The Impact of Leadership Practices Within Cultures

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Abstract

Purpose

This study investigated the behaviors of leaders across economically-distressed regions within four countries (Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Philippines), whether the impact of their behavior would be differentially affected by culture, and the psychometric properties of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) in this setting.

Design

Health care leaders and their constituents were surveyed regarding the frequency to which various leadership behaviors were engaged in. In a separate survey leaders indicated the extent to which they were engaged and positive about their work and provided demographic information. Constituents also completed a separate survey and described the effectiveness level of their leader. Analyses of leadership behaviors were conducted for respondents by country and by type (leaders versus constituents) across countries and within countries, as well as examining the impact of leadership behaviors on leader engagement and constituent evaluations of leader effectiveness. Psychometric properties of the LPI were examined.

Findings

While the frequency of leadership behaviors varied across cultures the impact of leadership within cultures was consistent. Results supported the psychometric hardiness of the Leadership Practices Inventory as both an instrument and conceptual framework for studying the cultural universality of leadership.
Research implications

While context remains important, the process of leadership appears to have key universal elements. This finding warrants continued study involving participants from different countries (cultures).

Practical implications

Leadership makes a difference. This study identifies a number of leadership behaviors which have an impact on personal and organizational effectiveness. The LPI shows robustness from a 360-degree perspective in accurately measuring the behavior of leaders.

Originality

Empirical confirmation of the universality of key leadership behaviors will be of interest to both leadership scholars and leadership trainers, especially relevant for non-traditional settings and populations. Continued evidence about the reliability and validity of the LPI also gives confidence to scholars wanting to study leadership, and trainers interested in developing leaders, in cross-cultural settings.

Keywords

- Leadership
- Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)
- Kouzes and Posner
- Transformational leadership
- Cross-cultural leadership
• The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership
The Impact of Leadership Practices Within Cultures

**Introduction**

Globalization has many ramifications, not the least of which is the search for leadership concepts that are universally relevant and effective across various cultures, environments, settings, and populations. Common technological imperatives, worldwide industrial and supply chain logistics, boundary-less marketplaces and currencies, ubiquitous communication and social media platforms, among other factors, are serving to harmonize and homogenize management/leadership and organizational practices (Friedman, 2007; Hamel, 2007; Friedman, 2009). Global managers, consequently, it is argued “need universally valid leadership theories and principles that transcend cultures” (Ergeneli, Gohar, and Temirbekova, 2007:704); even while some scholars claim that leadership differs around the world and that concepts developed in the United States, especially, may be limited in their applicability to other cultures (e.g., Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, Dorfman, and GLOBE Associates, 1999; Hofstede, 1980a, 2001; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta, 2004). The assertion that the process of leadership is universal even while the particular application may be context specific (and appropriate) may be nearer the truth; as noted by Zagorsek, Jaklic, and Stough (2004): “Culture does matter. But its impact is not as strong as is commonly thought.”

This study examined the impact of leadership both across and within a multi-country (cultural) set of managers. These managers were working in four of the poorest economic regions of the world and this bottom-of-the-pyramid economic context provided a robust challenge for how much difference leadership might make at this basic level of any “hierarchy of needs” paradigm. Examining the psychometric properties of a leadership questionnaire in
this non-traditional setting and diverse sample populations were additional objectives of this research project. We look at some research and viewpoints about the relationships between leadership and culture and then review previous studies involving the leadership questionnaire prior to discussion of the current study.

**Leadership and Culture**

The GLOBE research program (House, *et al.*, 1999) defines culture as “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.” From this perspective culture represents the “collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (Hofstede, 1980b). In differentiating between cultures researchers have typically relied upon these four core dimensions, as defined by Hofstede (1980b):

- **Power distance (PD):** The extent to which the less powerful people accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more versus less) but defined from below rather than above; so that a society’s level of inequality is endorsed by low power participants as much as it is by high power ones.

- **Uncertainty avoidance (UA):** The extent of tolerance a society has for uncertainty and ambiguity. Unstructured situations are novel, unknown, and surprising and uncertainty avoidance cultures try to minimize the possibility of such situations by strict laws, rules, safety and security measures, and a philosophical and/or religious preference in absolute Truth.
• **Individualism vs. collectivism (IND):** The extent to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the former are societies where everyone is expected to look after themselves (and their immediate families) and on the latter are societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.

• **Masculinity vs. femininity (MAS):** The extent to which the distribution of roles in society is associated with gender but also the association of men’s values which focus on competitiveness and assertiveness and women’s values which focus on cooperation and modesty.

