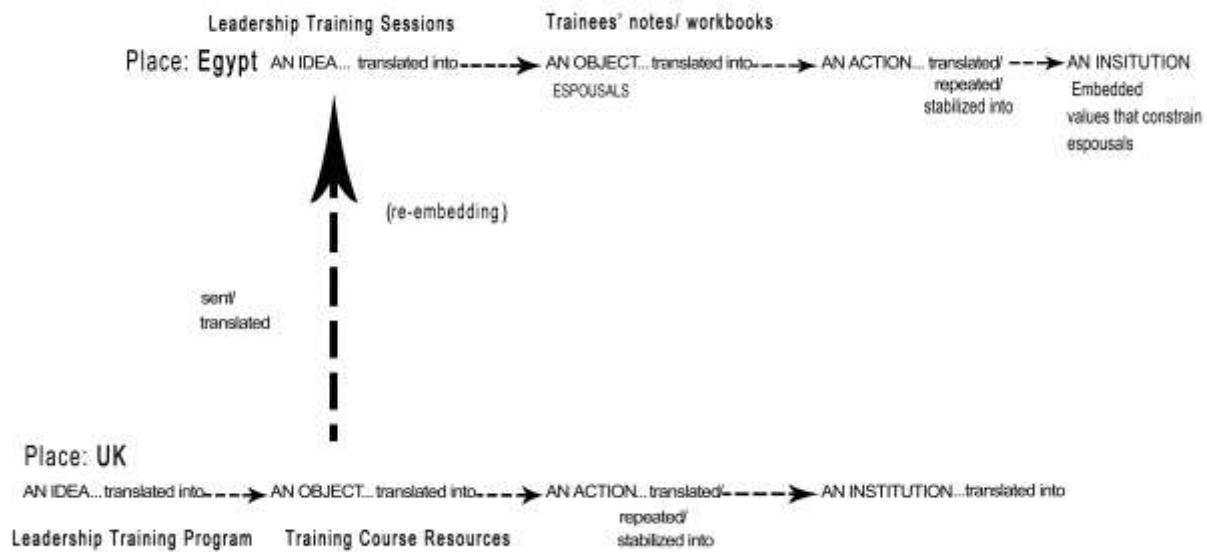
**Figure 6.2 Illustrative Example of Leadership Theories and 'Travel of Ideas' (After Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996)**

## 6.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided an extensive discussion related to the findings of the 3 data collection techniques in relation to the extant literature.

RQ 1.  *Which leadership theories are more or less culturally attuned to Egyptian managers?*

By focusing on the gap in the literature, RQ 1 was answered in the discussion of the RGT categories and Element analysis. Table 6.1 provides a summary of the preferences of the 9 leadership theories.

**Table 6. 1 Summarized Comparison between Egypt and UK  Frequency Count on Ratings of the Overall Supplied Construct (cultural appropriacy to managing a team)**

| Median Rating | Egypt Interviewees | UK Interviewees |
|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | | |
| 1.5 | | LT5: Path Goal Theory<br>LT8: The 5 Leadership Practices |
| 2.0 | LT3: Situational Leadership<br>LT4: The Leadership Continuum<br>LT5: Path Goal Theory | LT3: Situational Leadership<br>LT4: The Leadership Continuum |
| 2.5 | LT8: The 5 Leadership Practices | |
| 3.0 | LT6: Contingency Theory<br>LT7: Transactional/Transformational Leadership | LT7: Transactional/Transformational Leadership |
| 3.5 | LT2: The Managerial Grid | |
| 4.0 | LT9: Arab Leadership | LT2: The Managerial Grid<br>LT6: Contingency Theory |
| 4.5 | | LT1: Traits Theory |
| 5.0 | LT1: Traits Theory | LT9: Arab Leadership |

The 4 leadership theories that were preferred by the indigenous managers were Situational Leadership Theory; Path Goal Theory; The Leadership Continuum and The 5 Practices of Leadership. Despite these findings the analysis identified that their espousals were somewhat different to their day to day leader follower interactions. Egyptian managers construe leadership theories through a localized lens. A degree of cultural adaptation resulted in the formation of a pseudo-leadership version as the leadership theories were enacted in the leader-follower interactions.

The leadership theories that were most closely aligned to their leadership enactment were (in order of preference) The 5 Leadership Practices and Situational Leadership (see Table 5.6).

