2021-05-15

Leadership Development in Saudi Arabia's Private Sector: A Mixed Methods Approach

Khaled Hanaky
University of San Diego

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN SAUDI ARABIA'S PRIVATE SECTOR: A MIXED
METHODS APPROACH

by

Khaled A. Hanaky

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2021

Dissertation Committee

Fred J. Galloway, PhD, Chair
Robert Donmoyer, PhD, Member
William H. Davidson, DBA, Member
Abdulmalik A. Alhusseini, PhD, Member

University of San Diego

University of San Diego
School of Leadership and Education Sciences

CANDIDATE'S NAME: Khaled A. Hanaky

TITLE OF DISSERTATION: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN SAUDI ARABIA'S PRIVATE SECTOR: A MIXED METHODS APPROACH

APPROVAL:

_____, Chair
Fred J. Galloway, PhD-

_____, Member
Robert Donmoyer, PhD -

_____, Member
William H. Davidson, DBA

_____, Member
Abdulmalik A. Alhusseini, PhD

DATE: April 2, 2021

ABSTRACT

There is currently a proliferation of business-focused leadership development programs in Saudi Arabia. These programs represent a reaction to the shortage of qualified leaders who can drive and sustain both recent and future advances introduced by Saudi Vision 2030, the national transformation program that is introducing social and economic reforms. Importantly, business leadership development has not been studied in this context of contemporary Saudi Arabia. This study examined the state of Saudi leadership development programs by employing an explanatory sequential case study design that focused on a particular leadership development program. Through the use of surveys and participant interviews, results revealed that most participants benefitted from the program and noticed growth in their leadership skills. Results also suggested that participants found small group activities and strategic management to be the most effective program features. Regression analysis results revealed significant positive correlations between participants' growth in their leadership skills and the relevance of program content to their background and work, as well as their engagement in program activities, while a significant negative correlation was found between participants' growth in leadership and their status as a parent. While qualitative interview findings confirmed the first two findings, they contradicted the parental finding, suggesting that more research is needed in this area. Interviews also pointed to some of the most valuable components of the program including the overall quality of training content and delivery, interactivity and practicality of the program, and participants' ability to learn soft skills and change their perspectives. Some areas of improvement were also discovered including enrollment criteria and the quality and comprehensiveness of program material such as readings.

The findings and recommendations from this study could benefit various stakeholders. For instance, organizations interested in these programs need to select people who are interested in learning and growing their skills. Organizations also need to consider supplementary initiatives within the workplace to expand leadership development from individual to collective levels. For trainers, practicality and interactivity are key features for successful programs. Finally, many soft skills taught in these programs could be included into school curriculum to ensure future workers are better prepared.

DEDICATION

To Gada, Abdullah, Jazi, Maha, and Mohammed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This chapter introduces the research study by first outlining the background to the study and the recent events that shaped the leadership development scene in Saudi Arabia. The second section describes the problem statement and justifies the need for this study. A final section highlights the purpose of the study and lists the research questions (RQs).

Background to the Study

Since the early 1970s, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) introduced development plans to diversify its economy and make it less oil dependent. A common objective in all these plans has been to achieve a sustainable national economy that is not impacted by fluctuations in global oil prices (Ministry of Economy and Planning, 2019). Ten development plans, each spanning a 5-year period, were issued; however, as recent as 2015, oil was still considered the main factor in the Saudi economy (Albassam, 2015). Nevertheless, current developments under the leadership of the King and the Crown Prince of modern Saudi Arabia may lead to success in the country's endeavor to diversify the economy and, in the process, decrease the country's reliance on oil as a source of income. In fact, a recent news article by Bloomberg articulated growth in the Saudi gross domestic product (GDP) in the year 2020 will be faster than in 2019, especially in the non-oil private sector (Nereim, 2020). If true, this growth can be attributed to recent initiatives that introduced major changes in the Saudi economy—especially in the private sector. This growth comes with many challenges including the shortage in capable business leaders. Subsequent sections will describe the recent initiatives in some detail but, first, a historical background is provided.

A New Era Begins

In January 2015, Saudi Arabia entered a new era with King Salman bin Abdulaziz becoming the seventh king of the third Saudi state, which was established by his father, King Abdulaziz ibn Saud, in 1932. King Salman had been known as a visionary leader throughout his early years as Governor of the capital city, Riyadh; he served in this role for more than 48 years. Also, in January 2015, the King appointed Prince Mohammed bin Salman (colloquially known as MbS) as Minister of Defense and Chairman of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs, two powerful positions that enabled MbS to take the lead on economic, social, and political fronts. In 2016, MbS announced Saudi Arabia's National Transformation Plan, known as Vision 2030, as a comprehensive roadmap with numerous social and economic reforms designed to uplift and modernize the country. Vision 2030 will be further explored in a following subsection since it is an important factor in making a case for the need for leadership development in Saudi Arabia today.

In June of 2017, the King appointed MbS, who was 32 years old at the time, as the Crown Prince, a position that made MbS the de facto ruler of the Kingdom. This elevation ultimately enabled MbS to spearhead prominent changes in the country including removing the ban on women's right to drive cars, allowing women into sport stadiums and arenas, opening the country to tourism, encouraging the proliferation of cultural/musical/sports events and festivals, and launching the famous anticorruption purge. These and other successful changes that sprung from Vision 2030 gave credibility to the kingdom's determination to implement a national transformation plan including a transformation of the country's economy, and other reforms and changes highlighted in Vision 2030. The following subsections highlight Vision 2030 and the

demographics of Saudi Arabia as two key factors for the need to study leadership development in the private sector.

Vision 2030

Saudi Arabia, a member of the G20 (group of twenty of the world's largest economies), is the world's largest oil exporter and derives 70% of the government revenue from oil (Nurunnabi, 2017). This highly oil-reliant model has been recognized as unsustainable; therefore, it needs to be changed to a more sustainable model to help the country evolve into the 21st century. This economic revolution was one of Vision 2030's pillars; the others are a vibrant society and an ambitious nation. Overall, the Vision 2030 goals that are linked to the Saudi private sector are numerous. Here are some examples:

- to increase the private sector's contribution from 40% to 65% of the GDP

- to raise the share of non-oil exports in non-oil GDP from 16% to 50%

- to rise from the current position of 25 to the top 10 countries on the Global Competitiveness Index

- to increase foreign direct investment from 3.8% to the international level of 5.7% of GDP

- to increase women's participation in the workforce from 22% to 30%

- to move from the current position as the 19th largest economy in the world into the top 15

- to lower the rate of unemployment from 11.6% to 7%

- to increase small & medium enterprises contribution to the GDP from 20% to 35% (Saudi Vision 2030, 2017).

These goals are projected to bring about tremendous growth in the private sector, although several challenges exist including job creation and change management. A critical

question remains: how likely is the Kingdom to execute its Vision 2030 plan, given the low levels of success generated by previous development plans? A review of documentation and media coverage pertaining to Vision 2030; however, reveals many unique features of the initiative in comparison to prior development plans.

The first noticeable feature is the rigorous and detailed methodology used in drawing up the plan. At the highest level, Vision 2030 started with the identification of the three main pillars mentioned in the previous paragraph to serve as the reform initiative's backbone: (a) a thriving economy, (b) a vibrant society, and (c) an ambitious nation. These pillars were used as the base on which themes, objectives, initiatives, and programs were drawn. In the final step, accountability measures were incorporated to ensure alignment with the plan.

Second, the reform initiative emphasizes open and clear communication with all stakeholders, including the public. The Vision 2030 message has been communicated by the highest authority (MbS) with very convincing details that were more data-driven and less rhetorical. This was so prominent a 2016 Gallup annual poll found a large shift in the percentage of Saudis who evaluated their lives as "thriving" from 35% to 48%. Gallup linked this "rare" significant shift in public opinion to the launch of Vision 2030 (Younis, 2016, p. 1).

Third, real change is already happening because of Vision 2030. To highlight a few examples: labor laws were updated to enable organizations to hire more women, a major factor in reducing unemployment rates; lifting of the ban on women's right to driving; and the launch of tourism and the introduction of electronic visas in 2019 led to a noticeable increase in visitors to the Kingdom. On the investment fronts, the initial public offering (IPO) of Aramco, one of the most significant goals of Vision2030, was executed in 2019 and was, then, the largest IPO in history ($29 billion). Finally, numerous mega projects were launched according to the Vision

2030 plan. Among the top projects are: NEOM City of industry, technology, and innovation ($500 billion investment), Qiddiay Entertainment City, and the Red Sea Project (Oxford Business Group, 2020).

The international response to Vision 2030, as found in media and publications coverage, has been a mix of skepticism and support, but more on the positive side. For example, James Smith, former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, called the Vision 2030 plan an investment in the future of Saudi youth who represent 60 % of the country's population. Smith added, "Fittingly, the architect of the plan is Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, 31" (Smith in Neil & Sprusansky, 2017, p. 1). Smith linked the plan to the Kingdom's extraordinarily successful 10-year investment in education, which led to quadrupling the number of Saudi universities and a scholarship system that sends around 200,000 Saudis to study abroad every year. "If the Saudis can capitalize on that investment in education," Smith said, "it's entirely possible that their economy will be an engine for the region in the future" (Smith in Neil & Sprusansky, 2017, p. 1). Similarly, Julie Monaco, a Citi Bank executive called Vision 2030 "entirely possible," linking its strength to the political support for implementation and the increased role of the Saudi private sector (Monaco in Neil & Sprusansky, 2017, p. 1).

This subsection's main topic has been Vision 2030 as a main factor in changes impacting the Saudi business environment. In addition to Vision 2030, the demographics of the country also contribute to the private sector's challenges and that topic is detailed in the following subsection.

Demographic Situation

According to the 2018 population census (General Authority for Statistics, 2018), there are more than 33 million people living in Saudi Arabia, of which 12 million are non-Saudis,

primarily in Saudi Arabia on temporary work visas. Looking at age-specific data of the remaining 20+ million nationals, there are more than 12 million people under the age of 30 (about 60% of nationals). This large percentage of young citizens is a result of many factors, including the economic prosperity of the 1970s and 1980s when wealth from huge oil production levels helped to establish urbanization in the country, and improved health care, education, and housing, among other aspects of life (Charles & Bechtold, 2014). Following a nomadic and seminomadic lifestyle prior to the 1970s, this rapid economic and urban development led to rapid population growth (Charles & Bechtold, 2014).

Of course, these younger citizens are expected to become employable in the next few years. Given the government's push toward privatization and reducing reliance on the public sector as the preferred employer, while encouraging the private sector to become more impactful in the economy, the influx of job seekers will pressure private organizations to create jobs and to prepare young workers to become leaders of the future. Another government policy that impacts Saudi business organizations has been the push for Saudization of jobs. The Ministry of Labor, as a regulator in charge of both controlling unemployment and issuing work visas for expatriate workers, has been imposing a strict policy to give priority to hiring locals before allowing a business to hire from outside the country (Peck, 2014).

In summary, the Saudi private sector is facing challenges on many fronts: it needs to grow, it needs to create more jobs, and it must rely primarily on local workers. The next section focuses more explicitly on needed changes in business and on the knowledge required to ensure that changes happen and are successful. The discussion of needed knowledge will be especially concerned with knowledge about how to develop private-sector leaders.

Problem Statement

The current business environment in Saudi Arabia meets the definition of the term "a VUCA World," a term that lately has been used by management writers to describe a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous environment (Horney et al., 2010). As will be demonstrated in Chapter 2, the literature has emphasized the role of effective leadership in making organizations survive and thrive in a VUCA World. For example, Bennett and Lemoine (2014) underlined how leaders can use scarce resources to improve their organizations' performance. Changes happening in the Saudi private sector are expected to bring about many challenges that require actions on many fronts including government regulations and policies, financing solutions, improvements in the logistics infrastructure, and—of particular importance for this study—more and better leaders and effective leadership development.

There is a dearth of research on leadership development in the Middle East, in general, and Saudi Arabia, in particular. A database search on Google Scholar and a review of the University of San Diego (USD) library catalog yielded very few results related to leadership development in private sector organizations in Saudi Arabia. In addition, considering the current changes taking place in the country, the context of business leadership is also changing; consequently, studies conducted prior to 2015 may not be applicable now.

A common theme in the few studies on leadership in Saudi Arabia was a shortage of leaders, especially in the private sector (Alexander, 2011; Almohaimeed, 2014). This shortage presumably can be linked to outcomes of the Saudi education system. To further examine this link, an analysis was conducted on the Ministry of Education's list of all majors offered across the higher education system in Saudi Arabia, which included 64 institutions (Ministry of Education, 2017). Out of 4,506 undergraduate and graduate programs offered by all institutions,

only three had the word leadership in the title of major. All three were called "educational leadership" and listed under three schools that combined enrolled less than 6% of the total higher education students in the country (Dar Al Hekma, 2020; General Authority for Statistics, 2016; Ministry of Education, 2017).

To further examine the education system, a review of websites of several university programs that award the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree in Saudi Arabia was conducted. The analysis revealed a lack of focus on leadership and other soft skills often associated with effective leadership (e.g., communication, people management, team effectiveness) and a strong emphasis on so-called hard skill courses (e.g., finance, accounting, economics, operations, marketing, information technology) in the MBA programs (Alfaisal University, 2020; KFUPM, 2020; KSU, 2020; PMBSC, 2020; PSU, 2020). Table 1 summarizes a comparison between some Saudi and American MBA programs in terms of the number of required leadership or other soft skills courses (Stanford, 2020; UCLA, 2020; USC, 2020). The analysis shows less emphasis on leadership in Saudi MBA programs when compared to similar American schools.

Table 1

Comparison of Proportion of Leadership and Soft Skills Courses in Saudi and American MBA Programs

University name	Number of required hard skills courses	Number of required leadership and other soft skills courses
Saudi MBA Programs		
King Fahad University for Petroleum and Minerals	14	2
Alfaisal University	9	1
Prince Sultan University	8	1
King Saud University	13	4
Prince Mohammad bin Salman College	14	1
American MBA Programs		
University of Southern California	17	3

Stanford University	12	7
University of California Los Angeles	6	5

In what seems to be an attempt to bridge this shortage in Saudi leaders, there is an obvious proliferation in government, semi-government, and for-profit organizations and programs solely focused on leadership development. Some examples include:

- The Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF)—a government entity established in 2000 whose mission is to develop the national workforce's competitiveness and started a leadership development academy in 2019 (*Human Resources Development Fund - HRDF*, n.d.).

- The Institute of Public Administration (IPA), established in 1961, started the Academy to develop administrative leaders in 2019 (IPA, n.d.).

- The Misk Academy, an initiative led by Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Foundation, was established in 2018 with a core purpose of developing the next generation of Saudis to become leaders, developers, engineers, and content creators (Misk Academy, n.d.).

- The Qimam Fellowship is a program founded by McKinsey & Company and sponsored by 30 Saudi and international companies. The program started in 2018 with an aim to identify, develop, and empower the most promising university student in and from Saudi Arabia. Participants receive leadership training and mentorship (Qimam, n.d.).

To date, the impact of these programs and initiatives have not been systematically assessed. Given the newness of these programs, there is obviously a need to study their contribution to the development of Saudi leaders and to extract lessons from these initiatives that can be useful for the private sector and, subsequently, the achievement of the national transformation goals.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe leadership development practices in Saudi Arabia's private sector to examine the current state of leadership development and identify the challenges associated with it and strategies to help improve the situation. As outlined in Chapter 3, the study focused on one specific program and considered it a case study that represents the broader activity of leadership development in KSA. Participant experiences in the selected program were studied to extract lessons learned therein, and to provide recommendations for stakeholders. Therefore, the study's RQs were:

- RQ1: How do participants in a select leadership development program feel about the different aspects of the program?

- RQ2: To what extent, if any, can variation in the experiences of participants in the selected leadership development program be explained by demographics, previous training, and organizational culture?

- RQ3: What experiences were the most powerful for participants in the selected leadership development program?

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of leadership dates to the earliest periods of human civilization. Most scholars agree leadership was among the main indicators of civilization since it signaled an understanding that authority needed to be centralized (Khajeh, 2018). From the perspective of realism theorists, centralization of authority is essential to promote order (Kempster & Carroll, 2016). Borrowing from this realist perspective, leadership is essential in a typical organization for promotion of order so organizations can accomplish their goals and objectives.

While leadership is an old concept, it has undergone numerous modifications to suit the various contexts in which centralization of authority is deemed essential (Mujani et al., 2012). In contemporary society, leadership is recognized as an important aspect, especially in the corporate context. According to Preston et al. (2017), leadership is the process of influencing other people to consolidate their mental and physical effort toward the attainment of a goal that would otherwise have not been achieved had it not been for the influence of the leader. Similarly, Coffey et al. (1994) looked at leadership as the ability of a leader to instill motivation and confidence in a group of followers to enhance achievement of organizational goals. Holding a slightly different view, Laub (2018) considered the idea of "influence" in the leadership context to be bi-directional. Specifically, Laub considered leadership to be the mutual influence between leaders and their followers, which enhances achievement of corporate goals. One weakness of Laub's definition is there are certain contexts in which influence in the leadership context does not have to be bi-directional. For instance, in a bureaucratic context, leaders have executive authority to make most critical decisions without involving the followers. Summarizing the conceptualizations of both Coffey et al. (1994) and Laub (2018), Reardon et al. (2019) defined leadership as the process where human conduct, behavior, thoughts, emotions, and other

personality aspects are associated with tasks people expected to address. From the definition

offered by Reardon et al., leadership can be the influence that leaders have on followers or the

mutual influence leaders and followers have on each other to achieve organizational goals.

Sarkar (2016) examined the significance of leadership in environments that are volatile,

uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA environments). Particularly, Sarkar found that

critical success factors for organizations operating in VUCA environments include: (a)

organization-wide agility when responding to external and internal environment dynamics; (b)

sound business values, ethical practices, innovation, and creativity; and (c) a strong collaborative

network of leaders and followers. Additionally, Sarkar argued that only meeting these critical

success factors does not guarantee organizations would successfully navigate through a VUCA

environment unless those factors are perfectly aligned with organizational leadership. In essence,

navigating through VUCA environments requires appropriate leadership and demands effective

leadership development programs. Similarly, Reardon et al. (2019) argued that successfully

navigating the inevitable dynamics in the external and internal business environments requires

implementation of leader and leadership development programs, especially during succession

planning situations to prepare incoming leaders who should take over from outgoing leaders.

Notable scholars in this domain, such as Day (2000), argued that existing frameworks of

leadership can explain leadership development. Additionally, Day and Halpin (2008) argued that

practitioners heavily relied on leadership theories for the creation of developmental

interventions. For instance, Mujani et al. (2012) reported that practitioners normally conduct

leadership training based on the situational leadership model. Specifically, situational leadership

necessitates the existence of different types of leadership styles such as autocracy or democracy

based on the different circumstances faced by a leader.