Hofstede’s culture scores for the countries involved in this study are presented in Table 1, along with those from the United States for comparison purposes. There are many differences between the cultures of the four countries in this study. The PD in the Philippines is very high compared with the other countries, and particularly in comparison with the United States, although PD is also considerably higher in the other three countries than in the U.S. Pakistan is much higher on UA than the other three countries (which are relatively close to the U.S. scores). On the IND dimension, Pakistan is the lowest and its neighbor India the highest (although all of these four countries are quite different from the U.S. on this variable). The highest MAS rating is for the Philippines (not too different from the U.S. score), followed by India and Pakistan, and lowest for Ethiopia. If absolute differences in the country culture scores on all four dimensions are summed up, the cultural distance between Pakistan and the Philippines is greatest (97) and similar to the distance between Pakistan and India (92). The smallest difference is between India and the Philippines (42). More moderate differences are
found between Ethiopia and the other three countries, as well as between India and the Philippines (42). None of the differences between these four countries is as great as any of them are in comparison with the United States, and from this perspective, offers an interesting test of an American-developed leadership framework and instrument.

Many cross-cultural studies suggest that culture can influence leadership concepts, styles, and practices. As House, et al. (1999) suggest, “what is expected of leadership, what leaders may or not may do, and the status and influence bestowed upon them vary considerably as a result of the cultural forces in the countries or regions in which the leaders function.” How subordinates and coworkers are treated, deference to higher authority, risk-taking, and celebration and the like in one cultural context are likely to vary in another cultural setting. For example, it can be argued that transformational leadership emerges more easily and is more effective in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures (Jung, Bass, and Sosik, 1995). Or that a less negative attitude towards authoritarian leadership might be found in high power distance societies (Smith, Peterson, and Misumi, 1994; Den Hartog, et al., 1999). High uncertainty avoidance cultures, with their emphasis on rules and procedures, may place greater limitations on leadership actions than do low uncertainty avoidance cultures. In highly feminine cultures, where people strive to cooperate, maintain relationships, and express more compassion leaders might be expected to behave different than their counterparts in highly masculine cultures. Similarly it might be expected that credibility, as measured by the gap between what leaders say and do, would be most tolerated in high power distance cultures.
Because the countries studied differ in these cultural dimensions it is expected that the extent to which respondents would engage in a common set of leadership practices would differ among them. This is an obvious and important hypothesis. As the literature suggests, culture can be “sliced-and-diced” in many ways, subjected to considerable speculation and variation in terms of predicting differences between leaders in various countries (and cultures). However, in many ways this is no different than examining how leadership varies across followers (Wu, Tsui, and Kinicki, 2010), across organizations (Aime, Johnson, Ridge, and Hill, 2010), or even across jobs (Morgeson and Humphrey, 2008). The purpose of this study, however, was directed less at the differences between leaders across these four countries and more at what impact the same leadership behaviors would have within each country. Simply put, we proposed that the more managers engaged in certain leadership behaviors the greater would be their impact on their constituents, and that this relationship would not be significantly affected by the managers’ culture. Such findings would provide further evidence for proposing a universal (versus case-by-case, or country-by-country) process of leadership.

For example, contrary to expectations, few significant differences were found between the leadership practices of American, Nigerian, and Slovenian MBA students which implies that some leadership behaviors may be universally practiced (Zagorsek, Jaklic & Stough, 2004). Abu-Tineh, Khasaswneh, and Al-Omari (2008) reported that the Kouzes Posner leadership framework was being successfully applied by school principals in Jordan, as viewed by the teachers within their schools. This finding was further substantiated by Al-Khalaileh (2008) in another set of Jordanian schools (Zara Governorate); as well as in Thailand with both school principals (Oumthanom, 2001) and nurses (Chitonnom, 1999).
Wilberg (2003) investigated newspaper editors and administrators (managers) in Norway and Sweden. He found no significant differences between the two countries in their perceptions of leadership practices. Newspaper robustness (perceived competitiveness of the newspaper) was strongly related with leadership for both editors and managers. As part of his examination of how followers influenced the performance of their Indonesian leaders Satriago (2010) found that the perceptions of leadership practices did not significantly differ between the leaders and their constituents. Lock (2001), while investigating a pharmaceutical company based in the U.S., nonetheless examined how leadership directly influenced organizational culture. She found that leadership practices accounted for over 27 percent of the overall variance in the dependent variable of organizational culture.

Kouzes Posner Leadership Framework

The transformational leadership framework proposed by Kouzes and Posner (2007) was investigated. Their research began with case studies and systematic interviews with managers, across a wide variety of public and private sector organizations around the world, about “personal best” experiences as leaders, which were subsequently analyzed to categorize common themes or practices. The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership framework identifies leadership practices (each consisting of reasonably specific, concrete, and measurable behaviors) that leaders use to achieve extraordinary results, taking people and organizations to “places they have never been before.” These Five Practices are defined in the following way (Kouzes and Posner, 2007:26):

1. Model the Way: Clarify values by finding your voice and affirming shared ideals; and set the example by aligning actions with shared values.
2. Inspire a Shared Vision: Envision the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities; and enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.

3. Challenge the Process: Search for opportunities by seizing the initiative and by looking outward for innovative ways to improve; and experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from experience.

4. Enable Others to Act: Foster collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships; and strengthen others by increasing self-determination and developing competence.

