



EFFECTS OF EMPLOYEE SHARED FACTORS ON THE PRACTICE OF MANAGEMENT IN THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the role employee shared factors play in the practice of Management in the gulf cooperation council countries. It adopted a descriptive research design. A pilot study of 25 Managers who had worked in several of these countries but currently working in the United Arab Emirates was conducted. Its sample was 150 individuals in different cities of the United Arab Emirates, working for different organizations. A semi structured questionnaire was used. Demographic profiles were analyzed using descriptive statistics. For further analysis of the data, meaning was inferred by ascertaining the relationships of the variables of the study through correlation and regression analysis. The findings affirmed that employee shared factors affect the practice of management. The study took 90 days to be completed.

Key words: Employee shared Factors, Attitudes, Values, Lifestyles, Technology, Material Customs, management practice, GCC Countries

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1. INTRODUCTION

There are several factors which make modern day organizations succeed. Among these factors we have customs, lifestyles, values, attitudes and technology. These may otherwise be referred to as employee shared factors. An overview of recent studies by Wang and Noe,(2010); McKinnon, Harrison, Chow, and Wu, (2003); Lee and Choi (2003); Jackson, Timothy, Meyer, John, Xiao-Hua (Frank) and Wang, (2013); Jauhari, Singh, and Manish, (2017); Hong, Sepasgozar, Ahmadian, & Akbarnezhad,(2016); Loi, Hang-Yue, & Foley,(2010); Stinglhamber, et al., (2015) among others, reveal that employee shared factors

are an indispensable part of an organization. They moderate behavior. When coupled with top management support they will lead into success.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Employee shared factors entails the sum total of all those factors within an organizations workplace that employees share and have some influence on the people who work there and how these affect people's behavior towards work. Mearns (2020) postulates that, unless these factors are understood appropriately, expected organizational performance may not be realized, which may be a consequence of poor managerial practices. Individuals managers at different levels of responsibility will share these. The specific shared factors in this context are those factors related to the behavior of individual employee. The study endeavors to ascertain how and to what extent these factors affect the practice of management. Limited research on these factors has been done and especially in the GCC countries. The paradoxical nature of human and employee shared factors has led to the questions of their relevance and importance. This study looks at specific effects these factors tend to have on the practice of management. The study seeks to establish that shared employee factors have a real effect on the practice of management.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Societal Culture plays a Key in the adoption of an organisations culture by an individual. Organisational culture is one of the critical ingredients for an organization's effective performance. Within the domains of organisational culture, there is employee shared factors. Employee shared factors are developed by the leadership of an organization for the adoption by the members of the organization. In some of the contemporary organizations, they may be developed inclusively. These shared factors between the members of the organization act as guidelines when acting on behalf of the organization and are representative of the expected behavior within the practice of management in an organization. Michael, Dirk, Martha, Daniel, & Diana (2019), opine that genuine engagement of the leadership as per the recommendation by Haslam, Reicher, & Platow (2010) is critical. This genuine engagement clarifies, reaffirms and models values and norms that define the organisation being led. Employee shared values are a force and a factor. As a force, it acts on an organization, changing it, shaping it and making it do new things. As a factor of operations, they constrain and change what happens within an organization .

The countries under study are the Gulf countries which are predominantly influenced by the Islamic culture. Nidhal (2008) affirms that, adherents of Islamic culture, take the holy Qur'an to be a very sacred book and also an Object, in both its text and as a package. This happens on a daily basis, and therefore the peoples' behavior and contact is moderated by the Qur'an. Cragg (1988) postulates that, the Quran occupies a predominant position in the establishment of beliefs, peoples' lifestyle, and general worldview of Muslims. He further, notes that Muslim adherents take it as "the foundational plan of and for all knowledge". He draws the essential conclusion, that the holy Qur'an expresses itself as guide for humans, a guide which is spiritual and temporal.

The GCC countries are among the most dynamic countries within the Arabian Peninsula and the middle east. Their economic growth has been unsurpassed over the last few decades. This largely not only being driven by visionary leadership and the oil Industry but also its emerging complementary industries. There has seen an emergence of a myriad many businesses within the emirates for instance. UAE is among the most developed and leading economies of west Asia. The economy is the scores as the largest in the Arab world after the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The emirate of Sharjah, where majority respondents came from is considered the third largest emirate and the cultural capital of the Arab world. The growth of Sharjah is attributed to many factors among which are, political stability, development of economic zones and diversification into tourism, among which we have cultural and eco-tourism, presence of a strong manufacturing base and abundance of medium and not large sized enterprises. The main sectors leading to the Sharjah's economic growth are real estate and allied businesses, the manufacturing sectors, mining, quarrying and energy sector. The services sector as a complementary to the above four is growing at an unprecedented phase.