The work of Bass and Bass (2009) is prominent in leadership theory. In their theory, Bass and Bass identified three ways a person could become a leader: (a) as a result of having a trait, (b) as a result of a transformation process, and (c) as a result of a great event. As per the trait method, Bass and Bass argued people capable of holding leadership positions contain innate and inimitable attributes that distinguish them from non-leaders, such people have the capacity to automatically become leaders. However, based on the model developed by Zaccaro and Banks (2004), the possession of key attributes thought to contribute to leadership effectiveness does not guarantee a person will automatically become a leader. Nevertheless, the possession of key attributes traditionally associated with leadership such as effective communication and emotional intelligence is a driving force that provides a strong foundation upon which more profound leadership skills will be developed (Alexander, 2011).

Transformational leadership is slightly different from great event and trait theories in that it emphasizes the need for practitioners to impart leadership skills, knowledge, and competencies through a variety of approaches such as training and mentorship. Leadership through transformation suits the concepts of leader and leadership development as it explains how practitioners can transform people, regardless of whether they possess traits that are thought to be associated with leadership, into future leaders. Nevertheless, transformation should be quite effective in situations where the upcoming leader has underlying attributes associated with leadership.

Leader and Leadership Development

Leader development and leadership development, used interchangeably in most non-scholarly situations, refer to different things. As Almohaimeed (2014) argued, some scholars have previously used the phrase leadership development when they are referring to leader

development. Making a distinction between these two terms is essential for this study. Day (2011) suggested there are numerous theories and perspectives of leadership and leadership development. There is personal leader development, which is characterized by feedback, challenges, and a personal commitment to learn from experience (Day, 2011). Leadership development was also theorized to be a product of social identity, with individuals identifying closely with specific values and adopting expertise aligned with those values. Other theories of leadership development noted the importance of self-regulation in the management of learning to acquire leadership expertise (Day, 2011). Consequently, there were numerous leadership development theories identified.

According to notable scholars such as Feser et al. (2017), leader development is the enhancement of an individual's capacity to engage in effective leadership practice. Feser et al. refers to leader development as the process of training and mentoring leaders so that they develop skills and values that are typical of professional leaders such as creativity, responsibility, feedback, role delegation, interpersonal skills, and effective communication. As Alghamdi and Al-Hattami (2018) reiterated, the difference between leader development and leadership development manifests in terms of scope. Leader development is only a facet of leadership development, which covers a much broader scope as it involves the enhancement of a group's capacity to produce commitment, alignment, and sense of direction.

The distinction between the two terms can also be conceptualized by considering the specific enhancement activities involved in the development process. For instance, Almohaimeed (2014) indicated that leader development focused on enhancing individual knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies. On the contrary, leadership development, according to Feser et al. (2017), involved the construction of networked relationships among members of a group,

particularly a group of leaders, to enhance an organization's social capital. Day (2011) noted that strong leaders drew on their staffs and maximized existing relationships to drive the accomplishment of organizational goals. Additionally, Storey (2016) argued that the main assumption in leader development was that effective leadership resulted from enhancing individuals' values, skills, and competencies in an organization. Conversely, the main assumption behind leadership development is that effective leadership is a result of enhancing the social capital embedded in networked relationships among organizational members (Storey, 2016).

While a clear distinction has been established between leader and leadership development, little empirical research has been conducted on how the two concepts compare or contrast in terms of enhancing leadership effectiveness. Among the few empirical studies found, Kiersch and Peters (2017) reported a greater leadership effectiveness when more emphasis was given on leader than leadership development. Additionally, Kiersch and Peters found that leader development, involving the mentoring and training of young leaders as part of succession planning, was more effective in enhancing leadership effectiveness than leadership development. However, another significant gap in literature concerns the scarcity of empirical studies on the effectiveness of each of the two concepts on leadership effectiveness in private and public sector organizations. Examination of leader and leadership development in public and private sector organizations is important since organizations operating in these two sectors have different operational standards. For instance, organizations in the private sector emphasize financial performance hence leaders are expected to be aggressive in conducting their business transactions (Storey, 2016).

However, according to Kjellström et al. (2020), examining differences between leader and leadership development is irrelevant since both concepts can be implemented concurrently in a perfectly functioning organization. Kjellström et al. reiterated that organizational prosperity in terms of financial health, internal efficiency, client satisfaction, and employee satisfaction requires both leader and leadership development. Therefore, organizations that wish to prosper must develop both leadership skills in individual upcoming leaders and interpersonal skills to enhance interactions among the emerging leaders.

Importance of Leadership Development

According to Saeed et al. (2014), leadership is crucial in managing conflicts that arise in an organization. It also has the power to influence the outcome of these conflicts. Therefore, organizations must ensure that they have the best leadership style in place. Strong and effective leadership plays a central role to both personal and organizational success (Saeed et al., 2014). Creating leadership development opportunities increase morale and motivation among the workers. Leadership training increases productivity. It helps improve the skills, experience and knowledge of workers thus raising their performances (Saeed et al., 2014). Leadership training that incorporates emotional intelligence equips individuals with emotional skills making them better managers and leaders. The programs also help organizations to retain their high performing employees. When managers are ineffective, they may force high skilled employees to leave as they feel less appreciated (Saeed et al., 2014). By investing in quality training programs, companies can retain their workers and avoid the costs that come with recruiting new workers.

Ardichvili et al. (2016) also argued that leadership development helps nurture future leaders. Quality leadership combines both the right training and the right qualities. It is up to the management to identify the employees with the right qualities and provide them with targeted

leadership training (Ardichvili et al., 2016). By nurturing future leaders, the succession process from one management team to another becomes easier. It is also an opportunity to offer career path to workers thus increasing the retention rates. Leadership development increases the engagement of employees in the decision-making process. Constructive feedback at least once a week increases their satisfaction and make workers more likely to take part in important issues in the organization (Haslam et al., 2017). Giving feedback is an indication of a successful and effective leader. Through training programs, experts teach learners how to effectively give feedback to workers while motivating them to improve on their skills. With high quality leadership development, employees improve their decision-making process. Leaders who have a high level of emotional intelligence have better chances of making intelligent and informed decisions (Haslam et al., 2017). Business organizations should invest in leadership development training to ensure they achieve better results both in the organization and in the market.

Leadership Skills and Leadership Traits

Leadership skills as stated by Beauchamp (2007) are techniques that workers apply toward achieving business goals. They are vital components used in positioning key members in an organization who have the responsibility of making better decisions for achieving business objectives. Some of the leadership skills include: (a) patience, (b) empathy, (c) flexibility, (d) creativity, (e) positivity, (f) effective communication, and (g) reliability, among many others (Mendoza et al., 2016). Leadership skills are essential as they enable leaders build strong teams and ensure that business projects are successful. Leaders are more effective when they make decisions faster regarding the available information. With time and experience, leaders develop into informed effective decision makers (Mendoza et al., 2016). Leadership traits on the other hand are the abilities of an individual to apply the skills and knowledge acquired in achieving

business goals. It is the willingness of a person to engage with others in working together toward a common goal. Leadership traits can be transferred from one industry to another (Haslam et al., 2017). Emotional intelligence and resourcefulness are some of the leadership traits which enable leaders help their team members to achieve both personal and business goals and complete their initiatives.

Leadership development and behavior may be influenced by family role identification. It is thought that nonwork roles and family dynamics, such as being a parent, can influence employees' behavior at work through a process known as positive interrole spillover (Chen & Powell, 2012; Hanson et al., 2006). In this process, skills and knowledge that are acquired from serving in a certain nonwork role are transferred into the workplace and enhance a worker's performance and behavior (Lu et al., 2011). For instance, Dumas and Stanko (2017) found that working professionals and executives who were married and had children reported higher levels of family role identification and that this was associated with increased transformational leadership behavior. Participants also reported that skills they commonly used in family roles, such as interpersonal skills, help enhanced their performance at work (Dumas & Stanko, 2017). Family roles can affect three workplace domains that are relevant to leadership and managerial positions – psychological, social support, and learning opportunities (Ruderman et al., 2002). For instance, raising a child may increase a person's confidence and feeling that they can accomplish anything. This confidence may then translate into increased confidence at work and have a positive effect on the employee's performance (Bindah, 2017). Parenting style and leadership style may also be related. For example, parents who employ an authoritative parenting style that emphasizes positive reinforcement and consensus may be more likely to display transformational leadership styles at work (Jex & Britt, 2014; Morton et al., 2011).

Culture of Saudi Arabia

Leadership can be a highly social concept that is subjected to cultural complexities (Gruda & Kafetsios, 2020). Therefore, it is important that leadership development programs are designed with cultural nuances in mind. The Saudi Arabian cultural setting is significantly influenced by Islamic religion and Arabic culture. The Saudi society is characterized by conservatism and family orientation. Conservatism implies that priority is given to Arabian customs and traditions even during the modern era of globalization. Even though Western civilization has successfully spread to Saudi Arabia, Saudi people still hold dearly to their Arabic culture and Islamic civilization (Dakhil, 1988).

While it is obvious that Saudi culture is founded on the tenets of Islamic religion and Arabic traditions, using a structured approach to deconstruct the culture is important. The most used model to deconstruct culture is Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, which originally consisted of five cultural dimensions – power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and long/short term orientation (Obeidat et al., 2012). A sixth dimension, indulgence/restraint, was later added in 2010 to describe the degree of freedom to which cultural norms enable people to fulfill their desires (Geert Hofstede, 2011). The main reason Hofstede's model is widely used to assess national culture is that it provides different lenses through which a nation's culture can be viewed and compared to other national cultures. The six dimensions can also be used to explain how national culture affects organizational performance and can facilitate a cross-cultural comparison of organizational performance (Obeidat et al., 2012). A brief explanation of the cultural dimensions as applicable to Saudi Arabia follows.

Power distance is the degree of influence that a subordinate perceives to be having in his or her relationship with a superior. Within the context of Saudi Arabia, various scholars have

reported a huge power distance in both private sector and public sector organizations. The large power distance can be explained in terms of the underlying espoused Islamic traditions such as the need to respect religious leaders and God (Obeidat et al., 2012). Therefore, subordinates acknowledge that they are not in any way equal to any symbol of authority. The large power distance in Saudi Arabia has far-reaching implications on leadership. Particularly, leaders are expected to act authoritatively if they operate in ethical bounds (Shin, 2012). Nevertheless, studies reporting a huge power distance in Saudi Arabia fail to correspond with study findings that indicate a high prevalence of nonbureaucratic leadership styles such as participatory and transactional models (Alghamdi & Al-Hattami, 2018).

Uncertainty avoidance is another important cultural dimension that refers to the degree to which members of a particular culture feel threatened by unknown outcomes. According to Obeidat et al. (2012), members who have a higher uncertainty avoidance attitude tend to depend more on the government to intervene in most situations. On the contrary, cultures in which members have a lower uncertainty avoidance index tend to encourage independence rather than overdependence on the government. While Hofstede did not analyze Saudi Arabia's culture independently, it is important to note that Arab countries scored low in the uncertainty avoidance dimension of his model. Khazma et al. (2016) provided a justification for this low score, arguing that the Islamic faith has been an important factor that contributes to the low uncertainty avoidance tendency since members always believe that God is the ultimate decision-maker who guides them through all uncertain situations. From the leadership perspective, relatively lower uncertainty avoidance implies that leaders need to exhibit courage and innovativeness to facilitate the achievement of national goals outlined in the Vision 2030 plan.

Individualism vs. Collectivism is a concept that denotes the extent to which an individual prioritizes their self-interests over the concerns of the community. In a study conducted by Turner et al. (2017), Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, had scores of less than 40% in terms of individualism. The scores indicated that Arabic culture is characterized by high collectivism. The Islamic religious foundation is the core factor that encourages prioritization of group concerns over personal interests (Turner et al., 2017). Islamic culture also encourages members to always be one another's "brother's keeper," implying that members should not engage in any activities that might cause harm to other people. A high level of collectivism, as Obeidat et al. (2012) reiterated, implies that leaders do not have an easy time consolidating people with much lesser resistance than in Western countries such as the United Kingdom, where an individual can prioritize personal goals without considering the long-term impacts of their activities on the general society (Khazma et al., 2016). Indeed, of the main challenges in Arab organizations is that workers are more loyal to individuals than they are to the organization itself, leading to a noncohesive and less-elaborate work structure (Obeidat et al., 2012).

Additionally, a highly collectivist culture encourages healthier interpersonal relations between leaders and followers hence hastening the achievement of organizational goals. In a recent publication, Turner et al. (2017) argued that leaders in countries with high collectivism and low individualism are more ethical than those in countries with relatively higher levels of individualism. In essence, individualism may encourage leaders to just think about themselves rather than the society in which they exist and the followers who facilitate the leadership process (Turner et al., 2017). Therefore, the high degree of collectivism in Saudi Arabia, coupled with strict Islamic traditions that discourage selfishness, indicate that Saudi leaders are more likely to be ethical in their dealings (Khazma et al., 2016). Nevertheless, no empirical investigation has

ever been conducted to explore how ethicalness compares between highly collectivist cultures and highly individualistic cultures.

Masculinity/femininity is the fourth dimension of Hofstede's cultural model. This dimension refers to the characteristics of the culture itself and how values traditionally associated with each gender are distributed (Hofstede, 2011). For example, masculine cultures emphasize ambition, prioritize work over family, and place high value on outputs and assertiveness (Hofstede, 2011; Obeidat et al., 2012). Research has demonstrated that Arab countries tend to score moderately in this dimension and display both masculine and feminine characteristics (Obeidat et al., 2012). For instance, Arab culture places high value on establishing friendly relations with others and prioritizing family (Bjerke & Al-Meer, 1993). The high value that is placed on interpersonal relationships has significant implications on retention practices in Saudi Arabia, as it means that individuals are rarely fired for poor performance (Idris, 2007).

Long-term vs. short-term orientation, the fifth dimension of Hofstede's cultural model, refers to how forward looking a country is (Hofstede, 2011). It was originally not a part of Hofstede's cultural model and was added after research conducted by Chinese scholars found evidence of a dimension strongly related to economic growth (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). Cultures that are more future focused tend to experience higher economic growth and development (Hofstede, 2011). Translated into an organizational context, this means that organizations in cultures with a long-term orientation are more open to change and in-depth investment (Waarts & Van Everdingen, 2005). Several studies have ranked Saudi Arabia as moderately long-term oriented (G. Hofstede et al., 2010), suggesting that Saudi culture emphasizes planning to reduce uncertainty and that it places heavy emphasis on the past (Kalliny & Gentry, 2007).

Indulgence/restraint is the last and newest dimension in Hofstede's cultural model. It is weakly correlated with the long-term/short-term orientation dimension and reflects the degree to which cultural norms permit individuals to achieve their desires (Hofstede, 2011). Indulgent societies allow for free gratification while societies with high levels of restraint regulate the gratification of need. Since this is the newest concept in Hofstede's model, less research has been done on this dimension in the Saudi Arabian context. An application of Hofstede's six-dimensional cultural model to Saudi Arabia reveals that the country has a score of 52 in this category, suggesting that there is no strong preference for indulgence or restraint in the country (*Saudi Arabia - Hofstede Insights*, n.d.).

As can be seen, Arab culture possesses many unique characteristics that influence organizational culture and management practice. In fact, Weir (2001) suggested Arab culture represents a fourth paradigm of management practice in addition to traditional American, European, and Japanese cultural paradigms. As previously mentioned, Islam plays a significant role in dictating the behavior of most citizens of Arab countries, although it is not the only contributing factor (Obeidat et al., 2012). However, it does contribute to the ranking of Arab countries as having a big power distance, strong uncertainty avoidance, high collectivism, and balanced levels of masculinity/femininity (Obeidat et al., 2012). Due to the uniqueness of Saudi culture, it is important that leadership development is delivered in a culturally aware fashion since the frameworks through which leadership is implemented may be highly dependent on geographical and cultural context (Du et al., 2013; Voegtlin et al., 2012).

Leadership Development in Saudi Arabia

A common theme among many studies reviewed on leadership in Saudi Arabia was the shortage of leaders, particularly in the private sector (Alexander, 2011). A lack of training

courses, including leadership training, has also been identified as a shortcoming in Arab management due to a high centralization of authority and perspectives that training is a cost rather than an investment (Al-Rasheed, 2001; Obeidat et al., 2012). Another crucial theme was the absence of scholarly material sufficiently illustrating the effectiveness of Western Leadership theories in the context of Saudi Arabia (Alzoman, 2012). In what seems to be an attempt to bridge this shortage in Saudi leaders, there is an obvious proliferation in government, semi-government, and for-profit organizations and programs that are solely focused on leadership development. Specific examples of such programs include the Human Resource Development Fund (HRDF), the Institute of Public Administration, and the Misk Academy.

The HRDF is an agency of the Saudi Arabian government, established in 2000 by a royal decree, charged with the responsibility of providing financial support to private-sector organizations that provide training to Saudi citizens. The primary purpose of establishing this agency was to encourage private-sector organizations to absorb Saudi Arabian citizens hence reduce unemployment in the country. As Alghamdi and Al-Hattami (2018) reported, the HRFD pays approximately half of the salaries to employees working in the private sector for their first year of employment. The implication is that the private sector is encouraged to absorb more Saudi workers.

The Institute of Public Administration has also been cited by several scholars as an important establishment aimed at promoting leadership development in the country (Alhamoudi, 2017; Banafea & Ibnrubbian, 2018). The IPA was established in 1961and has continued to provide training to numerous Saudi citizens. According to Alhamoudi (2017), the IPA has lived to fulfill its purpose of enhancing leader and leadership development in the country, although the

IPA was particularly suited to enhance leadership development in the public, rather the private, sector.

The Misk Academy is another initiative pioneered by the Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Foundation for developing the next generation of Saudis to become leaders, developers, engineers, and content creators. The program was instituted in 2018, and therefore has not accumulated adequate historical data to warrant an empirical investigation into its effectiveness. Nevertheless, the newness of the program and the subsequent deficiency of empirical data for evaluation of effectiveness has not stopped scholars from speculating on its expected effectiveness. According to Yamada (2018), the Misk Academy will significantly contribute toward the growth of the Saudi economy. Additionally, arguing from the current leader-shortage perspective, Yamada illustrated that the Misk Academy would accelerate economic growth in the public sector by providing leadership talent to the country's labor market. Nevertheless, the scholars have not examined the specific effects of the Misk Academy program on Saudi Arabia's private sector.

One of the processes that form the core of the programs discussed above is the concept of leadership training. Based on the programs put in place to enhance leadership development, it is quite evident that the government of Saudi Arabia has invested its resources in leadership training. Even though there is a scarcity of empirical studies on the effectiveness of the program, there are quite a few studies that examine the efficacy of leadership training programs, hence can be used to deduce the indirect effectiveness of the programs put in place to promote leadership development. For instance, Alghamdi and Al-Hattami (2018) surveyed 36 female students taking a leadership training course in a certain institution in Saudi Arabia with the intention of finding out their perception toward the training. In their findings, Alghamdi and Al-Hattami reported that

the training program significantly enhanced the students' perception of leadership skill. The implication of this study is that provision of leadership training to students pursuing undergraduate or post-graduate courses enhances their ability to develop and apply effective leadership skills such as time management, interpersonal communication, and innovativeness. However, Alghamdi and Al-Hattami did not conduct any comparison of leadership perception across demographic aspects such as age and gender as their sample consisted of females of all ages. There is also scarcity of literature that adequately explores the differences and similarities in the effectiveness of leadership training across demographics factors such as gender and age. Additionally, the study by Alghamdi and Al-Hattami consisted of a small sample of just 36 participants. This sample is considered relatively smaller because of the quantitative research design adopted; the sample size would have been adequate for a qualitative rather than quantitative research. Nevertheless, the researchers appealed for future parallel studies to consider selecting relatively larger sample sizes for more relevant results (Alghamdi & Al-Hattami, 2018).