5. Encourage the Heart: Recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence; and celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community.

After the development of The Five Practices conceptual framework Kouzes and Posner created the Leadership Practices Inventory (Posner and Kouzes, 1988, 1993). The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) was first used to validate the conceptual framework and secondly to provide a reliable measure to assist in the development of individuals’ abilities in using the five leadership practices. The LPI consists of 30 behaviorally-based statements; six separate items are used to form each one of the five leadership practices. Each statement is cast on a 10-point Likert scale scored from 1 (almost never) to 10 (almost always) representing the frequency which that behavior is engaged or used. Two parallel versions of the LPI (self and observers) allows for 360-degree assessment and feedback.

Psychometric evaluation of the LPI was first conducted across a variety of public and private sector organizations using 2,876 managers and their direct reports (Posner and Kouzes, 1988). Internal reliabilities of the five leadership practices (scales) ranged from .70 to .84 for the LPI-self and .79 to .91 for the LPI-observer. The average test-retest reliability was .94. A
principal components factor analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation was conducted to extract five factors accounting for 59.9 percent of the variance. The loadings of the five factors ranged from .37 to .73. The basic psychometric properties of the LPI have been supported over the years. A 1993 report, involving over 36,000 respondents, showed internal reliabilities for the LPI-self ranging from .70 to .85 and between .81 and .92 for the LPI-observer and factor analysis again revealed five factors that accounted for 60.2 percent of the variance (Posner and Kouzes, 1993). The most recent report on the LPI involving over 1.3 million respondents from around the world still shows results consistent with the first edition (Posner, 2010a).

Researchers have successfully used the LPI outside the United States and with non-U.S. populations. Some examples: In a study involving Australian bank managers, reliabilities on the LPI ranged from .70 to .89 (Carless, Wearing, and Mann, 1994); for a sample of therapeutic radiographers from Hong Kong reliabilities ranged between .82 and .93 (Man, 2000); using a Spanish-language version of the LPI with Mexican managers reliabilities ranged from .81 to .89 (Berumen); reliability scores were greater than .73 for the LPI-self and greater than .86 for LPI-observers with nurses in China (Chitonnom, 1999); and using a Turkish-language version of the LPI with teachers reliabilities ranged between .82 and .92 (Yavuz, 2010). McNeese-Smith et al. (2000) reported that internal reliability for a Chinese language version of the LPI used in their study with staff nurses was very good. Trend (2000:31-32), who translated the LPI into Mongolian for use in a study of the leadership practices of higher education leaders, concluded: “The response options on the LPI are fairly straightforward...and there are no statements that directly reflect American cultural values that could potentially confuse respondents from other nations.”
Some studies, however, with nurses in Taiwan (Chen and Baron, 2007) and MBA students in Pakistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkey (Zagorsek et al., 2006), have shown that some items on the LPI are redundant and contribute little to the overall precision of the instrument. Posner (2010b) has commented that the aims of leadership researchers and leadership trainers are sometimes at odds with one another when it comes to using the LPI, where researchers are often more interested in parsimony than are trainers who focus on redundancy as necessary repetition of important principles and on some of the nuances associated with the development of leadership skills.

The LPI has demonstrated a high degree of structural equivalence -- an instrument shows structural equivalence if it measures the same construct in different cultural groups. Previous research suggests that both the instructions and its items are easily understandable and easily translatable into different languages (Kouzes and Posner, 2002; McNeese-Smith, Yan, and Yan, 2000), and that "there are no statements that directly reflect American cultural values that could potential confuse respondents from other nations" (Trend, 2000, p. 93). Results of the multi group confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) performed by Zagorsek et al. (2006) showed that “the five factor structure emerged in all nations studied and that most of the items that were supposed to load on a particular factor did load on that factor. Out of 180 loadings (6 groups x 30 items, 175 loadings were significantly different from 0. Furthermore, most of the factor loadings (for 21 out of the 30 items) were equal (showing no statistically significant differences) across cultures studied” (p. 184).

Overall, the LPI has been effectively used for over two decades by leadership scholars and trainers, and the psychometric properties of the LPI are well documented. As Huber et al. (2000) conclude: “Several meta-reviews of leadership development have been conducted. The
Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) is consistently rated among the best, regardless of the criteria. For example, in one assessment of 18 different leadership instruments, the LPI was the only one to receive the top score in psychometric soundness and ease of use.” Leong (1995) reports that “there is good evidence to support the reliability and validity of the LPI [and]… the conceptual scheme on which the LPI is based is elegant and the test items on the LPI have excellent face validity as well as psychometric validity. Factor analysis and multiple regressions provide strong support for both the structural and concurrent validity of the LPI.”

To summarize, the first hypothesis was that leadership practices would vary by country. The second hypothesis was that leadership would impact how constituents felt about their workplace and their leaders. The third hypothesis was that the impact of leadership would not vary within country (as a surrogate for culture). The more that leaders engaged in the leadership practices the more impact they would have on their constituents, and the more effective they would be viewed by their constituents, and that these relationships would be consistent within each country studied. The final objective for this study was to examine how the psychometric properties of the LPI in this cross-cultural setting.