The theories that were least favoured by the indigenous managers were Arab Leadership and Traits Theory. This is despite the fact that the extant literature depicted Egyptian managers as possessing characteristics strongly associated with these theories (see Section 5.2.2.2).

RQ 2:  *What role does national culture play in terms of how the indigenous managers construe Western evolved leadership theories?*

The remainder of the chapter focused on discussing the findings in order to answer RQ 2. This was done by discussing the values that emanated from the grid interviews and the Stories that were revealed in the two series of data collection interviews. The ensuing discussion focused on how these findings could be interpreted in the context of the cross-cultural literature with particular attention to the notion of 'Travel of Ideas' and concluded with interpretations in the light of Kelly's (1955, 1963) Personal Construct Psychology.

The final chapter will address concluding remarks on this cross-cultural study and highlight how it can usefully serve to contribute to the literature at various levels and additional research and practitioner implications.

**CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS**


**7.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter comprised a discussion and interpretation of the findings derived from the data analysis of this cross-cultural research. The emergent findings provided an extended analysis and findings in order to uncover and identify the values that the indigenous managers attach to their construals of the various leadership theories and how they influence action. By referring to the extant literature the two research questions were answered, thus closing the gap that was identified in the literature synthesis (see Section 2.9).

This chapter provides a summary of the research, which starts with a brief review of the two research questions and associated conclusions. Furthermore this chapter highlights the significance of the research by outlining its contribution to academic knowledge and professional practice. The final section refers to the research limitations and suggestions for future cross-cultural studies.

**7.2 Recap on the Research Questions and Conclusions**:

RQ 1. *Which leadership theories are more or less culturally attuned to Egyptian managers?*

Out of the 9 leadership theories there were 4 that were preferred by the indigenous managers and 3 theories that were least preferred (see Table 5.4). The emergent findings indicated a different order of preferences of the leadership theories (see Table 5.6 and Section 6.4). This highlighted an important notion, i.e., how the espousals of the indigenous managers are not so directly aligned to their 'theories in use'. The literature review (see Section 2.6) highlighted a number of pseudo-leadership theories/practices common in Egypt which was evident in this empirical study. The

preferred leadership theories that travel from the UK office to the Egypt office are culturally adapted. This cultural adaptation results in pseudo-leadership theories being enacted by the indigenous managers, which explains how Egyptian managers construe Western evolved leadership theories.

RQ 2: *What role does national culture play in terms of how the indigenous managers construe Western evolved leadership theories?*

The influence that national culture has on how leadership is enacted in Egypt was highlighted in the analysis of the personal values statements (see Table 5.8) and Storytelling sessions (see Table 5.10 and Fig. 6.1). This indicated that national culture plays a role in how the aforementioned theories are adapted to accommodate aspects of the Middle Eastern culture.

Differences do exist in how Egyptian managers make sense of Western leadership theories in comparison to their colleagues in the UK office. Egyptian managers construe leadership theories through a localized lens. These differences are underpinned by their personal values, which are deeply attached to aspects of the socio-cultural environment.

**7.3 Research Summary**

The topic of this research is positioned in the field of cross-cultural studies and examines leadership from the perspective of an international corporation that operates from the Middle East. It is an investigation calling on the sense-making (Weick et al, 2005) paradigm in which Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955, 1963) has been utilized to disclose how indigenous managers construe Western originated leadership theories. The thesis was based on a case study of two offices, Egypt and UK that report into the Middle East headquarters. 36 junior managers from these 2 offices participated in the study. The principal data collection technique was the Repertory Grid a

technique which draws on phenomenological and constructivist assumptions. Interviews with 18 junior managers from each of the Egypt and UK offices generated a total of 310 constructs. The second data collection tool was the Personal Values Statement interviews which generated 172 values. The ethnographic approach of Storytelling was the third data collection tool in which 55 Stories were obtained from the interviewees.

Both qualitative and quantitative material was collected to produce a more profound level and range of data (Fox and Tan, 1997; Snape and Spencer, 2003). An independent collaborator was involved in an inter-rater agreement procedure at the data analysis stage of the grid interviews and Story data with the aim of strengthening the reliability of the analysis (Jankowicz 2004; Miles et al, 2014). The findings of the 3 data collection tools were triangulated to provide a rigorous research design (Ritchie, 2003).