3.1. Customs and the Practice of Management

A custom is generally a widely accepted way of conducting oneself, or a way a group of people behave. It is a tradition which is specific to a particular society, place, or time. It may or may not be related to the beliefs of the people. Ekkehart (1993) felt that, custom as a factor in organizational performance is very critical. Social and economic institutions build on it for effectiveness. This effectiveness is due to the social capital from the custom at play. The criticality of custom in an organization stems from the fact that it creates entitlements and preferences which shape behavior and hence decision making. Ekkehart (1993) further views custom from two perspectives; scope of application and level of context. These lead to the context of *haram* or *halal*. It is from this perspective that an employee shares with others in the organization. These others entail fellow workers and managers.

The term *Halal*, in the Arabic language means something that is permitted and allowed according to Islamic law. The principles given in the holy Quran extend beyond food and dietary requirements and underpins every form of human conduct for the believers of the Islam. This includes the beliefs, people's actions, people's diet, dressing, how they earning, their relationships, etc. These are the principles which determine how managers and business leaders make decisions when it comes to planning, organizing, coordinating, command and control.

3.2. Lifestyles and the Practice of Management

A lifestyle is the way a person lives. This in most cases is determined by the person's physical environment. Vahideh, Sakineh, Jamileh, & Mirghafourvand (2019) feel that a person's lifestyle is important because it influences the person's own perception of self and affects the quality of their interaction with the surrounding environment. Caiping, Gang, and Xu (2018) in their journal article cited Sweeny, Hughes, and Lynch (2018) and said that, in the pursuit and observation of a specific way of life may reflect a behavioral and a culture change leading to creating management or leaders self-images which may figuratively communicate their ideological positions. In most cases the individual manager will make decisions based on his or her life style, which may be deeply entrenched in the way they perceive their environment. As per Ryan and Deci (2000) in the *self determination theory* (SDT), a person's intrinsic motivation of lifestyle may be the main stimulant to their social and environment-related physical interaction which may satisfy the stakeholders and their expectations of work life balance. In organizations which are small, the process of decision making will always reflect the motivations of the person, as per Sampaio, Thomas, and Font (2012) and Hallak, Brown, and Lindsay (2012). Bigger organizations may have a lesser reflection of this.

3.3. Values and the Practice of Management

Values are standards of behavior; they entail a person's judgement of what is important in their lives. They determine and moderate the expected behavioral conduct in an organization. Values are important in an organization for they facilitate the formation of thoughts, scenarios

and actions. They assist in the advancement and development of the organization; Values are the corner stones of an organizations future that people want to experience. Malini (2020) while citing Bardi & Schwartz (2003) pressed the idea that values are more trait-like, though malleable factors which refers to what a person perceives to be among the most important aspects of life. Values may influence subsequent conscious or subconscious behaviors, decision-making, and maintenance of habits (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003). Values determine how, when and why a person carries out his or her tasks. Values are expressed through behavior. An individuals' conduct as they carry out their tasks would easily symbolize the values they stand for. Managers as employees are driven by values as they make decisions for the organisations.

3.4. Attitudes and the Practice of Management

An attitude is an individuals' frame of mind. It is a person's thinking or feeling. It is can be defined as a psycho-physical factor of a person expressed by the individual outwardly through behavior. This may be as a result of their perception. Attitudes greatly influence the functions of management; planning, organizing, coordinating, controlling and commanding. Attitudes may be positive or negative. Attitudes can be changed by high or low thought processes. In literature, Suresh, Cara, and Hart (2018) established that, the position and working norms take on workers' attitudes and their beliefs influencing their own capability and their capacity to do prescribed activities and certain tasks (i.e. self-efficacy). This however, has largely been ignored and at times assumed to be independently effective on the intentions to conduct managerial duties (Guo, Yuan, Archer, & Connelly (2011); Warkentin, Johnston, & Shropshire, (2011). The author is in agreement with other researchers like Ouchi in 1979 and Merchant and Van Der Stede in 2007. They postulated that, control systems of organizations are techniques that are meant to moderate behaviours of employees and attitudes. Attitudes which lead to conduct, though unmeasurable may contribute to the management output and attendant behavior outcomes.