Training as an important concept in leadership development in Saudi Arabia has also been explored by Alghamdi and Al-Hattami (2018). In their research, Alghamdi and Al-Hattami found that Saudi Arabia has a shortage of nurse leaders and the only way to increase them is through on-duty training. Particularly, Alghamdi and Al-Hattami emphasized the need for both private and public organizations in Saudi Arabia to offer transformational leadership training. However, literature on leadership development in Saudi Arabia tends to focus more on leadership training yet there are more approaches of enhancing leadership success. For instance, Gorondutse et al. (2018) argued, although outside the context of Saudi Arabia, that only training does not guarantee the creation of leadership personnel capable of providing sound

organizational leadership. Training only equips the leaders with technical leadership skills such as time management but does not equip them with soft skills such interpersonal communication and empathy (Gorondutse et al., 2018). Mentoring and motivating complements training effectiveness by allowing the leaders to acquire the skills that could not be imparted on them directly through teaching.

In their study, Charles and Bechtold (2014) indicated the prevalence of a power-driven leadership style and a desire for Saudi organizational leaders to adopt culturally sensitive leadership and organizational development approaches that serve to enable, develop, and empower employees. Charles and Bechtold reported several themes that necessitated the adoption of developmental leadership approaches among Saudi Arabian leaders; Islamic principles, the need for the government to support business, relationships among leaders and followers, and leader-follower roles. Hodges (2017) also conducted research with the purpose of examining Saudi women's perceptions of leadership. In their findings, Hodges revealed that Saudi women's perceptions of leadership are significantly affected by the women's personal factors and relationships with other people in the workplace. The findings by Hodges are consistent with the notion that women value relationships to a greater extent than men. The most important insights Hodges drew from his findings is that women's tendency to value relationships more than men creates a difficult environment for them to ascend to powerful positions.

Ways of Improving Leadership Capacity in Saudi Arabia

Nahavandi and Krishnan (2017) suggest several measures that organizations can adopt to improve their leadership style. It is important for them to understand leadership as a collaboration of different stakeholders rather than receiving instructions from a single person. It

is not all about exerting positional authority but engaging each other to come up with the best possible solution. Another recommendation is to develop teams in organizations which have the capability to produce high performance regardless of the external and internal conditions. Such teams need to have individuals with high decision-making and problem-solving skills because quick—and correct—decisions are vital in improving quality of performances (Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017).

Leadership training programs are one way to enhance an organization's leadership capacity. In Saudi Arabia, formal leadership training opportunities are a growing minority and have been recognized as the most defining aspect of professionals' careers in the education and business sectors (Alfrayan, 2014). Sywelem and Witte (2013) found that updating knowledge, receiving training for changing roles, and improving job satisfaction should be a central facet of professional leadership development programs. Many leadership programs have been implemented in the education industry. Graduate medical students enrolled in a leadership training workshop at King Saud University reported that the democratic and flexible nature of the program, and its emphasis on creating a community of practice were their favorite parts of the program (Elzubeir, 2011). Alogali (2018) also found that participants who completed the Saudi Oxford Program for Educational Leaders (SOPEL), a 2-week leadership intensive training program for educators, came away from the training with a better sense of their individual leadership style, increased network connections, and exposure to good leadership practices. Participants were also inspired to apply what they learned in the training to their own work (Alogali, 2018). Since the SOPEL program took place in England, participants also acknowledged that the training was delivered in a culturally appropriate manner and that cultural boundaries were not crossed (Alogali, 2018). However, several participants expressed frustration

with language barriers and that they were not able to adequately communicate their thoughts and ideas in English, the language the program was delivered in (Alogali, 2018). This observation emphasizes the importance of making sure that leadership development programs targeted toward Saudi participants are either delivered in Arabic or accompanied by high-quality translations. Participants in SOPEL also reported that the selection criteria for the program did not emphasize a person's expertise and skills as much as they should have, and that the program's overall efficiency was reduced as participants did not all possess the same skill level (Alogali, 2018). Therefore, leadership training programs need to ensure that participants are selected based on explicit and carefully reviewed selection criteria.

Western Models of Leadership in Non-Western Cultures

In the existing literature, some scholars hold that leadership is a universal concept and qualities that are desirable in leaders are the same everywhere (Bendell et al., 2016; Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017). The implication of this stance is that there exists no difference between Western and non-Western cultures in terms of leadership and leader-follower interaction. Furthermore, Du et al. (2013) contended that numerous similarities exist between Western and non-Western models of leadership. However, these similarities are not common across all models of leadership (Du et al., 2013). As Voegtlin et al. (2012) contended, models such as charismatic and transformational leadership do not have any geographical limits. According to Voegtlin et al., while the conceptualization of Western and non-Western leadership styles might be similar, the actual models that are implemented significantly differ across cultures and geographical regions. The implication of this argument is that cultural and geographical diversity necessitates that leaders adopt leadership styles and models that synchronize with their specific leadership settings.

Autocratic leadership is one of the most common Western leadership models that are also evident in the non-Western world (Dirani et al., 2017). Particularly, autocratic leadership is characterized by the top-down chain of command where organizational direction is communicated from the top leadership level. Dirani et al. (2017) reported that autocratic leadership was more common in Saudi private sector organizations than public sector organizations. The findings follow a similar trend like those found in other non-Western countries such as China (Rivers, 2019). For instance, Rivers (2019) found that organizational leaders in China preferred an autocratic approach as compared to other participative models such as democratic leadership. According to Chukwusa (2018), autocratic leadership in private sector organizations is sometimes necessary since the organization's focus is on maximizing economic value. However, other studies such as McCleskey (2014) reported reduced levels of autocratic leadership in contemporary organizations considering that most of the labor market in both Western and non-Western countries is composed of millennials who have a greater preference for informal environments.

Situational leadership has also been examined in the context of non-Western cultures. Situational leadership theorists hold that there is no specific leadership that is considered the best for all situations (McCleskey, 2014). Instead, leaders determine the best course of action depending on the prevailing situations. For instance, during crisis times, it may be more reasonable for a leader to adopt the autocratic approach to centralize all communications and speed up implementation of crisis containment measures (McCleskey, 2014). A democratic approach would be ineffective in a crisis since there will be no time to listen to the opinion of everybody in the organization. On the contrary, the democratic approach might be more effective in situations where an organization is bound to undergo a change process. Failure to consider the

opinions and input of other parties might cause them to resist the change process. A primary

study on situational leadership is quite difficult to examine considering that leaders keep

changing their leadership approaches to suit the specific scenarios they are faced with. As such,

literature on situational leadership in the non-Western cultural context has been scarce.

Other than situational and autocratic models, transformational leadership and

participatory leadership models have been reported to be evident in various sectors in Saudi

Arabia. Specifically, transformational leaders focus on inspiring their followers to recognize the

importance of achieving organizational goals and objectives. According to Alghamdi and Al-

Hattami (2018), transformational leadership is common in both Western and non-Western

cultures. The transformational concept of leadership has gained significant importance as

majority of schools and organizations are teaching individuals to become leaders and not

managers. Some research that has been done in the recent years is contradictory and confusing

on the concept of leadership. Different individuals such as trait theorist, behavioral and

charismatic theorists have different thoughts on what constitutes to a good leadership. According

to Feser et al. (2017), individuals are given an opportunity to lead others not because they are

chosen by organizational managers but due to their characters and ability to lead. These

individuals have the influence to convince followers to work toward achieving objectives.

Therefore, the acceptance and readiness of followers is another important characteristic of a

leader. The leaders are not only required to give guidance but also provide the followers with the

required tools and resources to accomplish organizational goals. In many Saudi organizations,

conflicts have been reported due to failure of the leaders to provide information and other

resources in time (Obeidat et al., 2012). The roles and responsibilities of leaders are very

delicate, and it is therefore important to ensure that they think and act strategically (Alghamdi & Al-Hattami, 2018).

Leadership success is found to have a positive impact on the success of organizations, where successful leaders can achieve organizational goals more efficiently and effectively. There are different factors that promote the success of the leader, including education, skills, experience, society, culture, and knowledge (Kattan et al., 2016). Continuous development of leadership skills help leaders understands their own strengths and weaknesses. Taking part in self-improvement projects is a way of strengthening the skills. It ensures that one has the right skills to take control of others. Education and technical proficient helps leaders to be conversant with their roles and duties. Leaders are not required to be experts in everything, but due to the ever-changing digital world, they need to be conversant with the possible threats and opportunities available for the organization both internally and externally.

Participatory leadership holds that sourcing input from many stakeholders' results in more informed decision-making as compared to when only one person makes the decision for the entire organization. Participatory leaders encourage members to take part in decision-making processes to enhance the quality of organization-wide decisions made. Just like transformational leadership, participatory leadership has been shown to be quite common in both Western and non-Western cultures. Javidan and Zaheer (2019) indicated that Western leadership approaches differ from those common in Arab countries in terms of trust. Specifically, it was shown that most firms in the Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, are family owned. As such, it becomes difficult for an external leader to be entrusted with family wealth. Nevertheless, if the chosen firm leader has the required qualities to manage the organization, effective leadership should be anticipated.

Summary of Literature Review

The main purpose of Chapter 2 was to provide a comprehensive review of literature on the core subject of study—leadership development in Saudi Arabia's private sector. This review drew from different theorists on how leadership emerges and the effectiveness of sound leadership development and how leadership impacts the achievement of organizational goals. Specifically, trait and transformation theories by Bass were found to be effective in explaining the concept of leader and leadership development, while empirical studies on impact of leadership on organizational performance were found effective in explaining how leadership can facilitate the attainment of organizational goals.

According to the reviewed literature, there exists significant differences between leader development and leadership development. However, the differences only confirm that leader development is a facet of leadership development. The review tried to identify several ways through which leader and leadership development can be attained—motivation, training, apprenticeship, and mentorship. Within the context of Saudi Arabia, it was found that there is an acute shortage of leadership and that the government has instituted several programs and measures to grow local leaders particularly through training. There was also a scarcity of literature on the effectiveness of the leadership development programs in the Saudi private sector.

While it was found that Western models of leadership such as autocracy, transformational, and participatory leadership styles were applicable in the Saudi context, assessment of the nation's culture necessitated that leaders choose wisely the strategies they adopt to succeed in their missions. For instance, assessment of the country's culture from Hofstede's dimensions revealed that there is a relatively higher power distance in Saudi Arabia,

hence leaders may find authoritative approaches to be more useful. Considering Vision 2030's goals, it is imperative that appropriate leadership be put in place to increase the chances of the goals being achieved.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

As highlighted in Chapter 1, multiple business-focused leadership development initiatives were recently launched in Saudi Arabia. These programs include: (a) The Human Resource Development Fund Academy (HRDF Academy), (b) the Institute of Public Administration (IPA), (c) the Misk Academy, and (d) the Qimam Fellowship program, to name a few. The proliferation of these programs seems to be the private sector's (with government's help) reaction to factors that amplify the sector's need for more and better leaders.

Therefore, the main aim of this research was to study the phenomenon of business leadership development in the contemporary context in Saudi Arabia. This study used the case of one leadership development program to shed light on recent activities in the Saudi private sector. Due to a confidentiality agreement with the organization running this program, a pseudonym will be used to reference it as the Saudi Business Leader Development (SBLD). While acknowledging that there are many types of case study research, the intention here is to use the SBLD program as a representation of a phenomenon that is larger than the case itself (Stake, 1995). This positioning of the case is essential to highlight since it is not an interest of this study to make a program evaluation type of research. The SBLD program, therefore, is not the focus of this study, rather a lens used to examine the current leadership development situation in the Saudi private sector. This positioning of SBLD will be ubiquitous throughout the data collection and data analysis phases.

Selecting the SBLD program was based on many factors: the program is cohort-based and is expected to enroll 1,000 trainees from the private sector, which makes a substantial pool of participants to be included in the study and who make up a fair representation of the population concerned. In addition, SBLD is conducted over a fairly long period of time—several

months—and covers a wide range of leadership topics. This creates a rich experience for participants that, in turn, enriches this study's data collection and analysis and subsequent findings. The research questions (RQs) this study attempted to answer are:

- RQ1: How do participants in a select leadership development program feel about the different aspects of the program?

- RQ2: To what extent, if any, can variation in the experiences of participants in the selected leadership development program be explained by demographics, previous training, and organizational culture?

- RQ3: What experiences were the most powerful for participants in the selected leadership development program?

This chapter provides detailed description of the research methods that were used to collect, interpret, and analyze data. Specifically, the chapter addresses the research design, sites and participants, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and the researcher's positionality statement.

Research Design

An explanatory sequential mixed methods case study design was employed in this study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Yin, 2017). The intersection of mixed methods with a case study approach is considered one of the complex applications of mixed methods research according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2017). The rationale for this design is best explained in three parts.

First, to have an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of business leader development in contemporary Saudi Arabia, a case study approach is considered best fit (Yin, 2017). Yin (2017) suggested that a case study is favorable over an experiment or archival analysis when the main research questions are "how" or "why," when the researcher has little or

no control over events, and when the focus of the study is a contemporary phenomenon. These conditions apply to the purpose of this study.

Second, a mixed methods approach is adopted because a quantitative or qualitative study in isolation may not provide sufficient data to understand the multifaceted issue of leadership development in Saudi Arabia. Statistical findings need to be explained and exploratory findings need to be integrated with quantitative findings to examine generalizability. Such more complete and corroborated studies may help the Saudi private sector address the issue of leadership deficiency. In addition, mixed methods may be used to involve participants in the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). In the context of this study, participants are existing or future leaders of Saudi business organizations, they live the phenomenon of leadership development, and they are, presumably, interested in their own and other leaders' development. Therefore, their involvement will provide detailed nuances, shape future developmental endeavors, and help future implementation of research findings.

Third, combining both the case study approach and the mixed methods approach, we can generate a more detailed and contextualized study of a topic, leading to "practical understandings and conclusions that are particularized and transferable" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017 p.118). Applying this combination of methods to the issue of Saudi Arabia's business leadership development would provide useful input for future initiatives and improvements.

Sites and Participants

All the research activities for this study were conducted remotely using web-based surveys for the collection of quantitative data and one-on-one interviews of a subset of the survey participants for qualitative data. These interviews were conducted using the remote

meetings service ZOOM. Trainees who have graduated from the selected SBLD cohorts were the primary participants.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Table 2 maps this study's RQs to the selected data collection and analysis procedures. Since the explanatory sequential approach was used in this study, two phases of data collection were necessary. Specifically, results of the quantitative phase informed the qualitative phase where a subset of survey respondents (9 of 92) were interviewed for deeper understanding of their experiences.

Table 2

Mapping of Research Questions to Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

RQ	Strand	Sample	Data collection	Data analysis
RQ1	Quantitative	92 SBLD graduates	Survey	Descriptive analysis
	Qualitative	9 SBLD graduates	Interviews	Thematic analysis
RQ2	Quantitative	92 SBLD graduates	Survey	Multiple regression
	Qualitative	9 SBLD graduates	Interviews	Thematic analysis
RQ3	Qualitative	9 SBLD graduates	Interviews	Thematic analysis

Quantitative Data Collection Procedures

To collect quantitative data, a web-based survey was used as the research instrument. As such, a questionnaire was constructed to measure variables relating to the leadership development process that took place at the SBLD program. This survey was administered post-program and contained both retrospective questions and questions on participants' feelings after program completion. The survey, which can be found in Appendix A, consisted of questions dealing with participants' demographics, work experience, personal leadership journey, and experience in the SBLD program. Survey questions were close-ended and most of them used a 7-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was deployed using the online Qualtrics tool and the survey results were collected using the same tool. A web link to the survey was sent by email to the

SBLD coordinator who then forwarded it to all graduates from the first 20 cohorts—around 488

people. The collection process commenced right after receipt of IRB approval.

Quantitative Data Analysis Procedures

For the first RQ, descriptive statistics were used to present the results of the survey

findings. Quantitative data collected using the survey were exported from the Qualtrics platform

to SPSS software version 26 to be coded, scored, and analyzed. More details about this process

will be presented in the quantitative data analysis section of Chapter 4.

For the second RQ, multiple regression analysis was tabulated to explain variation in

SBLD participants' experiences during the program. To do that, participant's significant growth

in leadership skills after the program was the dependent variable. Some of the independent

variables that were used in this analysis were aspects of demographics, previous leadership

development endeavors, and organizational culture. The intent was to examine why some

participants enjoyed lectures more than other features of the program. Data generated using this

approach were used to point to unique relationships between the variables associated with

leadership and the leadership outcomes of the program. The multiple regression analysis

technique will be explained in detail in in the quantitative data analysis section of Chapter 4.

Qualitative Data Collection Procedures

A convenience sampling strategy (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) was used to select

interviewees for the qualitative data collection. The survey used in the quantitative data

collection phase encompassed a question that asked participants if they were willing to

participate in a conversational, anonymous interview. If they agreed, they would input their

contact information (either an email address or phone number). Out of the 92 people who

completed the survey, 52 agreed to be contacted for an interview (38 answered yes and 14

answered maybe) and provided their contact information. However, after contacting all 52

participants, only nine participated in the interviews. These nine interviews were conducted

using ZOOM service which allowed for recording (with participants' consent). All interviews

were completed in Arabic language and were later translated into English and transcribed. Use of

a semi-structured interview guide, found in Appendix B, ensured coverage of the important

aspects of the study.

Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis for the qualitative interviews followed the process outlined by Braun et al.

(2016) consisting of the following six steps:

1. **Familiarizing** oneself with the data by reading and rereading the complete dataset

   until the researcher felt comfortable with the data. During this step, the researcher

   made personal notes about recurring ideas, potential themes, and subthemes.

2. **Generating initial codes** based on the data by highlighting a short phrase or sentence

   that represented a certain idea and giving each idea a code name. Similar ideas were

   put under the same code.

3. **Determine/identify themes.** Themes represent expressions in the data that belong to

   the same group.

4. **Review of themes.** In-depth scrutiny of themes to ensure that the theme allocation is

   optimal.

5. **Definition of themes.** In addition to step 3, the themes are named and defined for use

   in the final analysis step.

6. **Reporting of the results** in the form of themes that are reported under the section

   "Qualitative Results" of Chapter 4.

This process was applied after uploading all transcribed interviews into NVivo software for analysis. During the coding process, specific lines of texts that denoted themes associated with the study such as leadership development challenges, program strengths, participants' education background, and leadership development outcomes were identified and highlighted. Codes were then condensed to come up with the themes, which were essential in telling the stories and extracting lessons from the interviews.