The discussion and interpretation of the findings identified which leadership theories were more culturally pertinent to the indigenous managers and which less so. As a result of analyzing the findings an emergent finding came to light. This uncovered an interesting notion that the indigenous managers overtly recognize characteristics of the Western leadership theories which in fact conflict with what they are predisposed to do within the confines of their national culture. The discussion and interpretation of this entire cross-cultural study answered the research questions derived from the identified gap in the literature. Thus, this thesis will make a contribution to the knowledge base at both academic and practitioner levels.

## 7.4 Academic Contribution

The resultant and emergent findings in this thesis will contribute to the cross-cultural knowledge base on leadership. It will also raise awareness of a region that the extant literature described as being generally overlooked. Researchers postulate that a dearth of cross-cultural enquiry conducted on and in the Middle East region is evident. In order to discuss how RQ 1 and 2 have contributed to the knowledge base Table 7.1 presents specific details of the gaps in the knowledge base according to the referenced literature. These are addressed in the summary (Table 7.1) below.

**Table 7.1 Knowledge Gaps in the Referenced Literature**

| Specific Area | Author(s) |
|---|---|
| Research examining effects of culture on management style of Middle East managers working in the US. | Bakhtari (1995). |
| Indigenous managers and international managers' knowledge in Arab countries. | Branine and Pollard (2010). |
| The association of Islam and management, in particular in the field of ethics. | Beekun and Badawi (2005). |
| Cross-cultural research that disregards local concepts of leadership and nuances of leadership styles. | Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E. (2013). |
| Information on training and development from an Islamic perspective. | Hassi, A. (2012). |
| Management research in Egypt | Hatem and Parnell (1999). |
| Cross-cultural studies on the Egyptian business environment | Ibrahim (2014). |
| Research on management systems and leadership styles in the Middle East region | Kabasakal, et al (2012). |
| Research on Transformational Leadership in Egypt | ElKordy (2013). |
| HRM practices and approaches adopted by Egyptian-owned organizations. | Leat and Kott (2007). |
| Research on leadership and gender in non-Western cultures | Metwally (2014). |
| Research on leadership in the Arab world | Mohamed, S. (2012). |
| Research on culture and knowledge transfer in Egypt | Nafie (2012). |
| Empirical work on management behaviour in Egypt. | Parnell and Crandall (2003). |
| Empirical research in the Middle East region. | Ralston et al (2012). |
| Empirical studies on culturally-related ethical issues | Rice (1999). |
| Transactional/Transformational leadership research in Egypt. | Shahin and Wright (2004). |
| Research that addresses work values and beliefs in the Egyptian context. | Sidani and Jamali (2009). |

The findings pertaining to both RQ 1 and RQ 2 provided an in-depth appreciation of how leadership is viewed from a local standpoint and how cross-cultural values do impinge on

leadership styles. The case study which formed the basis of this thesis was positioned in the training and development forum. The pervasive influence of Islam on the work practices and organizational settings was described at several points in the study. The findings and discussion that relate to answering RQ 1 could provide new theoretical insights into leadership development, possibly building on Weir's (2001) Arab leadership model. This thesis also contributes to the academic literature base on the role and influence of Islam in the field of management which was related to RQ 2 as it was asserted that religion has a profound effect on Middle Easterners. Although it was alluded to, this study did not address the gap in the literature regarding the notion of reverse diffusion postulated by Branine and Pollock (2010).

In answering RQ 1, light was shed on Transactional / Transformational Leadership, which contributes to the gaps identified by a number of local researchers. However this topic was limited to describing the current state in the field rather than examining causal factors that would be at a more detailed level of investigation.

Indigenous work values and beliefs have been uncovered through the findings and discussions related to RQ 2. The data collection tools (i.e., Personal Values Statements and Storytelling) elicited the values that the Egyptian managers possess that impact on their leadership styles and the tacit knowledge revealed via the Stories provided further insights that contribute to closing the gap detailed in Table 7.1. The study of values that contributed to answering RQ 2 highlighted the importance of ethics which evolved from the personal values (grid follow up interviews) and the Story themes.