Methods

Sample

This study was sponsored by the Institute of International Education (IIE) West Coast Center, which supports the leadership development and engagement of reproductive health and population leaders in the poorest regions of Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines. Their overall goal is to build and sustain a “critical core network of well-trained emerging and established leaders with the vision, commitment, knowledge and skills to
improve reproductive health outcomes in each of the countries.” Over the course of nine months, as part of a regularly scheduled leadership development program, participants completed the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and were asked to complete a separate survey which included demographic and assessment information. Participants also asked three-to-eight of their constituents to complete an observer’s version of both surveys.

Participation in the study was voluntary and confidential. Data was collected online and accessible to the research team only. Feedback on the LPI was provided to the IIE staff who, in turn, shared this information at an individual level, as appropriate, to study participants in the various country settings. Neither the staff nor participants were privy to any analysis of assessment and demographic information. Nigeria was excluded from the study for various logistical reasons.

There were 207 leaders and 1,253 observers overall who participated in the study. The breakdown by country between leaders and observers was: 39 leaders (19%) and 138 observers (11%) for Ethiopia; 43 (21%) leaders and 263 observers (21%) for India; 60 leaders (29%) and 404 observers (36%) for Pakistan; and, 65 leaders (31%) and 448 observers (36%) for the Philippines. The ratio between leaders and observers was roughly equivalent within countries except for Ethiopia, where fewer observers participated overall. Approximately forty percent of the leaders were men and sixty percent were female, with the ratio between males and females more equal between observers (48% males and 52% females). Among the leaders, ten percent were between the ages of 25-30 years, 43 percent between 31-40 years, 31 percent between 41-50 years and 16 percent were 50 years and older. Finally, when asked about the total number of days they had participated in leadership development training activities, 61 (42%) indicated one week to one month. Twenty-one (15%) indicated less than a week, 37
(26%) selected more than one month but less than six months, and 25 (17%) responded that they had spent over six months in such activities.

**Measures**

The LPI consists of 30 statements describing various leadership behaviors. Respondents indicate the extent to which they engaged in the behavior described in each statement using a 10-point scale, with 1 indicating “almost never” and 10 indicating “almost always.” The observer’s version uses the same behavioral statements and asks about the extent to which they observe this person (who requested their feedback) to engage in this behavior, using the same 10-point scale as the self version. Five leadership practices are computed, each with six statements: Model the Way (MTW), Inspire a Shared Vision (ISV), Challenge the Process (CTP), Enable Others to Act (EOA), and Encourage the Heart (ETH). These are considered the “Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership” (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). The internal reliability analysis for the five leadership practices for this sample is shown in Table 2. Overall, Cronbach alpha scores are all above .83; for leaders the coefficients range between .69 and .83 and for observers the range is between .84 and .90; and coefficients above .60 are generally considered acceptable (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000). The breakdown by country is relatively consistent, and the larger sample sizes for observers generally accounts for the stronger scores. The strongest reliability scores are generally for Encouraging the Heart and Inspiring a Shared Vision, while the lowest reliability scores from leaders are on Modeling the Way and Enabling Others to Act.

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE
After completing the LPI Online, respondents were invited to complete another separate online survey. In this second survey, leaders were asked to answer a set of questions about their sense of engagement and feelings about their workplace, as well as to provide some demographic information. These nine statements, taken from Posner (2010a), were used to create a Positive Workplace Attitude (PWA) scale: I have a strong sense of team spirit with my work colleagues; I am proud of the work that I do; One year from now I would like to be working for the same organization; I would work even harder and for longer hours if the job demanded it; I am highly productive in my job; I am clear about what is expected of me in my work; I feel that my organization values my work; I am effective in meeting the demands of my job; and, I feel like I am making a difference in my organization. A five-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) was used and internal reliability for the scale was strong (Cronbach alpha = .88). Males and females did not significantly differ on this scale. Similarly responses did not vary systematically as a result of the number of days participants had been involved with leadership development training activities. Approximately 75 percent of the leaders who completed the LPI also completed the second survey.

For observers, the second survey asked them five questions about the effectiveness of their leader, using a five-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strong agree). These statements were created by the IIE staff and seen by them to be particularly relevant to the work of these leaders: Is effective in representing the mission of his/her organization; Builds a sense of excitement and enthusiasm among the people he/she works with; Fosters a sense of collaboration and trust in his/her working relationships; Motivates the people around him/her to work hard; and, Is willing to take on challenges. A Leader Effectiveness (LE) scale
was created by combining these responses and internal reliability for this scale was strong (Cronbach alpha = .92). Responses to the LE scale did not significantly vary as a function of respondent gender. Approximately 28 percent of the observers who completed the LPI also completed the second survey.