Researcher's Positionality Statement

When conducting the interviews, and during other parts of this study, there was a small element of positionality to be considered. Being a leadership studies scholar who shares similar culture and speaks same language as participants—Arabic—helped add legitimacy and increase trust. Also, since I was not a part of the SBLD program as I have not been through the program myself and I do not come from the organization that manages the program, that was, in my opinion, favorable for this study's validity. However, having spent 20 years working in the Saudi private sector myself, having been through similar trainings, and having managed leadership development initiatives; there has been a greater need for awareness of predispositions and bias on my side as the researcher. This awareness and reflexivity were of major importance throughout the study procedures.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

As outlined in previous chapters, the purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed

methods case study was to explore and describe leadership development practices in Saudi

Arabia's private sector. More specifically, the study examined the current state of leadership

development and identified the challenges associated with leadership development and strategies

to help improve the situation. As outlined in Chapter 3, the study focused on one specific

program and considered it a case study that is representing the broader activity of leadership

development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The following research questions (RQs)

were developed to guide the study:

- RQ1: How do participants in a select leadership development program feel about
  the different aspects of the program?

- RQ2: To what extent, if any, can variation in the experiences of participants in the
  selected leadership development program be explained by demographics,
  previous training, and organizational culture?

- RQ3: What experiences were the most powerful for participants in the selected
  leadership development program?

The following sections will outline the quantitative and qualitative data collection

procedures, data analysis procedures, and findings. Since this study was designed with an

explanatory sequential approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017), the quantitative strand was

completed first then the qualitative strand followed thereafter. The first section outlines

quantitative data collection procedures followed by data analysis and findings for RQ1 then

RQ2. The qualitative sections begin with an overview of the data collection and analysis

procedures followed by findings that are organized by themes and direct participant quotes are

used to support the relevance of these themes and claims about them. To close this chapter, a

summary of the findings and introduction into Chapter 5 was provided.

As has already been noted, for this explanatory study, both quantitative and qualitative

data were captured. Considering that this study implemented what the literature refers to as the

explanatory sequential approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017), two phases of data collection

were necessary. Specifically, results of the quantitative phase informed the qualitative phase.

Based on the results of the quantitative data analysis, all survey participants who were willing to

be interviewed (52 out of 92) were invited to participate in the qualitative strand of the study;

thus, a convenience sampling technique was applied (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Eventually, 9

participants actually agreed to be interviewed. These participants were interviewed for deeper

understanding of their experiences. Table 3 maps this study's RQs to the selected data collection

and analysis procedures that were applied.

Table 3

Mapping of Research Questions to Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

RQ	Strand	Sample	Data collection	Data analysis
RQ1	Quantitative	92 SBLD graduates	Survey	Descriptive analysis
	Qualitative	9 SBLD graduates	Interviews	Thematic analysis
RQ2	Quantitative	92 SBLD graduates	Survey	Multiple regression
	Qualitative	9 SBLD graduates	Interviews	Thematic analysis
RQ3	Qualitative	9 SBLD graduates	Interviews	Thematic analysis

Quantitative Data Collection Procedures

A survey was designed with four main parts: (a) participant's experience in the SBLD

program, (b) participant's work and organizational aspects, (c) participant's leadership journey,

and (d) demographics. This web-based questionnaire was designed and published using the

Qualtrics platform that is provided by the University of San Diego. The organization that runs

the SBLD program mandated that all survey invitations were to be sent through them. This

prevented direct access of communication with participants. Multiple invitations and reminders were sent by the organization to participants and the result of these, over a period of 8 weeks, was a final sample of 92 responses as detailed in Table 4.

Table 4

Number of Survey Respondents From Each Cohort

Cohort #	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total
1	2	0	2	4
2	4	1	-	5
3	1	0	-	1
4	3	0	-	3
5	7	2	1	10
6	4	2	1	7
7	4	0	1	5
8	2	2	-	4
9	4	0	3	7
10	4	2	-	6
11	4	1	-	5
12	1	3	-	4
13	5	0	-	5
14	2	1	0	3
15	4	0	-	4
16	4	0	-	4
17	1	0	-	1
18	4	1	-	5
19	1	0	-	1
20	6	2	-	8
Total	67 (73%)	17 (18%)	8 (9%)	92 (100%)

Examination of Table 4 reveals that the number of female respondents were under-represented in the sample. Only 18% of survey responses were from female SBLD participants, while 26% of the total SBLD program participants were females.

At the end of data collection, there were eight incomplete responses where only questions in the first part of the survey were answered. These partial responses were used in the descriptive

analysis but not in the regression analysis. Survey questions and their possible answers with a scoring key are summarized in Appendix 1.

The survey data itself was exported from the Qualtrics platform to the SPSS software package for statistical analysis. Using SPSS, descriptive statistics were used to answer RQ1, while multiple regression analysis was used to answer RQ2.

Quantitative Data Analysis and Findings (RQ1)

As a reminder, the first RQ was "How do participants in a select leadership development program feel about the different aspects of the program?" To answer this RQ, participant responses to survey question number 1.1 were studied. Question 1.1 asked about the respondent's agreement with the statement "I had significant growth in my leadership skills after the SBLD Program." Strong agreement corresponded to a numerical score of 7 while strong disagreement was scored as 1 point. As shown in Table 5, the mean score was 6.30 suggesting there was a strong tendency toward agreement among respondents.

Table 5

Significant Growth in Leadership Skills After Attending SBLD

Agreement level (points)	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree (7)	46	50%
Agree (6)	33	36%
Somewhat agree (5)	11	12%
Neither agree nor disagree (4)	1	1%
Somewhat disagree (3)	0	0%
Disagree (2)	0	0%
Strongly disagree (1)	1	1%
Total	92	100%

Note. Mean = 6.30. Standard deviation = 0.92

Another analytic technique used to answer RQ1 was computing a construct, called relevance, by combining the responses to questions 1.2 and 1.3 to measure how relevant the SBLD program was to each participant's actual work. This was calculated by taking the average

score of the 1-7 Likert scale for questions 1.2 and 1.3, and the mean score for all 92 respondents

was 6.01 which shows that respondents more than slightly agreed that the learnings in the

program were relevant to their work. Table 6 presents the means and standard deviations

associated with both questions (1.2 and 1.3) and the relevance scale.

Table 6

SBLD Program Relevance to Participant's Work and Background

Measure	Mean	Std. deviation
Q1.2 Most of what I learned in the Academy Program is applicable in my organization	5.82	1.09
Q1.3 I think the content of the Academy Program was appropriate to my culture and background	6.21	1.08
Relevance scale	6.01	.908

Note. N = 92

Another construct called engagement was developed by combining questions 1.7 and 1.8

to measure how engaged each respondent was during their SBLD experience. This was

calculated by taking the average score for questions 1.7 and 1.8 for each participant and the mean

score for the construct of 6.26 shows that respondents more than agreed that they were engaged

during the SBLD program. Table 7 presents means and standard deviations for questions 1.7 and

1.8 and the engagement scale.

Table 7

Participant's Engagement in the SBLD Program

Measure	Mean	Std. deviation
Q1.7 I was intellectually challenged in the Academy Program	6.10	1.18
Q1.8 I was supported in the Academy Program by instructors, colleagues, or administrators	6.41	.88
Engagement scale	6.26	.872

Note. N = 92

Question 1.4 asked participants to rank multiple features of the SBLD program (lectures, projects, small groups, readings, and coaching) in terms of their effectiveness. For each of the ranked features, points were calculated by multiplying frequency (how many times it was ranked at a certain order) by value of ordering (5 when ranked first, 4 when ranked second, and so on) as displayed in Table 8. The results show that working with a small group of other participants was the most valuable feature while reading materials were the least valuable. Detailed descriptive statistics are tabulated in Table 8.

Table 8

Participant's Ranking of SBLD Program Features

Value of ordering	Lectures		Projects		Small groups		Readings		Coaching	
	Frq	Pts	Frq	Pts	Frq	Pts	Frq	Pts	Frq	Pts
1 (5 points)	26	130	21	105	17	85	4	20	24	120
2 (4 points)	15	60	21	84	29	116	7	28	20	80
3 (3 points)	20	60	20	60	27	81	9	27	16	48
4 (2 points)	23	46	20	40	12	24	18	36	19	38
5 (1 point)	8	8	10	10	7	7	54	54	13	13
Total		304		299		313		165		299

Note. Frq = frequency; Pts = points; $N = 92$

Another ranking question was 1.5 which asked participants to rank the 6 major topics (transformational leadership, strategic management, entrepreneurship, project management, people management, and sales and marketing) taught in the SBLD program in terms of value to the participant. The same technique was used as with the previous ranking question and results show that strategic management was the most valuable topic while sales and marketing the least valuable. Table 9 lists the detailed descriptive statistics for this question.

Table 9

Participant's Ranking of Program Content

Value of ordering	Transf. leadership	Strategic mgmt	Entrepreneurship	Project mgmt	People mgmt	Sales & marketing

	Frq	Pts	Frq	Pts	Frq	Pts	Frq	Pts	Frq	Pts	Frq	Pts
1 (6 points)	17	102	35	210	6	36	8	48	25	150	1	6
2 (5 points)	20	100	24	120	8	40	10	50	28	140	2	10
3 (4 points)	24	96	18	72	10	40	15	60	17	68	8	32
4 (3 points)	17	51	10	30	29	87	20	60	9	27	7	21
5 (2 points)	10	20	4	8	23	46	36	72	10	20	9	18
6 (1 point)	4	4	1	1	16	16	3	3	3	3	65	65
Total points		373		441		265		293		408		152

Note. Frq = frequency; Pts = points; Transf. = transformational; mgmt = management; *N* = 92

The last construct computed was the "organizational culture scale" for which questions 2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, and 2.9 measured each participant's view of their current workplace culture. Here, the average score for all six questions was first calculated for each respondent and then the average score for all respondents was calculated (for this construct there were only 85 respondents that answered the relevant questions). As shown in Table 10, the highest score was 5.81 for the "leadership development is an important part of my organization's culture" question while the scale's mean was 4.72 which shows that respondents almost agreed that their organizational culture was supportive of leadership development.

Table 10

Participant's View of Their Organization's Culture

Question	Mean	Std. deviation
Q2.1 Leadership development is an important part of my organization's culture and management style	5.81	1.63
Q2.5 Succession Planning is well defined and clearly implemented in my organization	4.25	1.93
Q2.6 We have a well-defined high potential program in my organization	4.26	1.78
Q2.7 It is common to receive feedback about my job performance in my organization	4.85	1.69

Q2.8 Leader and leadership development are part of everyday business in my organization	4.52	1.74
Q2.9 In my organization, we have role models who are considered as source of inspiration for emerging leaders	4.64	1.75
Organizational culture scale	4.72	1.45

Note. N = 85; Minimum for all questions = 1; Maximum for all questions = 7

In summary, RQ1 looked at how participants felt about different aspects of the SBLD program. The results show a tendency among respondents to strongly agree that they had growth in their leadership skills after the program. Most participants found the program relevant to their work experience and they were engaged in the program. In terms of activities, small group activities were the most favorable feature and readings the least favorable, while strategic management was the most favorable topic and sales and marketing the least desirable. Finally, participants' perspective of their organizational culture as related to the topic of leadership development was slightly above the midpoint between agreeing and disagreeing.

Quantitative Data Analysis and Findings (RQ2)

RQ2 was "To what extent, if any, can variation in the experiences of participants in the selected leadership development program be explained by demographics, previous training, and organizational culture?" Multiple regression models were estimated using SPSS to analyze this RQ. Question 1.1 on the survey was used as the dependent variable. Question 1.1 used a Likert scale (from 1: *strongly disagree* to 7: *strongly agree*) to measure respondents' agreement with the statement "I had significant growth in my leadership skills after the Academy Program."

To understand which of these variables might be statistically significant predictors of the "significant growth in my leadership skills" dependent variable, stepwise regression techniques were used at the $p = .05$ level to specify the final model. In other words, an algorithm was used that iteratively constructed a series of models based on a search for the single most statistically significant predictor; this process continued until only statistically insignificant variables

remained. As a result of this process, three independent variables were identified: the relevance

and engagement constructs, and whether the participant had children. The final estimated model

in shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Regression model summary

	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Significance Level
Constant	1.32	.52	.01
Relevance	.44	.09	.00
Engagement	.41	.09	.00
Have children	-.35	.14	.01

R square = .60, Adjusted R square = .59, F = 39.74

As shown in Table 11, the final model explained about 60% of the variation in the

significant growth of leadership skills after the program. Importantly, the relevance and

engagement constructs were found to be associated with significant growth in leadership skills

after the program. The effect was slightly stronger for relevance than engagement, with a 1-point

increase in the relevance construct associated with a .44-point increase on the growth of

leadership skills question, whereas a 1-point increase in the engagement construct was associated

with a .41-point increase. Taken together, this indicates that the more that participants thought

the program was relevant to their work the more they benefited from the program as evident in

their growth as leaders. The same is applicable to the engagement coefficient. On the other hand,

having children was found to have a negative impact on participants' growth as leaders as a

result of participating in the SLBD program, with a -.35 estimated coefficient. These interesting

findings will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Data analysis for the qualitative interviews followed the process outlined by Braun et al.

(2016) consisting of the following six steps:

1. **Familiarizing** oneself with the data by reading and rereading the complete dataset
   until the researcher felt comfortable with the data. During this step, the researcher
   made personal notes about recurring ideas, potential themes, and subthemes.

2. **Generating initial codes** based on the data by highlighting a short phrase or sentence
   that represented a certain idea and giving each idea a code name. Similar ideas were
   put under the same code.

3. **Determine/identify themes.** Themes represent expressions in the data that belong to
   the same group.

4. **Review of themes.** In-depth scrutiny of themes to ensure that the theme allocation is
   optimal.

5. **Definition of themes.** In addition to Step 3, the themes are named and defined for use
   in the final analysis step.

6. **Reporting of the results** in the form of themes that are reported under five themes in
   the following section.

Qualitative Findings

Results of qualitative data analysis are represented under three overarching themes: (1)
role of demographics in program effectiveness, (2) valuable components of SBLD, and (3) areas
of improvement to SBLD. These themes are detailed in the following subsections.

Theme 1: Role of Demographics in Program Effectiveness

Five of the nine interviewed SBLD participants made comments that relate to the first theme, the possible role of demographic variables as predictors of program effectiveness. Interestingly, although the quantitative data seemed to suggest that individuals who are parents are less likely to benefit from the program, the qualitative data did not confirm this idea. These findings are discussed in more detail in the paragraphs that follow.

Participant 4 believed that there is no specific demographic that would benefit more from the course. The participant based this view on their own experience:

> I have no clue, because the group I was in had a lot of married people with kids. I can only talk about the group I was in and not all the 400 graduates, because there are different groups and different people in the sample that answered the questionnaire. But those with me in the group all benefited.

Three other course participants believed that parents, in particular, should benefit more from the program, thus, going against what the quantitative results suggested. Participant 7 and Participant 3 both believed that parents are likely to be motivated to attend the program because some of the leadership skills learned during the program could be applicable to parenting. Participant 7, for example, did not agree with the idea that "being a father of children would prevent me from benefiting from the program." On the contrary, this participant believed that "you are supposed to be motivated to teach your children so that one day they will become better than you are." Participant 3 shared a similar idea and likewise implied parents may take the course more seriously and benefit more than people who do not have children. This idea was shared by Participant 2, who recalled:

There was a woman with us who was a parent and a director of human resources, and she

was remarkably effective in the program. . . . I also saw married men who have children,

and I saw a high level of desire to learn in them because they are ready, they want to

learn and have the desire to develop, while there were young people and they were not

married and had no children, but the result was almost zero with them. At least this is

what I had from my experience with them.

One course participant speculated that the demographical variations obtained through the

quantitative analysis may be better explained by age differences and not so much by being a

parent or not. To explain the quantitative findings, for example, Participant 8 speculated that

those findings may be linked to age rather than to parenthood. The participant explained that

many parents are over a certain age, and older individuals may be less interested in a course such

as SBLD. Therefore, the results may be more reflective of age as a factor rather than parenthood.

The participant explained:

I think the age factor affects the interest. That may be the reason. If having children is an

indication that a person is over, say, 40 years of age, I think this is an indication of a lack

of interest in matters that concern them in terms of self-development. While if having

children has nothing to do with age, I share your confusion. could it be too many

responsibilities? I do not know.

Theme 2: Valuable Components of SBLD

In a second theme, statements that identified positive elements of SBLD were gathered

and subdivided over five subthemes, which were (a) overall program quality, (b) learning soft

skills, (c) interactivity, (d) practicality, and (e) change in perspective. These subthemes are

discussed in more detail in the paragraphs that follow.

Subtheme 1: Overall Program Quality

General views about class material and structure, how the classes were taught, and the cultural appropriateness of content were covered under this subtheme. Regarding class material and structure, all nine course participants shared positive views about the quality of such. Participant 9, in particular, was very positive about the course, and indicated that "some of us have achieved things that people would study an entire semester or year for," a comment that suggested the high quality of the course. Participant 3 was similarly overly impressed with the course and explained that he had attended a large number of courses over the years but had never encountered one that was as beneficial as SBLD. This participant explained: "I'm a self-learner by nature and I have joined many courses previously, and I have to say that I have never found a course that I could take advantage of like this one."

Participant 5 similarly highlighted that "it was a completely different program from the usual programs." The participant explained that courses usually take no longer than 5 days and are most often passive in the sense that a lecturer speaks and attendees just listen. SBLD, however, has a duration of 3 months and focuses on interactivity, which will be highlighted in subtheme 3. The participant explained, "The courses that we usually attend take only 5 days with an instructor who talks about something and then, everything is over." Participant 8 agreed and added that "the content was the main pillar that we benefited from in this course and contributed very much to the way the participants thought."

Participant 4 similarly shared, "I enjoyed and benefited from this experience in all respects. In terms of organization and efficiency of trainers." This quote implied that not only the quality of the course material is important, but also the quality of how courses are taught is important. In this respect, all nine class participants shared positive experiences. Participants

noted that teachers were very respectful of the Saudi culture, which they strongly appreciated.

Participant 4 explained:

> He did not violate anything about religion, but on the contrary; All they taught us was talking about work and how to manage situations and solve problems without any kind of hints or anything that contradicts our principles or our religion.

> Participant 7 supported this claim and similarly shared that "the Arab lecturers and

trainers who were present were very wonderful. The non-Arab and British coaches also

maintained our customs, and during this training session there was no disconnection from our

customs or our culture at all." In addition to respect for cultural customs and values, participants

also mentioned that course coaches were well-versed about the material and did not lack in

knowledge nor commitment. As Participant 5 noted, "I do not think that any of them lacked

knowledge, understanding, commitment or perseverance; all of them were at a high level of

intelligence, conscious people." Participant 4 further reemphasized this view and added that "the

coaches also excelled in communicating information to us, giving us their experiences, and

providing us with everything with love and from the heart." This participant added:

> Honestly, there are a lot of things, but one thing that really showed was that they were presenting the program with love. … There is such a big difference between someone who gives with love and someone who gives just to perform a job or a task. They were proud of us and we are proud that we were with them in the group and we learned from them and they helped us. Also, feedback they provided gave us confidence that made us give a better presentation and project. This was one of the best things they did, and they made us feel there was cooperation and love without knowing each other beforehand.