As this thesis has examined leadership through a corporate lens it has made a contribution to management research which focused on the business environment. It should also raise awareness of

indigenous managers and international managers' knowledge in Arab countries. This embedded case study included a regional company located in Egypt in which all most all of the employees are Egyptian nationals. HRM practices were highlighted, albeit in the guise of training and development. The aforementioned served to close the gaps referred to in Table 7.1 (above). Although the extant literature highlighted a gap in the gender debate this thesis did not contribute to that topic as this was beyond the parameters of study.

As RQ 1 was directly concerned with the indigenous managers construal process this study will contribute to knowledge in the current field of literature related to sense-making (Weick et al, 2005; Maitlis and Christianson, 2013) at a cross-cultural level (Scheer, 2003).

In answering RQ 2 Czarniawska and Joerges, (1996) 'Travel of Ideas' was operationalized to illustrate the role culture plays in knowledge transfer. This provided further insights specifically related to Egypt, thus contributing to closing the gap in the extant literature (Nafie, 2012).

**7.5 Professional Contributions**

This research addresses important questions regarding the ways in which national culture affects leadership and business against a backdrop of globalization. A number of cross-cultural research enquiries have asserted that they make a contribution to multinational companies with expatriates assigned to overseas locations (see Elsaid, A. and Elsaid, E. 2012; Elsayed-Elkhouly, S., M. and Buda, R., 1997; Ibrahim, 2014); this is true of the present thesis, but it also makes a contribution at a local level. It will provide insights for indigenous trainers and local training companies.

The notion of knowledge transfer is particularly pertinent to the professional contributions this research enquiry makes. If trainers are better informed about the ways in which indigenous trainees construe the Western originated leadership theories they will be better prepared and equipped to

ensure a more informed understanding and application of such theories at a local level. This would take the form of training resources, i.e., course design, training manuals etc. One way of doing this would be to produce a set of guidelines that make specific recommendations. These guidelines should include informing the trainer about what theories to focus on and which to expend fewer resources on given that trainees are likely to respond with varying degrees of interest. Another recommendation would be cross-cultural awareness raising so the trainer is informed on differences between UK and indigenous participants and the ensuing implications in the training arena.

One important notion would be to indicate to Western trainers embarking on Middle East assignment the various ways in which apparently identical leadership behaviours may be perceived quite differently by both leaders and their followers (Lord and Brown, 2004).

Trainers should be made aware that as there is no definitive or universal agreement on Western 'constructs' (Parnell and Crandall, 2003; Parnell and Hatem, 1997) that terminology used in the various leadership theories may mean different things (and have different values attached to them) to non-Western cultures.

Extending this to an Organizational Development (OD) level, the in house leadership development programs in Company X aim to develop and equip junior managers with essential leadership skills. This thesis has highlighted the leadership theories that Egyptian managers are most and least receptive to. By comparing leadership theories and the underlying values that indigenous managers attach to them as part of their construal process it may usefully serve to identify how to train and develop potential leaders.

On a personal note, the implications for a senior practitioner, such as myself, suggests the importance of sharing the key findings pertaining to preferred leadership theories with the trainers

who report to me. It would also be beneficial to Company X if I were to produce a report for the Learning and Development Manager at head office with relevant key findings of this thesis and follow up with a set of recommendations to consider for the annual Training Needs Analysis that is conducted via head office.

The principal data collection tool, the RGT, has widespread applications in the business world. Utilizing this technique at Company X could prove to be an effective O.D. application and contribute to performance appraisal; to the evaluation of training programs and to the design of job descriptions. As the RGT interview is participant oriented and a non-intrusive tool to elicit tacit knowledge the grid interview could prove to be particularly effective in the Middle East offices that report into Company X. Bearing in mind the extent to which Egyptians are low on expressiveness and operate in a high power distance culture where upward feedback is not encouraged (see Section 2.6) the grid technique might overcome many of those obstacles as part of a more sustained O.D. and personal development initiative.

## 7.6 Research Limitations

There are limitations to this research and the generalizability of its findings which are the result of the selected research method, techniques and design. The research design should include sufficient rigour which Yin (2014) asserts should include both validity and reliability. Therefore a brief overview of the aforementioned is provided by considering both strengths and weaknesses.

## 7.6.1 Strengths

The RGT's strengths include minimal researcher bias (see Table 3.3). Furthermore the limiting factor from the interviewee's perspective, i.e., social desirability responding is reduced as the

interviewee is directed toward self-generated responses, thus avoiding contriving the 'right' answer (Jankowicz, 2004).