**Results**

A t-test analysis comparing the means of LPI scores between leaders and observers is shown in Table 3. Responses from leaders were higher than observers on all five leadership practices. On Modeling, Enabling, and Encouraging the responses of leaders were significantly different than those from observers, but not for the leadership practices of Inspiring and Challenging. By rank order, these five leadership practices, from most frequently (1) to least frequently engaged in (5), were the same. Constituents viewed their leaders’ leadership practices in the same order of frequency as did the leaders themselves.

**INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE**

Table 4 shows the analysis of leadership practices by country between leaders. Using ANOVA, leaders across countries were not statistically different on the leadership practices of Inspiring and Challenging and were different on the practices of Modeling, Enabling and Encouraging. Post hoc analyses revealed that most of these differences were between leaders in Ethiopia and the other three countries (on Modeling and Encouraging). The rank order of the five leadership practices was identical for leaders from India, Pakistan, and the Philippines.
ANOVA results of comparisons by country for observers are shown in Table 5. There are statistically significant differences on four leadership practices: Model, Inspire, Challenge and Enable. Post hoc analyses indicate that most of these differences are accounted by respondents in Ethiopia and the Philippines differing from their counterparts in India and Pakistan. The rank order for the leadership practices in India and Pakistan are the same, and quite similar with the rank order for respondents from the Philippines.

Table 6 shows t-test analyses comparing the means of LPI scores of leaders and observers within rather than across the four countries. Within Ethiopia, leaders and observers statistically differed on four leadership practices (Model, Inspire, Challenge and Encourage), with responses from leaders showing less frequency than those from their observers (which is opposite the pattern of leaders and observers within India and Pakistan). Within India, leaders and observers differed on all five leadership practices. Leaders reported more frequency in the leadership practices than that reported by their observers, but the rank order between the two groups was identical. Within Pakistan, leaders and observers statistically differed on four leadership practices (Model, Challenge, Enable and Encourage), with responses from leaders showing more frequency than those from their observers. The rank order of the five leadership practices for Pakistan respondents was the same for leaders and observers. Within the
Philippines there were no statistically significant differences between leaders and their observers; the rank order of the leadership practices for the two groups was the same.

INSERT TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

The analysis by respondent gender and age is shown in Table 7. Leaders did not report any statistically significant differences in the average frequency to which they engaged in the five leadership practices on the basis of gender. The rank order of the five practices was the same for males and females. In terms of age, there were no statistically significant differences on this dimension for any of the five leadership practices. The rank order for the leadership practices was the same for respondents in the 31-40 age and the 41-50 age categories. The rank order difference between the other two age categories was that the youngest group (25-30 years) had Challenge ranked third and Model ranked fifth while these two were reversed for the oldest age group (over 50 years). Enable and Encourage were the two leadership practices ranked most frequently engaged in by all four age categories.

INSERT TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE

Responses on the Positive Work Attitude (PWA) scale for leaders and the Leader Effectiveness (LE) scale for observers were all quite positive, resulting in a fairly skewed distribution. Consequently, the sample was split at the mean and a comparison was made between a low (N=59) and high group (N=74) on the PWA. Splitting the sample at the mean on the LE scale also created a low (N=125) and high (N=125) group for comparison purposes.
Table 8 shows the results of these comparisons between the means (t-tests) for the PWA scale and the LE scale. Scores on all five leadership practices were higher for those leaders who reported the most positive work attitudes, with three of these comparisons reaching statistical significance. Leaders in the high PWA category reported engaging more frequently in Model, Inspire and Challenge than did those in the low PWA category.

INSERT TABLE 8 ABOUT HERE

Comparing the views of observers about their leaders’ effectiveness and reports about how frequently their leaders engaged in these five leadership practices produced quite strong and consistent results (see Table 8). Observers in the high LE category reported that their leaders more frequently engaged in each of the five leadership practices significantly more than that reported by observers who viewed their leaders as less effective.

Discussion

Support for the hypotheses was found. Leadership practices did vary across the leaders from these four countries (hypothesis #1) and the frequency to which these leaders engaged in the five leadership practices had a generally significant positive impact on positive work attitudes and their perceived effectiveness (hypothesis #2). While the frequency to which leaders engaged in the five leadership practices varied (from both their own assessment and from that of their observers or constituents) across the four countries, the impact of their leadership was viewed similarly within each of the countries (hypothesis #3). For example, while a leader in Ethiopia might use a leadership practice less frequently than his or her
counterpart in India, the affect this has on outcomes like engagement or positive work attitudes (from a self-perspective) or on effectiveness (from an observer or constituent perspective) does not vary --- generally as leaders engage in the five leadership practices more frequently they report having more positive work attitudes and are seen as more effective by their constituents. While the explicit assumption is that culture as represented by national boundaries would effect how leaders behave, which the data indicates, the significance of this difference is minimized by the evidence showing that the impact of leadership behaviors is quite similar within each culture. This finding supports the viewpoint that there are a set of leadership behaviors, in this case represented by the Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders, which are both universal and culturally-specific (cf., Bass, 1997; Bass and Avolio, 1993; Peterson and Hunt, 1997).