Although the above statements illustrated that participants were positive about the quality of teaching, Participant 9 did make one recommendation and explained that the course should not only be taught by academics, but by a combination of academics and non-academics (businesspeople). The participant's rationale was that many academics do not have practical experience and stick to theory. The participant explained:

When we tell *them [academics]* that the theory is correct, but the practice is wrong; this person comes saying "no, we have such-and-such" and explains. I mean the content is OK, but in my opinion, we just need to support it with people who are not academics, people with experience coming to give the same lecture in another way, support a bit.

Besides the quality of course material and teaching, many statements were made about whether the material should be adjusted to the Saudi culture. Most participants did not find this necessary, although some participants did see a value in doing this. Participant 5, for example, was unsure and argued that although "it is good to build examples and materials to match our society," one must also take into account that material that has been adjusted to a certain cultural setting may not benefit everyone and keeping the material more culturally "neutral" may not be a bad idea. The participant indeed explained that "regarding the subjects of leadership and history [in our culture], we know about it, but maybe someone else would not find it useful." The participant concluded keeping the material culturally neutral might be the best practice. Furthermore, the participant believed that when program lecturers share their experiences and perspectives from their cultural lens, this may, in fact, benefit students as it helps them appreciate other cultures, and see things from other perspectives.

The above idea was further emphasized by Participant 7, who added that "if you want to learn or become an intellectual, do not limit yourself to a specific color. . . . Our heritage is rich,

but this does not prevent you from taking a flower from every garden in order to acquire knowledge." More specifically, the participant said that "those who want to learn are not limited to a certain color, class, gender, or even a specific religion, for science is a sea with no limits." Participant 4 agreed with the idea that keeping material culturally neutral would be most beneficial because "there are different mentalities and each of us have their own point of view at the end of the day." Therefore, keeping things as neutral as possible would be more professional and effective.

Participant 6 similarly found "the content was excellent and suitable for us and our culture" because the content was culturally neutral. This participant felt that including examples from Saudi culture was not needed, as the course material was clear enough and did not need contextualization.

Participant 2 added a refreshing perspective and explained that, due to globalization, culturally sensitive material is not useful or applicable. The participant indeed elaborated that "the world has become a small village" and "the language of the business is universal and applicable to everyone." The participant added that "the internal protocols of Saudi Arabia are close to many external protocols. There is nothing called our culture and the culture of the outside."

Although Participant 3 agreed and similarly found that "I don't think it is necessary, especially because of globalization," this participant did not agree with Participant 2 that adding Saudi-specific examples would be useless. On the contrary, this participant argued that including historical stories from Saudi Arabia or Islamic history would be quite useful because they are emphasized in schools and familiar to everyone:

Indeed, we studied at school the story of Osama bin Zayd, the story of Omar bin Khattab, the story of the wars led by Abu Bakr in extremely critical times for Muslims. We learned all this, but why this did not link with leadership topics? It is a shame!

To conclude, a last view was shared by Participant 8, who found that "there is no doubt that it [leadership science] originates from the West, but I don't think it is a departure from our culture." This participant explained that leadership is a concept that originates from the West, and as a result it is perfectly normal that the course would be somewhat resonating with Western culture.

Subtheme 2: Learning Soft Skills

Under a second subtheme, ideas about how SBLD had contributed to six course participants' soft skills were covered. More specifically, two categories were formed: (a) ability to understand others and (b) trust and coaching leadership. Both categories are discussed below by means of direct participant quotes.

Category 1: Ability to Understand Others. A common pattern in the data were that many participants reported that since taking the course, they have become more aware of the value of good communication and relationships with employees. Participant 3 commented on this idea and shared that "since the course, I've paid more attention to interpersonal communication nuances." Specifically, the participant explained that, thanks to the course, "I saw a new aspect of employee patterns and the patterns of the characters of the teams made me more aware."

In alignment, Participant 5 more specifically commented, "my relationship with managers has changed as I have become more understanding and less frustrated." The participant more specifically explained that the program had taught him how to "understand the way the

person in front of me thinks." The participant valued this lesson because "now, when I talk to people, I have a better idea of what they want." This quote illustrated how the program has helped individuals to place themselves in the position of coworkers and understand where they are coming from when reporting a problem or issue. This idea was further emphasized by Participant 1, who added that "my perspective of many things has changed, I can now see things from another perspective thanks to the knowledge I acquired in the course." Participant 9 shared this view and admitted that "previously, I thought that it was correct to impose my opinion." The participant explained that the course had taught them that this is not a fruitful way of communicating:

> Honestly, my emotional intelligence has changed a lot, I used to react to everything, but now no. For example, if person X wants a certain thing, and I have another opinion and I've tried to explain and convince him but he is not convinced, it's totally fine. I mean, I no longer argue and instead focus on the bigger picture and more important things.

Other participants shared similar comments. For example, Participant 4 stated that "I'm trying to be close to my team and communicate information in a way that helps them understand." The participant explained that because of having adjusted their way of communication with the team, the participant felt that overall productivity had increased because, through the course, they had "learned how to deal with them in a diplomatic and leadership manner based on what…[they] learned in the course."

Participant 4 concluded by stating, "I've learned that every person has their own personality and way of dealing with things." This participant strongly valued having learned how to better deal with different individuals, and explained, "when you understand, you know the reason and based on that, you know how to deal with the person." Consequently, as Participant 5

shared, "The way I treat my employees has improved." This participant particularly appreciated the videos that were shown during class. The participant explained:

> During the course we were shown videos, for example, about people who are real leaders, and how they manage certain situations … my personal relations with the employees have improved because of the atmosphere in the course and because of the material that was presented, and because of the videos that were shown.

Category 2: Trust and Coaching Leadership. Five out of nine course participants shared that the course had made them aware of different leadership styles, including coaching leadership. They stated that through the program they had learned that good leadership includes trusting your employees and giving them more responsibilities so they can grow and develop into leaders themselves. Participant 7 emphasized this idea and stated that their leadership style had slightly changed since taking the course and they were now more comfortable with entrusting their employees' ability to execute certain tasks with minimal supervision. The participant explained that "before the academy, I used to not entrust the tasks to someone that easily and sometimes I would do them myself." The participant recognized that this way of working interrupted employee development and was unfruitful as it would increase the workload of the participant and at the same time inhibit employee development. The participant explained that they did things differently now and this had benefited the company tremendously:

> I tell managers, "develop people to replace you and who can move you to higher positions." In 1 year, I have gone from managing one to four divisions under my management, and this is not because I was doing tasks by myself, rather, it was because I entrusted tasks to other employees; they became able to do their work and I became able to take on new tasks.

Other participants made similar comments. For example, Participant 4 noted how they have invested more in "interacting with the team and communicating work requirements and things that benefit them to do their jobs better." In other words, as was also reported by Participant 1, the participant had learned how to delegate and coach employees, rather than giving authoritarian instructions. Participant 4 explained that coaching leadership was crucial "because *they* are the ones who deal with clients, while I am more strategic, so I help them do their job properly." Interestingly, Participant 3 added that entrusting employees would not only benefit employees and companies in terms of leadership development, but also boosts employees' confidence, it contributes to their psychological wellbeing. The participant explained: "What I personally prefer is to give confidence to people, to be willing to accept mistakes, because without mistakes there is no chance to learn." All the above quotes illustrated how, as a leader, you need to take risks and trust that employees can execute certain tasks with limited supervision.

Subtheme 3: Interactivity

Eight out of nine program participants agreed that the interactive components of the course were the most beneficial factor in the SBLD. More specifically, they stated that they had learned a lot from classmates through group discussions and role play. As Participant 4 explained, "The reading material was light, very simple and not boring, but we enjoyed the group activities together more." Participant 5 agreed and recalled working in teams on a sales issue. The participant explained that the purpose of the exercise was to "create a business plan and sell the products" and remembered that "the competition was incredibly fun and taught me many things." More specifically, the participant stated that "it was very helpful to hear their opinions on things." Other participants recalled similar experiences; Participant 5, for example, shared:

We were a group, one played the role of company CEO, another took the role of CFO,

another one took the role of marketing, and then one took the role of sales. And the case

was, how do you manage the company? And it was live, I mean, managing the company,

because the decisions that we made in managing the company were reflected right away

on sales, reflected in profitability … That was the most important topic of that course, to

learn how to manage a company or how to take a decision, or even to take a wrong

decision.

Participant 2 added:

The simulations were the most important thing for me. In the second module, I do not

remember anything other than the day on which we worked on this exercise. I was in a

simulation where I had a business and needed to make decisions, and I needed to make

them quickly. The whole day was a simulation.

These examples illustrated how interactive exercises were appreciated and regarded as

excellent ways to master theoretical concepts and practical skills. In addition, they allowed

students to learn from one another, which was important because, as Participant 9 noted, "I

interacted with people who changed my thinking completely." Participant 4 agreed and added

that "we used to meet people from different sectors and fields in the same group, and this

enriched our knowledge and experiences and allowed us to exchange them." These quotes

clearly illustrated the added benefit of organizing group activities and encouraging individuals to

share experiences and thoughts.

Subtheme 4: Practicality

Five out of nine participants who had participated in the SBLD program emphasized

appreciating the practicality of what they learned in the course and its applicability to the real

world. Participant 1 explained that "the important thing is to learn the skill because it is useful when we want to apply something." Participant 8 agreed and shared a specific example:

> There have been some training sit-ins in this course for me in terms of strategy building and how strategies have affected the lives of businesses. I think the most prominent thing in my mind when hearing the words "SBLD" is this kind of knowledge.

> This quote illustrated how practical material was valued more than theoretical

information. A different type of practicality was mentioned by Participant 3, who remembered having been shown a video that showed a practical application of change management. Thus, rather than course lecturers limiting the topic to the theory, they showed a short video to illustrate the practical application of the theory. The participant explained:

> They showed an entertainment video where penguins in a certain area were in trouble and how their leader started the change process. Although I memorize the Kotter model for change, when I saw it in the video and linked it to the vision [Vision 2030], … it was settled rapidly in my mind. … When you watch this video with the explanation, I linked the process of managing change in Saudi society. This was one of the most well-established things in my mind.

Subtheme 5: Change in Perspective

A fifth subtheme related to ideas about SBLD having contributed to five program participants' change in perspectives. Many examples were given; for instance, Participant 5 recognized that before the program they did not believe Vision 2030 was realistic. However, their perspective changed during the course and they were now able to better understand Vision 2030's intentions, and how it fits in with the Saudi economy. The participant explained:

I thought that long-term thinking was dreams, but I benefited from the discussion with the team who attended with me that it was more than a dream. My eyes opened to many things regarding the project, which we undertook an especially important and pioneering work. Because my focus used to be narrowly oriented to my job, but now my outlook has become more comprehensive, and I see the entire economy.

Participant 9 shared a different example and stated that "the academy taught me that there is leadership and there is more than one person in a company who can lead." This participant indeed explained that before the course they were unaware of the value and need for giving multiple individuals leadership training. However, the training "changed my thinking and expanded my perceptions." Participant 2 added "I noticed a little difference in my thinking style." This participant noted that "it made me think a little wider" as they learned to understand that everyone and everything has an impact, and it is about "what kind of an impact you want to leave behind." Lastly, Participant 4 shared a more practical change in perspective and explained:

I am one of the people who benefited the most from the second module because it was talking about business, and this has a close relationship with my work, and this made me think about the way they taught us about product and marketing and how to analyze competitors from such a perspective, so I benefited a lot from it.

Theme 3: Areas of Improvement to SBLD

A third theme related to feedback on how to improve SBLD. Generally, two clear areas of improvement were identified. The first area related to selection criteria; the second area related to the quality and comprehensiveness of the course. Both subthemes are discussed below by means of direct participant quotes.

Subtheme 1: Selection Criteria

All nine course participants mutually agreed that, based on their experience with the program, they noticed that some individuals were not very much invested and interested in the program. As a result, these individuals were believed to have benefited less from the program. Participants' rationale was that if an individual is not interested in learning, they will not learn much; hence, a lack of interest was considered to be almost a self-fulfilling prophesy in terms of programmatic impact.

The above idea was stressed by Participant 1, who said, "If a person wants to learn, they will learn. It is about the will and the ability to learn." This idea was also highlighted by Participant 9, who shared that companies could be wasting their time if they select an individual "who from the beginning thinks that the program will not benefit them." Participant 5 agreed and added that "there are people who would say, 'I do not need this program, I just want to visit another city,' and they didn't take the program that serious."

Participant 3 added an important point and explained that one reason for individuals' disinterest and lack of motivation may be that "they have not been consulted about the subject of the course and its importance, and its long-term objectives have not been clarified." This statement clearly illustrated the importance of giving selected individuals the necessary information and guidance before the program starts. However, participants recognized that even when given all the relevant information, some individuals may still not be interested in the program. To avoid the wasted cost of sending such individuals to the program, participants emphasized the importance of selecting the right employees for the course. Participant 2 elaborated:

The thing is that today, when you are choosing someone to train, you are

supposed to observe an important point in this person: the desire to learn, does he have it

or not? If you choose a person who is closeminded, even if you put him in the best

training program in the world, there will be zero outputs. The same story, when today, a

company nominates an employee to enter the program, you must be sure that this person

has the desire to develop, and the desire to look for the right tools to develop himself.

To make sure the right individuals would be selected, participants recommended revising

the current selection strategies and criteria. Indeed, as Participant 2 noted, "One current criterion

is that candidates need to be in an administrative position and need to have been in that position

for a number of years." The participant argued that such standards should be redundant and

should be replaced by criterion based on "a person's desire to develop, learn, and accept."

Practically, the participant explained that "you can measure this desire based on previous

experiences with this person." In addition, the participant explained, "We sometimes conduct an

interview with this person, in order to know his previous experience." Based on this interview

and previous experience with the employee, "I start to analyze whether this person has the desire

for development and training or not, and whether it a sincere desire or not." The participant

concluded, "The interview usually helps us with this issue plus our previous experiences with

this person."

Other participants agreed that this would be a good strategy. Some recommended to

combine the strategy of interviewing with other criteria, such as the requirement to be in a

supervisory role. Participant 9 explained:

The academy must have a criterion for enrollment to be limited for people who are in a

supervisor or higher level, I mean, for example, when I speak to you, you can be more

knowledgeable on the academic side, meaning if I wanted to ask you about a master's

degree, I will ask you because you went through this stage, you know everything related

to it, but when you bring someone who did not go through a stage and ask them about it,

this is the problem! Some were not in the position of supervisor, they needed to be

interviewed more closely.

To conclude, Participant 5 suggested that "HR departments must select three or four

people from each department who I, as a CEO can rely on them in the future, and when there are

such programs, I give those selected the opportunity to take it."

Subtheme 2: Quality and Comprehensiveness

A second identified area for improvement related to the perceived quality and

comprehensiveness of the program. In this regard, three course participants made

recommendations to improve the course, with most of their comments relating to the reading

material. A first recommendation related to improving the quality of translation. Participant 7

noted the Arabic translation of the reading material was relatively poor and inaccurate. This was

problematic because, instead of giving clarity, translations resulted in confusion and

complicatedness. The participant explained, "It was not clear, and the translation was an

objective translation and not an Arabic scientific translation; It felt as it was complicated." To

solve this issue, the participant recommended to review the translations.

A second recommendation, also made by Participant 7, related to the comprehensiveness

of the reading material. In this respect, Participant 7 indicated that the material was basically an

outline of what the trainer was teaching during the session so there is little to learn from the

readings alone. For those individuals who would have missed a class, the reading material would

be almost useless. The participant explained:

It should be better and clearer. Of course, in many training courses you are given a binder of readable information, and this is not to read and understand when you go home, but to follow up on the same day and at the same hour. At the same time, you read a page the coach is talking about it. … It is set up for the time the trainer talks about it, and if you come late you will not understand it.

Similarly, Participant 3 made a recommendation on the reading material, though their recommendation differed from the ones proposed by Participant 7. Indeed, this participant's recommendation related to the amount of time invested on theoretical material (reading material). According to Participant 3, interactive discussions and practical exercises were much more superior to theoretical (and passive) lessons. Therefore, this participant recommended to restructure the class and increase the amount of time spent on practical skills versus theoretical knowledge:

Readings are important, but the course has nothing to do with reading at all. The link between the lecture and the reading content is little because the course is more practical than theoretical. So, the participants did not pay attention.

With regard to this participant's comment about some students not paying attention during class, Participant 7 was frustrated about there being "no control from management over the attendance of trainees." This participant recommended that "to ensure that a person deserves this seat, they must monitor them throughout the training period, and there must be a strict time to attend without delay." The participant emphasized that such strict rules are necessary because the lessons build on each other and if a person keeps coming late to class, "they will not understand anything."

To conclude, another recommendation made by Participant 7 related to extending the course to include aspects of finance and administration. The participant noted that these aspects are currently not included in the program, but they are especially important as any leader should have at least some knowledge of finance and administration. The participant explained:

> There is no company that does not have a financial department and an accounting department, so there is a need. It is true that there are university graduates, but if you want to develop leadership, the person must be familiar with the financial side. … He must be able to read the budget, review some of the entries, and review the budget, and know well where he is going. Does it make any sense that there is a company leader who does not know how to read the budget or how to review it with a chartered accountant or a chartered auditor and has to seek the help of a legal auditor's office?!

Summary of Findings

To summarize findings from the quantitative strand of the study, descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze RQ1 and RQ2, respectively. For RQ1, there was a strong tendency among respondents to agree that they had growth in their leadership skills after attending SBLD. Also, respondents slightly more than agreed that the learnings were relevant to their work and that they were engaged in the program. In addition, working in small groups was the most favorable feature while strategic management was ranked as the top content type of the program. Finally, for RQ1, respondents almost agreed that their organizations do foster a culture that is supportive of leadership development.

For RQ2, the multiple regression analysis found the independent variables of relevance, engagement, and having children to be statistically significant predictors of the dependent variable of having significant growth in leadership skills after attending SBLD.

To summarize findings from the qualitative strand of the study, thematic analysis yielded three overarching themes: (1) role of demographics in program effectiveness, (2) valuable components of SBLD, and (3) areas of improvement in SBLD. With reference to the first theme, participants did not agree with results obtained from the quantitative data analysis which implied that individuals who are parents were less likely to benefit from the program in comparison to those who did not have children. On the contrary, some participants believed that parents in particular would benefit from SBLD because they would be able to translate the leadership skills learned during course to their parenting style. Also, participants implied that parents would benefit more from the program because they are naturally more responsible than people who did not have children and parents would be more likely to take the program serious.

About the second theme which included participants' positive views of the program, five subthemes were found: (a) overall program quality, (b) learning soft skills, (c) interactivity, (d) practicality, and (e) change in perspective. In summary, participants found the course highly effective, both in terms of content and way of teaching. Specifically, they valued the interactive and practical components as most beneficial. They said that through the course they had learned new communication and leadership skills which had helped them with improving their relationships with their colleagues and subordinates.