The categorization of the Personal Value Statements was carefully considered. As these were carried out as a follow-up to the grid interview the interviewees' values evolved from the constructs offered in the grid interviews (see Appendix H). Therefore the categories were derived from the actual values generated by the interviewees to produce an authentic and valid categorization.

Storytelling was an additional data collection tool which evolved from the aforementioned interviews. In order to strengthen the validity of the Storytelling, Richardson's (2000) criteria for ethnographic research were observed (see Section 3.4.3).

This thesis considered and incorporated reliability measures which are designed to ensure that '*different methods, research results, or people arrive at the same interpretations or facts*' (Krippendorff, 2011: 1).

An inter-rater agreement in the data analysis stages of the RGT categories and Storytelling categories ensured a very satisfactory level of reliability. This was carried out with a local, independent collaborator, whose credentials contributed to the reliability process. The procedures were carried out in observance of generic guidelines (see Fransella et al, 2004; Jankowicz, 2004) and reliability coefficients were calculated (percentage agreement and Cohen's kappa) to confirm the level of agreement. The reliability figures for the RGT categories were; 1st attempt, 85.4%; Kappa 0.84; 2nd attempt, 96%; Kappa 0.96. The reliability figures for the Storytelling content analysis were; 1st attempt 74.5%; Kappa 0.71; 2nd attempt, 90.0%; Kappa 0.90. Furthermore efforts to strengthen the validity of the study included triangulating the 3 data collection tools (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2014) and a discussion of the details in Table 5.13.

**7.6.2 Weaknesses**

The generalizability of this thesis is indeed limited by the fact that the case study was restricted to the Egypt and UK offices in their corresponding countries. Therefore caution should be exercised regarding its generalizability to other Arab countries. Although there are similarities 'Arab countries differ among themselves', (Hofstede et al, 2010: 94). Furthermore, Egypt is considered different and unique among its Middle Eastern neighbours (Parnell and Hatem, 1997; Parnell and Crandall, 2003).

This empirical study was conducted over a relatively short time frame. Opting for a longitudinal study could have yielded additional insights in terms of evaluating the change in the Egyptian managers' beliefs and values as a result of the in house training they undergo. A long term study would have created the opportunity to assess how these managers make sense of the various Western leadership theories over time. Studying change over a longer time frame allows for this (Metwally, 2014). The extant literature indicated that Middle Eastern values have changed over time (Sidani and Jamali, 2010) and that this is currently evident in Egypt (Ibrahim, 2014) a longitudinal study may have captured such changes.

**7.7 Further Research**

The findings in this thesis are not conclusive, but should be viewed as paving the way for future research focusing on cultural barriers and conflicts faced by managers in the transfer of knowledge. Identifying the particular values' various strengths and effects that are appropriate to the recipient culture in their application of Western leadership theories would indeed be a valuable addition to the research effort of this thesis.

The emergent findings in this thesis highlighted differences between indigenous managers' espousals and their actual leadership enactments. This was brought to light by uncovering the values they attach to their 'theories in use'. Therefore future research into a more in-depth study of values would be a fruitful direction to pursue and in which 2 distinct streams of inquiry are possible. Firstly identifying which values are more and which are less receptive to change and perhaps utilizing Kelman's (1986) theory, i.e., Compliance, Identification and Internalisation. Secondly from a social constructionist perspective the case could be made that societal values are somewhat different from personal values, thus a comparison between the two would be potentially insightful.

One other possible area that this thesis could encourage future research efforts in, relates to the notion of reverse diffusion. The UK managers in the case study report into the Middle East office of Company X. The Element analysis did indicate that one of the UK managers gave Arab Leadership (Weir, 2001) a high rating (i.e. *Most culturally appropriate to managing my team*). Furthermore many of the Stories submitted by the UK managers revealed that the Middle East office has a propensity to use a controlling style on the UK office. Calls for further research into reverse diffusion have been made in the academic community (Dobosz-Bourne, D., 2004: Branine and Pollard, 2010) in which case this thesis may play a role.

## 7.8 Chapter Summary

This concluding chapter presented an overall summary of the thesis. Details included the significance and contribution of this empirical study in the light of academic and professional fields. The limitations of this study were discussed. Finally, suggestions for further research were identified.

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