Overall, the frequency which leaders (self) reported engaging in the five leadership practices was very similar with that reported by their constituents (observers). Most of the differences by country between leaders’ responses on the five leadership practices were between those in Ethiopia and the other three countries. The participant rate for Ethiopia was lower than that of the other countries and some of the differences may be attributed to the lower sample size. Similarly, most of the differences by country between constituent responses on the five leadership practices were from those in Ethiopia, and somewhat from the Philippines. However, despite any differences in frequency of behavior, the pattern of engagement in the five leadership practices, as represented by the rank order, revealed relatively few differences by country for the leadership practices between respondents (self or observers). Furthermore, neither gender nor age category systematically affected the frequency to which leaders reported using any of the five leadership practices.
Leads<br>hership made a difference, regardless of culture (country). The more that leaders (self) reported engaging in the five leadership practices generally (and specifically Model, Enable and Encourage) the more positive were their attitudes toward work and their workplace. While the actual frequency of leadership practices may vary across cultural settings, the impact of their use within settings remained consistent. Leadership also mattered for constituents. Constituents (observers) who reported their leaders as engaging most frequently in each of the five leadership practices also provided significantly more favorable assessments of their leaders’ effectiveness. While the actual frequency of leadership practices may vary across settings, the impact of their use within settings remained consistent. While the absolute frequency of behavior varied across the four countries, constituents within each country (culture) viewed their leaders as more effective as the frequency to which these leaders engaged in the Five Practices of Leadership increased.

These findings are conceptually equivalent to those that show differences attributed to “cultural” factors like functional area (why the frequency of leadership behaviors for engineering managers differ from finance managers), industry (why the frequency of leadership behaviors of health care professionals differ from business executives or school principals), organizational size (why the frequency of leadership behaviors for managers from small firms, as measured by number of employees, differs from those of very large-sized companies), and the like are not as significant in a practical sense as those which show how engaging in various leadership behaviors, regardless of setting, impacts important organizational and interpersonal outcomes. Posner (2010a), for example, reports that the contribution of ten demographic and organizational variables to explaining variance around
engagement, across the globe, is negligible and pales in comparison to the importance of how leaders are seen as behaving by their constituents.

In reference to this study it would be interesting to know more about why the leadership practices of Inspire a Shared Vision and Challenge the Process did not vary in terms of their usage by leaders across these four countries. For example, could this be because of the common nature of their work responsibilities (although, if true, this should have mitigated against the differences found in the other three leadership practices) or could it be because these two leadership practices are the least culturally-specific of the set of leadership practices? For example, MBA students from the United States, Nigeria and Slovenia also did not vary on these two leadership dimensions but did on the other three (Zagorsek, et al., 2004).

When considering limitations of this study, the most serious is the nature of participants studied, especially in terms of their representativeness of the population of the countries they represented. First, the samples are relatively small. Second, they involve people in the medical profession which is not the typical (or dominant) occupation or function within that country and outside the standard experience in terms of years of formal education. In addition, these respondents were participating in a leadership development program which probably biased, in a favorable direction, their leadership skills and, at least, their awareness. The mitigating response, however, is that at least the same considerations applied relatively equally to participants across the four countries. That is, these respondents were at least all “apples” even if they were all from regions more typified by “oranges.” If the sample populations were atypical, at least they were all atypical in the same way from one country to another.

Similarly it should be noted that all of the surveys were in English. While all of the respondents were bilingual, use English regularly in their work life and it is the common
language across the organization, it is still most people’s second language and it is possible that this contributed in some fashion to the findings. Some researchers have noted greater homogeneity (less variance) when bilinguals respond to surveys in their native language (e.g., Bennett, 1977; Bong and Cheung, 1984). It may be worthwhile to examine this factor in future studies.

Neither respondent gender nor age accounted for any differences in their leadership practices, and while a reasonable start in eliminating potential demographic influences, future studies should explore a wider dimension of intervening personal variables. Similarly, this study involved a narrow range of occupation (function, industry) and caution should be exercised in generalizing these findings to others occupations (functions, industries) within or across these four countries. In addition, results (not shown) revealed that the number of days leaders spent in training did not account for any differences in the behaviors of these leaders. This suggests that the leaders in any one country were not \textit{a priori} any different in their leadership abilities before being selected into their positions or had differentially benefited from immersion in the leadership development program (i.e., everyone was “benefiting” at the same rate).