The third theme covered some important recommendations for further improvement of SBLD. These recommendations related to selection criteria, which participants believed should be reviewed and updated, and overall quality and comprehensiveness of the course. In Chapter 5, these results will be interpreted in light of existing literature on the topic. Limitations, recommendations, and implications will also be highlighted in this final chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In 2016, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) launched its national transformation program, Vision 2030, as a comprehensive roadmap for social and economic reform built on three pillars: a thriving economy, a vibrant society, and an ambitious nation (Saudi Vision 2030, 2017). Among many issues, Vision 2030 calls on the private sector to increase its contribution to the GDP from 40% to 65%, increase small and medium enterprises' contribution to the GDP from 20% to 35%, and increase women's participation in the workforce from 22% to 30% (Saudi Vision 2030, 2017). As a result, there is a growing need for more competent leaders in the private sector so that these goals can be met (Alexander, 2011; Almohaimeed, 2014). The shortage of competent private sector leaders can be linked to shortcomings in the Saudi education system that emphasize learning hard skills, such as accounting and marketing, at the expense of soft skills, such as communication, traditionally associated with effective leadership (Alfaisal University, 2020; KFUPM, 2020; KSU, 2020; PMBSC, 2020; PSU, 2020). Other factors that contribute to the shortage of competent leaders include limitations on hiring from overseas (because of regulations set forth by the government to combat unemployment) and the competition among private sector organizations to attract talented local leaders. To bridge this gap, several initiatives have recently been launched to develop a new generation of Saudi business leaders. The impact that these programs have had on participants and their contribution toward the development of Saudi leadership has not been systematically assessed. Therefore, the results from this study will prove useful in identifying lessons learned and best practices that can be useful for private sector leadership development.

The purpose of this research study was to examine the context of leadership development in today's Saudi private sector by studying a selected program as a case. The following research questions (RQs) guided this study:

- RQ1: How do participants in a select leadership development program feel about the different aspects of the program?

- RQ2: To what extent, if any, can variation in the experiences of participants in the selected leadership development program be explained by demographics, previous training, and organizational culture?

- RQ3: What experiences were the most powerful for participants in the selected leadership development program?

An explanatory sequential mixed methods case study design was chosen to enable the development of a deeper understanding of business leader development in contemporary Saudi Arabia and generate conclusions that are both particularized and transferable (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Yin, 2017). Participants were recruited from one of the recently launched programs that, because of a confidentiality agreement with the program, will be identified as the Saudi Business Leader Development (SBLD) program. The data collection process was broken up into two parts.

First, a survey that consisted of questions dealing with participants' demographics, work experience, personal leadership journey, and experience in the SBLD program was distributed to 488 SBLD graduates. Ninety-two participants completed the survey for a response rate of about 19%. Descriptive statistics were used to find that respondents (a) agreed that they grew their leadership skills after the program, (b) they thought the program was relevant to their background and culture, (c) they were engaged during the program, (d) they liked small group

activities more than other features in the program, (e) they favored strategic management over other topics taught in the program, and (f) they agreed that their organizations do support leadership development. In addition, multiple regression analysis found that the most explanatory model to explain variation in SBLD participants' experiences included the independent variables of relevance, engagement, and having children.

Second, nine of the survey respondents were interviewed to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences in the program. Thematic analysis of the interview data revealed the emergence of three key themes: Role of demographics in program effectiveness, valuable components of SBLD, and areas of improvement to SBLD, along with several subthemes.

The remainder of this chapter will be dedicated to discussing the findings of the study and their implications for policy and practice. The next section will present findings of the study organized by theme and conclusions that can be drawn from them. The implications of the study for policy and practice will be addressed next, followed by a discussion of the study's limitations and delimitations. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research and practice based on the study's findings.

Summary and Discussion of Findings

This study examined the experiences of participants in the SBLD. Based on findings from quantitative analysis carried out on the survey results, nine participants were selected for semi-structured interviews to examine their experiences of leadership development in the SBLD program. This section will present the results of this study organized by theme, situating them in the broader literature.

Theme 1: Role of Demographics in Program Effectiveness

Since quantitative analysis found a significant negative correlation between participants' growth in leadership skills and their status as a parent, this was further explored during the interviews. Four interviewees mentioned the role of demographic factors such as age and being a parent in influencing program effectiveness. Specifically, three participants believed that being a parent would enable trainees to benefit more from the program, while one participant felt that age, rather than parental status, may explain variation among the demographic findings from the quantitative analysis. There is a notable gap in the literature on how demographic factors such as age and gender impact leadership training effectiveness in the Saudi context (Alghamdi and Al-Hattami, 2018). Previous research has found that behavior manifested in a family role, such as parenting, may transfer to other roles that are perceived as similar through a process known as positive interrole spillover (Furr & Funder, 2004; Hanson et al., 2006). However, most research focuses on how the type of environment an individual grew up in can influence their leadership style rather than on the relationship between being a parent and being an effective leader. For instance, a study on the link between parenting and leadership in entrepreneurs found that individuals who grew up under authoritative parenting styles were more likely to exhibit people-centered, transformational leadership approaches at work (Bindah, 2017). The same study recognized that a better understanding of the influence of parenting skills on leadership needs to be developed (Bindah, 2017). The work-family nexus and its influence on leadership has also been examined by Michel et al. (2014), who found that the skills and behaviors developed through engagement in family roles such as parenting are transferrable into work-leader roles.

Theme 2: Valuable Components of SBLD

The second theme identified through thematic analysis focused on participants'

perceptions of valuable components of the SBLD program. These perceptions agreed with

survey findings that indicated appropriateness of program's activities and content. As detailed in

Chapter 4, five components of the SBLD were perceived as valuable. Several themes that arose

from survey responses and during interviews including the importance of cultural awareness,

learning soft skills, and a distinction between leader and leadership development, merit closer

attention.

The Importance of Cultural Awareness

Factors associated with overall program quality included class material, structure, how

the class was taught, and cultural appropriateness. Nine interviewees expressed that the course

was of a remarkably high quality, with a longer duration and bigger emphasis on interactivity

than similar courses they had taken. Additionally, participants noted that cultural awareness and

sensitivity was demonstrated by instructors throughout. Survey respondents also agreed that the

content was appropriate for their culture and background. Saudi Arabia's unique blend of Islamic

and Arabic cultures perpetuates an atmosphere of conservatism and family orientation that

carries over into the business sector. The idea of whether leadership is a Western concept is one

that is widely debated in the literature, with some scholars contending that leadership is a

universal concept (Bendell et al., 2016; Nahavandi & Krishnan, 2017). However, it is important

to note that while leadership concepts may be similar across cultures, the models through which

they are implemented may differ significantly across geographical and cultural contexts (Du et

al., 2013; Voegtlin et al., 2012). It is therefore important that leadership development programs

employ a culturally sensitive lens during training sessions, especially when sessions are led by

members who do not belong to the same culture as the participants. Several participants stated that the trainers were all respectful of Saudi culture and that coaches respected cultural norms and values during the program. Recognizing that much of the leadership training was delivered through a Western perspective, some participants stated that adjusting course material to Saudi culture may be preferable. For example, many Western cultures place a high value on individualism while Saudi culture is very collectivist in nature, prioritizing group concerns over personal interests (Turner et al., 2017). Most participants, however, did not feel that this would provide any added value and felt that keeping material culturally neutral would be a good practice.

Learning Soft Skills

The development of soft skills such as communication and people management that are typically associated with leadership was a second subtheme associated with the perceived value of the SBLD program. Commonly cited leadership skills include patience, empathy, flexibility, effective communication, and creativity (Mendoza et al., 2016). Emotional intelligence, which refers to an individual's ability to regulate their emotions and to accurately recognize and respond to the emotions of others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), is also associated with high-quality leadership. Leaders who are emotionally intelligent can make better informed decisions and relate more to their employees (Haslam et al., 2017; Kim & Kim, 2017). While emotional intelligence is a Western concept, Lone and Lone (2018) found that certain dimensions of emotional intelligence such as emotional competency and sensitivity are significant antecedents of leadership development in non-Western contexts. One of the specific skills that participants in the present study said increased was their ability to understand others. In addition, people management was ranked as the second most favorable SBLD topic by survey respondents. This

observation is related to emotional intelligence, as participants claimed the SBLD program helped them develop more empathy, be better communicators, and see things from other points of view. Five of the interview participants also noted that the SBLD program made them more aware of the importance of leadership development and the different types of leadership styles that can be employed. The importance of leadership development in the production of effective leaders has been widely cited in the literature (Alghamdi & Al-Hattami, 2018; Feser et al., 2017). For instance, Saeed et al. (2014) noted that leadership development is crucial to managing workplace conflicts and can increase productivity while Ardichvili et al. (2016) argued that leadership development helps nurture future leaders.

Leader vs. Leadership Development

When discussing aspects of the SBLD program that participants felt were particularly valuable, it is important to make the distinction between leader development and leadership development. Leader development is often described as one of the many facets of leadership development because it involves improving an individual's ability to be an effective leader (McCauley et al., 2010). As Almohaimeed (2014) observed, leader development focuses on enhancing individual knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies. Leadership development, on the other hand, involves enhancing an organization's social capital by increasing a group's capacity to produce commitment, alignment, and sense of direction (Feser et al., 2017; McCauley et al., 2010). Leadership development matters because strong leaders can capitalize on existing relationships and draw upon their staff to accomplish organizational goals (Day, 2011). Organizations should approach leader and leadership development simultaneously so that people are able to develop the intrapersonal skills needed to be effective leaders while simultaneously developing the interpersonal competencies that will enable them to be better communicators and

draw on the resources at their disposal. Survey and interview responses from the participants in

the present study concerning valuable components of the SBLD suggest that the SBLD program

attempts to bridge the gap between leader and leadership development. Participants expressed

that they were able to improve skills such as emotional skills and communication while also

interacting with other participants to exchange knowledge and learn how to optimize the

functioning of a business. Participants also noted that the SBLD program was very practical and

that it was easy to transfer the skills they learned in the training to real-life situations. This is

important because skills transfer and practicality have been cited as important dimensions of

leadership development (Moldoveanu & Narayandas, 2019).

Since leader development is individual-focused and benefits from having people from

different organizations with different perspectives, programs similar to SBLD seem to be useful

in this area. Indeed, because leader development involves enhancing individuals' skills

(McCauley et al., 2010) and one of the benefits of SBLD noted by participants was that it

provided them with an opportunity to exchange knowledge, providing leader development

programs to people from different organizations or positions simultaneously will likely enhance

a program's effectiveness. Leadership development programs, on the other hand, could work

better when conducted within organizations. This is because leadership development involves

higher level development that is targeted toward organization-specific aspects such as the

organization's strategy and values (Feser et al., 2017).

Theme 3: Areas of Improvement to SBLD

The third theme identified through thematic analysis related to feedback on how SBLD

can be improved. Selection criteria, quality, and comprehensiveness of the course were the most

cited improvements. Some participants noticed that there seemed to be other people in the

training program who were not invested or motivated to complete the program and argued that companies need to carefully select employees for leadership development programs. This was in line with the quantitative results where engagement was found to be a significant predictor of participants' leadership growth after the program. Personal commitment and motivation have been cited as traits of effective leaders in the literature (Banjar & El Seesy, 2019; Brownlee et al., 2019; Craig, 2018). Leaders who are committed and motivated to achieve goals and improve their organizations will also motivate employees and encourage the development of a more productive and inclusive workplace (Craig, 2018).

Implications for Policy and Practice

The results of this study have significant implications for leadership development practices in Saudi Arabia's private sector. The data also yield implications for positive social change, namely through the identification of best practices for leadership development in the Saudi context. These implications will be discussed in the following section.

Implications for Positive Social Change

The results from this study have the potential to help create positive social change in organizations. The central role that leaders play in mobilizing resources and motivating other members of the workforce has made leadership development an important field of research. Many studies have been conducted to determine if and how different leadership types and qualities influence factors such as workplace productivity and job satisfaction. For instance, transformational leadership has been positively associated with increased job satisfaction (Abelha et al., 2018), increased workplace innovation (Jiang & Chen, 2018), and organizational performance (Para-González et al., 2018). Transformational leaders motivate and inspire followers through idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and

individualized consideration (Avolio et al., 1999). They encourage excellent work outcomes by prioritizing the needs of their followers (Brownlee et al., 2019). Results from this study demonstrated that participants felt the SBLD program helped better enable them to empathize with coworkers, view matters from a different perspective, and work more effectively in a group. These are all abilities typically associated with transformative leaders. This is particularly significant in the Saudi context because transformational leadership has been identified as a common element between Western and non-Western cultures (Alghamdi & Al-Hattami, 2018).

Implications for Practice

The results from this study are an important contribution to the field of leadership development because they identify best practices for leadership development in a non-Western context. One finding from this study was that participants felt that the SBLD was, for the most part, presented in a culturally appropriate manner. As previously discussed, it is important for leadership development programs to be culturally sensitive as the frameworks through which different leadership skills may be presented or acquired can differ across cultural contexts (Du et al., 2013; Voegtlin et al., 2012). Participants in the study noted that presenting material in a way that was relevant to Saudi culture was not as important as presenting the material in a culturally neutral way. In other words, material that has been adjusted to a certain cultural setting may not benefit participants as much as it might in its original format, and that there is value to be gained from learning about other culture's perspectives on leadership. This finding holds important implications for leadership trainers and coaches who conduct workshops in culturally diverse settings.

Another important finding from this study was that the SBLD program enabled participants to become better leaders because it helped them better connect with coworkers and

view matters from alternative perspectives. SBLD also delivered highly transferrable skills in an

interactive manner. These findings, which all clustered under theme two – valuable components

of SBLD – also have important implications for leadership trainers and coaches. First, training

delivered through interactive workshops that incorporate real-life simulations helps participants

develop easily transferrable skills to their specific work context. Second, soft skills such as

communication and emotional intelligence are viewed as important traits to develop by workers

and should be included in training programs. Third, and specific to the Saudi context, the SBLD

program instilled confidence in participants that the ambitious goals of Vision 2030 can be met,

and that more programs similar to SBLD need to be implemented throughout the private sector.

A third set of implications for practice arising from this study center around

improvements that could be made to the SBLD that were identified by participants. Participants

stressed the importance of carefully selecting people for participation in leadership development

programs. As noted in the interviews, if organizations choose individuals who are not motivated

to improve their leadership skills or are not invested in the company, then they are likely wasting

their time and money. It is therefore prudent that organizations use a more stringent selection

criteria when selecting workers to participate in leadership development trainings. As one

participant noted, having been in an administrative position for a certain number of years is not a

sufficient criterion alone; other factors, such as the person's willingness to improve their skills

and their workplace performance, should be taken into consideration. Another implication for

practice derived from this study's interview results is that training materials need to be more

comprehensive and, if produced in a different language, translated professionally so that the

translations are of a high quality and convey the same message as the original. Several

participants noted that some of the reading materials they were provided were bullet point type

summaries of what the trainer had said and did not provide any additional context. Not only does this make it difficult for people who were not at the training to understand, it does not provide any added value. Therefore, reading materials should be made more comprehensive, and also kept to a minimum since many participants viewed role plays and simulations as more valuable learning exercises.

A final set of implications for practice arising from this study is that the findings may not be limited to leadership development in the private sector. Recent Vision 2030 changes have impacted the way the Saudi government is working, and many public agencies and organizations are now managed in a style similar to business. This is evident in the current wave of private sector leaders being attracted by government agencies (Martineau & Al-Hejin, 2021). However, since this study was framed around the private sector and its challenges, any generalization of findings beyond the private sector is not appropriate; however the degree to which some of these findings are transferable to other contexts is left for the reader to consider (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Implications for Policy

An important implication for policy derived from the results is the need to include more soft skills in the education system from kindergarten through university to equip Saudi youth with important leadership skills before they even enter the workforce. Several interview participants noted that they did not feel as if the Saudi education curriculum enabled students to develop important leadership skills or bestow upon them a sense of leadership. Indeed, most participants felt that youth were more likely to learn leadership skills from their parent and other family members than from school. The importance of teaching leadership skills and encouraging students to develop a sense of leadership is highlighted by several studies (Alexander, 2011;

Alsaleh, 2019). For example, Alexander (2011) found that female students enrolled in a

leadership course at Prince Mohammad bin Fahd University became more comfortable

facilitating a group, better able to articulate their impact on others as a leader, and better public

speakers. All these skills are important to effective leadership. Additionally, interviews with

students in pre-service teacher education programs highlighted the fact that critical thinking,

another essential leadership skill, is often not at the core of the program (Allamnakhrah, 2013).

While less research has been carried out in a Saudi context on the teaching of leadership skills to

younger students, Karagianni and Montgomery (2018) found evidence that leadership programs

targeted toward secondary school students can have positive impact on skills such as self-

efficacy and self-esteem. Global studies on the integration of soft skills in schools are abundant.

For example, a five-day workshop organized by Chan (2003) provided Chinese high school

students with training in communication, public speaking, problem solving, and other soft skills.

Chan (2003) found that upon transitioning to leadership roles within their school, students were

more confident leaders who were more competent in communicating and solving problems.

Additionally, Gregoric and Owens (2008) found that Australian high schoolers who participated

in a peer support leadership program improved their social skills as well as enhanced decision-

making and conflict resolution abilities.

Limitations and Delimitations

Critically evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of this study is important to

interpreting the reliability and credibility of the results. This study was carried out through an

explanatory sequential mixed methods case study design. This type of research design is

considered to be one of the more complex applications of mixed methods research (Creswell &

Plano Clark, 2017). An advantage of using a mixed methods approach is that the results that are

produced will lead to conclusions that are both generalizable and contextualized (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Quantitative methodologies produce results that are generalizable and identify statistically significant relationships or associations between variables at the expense of in-depth understanding, while qualitative methodologies produce results that enable a more holistic understanding of a certain phenomenon at the expense of generalizability.

There are a few limitations to the mixed methods case study approach that are worth noting. First, the study was confined to a single program and so the results are not necessarily transferrable to other leadership development programs. Second, a mixed methods approach can yield large amounts of data that are difficult to integrate and require substantial expertise to interpret. Indeed, a mixed methods approach should only be used when doing so will more fully answer the RQs than a single methodological approach could alone (Scammon et al., 2013). The use of a mixed methods approach in this study is justified because the study was focused on determining if factors like demographics and organizational culture were associated with participants' experiences in the SBLD and on explaining the experiences that a select number of participants had. A third limitation arising from the mixed methods approach used in this study is that the methods were applied sequentially so that the interviews were informed by the quantitative analysis performed on the survey. The advantage in applying methods sequentially, rather than concurrently, is that it allows one data set to be built of the other (Halcomb, 2019). However, it also means that it may be difficult for a reader to fully grasp the importance of combining quantitative and qualitative methods in the same study since they are present one at a time (Halcomb, 2019).

Other important limitations arose while conducting the study. During data collection, the researcher's direct access to participants was limited as SBLD administrators asked to handle all

communication with participants. This is worth mentioning because it meant that the researcher

was not able to directly communicate with participants the process or importance of the study.