3.5. Technology and the Practice of Management

Technology has been used by organisations since time immemorial. The advancement and utilization of technological innovation is what has been setting organisations apart from their competition. Goodhue and Thompson (1995), Petter, William and McLean (2013) posited that, the impact of technology utilization on an individual worker or managers' performance has been an ongoing concern in for several years. Business activities such as enterprise resource planning and business operations may not optimally be realized unless the appropriate technology is utilized. Technology helps improve the accuracy and efficiency of management practices. The dynamic nature and the environmental change rates have exposed technology as an important strategic factor for many organizations. Organizations respond to technology differently, some will react defensively, approaching technology as a challenge, while others through strategic use of technology gain strategic advantage.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research approach for the paper was descriptive, this was because the researcher could easily identify the subjects' data scoring characteristics and their frequencies, the trends thereof, and the correlations if in existence. This is in line with Aggrawal and Priya (2019) who argued that, it is necessary to have an idea of why something happens before you conduct research, then establish the 'how' of conducting the research, the 'when' and 'where' it happens.

The sample for the study was 150 managers who have had an experience of working in at least two GCC countries, from 150 companies in United Arab Emirates within the Emirate of Sharjah. The choice of the sample was through snowballing, since the researcher is new to the region. Johnson (2014) is of the opinion that this type of sampling is necessary, when fast confidential and reliable network exists. This was a factor for consideration since one of the researchers' assumption was that he was to get all the required information. The researcher assumed that the selected sample size being large or equal to thirty ($n \geq 30$), has a normal distribution.

A 5 point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect data. It was questionnaire was structured. The five points of the scale spanned where; 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the instrument for internal consistency.

The ideological formation of the study was employee shared factors and the practice of management. Employee shared values were the independent variables and included factors such as customs, lifestyles, attitudes, values and technology, while the dependent variable was management practice which was measured by the degree and extent of planning, organising, coordinating, controlling, and commanding by an individual manager. To ascertain the relationship of the variables, a conceptual model was put up, which further led to the development of the study's hypotheses. The null hypothesis for the study was; "*Employee shared factors do not have a significant effect the practice of management*".

This hypothesis led to the following analytical regression model.

$$Y \neq \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + e$$

Where; Y = Management Practice

β_0 = Constant

X1 = Customs

X2 = Lifestyles

X3 = Values

X4 = Attitudes

X5 = Technology

e = Standard Error

The model led to the development of the following conceptual framework.

Independent Variables (Shared Organizational factors) Dependent Variable (Management Practice)

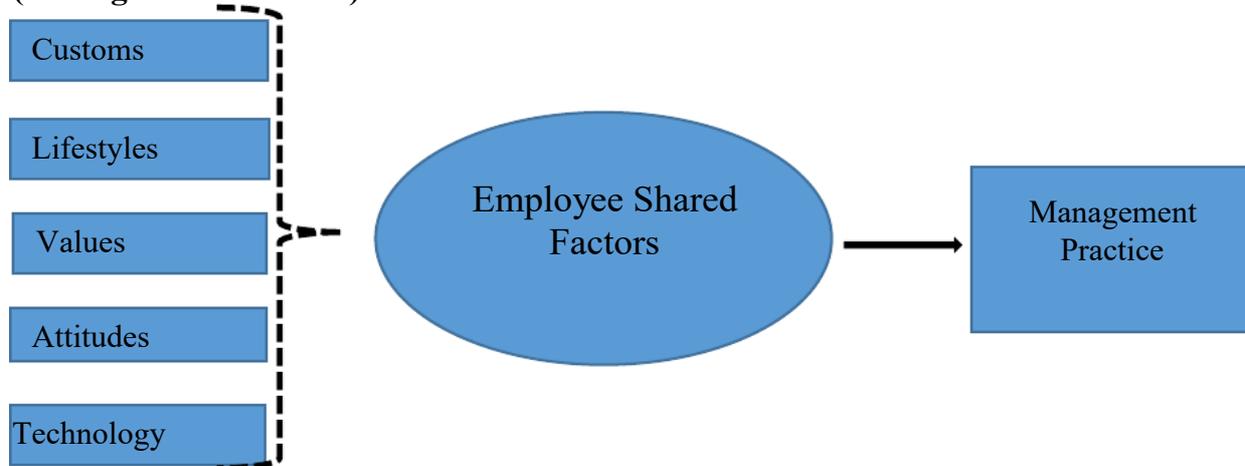


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of Employee Shared factors on the Practice of Management (Katuse, 2020)

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To test for internal consistency, the research instrument was subjected to the Cronbach's alpha, and the result was 0.847. This indicated a good reliability level of the questionnaire. The response rate of the sample was at ninety percent. The descriptive statistics of the study were as follow;

Table 1 Demographic Description of the study Sample

Demographic Information of the Study		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	58	43
	Female	77	57
Age	18-29	37	27
	30-39	61	45
	40-49	26	19
	50-59	11	8
	60<	0	0
Industry	Manufacturing	41	30
	Service	94	70
Position	Top Level	23	17
	Middle Level	47	35
	Operational level	65	48
Nationality	Emirati	79	59
	Non Emirati	56	41