The most obvious caution when it comes to interpreting these findings is that it is impossible to be certain about how respondents actually behave versus how they say they behave, even though the use of observations from their constituents in this study goes a long ways toward reducing that potential gap, and minimizing self-report bias; the fact remains. Continued studies should be undertaken involving participants from other countries to increase the generalizability of these findings.
Finally, the LPI showed good internal reliability and validity across and within these four countries. The psychometric properties of the instrument held up using a sample that differed from more traditional populations (i.e., corporate executives and students); and also in a more non-traditional setting (relatively poor economic communities involving health care workers). Scores on the LPI were relatively independent of such factors as respondent gender, age and amount of time spent in leadership development. These results speak to the robustness of the LPI for measuring leadership behavior and explaining the impact this has across, and within, a variety of settings, populations, and applications.

On a practical level these findings strengthen the argument that there are some universal principles, or better yet, processes of leadership that are relatively independent of culture, albeit not necessarily independent of context. Here’s how Caroline Wang (2010), formerly Vice President and the highest ranking Asian female executive for IBM globally with over 25 years of working experience in the United States and across Asia Pacific, and currently on the board of directors for three multinational companies in China sums it up: “When it comes to leadership it is not about the leader’s personality, it is all about how that individual behaves as a leader.” No matter where he is in the world, Rajeev Peshawaria (2011), CEO of the ICLIF Leadership and Governance Centre, based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia says that his “leadership style never changes.” Like Wang, he maintains: “The assumption that people are motivated differently around the world -- especially in Asia -- and that leaders must adapt their behavior accordingly is wrong. Having led and managed people in eight countries across three continents, I have found the exact opposite to be true. Regardless of geographic location or culture, what drives people to the highest level of engagement is innately human and universal. Thus, great leadership looks the same wherever you are.”
Culture is important and appreciating differences between how people “think” as a result of where they are in the world (e.g., power distance or individualism) is crucial for effective interpersonal and organizational relations. However, the unique aspects of national culture may not be so much different from understanding and appreciating the perspectives that vary between people based on such factors as age, functional background, industry, and the like. There may be a universal imperative to “treat people with respect” but how this is operationalized does vary much between dealing with five-year olds and fifty-year olds, or between those at entry versus senior levels in an organization’s hierarchy, or between those in health-care and law enforcement, or between those with little versus those with great wealth, or even between those living in Africa and those living in India, China, Europe, or Russia. There is definitely a need to understand, acknowledge, and be sensitive to these differences but the results of this study, and others like it, suggest that we shouldn’t lose sight of the forest through the trees. The more frequently that leaders engage in the five practices of exemplary leaders, whether in Ethiopia, India, Pakistan or the Philippines, the more effective they will be, even if the degree to which they are so engaged may vary from one country (environment) to another.
Table 1
Hofstede’s Country Culture Scores for Selected Countries and Differences between Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>PD</th>
<th>UA</th>
<th>IND</th>
<th>MAS</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States (US)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia (E)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India (I)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan (P)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

Internal Reliability of LPI for Leaders (Self) and Constituents (Observers) by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Inspire</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Enable</th>
<th>Encourage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone (N=1160)</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders (N=190)</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observers (N=970)</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Leaders (N=25)</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observers (N=105)</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Leaders (N=42)</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observers (N=199)</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Leaders (N=60)</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observers (N=338)</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Leaders (N=63)</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observers (N=328)</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Leadership Practices between Leaders and Observers

(Means, Standard Deviations, and Rank Order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Practice</th>
<th>Leader (N=190)</th>
<th>Observers (N=970)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model the Way</td>
<td>48.34 (6.30) (3)</td>
<td><strong>47.24</strong> (8.36)* (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspire a Shared Vision</td>
<td>46.03 (7.82) (5)</td>
<td>45.80 (9.13) (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge the Process</td>
<td>47.34 (6.54) (4)</td>
<td>46.29 (8.77) (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enable Others to Act</td>
<td>50.88 (5.72) (1)</td>
<td><strong>49.51</strong> (8.12)** (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the Heart</td>
<td>49.36 (7.32) (2)</td>
<td><strong>47.91</strong> (8.99)** (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05      ** p < .01
Table 4

Leadership Practices between Leaders by Country
(Means and Rank Order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Model**</th>
<th>Inspire</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Enable**</th>
<th>Encourage***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>44.40 (4)</td>
<td>45.04 (3)</td>
<td>45.20 (2)</td>
<td>49.88 (1)</td>
<td>43.72 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>49.74 (3)</td>
<td>44.71 (5)</td>
<td>47.52 (4)</td>
<td>51.90 (1)</td>
<td>51.55 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>48.90 (3)</td>
<td>45.48 (5)</td>
<td>47.75 (4)</td>
<td>52.25 (1)</td>
<td>50.72 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>48.44 (3)</td>
<td>47.81 (4)</td>
<td>47.68 (5)</td>
<td>49.30 (1)</td>
<td>48.84 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < .01  *** p < .001