Additionally, it meant that the researcher could not directly answer participants' questions and

that participants had to go through an extra line of communication (the SBLD administrators) if

they had any questions. As a result, participants may have been discouraged from seeking clarity

or from participating altogether. In addition, the development of a strong relationship between

the researcher and individuals who completed the interviews may have been precluded by the

barrier to communication described. However, other factors could have helped overcome this,

such as commonalities in language and in professional background.

A final limitation to be considered was that people who did not voluntarily participate in

the study may have had different opinions about the topic. These people's views were, therefore,

not captured here. One possible mitigation for this issue could be using different research designs

that incorporate direct participant observation, which will be included among other

recommendations for future research in the next section.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several recommendations for future research can be made based on the results of this study.

Recommendations for future research include:

1. As previously mentioned, this study only focused on one program. Future studies should

   consider using a multiple-case design so that more than one leadership development

   program can be included. Doing so would yield multiple benefits. First, the results,

   especially those from interviews, would be more generalizable since they would represent

   perspectives and experiences from multiple programs. Second, including participants

   from more than one program might yield findings that did not emerge from using a single

case study. Third, depending on how the cases are chosen, the researcher would be able to make comparisons on factors such as industry (e.g., finance, manufacturing) and modalities used in the training program.

2. Future research could take the form of a utilization-focused evaluation. This type of evaluation is based on the idea that evaluations should be conducted in line with their intended use and users (Patton, 2008). In other words, an evaluation is carried out considering how the evaluation's findings will be applied and who will be impacted by the evaluation. Regarding leadership development in Saudi Arabia's private sector, the researcher could work with intended users (e.g., a particular organization, program) to determine what their most pressing needs and challenges are. Instead of conducting research based on pre-decided RQs, the RQs would be developed in consultation with members of the study's target audience so that the results are more impactful. This would also help ensure that the intended users actually use the evaluation and that they feel ownership of the evaluation's findings (Patton, 2008).

3. Future studies that take place in the Saudi context should focus on different sectors. For example, several interview participants suggested that the financial sector would be a fruitful sector for the implementation of programs similar to SBLD because the sector is filled with many good business leaders. The nursing sector may also be a good target for future research on leadership development, as Saudi Arabia has a shortage of nurse leadership (Alghamdi & Al-Hattami, 2018).

4. Another future study may examine and further the idea of introducing leadership basics and other soft skills in the Saudi education system. For example, future studies could investigate whether mentorship programs between high schoolers and younger children

help develop leadership skills, as suggested by McDaniel et al. (2015). Furthermore, since school is the primary setting through which children are exposed to organizational culture and learn about organizational roles (Karagianni & Montgomery, 2018), future studies should also consider how leadership skills could be incorporated into school curriculums. There is evidence that leadership programs targeted at high school students are effective at improving soft skills such as communication and decision-making (Chan, 2003; Gregoric & Owens, 2012), but research on the development of leadership skills in younger school-aged children is limited. Therefore, future studies could also consider how elementary school children may benefit from programs designed to improve leadership skills, similar to Budarina and Zelko (2020).

Future research could overcome challenges related to low participation by employing techniques such as direct participant observation to ensure capturing wider range of data. Other helpful techniques include conducting a longitudinal study with measures such as 360-degree ratings to better evaluate program impact on participants' leadership capabilities. Also, to better understand if adjusting program content to be culturally fit for the Saudi audience, an experiment design could be useful.

Conclusion

Saudi Arabia is at an economic and social crossroads. In the past few years, the country launched it Vision 2030 as a national transformational program to, among other goals, decrease the country's dependency on oil and diversify its economy. Two of the many goals set forth in Vision 2030 are to increase the private sector's contribution to the GDP from 45% to 60% and raise the share of non-oil exports in non-oil GDP from 16% to 50% (Vision 2030, 2017). Private

sector leaders must be prepared to meet these ambitious goals and effectively answer the challenges they will bring.

Recognizing there is a dearth of literature on leadership development in Saudi Arabia, the goal of this study was to explore and describe leadership development practices in Saudi Arabia's private sector, examine the current state of leadership development, and identify the challenges associated with it and strategies to help improve the situation. To accomplish this goal, this study employed a mixed methods single case study approach. Participants were graduates from the Saudi Business Leader Development (SBLD) program, a cohort-based leadership training program for the private sector. Data collection and analysis was split into two parts: first, a survey was sent to 488 graduates asking about demographic information and experiences from the program. Based on findings from the surveys, nine participants were invited to participate in interviews to help develop a more holistic understanding of their experiences in the program. Key takeaways from the interviews emphasized the role of demographics in program effectiveness, valuable components of the SBLD program, and improvements that could be made to the program. Specifically, participants felt that the program was instrumental in helping them develop valuable soft skills such as emotional intelligence and the ability to view things from other perspectives. Participants also emphasized the value they found in the program's interactive approach to teaching and the transferability of the skills they developed. While the program was delivered in a culturally sensitive matter, participants noted that program materials need to be translated with higher quality.

The results of this study yielded several important implications for leadership development, both in a Saudi context and in a more general setting. For training programs to be effective, they should be delivered through a reliance on interactive workshops, be culturally

sensitive, be selective in deciding who can participate, and develop supplemental training

materials that do more than restate what the trainer says during the course. Recommendations for

future research include focusing on different sectors in Saudi Arabia, using a multiple-case

design, performing a utilization-focused evaluation, and employing direct participant

observation.

REFERENCES

Abelha, D. M., Carneiro, P. C. da C., & Cavazotte, F. (2018). Transformational leadership and job satisfaction: Assessing the influence of organizational contextual factors and individual characteristics. *Review of Business Management*, *20*(4), 516–532. https://doi.org/10.7819/rbgn.v0i0.3949

Albassam, B. A. (2015). Economic diversification in Saudi Arabia: Myth or reality? *Resources Policy*, *44*, 112–117. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2015.02.005

Alexander, N. H. (2011). Teaching leadership to female students in Saudi Arabia. *Advancing Women in Leadership Journal*, *31*, 199–212.

Alfaisal University. (2020). *MBA: General: Master in business administration* [Alfaisal University]. https://research.alfaisal.edu/mba

Alfrayan, R. A. (2014). *The self-efficacy of businesswomen: Understanding generational cohorts of Saudi Arabian advocates* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of California, Santa Barbara.

Alghamdi, A. H., & Al-Hattami, A. (2018). The impact of a leadership development program on Saudi university students' perception of leadership skills. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, *12*(2), 253. https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v12i2.5840

Alhamoudi, S. A. (2017). Challenge of implementing balanced scorecard strategy in Saudi Arabia. *China-USA Business Review*, *16*(9), 418–431. https://doi.org/10.17265/1537-1514/2017.09.003

Allamnakhrah, A. (2013). Learning critical thinking in Saudi Arabia: Student perceptions of secondary pre-service teacher education programs. *Journal of Education and Learning*, *2*(1), 197–210. https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v2n1p197

Almohaimeed, S. (2014). *Understanding leadership development for young people: Creating a multi-dimensional and holistic framework for emerging high-school students as future leaders in KSA* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Edinburgh]. http://hdl.handle.net/1842/15773

Alogali, A. F. (2018). *Educational leadership development in Saudi Arabia: Experiences of participants of the Saudi Oxford program for educational leaders* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of North Dakota.

Al-Rasheed, A. M. (2001). Features of traditional Arab management and organization in the Jordan business environment. *Journal of Transnational Management Development*, *6*(1–2), 27–53. https://doi.org/10.1300/J130v06n01_02

Alsaleh, B. A. (2019). K-12 education reforms in Saudi Arabia: Implications for change management and leadership education. In E. A. Samier & E. S. ElKaleh (Eds.), *Teaching Educational Leadership in Muslim Countries* (pp. 171–186). Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-6818-9_10

Alzoman, M. M. (2012). *Effective leadership of a culturally diverse workforce in Saudi Arabia basic industries corporation (SABIC)* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of Portsmouth.

Ardichvili, Alexandre, Natt och Dag, K., & Manderscheid, S. (2016). Leadership development: Current and emerging models and practices. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *18*(3), 275–285. https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422316645506

Avolio, B. J., Bass, B. M., & Jung, D. I. (1999). Re-examining the components of transformational and transactional leadership using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *72*(4), 441–462.

Banafea, W., & Ibnrubbian, A. (2018). Assessment of economic diversification in Saudi Arabia through nine development plans. *OPEC Energy Review*, *42*(1), 42–54. https://doi.org/10.1111/opec.12116

Banjar, H., & El Seesy, N. (2019). Measurement of the emotional intelligence competencies for effective leaders among Saudi nursing students at King Abdul Al Aziz University. *American Journal of Nursing Research*, *7*(4), 420–427. https://doi.org/10.12691/ajnr-7-4-3

Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2009). *The Bass handbook of leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications*. Simon and Schuster.

Beauchamp, N. J. (2007). Leadership. In D. M. Yousem & N. J. Beauchamp (Eds.), *Radiology business practice: How to succeed*. Elsevier Health Sciences.

Bendell, J., Little, R., & Sutherland, N. (2016). *Learning from the impasse in Western leadership: Implications of a critical perspective for non-Western scholarship*. Leadership Excellence and Development (LEAD) Conference, Denpasar, Indonesia. http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/2171/

Bennett, N., & Lemoine, G. J. (2014). What a difference a word makes: Understanding threats to performance in a VUCA world. *Business Horizons*, *57*(3), 311–317. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2014.01.001

Bindah, E. V. (2017). Family dynamics and intergenerational entrepreneurs' leadership style. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, *7*(1), 25. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40497-017-0083-1

Bjerke, B., & Al-Meer, A. (1993). Culture's consequences: Management in Saudi Arabia. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *14*(2), 30–35.

Braun, V., Clarke, V., & Weate, P. (2016). Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise research. In A. C. Sparkes & B. Smith (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise* (pp. 191–205). Taylor & Francis.

Brownlee, M. T. J., Bricker, K., Schwab, K., & Dustin, D. (2019). Seven characteristics of highly effective leaders. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, *37*(1), 154–157.

Budarina, A. O., & Zelko, A. S. (2020). *Pedagogical strategies for the development of soft skills of schoolchildren in after class education*. International Forum on Teacher Education. https://doi.org/10.3897/ap.2.e0291

Chan, D. W. (2003). Leadership Skills Training for Chinese Secondary Students in Hong Kong: Does Training Make a Difference? *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*, *14*(3), 166–174. https://doi.org/10.4219/jsge-2003-427

Charles, M., & Bechtold, M. C. (2014). From desert to destiny: Knowledge, attitudes and practices of Saudi Arabian leadership. *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, *14*(1), 157–169.

Chen, Z., & Powell, G. N. (2012). No pain, no gain? A resource-based model of work-to-family enrichment and conflict. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *81*(1), 89–98. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.05.003

Chinese Culture Connection. (1987). Chinese values and the search for culture-free dimensions of culture. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *18*(2), 143–164. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002187018002002

Chukwusa, J. (2018). Autocratic leadership style: Obstacle to success in academic libraries. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/2019

Coffey, R. E., Cook, C. W., & Hunsaker, P. L. (1994). *Management and organizational behavior*. Austen Press.

Craig, W. (2018, July 3). Leadership practices that drive results. *Forbes*. https://www.forbes.com/sites/williamcraig/2018/07/03/leadership-practices-that-drive-results/

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage publications.

Dakhil, M. M. (1988). *Management development and the Saudi Arabian culture* [Doctoral dissertation]. Claremont Graduate School.

Dar Al Hekma. (2020). *University facts and figures—About us—Dar Al Hekma*. Dar Al Hekma University. http://www.dah.edu.sa/en/about/Pages/Facts-and-Figures.aspx

Day. (2011). Leadership development. In A. Bryman, D. Collinson, K. Grint, B. Jackson, & M. Uhl-Bien (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of leadership* (pp. 37–50). SAGE Publications Inc.

Day, C. (2000). Beyond transformational leadership. *Educational Leadership*, *57*(7), 56–59.

Day, D. V., Harrison, M. M., & Halpin, S. M. (2008). *An integrative approach to leader development*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203809525

Dirani, K. M., Hamie, C. S., & Tlaiss, H. (2017). Leadership in Saudi Arabia: A multifaceted phenomenon. In A. Ardichvili & K. Dirani (Eds.), *Leadership development in emerging market economies* (pp. 245–260). Palgrave Macmillan.

Du, S., Swaen, V., Lindgreen, A., & Sen, S. (2013). The roles of leadership styles in corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *114*(1), 155–169. JSTOR. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23433656

Dumas, T. L., & Stanko, T. L. (2017). Married with children: How family role identification

    shapes leadership behaviors at work. *Personnel Psychology*, *70*(3), 597–633.

    https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12182

Elzubeir, M. (2011). Faculty-led faculty development: Evaluation and reflections on a distributed

    educational leadership model. *Saudi Journal of Kidney Diseases and Transplantation*,

    22(1), 90–96.

Feser, C., Nielsen, N., & Rennie, M. (2017). What's missing in leadership development?

    McKinsey Quarterly, *3*, 1–5. https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-

    insights/leadership/whats-missing-in-leadership-development

Furr, R. M., & Funder, D. C. (2004). Situational similarity and behavioral consistency:

    Subjective, objective, variable-centered, and person-centered approaches. *Journal of*

    Research in Personality, *38*(5), 421–447. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2003.10.001

General Authority for Statistics. (2016). *Statistical summary of higher education students*.

    General Authority for Statistics. https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/3218

General Authority for Statistics. (2018). *Population by gender, age groups and nationality*

    (Saudi/non-Saudi). https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/5680

Gorondutse, A. H., Abdullah, S. S., Ahmad, F. B., Alsherry, W. bin R., & Rogo, H. B. (2018).

    Influence of leadership style, training, role of ambiguity on employee performance of

    higher education of Saudi Arabia (KSA). *Journal of Business & Retail Management*

    Research, *13*(01), 213–224. https://doi.org/10.24052/JBRMR/V13IS01/ART-21

Gregoric, C., & Owens, L. (2008). *The effectiveness of peer support leadership training in a*

    South Australian school. 21.

Gruda, D., & Kafetsios, K. (2020). Attachment orientations guide the transfer of leadership judgments: Culture matters. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *46*(4), 525–546. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167219865514

Halcomb, E. J. (2019). Mixed methods research: The issues beyond combining methods. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *75*(3), 499–501. https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.13877

Hanson, G., Hammer, L., & Colton, C. (2006). Development and validation of a multidimensional scale of perceived work-family positive spillover. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *11*, 249–265. https://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.11.3.249

Haslam, S. A., Steffens, N. K., Peters, K., Boyce, R. A., Mallett, C. J., & Fransen, K. (2017). A social identity approach to leadership development; The 5R program. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, *16*(3), 113–124. https://doi.org/10.1027/1866-5888/a000176

Hodges, J. (2017). Cracking the walls of leadership: Women in Saudi Arabia. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, *32*(1), 34–46. https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-11-2015-0106

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind: Intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Hofstede, Geert. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, *2*(1). https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014

Horney, N., Pasmore, B., & O'Shea, T. (2010). Leadership agility: A business imperative for a VUCA world. *People & Strategy*, *33*(4), 32–38.

Human Resources Development Fund—HRDF. (n.d.). Retrieved February 25, 2020, from https://www.hrdf.org.sa/

Idris, A. M. (2007). Cultural barriers to improved organizational performance in Saudi Arabia. *Advanced Management Journal*, *72*(2), 36–53. https://search.proquest.com/openview/2c8251d1abe2b88e8ccf4d7b568f71a0/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=40946

IPA. (n.d.). *Institute of Public Administration*. Institute of Public Administration. https://www.ipa.edu.sa/en-us/Centers/LeadersCenter/Pages/default.aspx

Javidan, M., & Zaheer, A. (2019, May 27). How leaders around the world build trust across cultures. *Harvard Business Review*. https://hbr.org/2019/05/how-leaders-around-the-world-build-trust-across-cultures

Jex, S. M., & Britt, T. W. (2014). *Organizational psychology: A scientist-practitioner approach*. John Wiley & Sons.

Jiang, Y., & Chen, C. C. (2018). Integrating knowledge activities for team innovation: Effects of transformational leadership. *Journal of Management*, *44*(5), 1819–1847. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316628641

Kalliny, M., & Gentry, L. (2007). Cultural values reflected in Arab and American television advertising. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, *29*(1), 15–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2007.10505205

Karagianni, D., & Montgomery, A. J. (2018). Developing leadership skills among adolescents and young adults: A review of leadership programmes. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, *23*(1), 86–98. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2017.1292928

Kattan, M. M., De Pablos Heredero, C., Montes Botella, J. L., & Margalina, V. M. (2016). Factors of successful women leadership in Saudi Arabia. *Asian Social Science*, *12*(5), 94. https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v12n5p94

Kempster, S., & Carroll, B. (2016). *Responsible leadership realism and romanticism*. Routledge.

KFUPM. (2020). *CIM graduate programs—College of Industrial Management*. King Fahad

University of Petroleum & Minerals. http://cim.kfupm.edu.sa/graduate/

Khajeh, E. H. A. (2018). Impact of leadership styles on organizational performance. *Journal of*

Human Resources Management Research, *2018*, 10. https://doi.org/DOI:

10.5171/2018.687849

Khazma, J., Al-Najjar, D. K., & Steinberg, D. H. (2016). Customer service & Hofstede's cultural

dimensions in Lebanon, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, & the USA among entrepreneurial

finance professionals. *Proceedings of the Academy of Entrepreneurship*, *22*, 21–25.

Kiersch, C., & Peters, J. (2017). Leadership from the inside out: Student leadership development

within authentic leadership and servant leadership frameworks. *Journal of Leadership*

Education, *16*(1), 148–168. https://doi.org/10.12806/V16/I1/T4

Kim, H., & Kim, T. (2017). Emotional intelligence and transformational leadership: A review of

empirical studies. *Human Resource Development Review*, *16*(4), 377–393.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484317729262

Kjellström, S., Törnblom, O., & Stålne, K. (2020). A dialogue map of leader and leadership

development methods: A communication tool. *Cogent Business & Management*, *7*(1).

https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2020.1717051

KSU. (2020). *Study plan: Master of business administration*. King Saud University.

http://cba.ksu.edu.sa/sites/cba.ksu.edu.sa/files/imce_images/cba_catalog_2015-2016.pdf

Laub, J. (2018). Defining leadership: The critical role of definition making. In J. Laub (Ed.),

Leveraging the power of servant leadership: Building high performing organizations (pp.

45–71). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77143-4_3

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. SAGE.

Lone, M. A., & Lone, A. H. (2018). Does emotional intelligence predict leadership effectiveness? An exploration in non-Western context. *South Asian Journal of Human Resources Management*, *5*(1), 28–39. https://doi.org/10.1177/2322093718766806

Lu, C., Siu, O., Chen, W., & Wang, H. (2011). Family mastery enhances work engagement in Chinese nurses: A cross-lagged analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *78*(1), 100–109. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.07.005

Martineau, J., & Al-Hejin, B. (2021). *Private-to-public transitions*. Misk Foundation and Center for Creative Leadership.