Table 1 indicates that, majority respondents were Emiratis at 59 percent, were female (57%), aged between 30 and 39 (45%), in the operational level of management (48%), working in the services sector of the economy (70%). It should be noted that from the age of 49, the frequency drastically goes down and this corroborates with Rowson (2015), on her study on passage to Retirement for Expatriates in the UAE-A Psychological Perspective. She found out that the citizen of UAE, are supposed to retire at the age of 49 as per the labor laws of UAE, however for expatriates, the law succinctly refers to age 60 as the age of retirement (Warner & Moonesar (2019); UAE Government (2020).

With a finding that 57 percent of the respondents were women, the study corroborates with Rutledge, Shamsi, Bassioni, and Al Sheikh (2011). They studied on women, the labour market country's nationalization policies and also human resource development within the states of the Persian Gulf, which found out that women employees in gulf countries are increasing and in some sectors they tend to dominate. This is also in line with Metcalfe's (2007) findings, which revealed that there is an increasing importance to the employment of women in the gulf states. She further outlined the way different governments within the region have devised their country's development strategies in an Islamic context in order to support the advancement of women in the industry.

In order to identify the impact of the predictor variable (shared organizational factors) on the regressor variable (Management Practice), multiple regression was performed so as to accurately establish the factors which matter most, the factors which can be ignored, and how these factors influence each other. Since the dependent variable were five, the coefficient of determination was used to predict the future outcome of the dependent variable (management practice) and how it aligns to the combination of the five dependent variables. These findings are indicated in table 2.

The results on table 2 shows that the correlation is statistically significant since the *f statistic is 0.002* and is less than 0.05 ($0.002 < 0.05$) therefore the null hypothesis, "Shared

organisational factors do not have a significant effect the practice of management”, cannot be accepted. This also means that shared factors and management practice are significantly related in a positive way, which is a moderate ($r = 0.36$). The results are consistent with other studies (Stinglhamber, et al., (2015); Mearns (2020); Caiping, Gang, & Xu,(2018). This therefore brings about the question of to what extent do these factors affect the practice of management?

To answer this question, the model expressed as per the hypothesis was;
 $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + e$
 For the model to be fitted, table 2 below shows the outcome of the analysis.

Table 2 Regression Analysis

SUMMARY OUTPUT								
<i>Regression Statistics</i>								
Multiple R	0.36103618							
R Square	0.13034712							
Adjusted R Square	0.09663965							
Standard Error	0.47541021							
Observations	135							
ANOVA								
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	5	4.370008012	0.8740016	3.8670093	0.002680205			
Residual	129	29.15591791	0.2260149					
Total	134	33.52592593						
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	0.93427989	0.330591714	2.8260838	0.0054629	0.28019609	1.5883637	0.28019609	1.58836369
Plan	0.01631057	0.035379649	0.4610156	0.6455637	-0.05368893	0.0863101	-0.0536889	0.08631007
Organise	0.07723324	0.031799719	2.4287396	0.0165295	0.014316714	0.1401498	0.01431671	0.14014976
Control	-0.0750726	0.049263782	-1.5238903	0.1299839	-0.1725422	0.022397	-0.1725422	0.022397
Command	0.11914509	0.038604401	3.0863085	0.0024808	0.04276534	0.1955248	0.04276534	0.19552485
Coordinate	0.01672102	0.029097026	0.5746642	0.5665192	-0.04084816	0.0742902	-0.0408482	0.0742902

The analysis resulted in the non-acceptance of the null hypothesis and hence the alternative was accepted. This means that shared organizational factors indeed have a significant relationship with the practice of management. This leads to the fitting of the alternative model as follows;

$$Y = 0.9 + 0.016X + 0.077X - 0.075X + 0.119X + 0.0167X$$

The fitting of the model in this context therefore means that, when all the other independent variables are held at the same value, change in the practice of management is affected by an increment of 1.6 percent in planning, an increment of 7.7 percent in organizing, lessening of control by 7.5 percent, increasing command by 11 percent and an increment of coordination to 1.7 percent. The findings agree with Cromwell & Kolb (2004) that with increased command levels and organization, the practice of management is enhanced.

6. CONCLUSIONS

From the findings, the study would conclude that any change in the practice of management depends on several factors, however among the factors studied command seems to have the most effect at 11 percent.

7. RECOMMENDATION

There are several areas of recommendation where the author would make suggestion for further research. Future researchers may possibly investigate the link between employee output and predictor variables.

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