MTW: Ethiopia differs from all three other groups (p < .01)
EOA: Philippines differs from Pakistan (p < .05)
ETH: Ethiopia differs from all three other groups (p < .001)
Table 5
Leadership Practices between Observers by Country
(Means and Rank Order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Model**</th>
<th>Inspire***</th>
<th>Challenge***</th>
<th>Enable***</th>
<th>Encourage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>48.26 (5)</td>
<td>49.69 (3)</td>
<td>48.90 (4)</td>
<td>51.73 (1)</td>
<td>49.73 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>46.06 (3)</td>
<td>43.67 (5)</td>
<td>44.26 (4)</td>
<td>48.22 (1)</td>
<td>47.23 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>46.70 (3)</td>
<td>44.54 (5)</td>
<td>45.86 (4)</td>
<td>48.84 (1)</td>
<td>47.50 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>48.16 (3)</td>
<td>47.15 (4)</td>
<td>47.13 (5)</td>
<td>50.27 (1)</td>
<td>48.15 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** $p < .01$  *** $p < .001$

MTW: Philippines differs from Pakistan ($p < .05$)
ISV: Philippines and Ethiopia differ from India and Pakistan ($p < .001$)
CTP: Philippines and Ethiopia differ from India ($p < .001$) and Philippines differs from Ethiopia ($p < .01$)
EOA: Philippines and Ethiopia differ from India ($p < .05$) and Ethiopia differs from Pakistan ($p < .01$)
Table 6
Leadership Practices between Leaders and Observers by Country
(Means and Rank Order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Inspire</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Enable</th>
<th>Encourage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>44.40 (4)</td>
<td>45.04 (3)</td>
<td>45.20 (2)</td>
<td>49.88 (1)</td>
<td>43.72 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observers</td>
<td>48.26 (5)</td>
<td>49.69 (3)</td>
<td>48.90 (4)</td>
<td>51.73 (1)</td>
<td>49.73 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>49.74 (3)</td>
<td>44.71 (5)</td>
<td>47.52 (4)</td>
<td>51.90 (1)</td>
<td>51.55 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observers</td>
<td>46.06 (3)</td>
<td>43.67 (5)</td>
<td>44.26 (4)</td>
<td>48.22 (1)</td>
<td>47.23 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>48.90 (3)</td>
<td>45.48 (5)</td>
<td>47.75 (4)</td>
<td>52.25 (1)</td>
<td>50.72 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observers</td>
<td>46.70 (3)</td>
<td>44.54 (5)</td>
<td>45.86 (4)</td>
<td>48.84 (1)</td>
<td>47.50 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Inspire</td>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>Enable</td>
<td>Encourage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>48.44 (3)</td>
<td>47.81 (4)</td>
<td>47.68 (5)</td>
<td>49.30 (1)</td>
<td>48.84 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observers</td>
<td>48.16 (3)</td>
<td>47.15 (4)</td>
<td>47.13 (5)</td>
<td>50.27 (1)</td>
<td>48.15 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05      ** p < .01      *** p < .001
Table 7

Leadership Practices by Gender and Age (Leader respondents only)

(Means and Rank Order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Inspire</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Enable</th>
<th>Encourage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>48.79 (3)</td>
<td>46.45 (5)</td>
<td>47.54 (4)</td>
<td>51.96 (1)</td>
<td>50.41 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>48.48 (3)</td>
<td>45.73 (5)</td>
<td>47.27 (4)</td>
<td>50.40 (1)</td>
<td>48.97 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Inspire</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Enable</th>
<th>Encourage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-30 years</td>
<td>46.92 (5)</td>
<td>47.23 (4)</td>
<td>48.54 (3)</td>
<td>53.92 (1)</td>
<td>49.46 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>48.59 (3)</td>
<td>44.68 (5)</td>
<td>47.39 (4)</td>
<td>50.92 (1)</td>
<td>49.22 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50 years</td>
<td>49.49 (3)</td>
<td>46.81 (5)</td>
<td>47.91 (4)</td>
<td>51.37 (1)</td>
<td>50.30 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50 years</td>
<td>48.18 (3)</td>
<td>46.41 (4)</td>
<td>45.73 (5)</td>
<td>49.77 (1)</td>
<td>48.45 (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: There were no statistically significant differences on any of the five leadership practices on the basis of gender or age.
Table 8

Leadership Practices by Low and High Groups on Positive Work Attitudes (PWA)
and Leadership Effectiveness (LE)

Positive Work Attitudes (Leader respondents only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model**</th>
<th>Inspire***</th>
<th>Challenge*</th>
<th>Enable</th>
<th>Encourage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (N=59)</td>
<td>47.17</td>
<td>43.73</td>
<td>46.17</td>
<td>50.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (N=74)</td>
<td>49.69</td>
<td>47.65</td>
<td>48.32</td>
<td>51.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leadership Effectiveness (Observer respondents only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model***</th>
<th>Inspire***</th>
<th>Challenge***</th>
<th>Enable***</th>
<th>Encourage***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (N=125)</td>
<td>45.19</td>
<td>43.29</td>
<td>43.68</td>
<td>48.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (N=125)</td>
<td>49.77</td>
<td>49.39</td>
<td>49.56</td>
<td>51.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** $p < .01$    *** $p < .001$
References