McCauley, C. D., Van Veslor, E., & Ruderman, M. N. (2010). Introduction: Our viewpoint of leadership development. In E. Van Veslor & M. N. Ruderman (Eds.), *The Center for Creative Leadership handbook of leadership development* (Third, pp. 1–26). Jossey-Bass.

McCleskey, J. A. (2014). Situational, transformational, and transactional leadership and leadership development. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *5*(4), 14.

McDaniel, S. C., Yarbrough, A.-M., & Besnoy, K. (2015). *Research-Based Practices in Afterschool Mentoring Programs*. 8.

Mendoza, L. R., Orea-Amador, L., & Kendall, M. R. (2016). Mixed method study of the evolution of leadership traits during a leadership experience. *Proceedings of the 2016 ASEE Annual Conference and Exhibition*.

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (Fourth Edition). Jossey-Bass.

Michel, J. S., Pichler, S., & Newness, K. (2014). Integrating leader affect, leader work-family spillover, and leadership. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *35*(5), 410–428. https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-06-12-0074

Ministry of Economy and Planning. (2019). *The first development plan 1970-1975*. https://www.mep.gov.sa/en/AdditionalDocuments/PlansEN/1st/First%20Development%20Plan%20-%20Chapter%201%20-%20Introduction.pdf

Ministry of Education. (2017). *All majors in the Saudi higher education system*. https://fac.ksu.edu.sa/aruzaiza/publication/106951

Misk Academy. (n.d.). *Misk Academy*. Misk Academy: Accelerate Your Professional Career. Retrieved February 25, 2020, from https://www.miskacademy.edu.sa/

Moldoveanu, M., & Narayandas, D. (2019). The future of leadership development. *Harvard Business Review*, *March-April 2019*, 2–10.

Morton, K. L., Barling, J., Rhodes, R. E., Mâsse, L. C., Zumbo, B. D., & Beauchamp, M. R. (2011). The application of transformational leadership theory to parenting: Questionnaire development and implications for adolescent self-regulatory efficacy and life satisfaction. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, *33*(5), 688–709. https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.33.5.688

Mujani, W. K., Jamsari, E. A., Tibek, S. R. H., Ya'akub, N. I., Hamid, H. A., Yusoff, W. M. W., Suradi, N. R. M., Zainol, Z. A., & Mohd, W. (2012). Leadership theories and models of the perspective of Western scholars. *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences*, *6*(8), 1405–1410.

Nahavandi, A., & Krishnan, H. A. (2017). Indo-European leadership (IEL): A non-Western leadership perspective. In J. L. Chin, J. E. Trimble, & J. E. Garcia (Eds.), *Building*

leadership bridges (pp. 105–123). Emerald Publishing Limited.
https://doi.org/10.1108/S2058-880120170000003006

Neil, E., & Sprusansky, D. (2017). A look at Saudi Arabia Vision 2030. *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, *36*, 53–54.

Nereim, V. (2020, February 21). Saudi Arabia's economy to see upturn this year, Alkholifey says. *Bloomberg.Com*. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-02-22/saudi-arabia-s-economy-to-see-upturn-this-year-alkholifey-says

Nurunnabi, M. (2017). Transformation from an oil-based economy to a knowledge-based economy in Saudi Arabia: The direction of Saudi Vision 2030. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, *8*(2), 536–564. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-017-0479-8

Obeidat, B. Y., Shannak, R. O., Masa'deh, R., & Al-Jarrah, I. (2012). Toward better understanding for Arabian culture: Implications based on Hofstede's cultural model. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, *28*(4), 512–522.

Oxford Business Group. (2020). *Giga-projects under construction are set to boost Saudi Arabia's entertainment and tourism offerings*. Oxford Business Group. https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/analysis/spearheading-growth-giga-projects-expand-entertainment-and-tourism-offering

Para-González, L., Jiménez-Jiménez, D., & Martínez-Lorente, A. R. (2018). Exploring the mediating effects between transformational leadership and organizational performance. *Employee Relations*, *40*(2), 412–432. https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-10-2016-0190

Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation*. SAGE Publications.

Peck, J. R. (2014). Can hiring quotas work? The effect of the Nitaqat program on the Saudi private sector. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, *9*(2), 316–347. https://doi.org/10.1257/pol.20150271

PMBSC. (2020). *Core curriculum*. Prince Mohammad Bin Salman College. https://www.mbsc.edu.sa/corecurriculum

Preston-Cunningham, T., Elbert, C. D., & Dooley, K. E. (2017). Defining leadership: Collegiate women's learning circles: A qualitative approach. *Journal of Leadership Education*, *16*(1).

PSU. (2020). *College of business administration (CBA)*. Prince Sultan University. https://www.psu.edu.sa/cba/public/graduate-prog-plan

Qimam. (n.d.). *Qimam fellowship*. Qimam. Retrieved June 5, 2020, from https://www.qimam.com/en/

Reardon, R., Fite, K., Boone, M., & Sullivan, S. (2019). Critically reflective leadership: Defining successful growth. *International Journal of the Whole Child*, *4*(1), 20–32.

Rivers, M. N. (2019). A review of autocratic, paternalistic, and charismatic leadership in three collectivist cultures. *Emerging Leadership Journeys*, *12*(1), 68–104.

Ruderman, M. N., Ohlott, P. J., Panzer, K., & King, S. N. (2002). Benefits of multiple roles for managerial women. *The Academy of Management Journal*, *45*(2), 369–386. https://doi.org/10.2307/3069352

Saeed, T., Almas, S., Anis-ul-Haq, M., & Niazi, G. S. K. (2014). Leadership styles: Relationship with conflict management styles. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, *25*(3), 214–225. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCMA-12-2012-0091

Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, *9*(3), 185–211. https://doi.org/10.2190/DUGG-P24E-52WK-6CDG

Sarkar, A. (2016). We live in a VUCA world: The importance of responsible leadership. *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*, *30*(3), 9–12. https://doi.org/10.1108/DLO-07-2015-0062

Saudi Arabia—Hofstede Insights. (n.d.). Retrieved February 2, 2019, from https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/saudi-arabia/

Saudi Vision 2030. (2017). *Saudi Vision 2030 goals*. http://vision2030.gov.sa/en/goals

Scammon, D. L., Tomoaia-Cotisel, A., Day, R. L., Day, J., Kim, J., Waitzman, N. J., Farrell, T. W., & Magill, M. K. (2013). Connecting the dots and merging meaning: Using mixed methods to study primary care delivery transformation. *Health Services Research*, *48*(6 Pt 2), 2181–2207. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6773.12114

Shin, Y. (2012). CEO ethical leadership, ethical climate, climate strength, and collective organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *108*(3), 299–312. JSTOR. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41476296

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. SAGE Publications Inc.

Stanford. (2020). *Stanford Graduate School of Business*. https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/programs/mba/academic-experience/curriculum/first-year

Storey, J. (2016). *Leadership in organizations: Current issues and key trends*. Routledge.

Sywelem, M. M. G., & Witte, J. E. (2013). Continuing professional development: Perceptions of elementary school teachers in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Modern Education Review*, *3*(12), 881–898.

Turner, E., Norman-Conchas, G., O'Dell, D., Weis, A., Agha, R., Barahona, K., Barry, R., Chau, T., Jaradat, R., Lane, S., Niu, C., & Modi, M. U. (2017). China, Costa Rica, Japan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and the USA: Customer service and cultural differences. *International Conference Proceedings*, *1*, 185–190.

UCLA. (2020). *UCLA MBA program*. UCLA Anderson School of Management. https://www.anderson.ucla.edu/degrees/full-time-mba

USC. (2020). *Core curriculum: USC Marshall*. https://www.marshall.usc.edu/programs/mba-programs/full-time-mba/academics/core-curriculum

Voegtlin, C., Patzer, M., & Scherer, A. G. (2012). Responsible leadership in global business: A new approach to leadership and its multi-level outcomes. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *105*(1), 1–16.

Waarts, E., & Van Everdingen, Y. (2005). The influence of national culture on the adoption status of innovations: *European Management Journal*, *23*(6), 601–610. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2005.10.007

Weir, D. (2001). *Management in the Arab world: A fourth paradigm*. First European Academy of Management Conference, Barcelona, Spain.

Yamada, M. (2018). Can Saudi Arabia move beyond "Production with rentier characteristics"? Human capital development in the transitional oil economy. *The Middle East Journal*, *72*(4), 587–609.

Yin, R. K. (2017). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods*. Sage publications.

Younis, M. (2016, August 8). Saudis see hope after oil. *Gallup Poll News Service*, 2. https://news.gallup.com/poll/194210/saudis-hope-oil.aspx

Zaccaro, S. J., & Banks, D. (2004). Leader visioning and adaptability: Bridging the gap between

research and practice on developing the ability to manage change. *Human Resource

Management*, *43*(4), 367–380. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20030

APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The following represents the entire survey used in the quantitative data collection. This was exported from the Qualtrics platform. The survey takers had the option of completing the survey in either English or Arabic. The English survey questions were:

Leadership Development in Saudi Arabia Survey

Start of Block: 1. My Academy Program experience

Expected completion time: 6-10 minutes.
The following questionnaire is part of my doctoral research study about leadership development in the Saudi private sector. This survey is broken down into 4 parts:
1. Your experience in the Academy
2. Your organization
3. Your leadership journey
4. Demographics

Q1.1
1. Your experience in the Academy
 I had significant growth in my leadership skills after the Academy Program.

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q1.2 Most of what I learned in the Academy Program is applicable in my organization.

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q1.3 I think the content of the Academy Program was appropriate to my culture and background.

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q1.4 Considering your experience in the Academy Program, rank these features in terms of significance to your learning. Drag the most significant feature to the top of list.

_____ Lectures (1)
_____ Projects (2)
_____ Small group discussions (3)
_____ Readings (4)
_____ Coaching (5)
_____ Other, please add: (6)
_____ Other, please add: (7)

Q1.5 Rank these topics from your Academy Program learning in terms of usefulness for your growth as leader. Drag the most useful to the top of list.

_____ Transactional and Transformational Leadership (1)
_____ Strategic Planning and Management (2)
_____ Entrepreneurship (3)
_____ Project Management (4)
_____ People Management (5)
_____ Sales and Marketing (6)
_____ Other, please add: (7)
_____ Other, please add: (8)

Q1.6 I received personalized feedback about my own leadership skills/abilities in the Academy Program.

- Yes (6)
- No (7)

Display This Question:

If received personalized feedback = Yes

Q1.6a That personalized feedback was based on:

- A self assessment I completed (1)
- My participation in the sessions (2)
- My project work (3)

Display This Question:

If feedback based on = A self assessment I completed

Or feedback based on = My participation in the sessions

Or feedback based on = My project work

Q1.6b And that feedback was useful for my growth as leader

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q1.7 I was intellectually challenged in the Academy Program.

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q1.8 I was supported in the Academy Program (by instructors, colleagues, or administrators).

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q1.9 I enrolled in the Academy Program because:

- I made a request to attend the program and my manager approved it (1)
- My direct supervisor/manager suggested the program for me (2)
- Human Resources (or Training/Development) department suggested the program for me (3)
- Other (4) _____

Q1.10 The cohort I attended was:

▼ Cohort 1 (1) . . . Cohort 33 (33)

Q1.11 The Academy Program I attended was conducted in

- English (1)
- Arabic (2)

Q1.12 The Academy Program I attended was conducted

- Live (in-person) (1)
- Online (2)
- Some sessions were in-person and some online (3)

End of Block: 1. My Academy Program experience

Start of Block: 2. My work/organization

Q2.1
2. Your organization Leadership development is an important part of my organization's culture and management style

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q2.2 My enrollment in the Academy Program is part of a wider leadership development activity in my organization that involves other employees and managers being developed as well.

- Agree (1)
- Disagree (2)

Q2.3 I was promoted to a higher position after attending the Academy Program

- Yes, already promoted (1)
- No, but expecting a promotion in the near future (2)
- No, but expecting a promotion in the long run (3)
- No, and I am not sure when to be expecting a promotion (4)

Q2.4 In my organization, the highest position that is responsible for training and development is

- The CEO/President (1)
- The HR Director/Manager or CHRO (2)
- The Training and Development Manager (3)
- The Training Specialist (4)
- Other. Please add: (5) _____

Q2.5 Succession Planning is well defined and clearly implemented in my organization

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q2.6 We have a well-defined high potential program in my organization

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q2.7 It is common to receive feedback about my job performance in my organization

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q2.8 Leader and leadership development are part of everyday business in my organization

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q2.9 in my organization, we have role models who are considered as source of inspiration for emerging leaders

- Strongly agree (7)
- Agree (6)
- Somewhat agree (5)
- Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- Somewhat disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

Q2.10 My organization's main business is considered to be in this industry:

- Manufacturing/industrial (1)
- Food and agriculture (2)
- Banking, Insurance, and Financial Services (3)
- Retail (4)
- Services (5)
- Hospitality (Hotels, Restaurants) (6)
- Real Estates (7)
- Other (8) _____

Q2.11 Total number if employees in my organization is:

- less than 100 (1)
- 101 to 500 (2)
- 501 to 1,000 (3)
- 1,000 to 5,000 (4)
- More than 5,000 (5)

End of Block: 2. My work/organization

Start of Block: 3. My Leadership Journey

Q3.1
3. Your leadership journey

In my growth as leader, I was mostly inspired by: (select all that apply)

- o   A parent (1)
- o   A teacher (2)
- o   A school principle or staff (3)
- o   A mentor (4)
- o   A manager/supervisor I worked with (5)
- o   A contemporary public figure (6)
- o   A historic figure (7)

Q3.2 I was exposed to leadership concepts in my K-12 education (elementary, middle, and high school)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q3.3 I was exposed to leadership concepts in my college education

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q3.4 I have had leadership training before the Academy Program

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q3.5 I have done some self-based leadership development (for example, reading leadership books)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q3.6 I think people who can mostly influence my growth as leader are (select all that apply):

o Family members (1)
o Political figures (2)
o Religious figures (3)
o Celebrities (from the arts, sports, media, social media) (4)
o Business leaders (5)

End of Block: 3. My Leadership Journey

Start of Block: 4. Demographics

Q4.1
4. Demographics
 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q4.2 How old are you?

- 25 or younger (1)
- 26-30 (2)
- 31-35 (3)
- 36-40 (4)
- 41-45 (5)
- 46-50 (6)
- 51 or older (7)

Q4.3
What is your marital status?

- Married (1)
- Widowed (2)
- Divorced (3)
- Never married (4)

Q4.4 Do you have children?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q4.4a How many children?

_____

✳

Q4.5 How many siblings do you have?

_____

✳

Q4.6 What is your birth order among your siblings?

_____

Q4.7 What was your undergraduate major?

- Business (including Finance, Accounting, Marketing, Management) (1)
- Engineering (2)
- Islamic Studies (3)
- Science (4)
- Medical majors (including Dental, Public Health, Nursing, Pharmacy, etc.) (5)
- Social Sciences (6)
- Humanities (7)
- Other: (8) _____

Q4.8 Where did you attend college?

- In Saudi Arabia (1)
- In another country (2)

Q4.9 Do you have a Master's degree?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Display This Question:

If have Master's = Yes

Q4.9a What was your Master's degree major?

- Master Business Administration (MBA) (1)
- Something else: (2) _____

Display This Question:

If have Master's = Yes

Q4.9b Where did you earn your Master's degree

- In Saudi Arabia (1)
- In another country (2)

Q4.10 How many organizations did you work for?

- (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- (5)
- or more (6)

Q4.11 How many years is your total work experience?

- 1 to 4 years (1)
- 5 to 8 years (2)
- 9 to 12 years (3)
- 13 or more years (4)

Q4.12 How long have you been working in your current organization?

- 1 to 4 years (1)
- 5 to 8 years (2)
- 9 to 12 years (3)
- 13 or more years (4)

End of Block: 4. Demographics

Start of Block: 5. Interview opt-in

Q5.1
The researcher will select a few participants from the Academy Program for casual interviews about their leadership training experience. These interviews will be used to further study the issue of leadership

development in Saudi organizations. Are you willing to be interviewed via phone or Zoom?

- Yes (1)
- Maybe (2)
- No (3)

✳

Q5.1a Great! Please choose your preferred contact method to coordinate the interview:

- WhatsApp, my mobile number is: (1)
_____

- Email, my email address is: (2) _____

End of Block: 5. Interview opt-in

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following interview guide was used with all 9 interviews. There was a standard introduction and purpose clarification in the beginning followed by conversational-type questions.

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this interview is to enrich the study about business leadership development in Saudi Arabia's current context. As a reminder, this is not to evaluate the SBLD program, you, or your organization. Rather, the focus is the leadership development activity that is happening in the country. Just like the survey response, I am not asking about any identifying information about you or the organization you work for.

Also, it is worth mentioning that this interview is being recorded and the recording is kept in a password-protected computer file accessible only by me. Recordings will not be shared with anybody except, possibly, a freelance translator who would listen to the recording for the purpose of translating and transcribing it in English. Pseudonyms will be used to refer to participants.

General Questions

- How do you see the business leadership development activity in KSA?

- How is now different from the past?

- What has been the impact of Vision 2030 on private sector organizations' leadership development?

- What can organizations do to improve the chances of successful leadership development?
    - What can CEOs do?
    - What can HR departments do?

○ What can line managers do?

- What is the education system (K-12 and college) doing to prepare young Saudis to become future leaders? And what can be improved?

- What other entities could impact the development of leaders? And how?

- How can family businesses develop leaders?

- Do you think any particular industry is noticeably developing more leaders? Why?

Questions About the SBLD Experience

- How was your experience in the SBLD?

- What was a significant experience you had in the program (good or bad)?

- Describe a time at work when you acted differently as a result of your training at SBLD.

- Any interesting observations from SBLDT?

○ Did you notice SBLD colleagues who seemed to have (or have not) benefited greatly from the program? What do you think is behind that?

- Have you been involved in developing others to become leaders? What worked? Any interesting insights?

- Examples from quant analysis for discussion

○ People said readings were the least useful, what is your take on that?

○ Seems like people who had children noticed less growth in their leadership skills after SBLD, what do you make of that? How do you think having children is linked to leadership development?

- How do you think organizations could maximize the effectiveness of leadership development endeavors?

- What are some examples of organizational practices that could help/hinder leadership development?

- Describe your views about the training material and content used in SBLD.

  ○ Were they appropriate for your background and culture?

  ○ Was there anything from local history or about local people?

👤 Khaled Hanaky ▾

Study Details	Submissions

Approved

IRB-2020-503   Leadership Development in Saudi Arabia's Private Sector

📄 PDF   🗑 Delete

Approval Date:
08-27-2020

Expiration Date:
08-27-2021

Organization:
Sch of Leadership & Ed Science

Active Submissions:
N/A

Sponsors:
N/A

Admin Check-In Date:
N/A

Closed Date:
N/A

Current Policy
Post-2018 Rule

Key Contacts ⓘ	Attachments

Team Member	Role	Number	Email
Khaled Hanaky	Principal Investigator	619-260-4600	khanaky@sandiego.edu
Fred Galloway	Primary Contact	619-260-7435	galloway@SanDiego.edu