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Leadership styles in the Palestinian large-scale industrial enterprises  
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# Leadership styles in the Palestinian large-scale industrial enterprises

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – To highlight the importance of leadership through identifying the leadership styles and practices in the Palestinian industrial sector and to find out the optimal style most suitable to this country so as to help its business leaders lead their business ventures effectively and efficiently.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The triangulation methodology and Bass' (1985) full range model of leadership was utilized because it covers a full range of leadership behaviors and styles from the highly transformational to the highly avoidant (Avolio and Bass, 1991). The multifactor leadership questionnaire and a structured interview were used as the main instruments to elicit the data of the study.

**Findings** – Transactional leadership style was found to be the most frequently used leadership style; transformational leadership was exhibited less frequently; and laissez-faire was noted as the least commonly occurring leadership style and more frequently among the leaders with low educational background, low previous managerial experience, and employee leaders. Transformational leadership was found to induce the greatest satisfaction, willingness to exert extra effort, and effectiveness among employees.

**Research limitations/implications** – The exclusion of the small and medium scale industries, the exclusion of Gaza Strip from the survey, and the unavailability of a complete and official list of Palestinian industrial companies.

**Practical implications** – The utilization of the transactional leadership style in the Palestinian industrial institutions resulted in high degree of dissatisfaction among employees, which in turn, has dangerous effects and consequences on the overall performance of the organizations. This issue should be given the greatest care, concern, and attention of both the leaders of the Palestinian organizations and the related decision makers if they want to develop and enhance the competitive capacity of the Palestinian economy. Additionally, educators in higher management education in Palestinian universities should include the teaching of leadership theory as an important part of the graduate curriculum.

**Originality/value** – Many factors were found to have an important impact on the choice of the leadership style. Among these: education, past experience, culture, political and economic stability, and mutual trust. Another important issue revealed by the study is that transformational leadership can be effectively and efficiently implemented in the transitional economies.

**Keywords** Leadership, Transformational leadership, Palestine

**Paper type** Research paper



## Introduction

In a competitive and quickly changing business environment, the effective leadership becomes one of the most critical needs and requirements (Bass, 1985; Bryman, 1986;

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Pierce and Newstrom, 1995). When the unpredictable change occurs rapidly in an environment, it necessarily requires much more innovation, creativity, and individual thought and initiative. In such a situation, prescriptions, policies, and procedures become useless. Kotter (1990) suggests that tomorrow's leaders may need to hold visions, values, assumptions and paradigms that are in agreement with having a team-oriented, empowered workforce in order to be most successful. Without the vision and values that support the organizational structures of the future, leaders may not be equipped to make decisions in line with that structure (Bryman, 1986; Kotter, 1990).

The interest in leadership research and theories can be inferred from writings of early civilizations. Confucius (500 BC) wrote one of the earliest comprehensive treatises on leadership, and discussions of leadership can be found in the writings of Plato, Plutarch, and Caesar. In more recent times, leadership has continued to be a topic of interest, as well as a subject of contention among many leadership theorists. As evidenced in Bass's excellent review of leadership, more than 7,500 studies on leadership have been conducted (Jennings, 1960; Stogdill, 1974; Hollander, 1978; Bass; 1990). Several different schools of thought regarding leadership have prevailed simultaneously since the early observations in this area of interest began. Traditionally, leadership studies have taken as their independent variable either an attribute of a leader (such as a skill or personal trait), or a dimension of a leader's behavior (such as the leader's preferred style of supervision). The dependent variables, on the other side, have most often been the satisfaction of the subordinates and the performance. Some theories have gone further and speculated about intervening variables such as the motivations, attitudes, or expectancies of the subordinates (Bass, 1990).

In the following, leadership theories are reviewed from a historical perspective focusing on how leadership theory has developed over time. To achieve this goal, three approaches can be identified: the traits approach, which dominated the study of leadership up to the 1940s; the behavioral approach, which was popular until late 1960s; and the contingency approach, which is currently the dominant approach to leadership (Robbins, 2003; Robbins and Coulter, 2003).

### **Traits approach**

Trait theories of leadership focused and evolved around a central idea that tried to study and isolate the personal qualities and characteristics that differentiate leaders from non-leaders. They are based on the underlying assumption that leadership is inborn, which means that one is either born as a leader or as a follower. Traits such as intelligence, knowledge, dominance, initiation, achievement, responsibility, participation, self-confidence, energy, emotional maturity, stress tolerance, pragmatism, result-orientation, ambition, honesty, and integrity were studied and labeled as characteristics of effective leaders (Stogdill, 1974; Bass, 1990; Bryman, 1996; Robbins; 2003; Robbins and Coulter, 2003). Stogdill (1948) reviewed 124 studies grounded upon the trait theory. Although he ultimately concluded that the trait theory studies were weak and inconclusive, he did determine that leaders exceeded others in several traits, such as: intelligence, scholarship, dependability, social participation, and social and economic status. While these determinations were thought provoking, and later applicable to other leadership studies, Stogdill concluded that leadership could not be adequately defined by the axioms of trait theory.

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Stogdill postulated that effective leadership is dependent upon the situation as well as the leader's personal characteristics. He concluded that "a person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits" (Stogdill, 1948, p. 66).

### **Behavioral approach**

In contrast to trait theories, behavioral theories argue that leadership can be taught, and leaders can be made rather than born. In this approach, leadership was explored as a style. Instead of focusing on the individual traits the leader should enhance, the research questions here were directed towards the nature of managerial work and a classification of the different functions, practices, roles, and behaviors of the leader. This was based on the fact that in contrast to personality, behavior can be learned and altered through practice, which, in turn, resulted in an interest in training leaders, and in some parts of the research, in an investigation as to whether one kind of behavior was more efficient than others (Stogdill, 1974; Bryman, 1986; Bass, 1990). Rather than concentrating on what leaders are, as the trait approach urged, the behavioral approach forced looking at what leaders do. The general question underlying this approach was: what is being done by leaders that differentiate them from non-leaders? (Greenberg and Baron, 2000; Greenberg, 2003). According to Robbins (2003), the main difference between trait and behavioral approaches in terms of application lies in their underlying assumptions. If trait theories were valid, then leaders are born rather than made. On the other hand, if there were specific behaviors inherent to leaders, then these behaviors could be isolated, defined, and taught.

### **The contingency approach**

The contingency approach, which is sometimes referred to as the situational approach, appeared in the beginnings of the 1960s as a consequence of the lacking ability of earlier approaches to explain the many different aspects of leader behavior (Kast and Rosenzweig, 1973; Pierce and Newstrom, 1995). It states that the effective leader should adjust his/her style in a manner consistent with critical aspects of the organizational context, such as the nature of the task, and attributes of employees carrying out the work (Stogdill, 1974; Bass, 1990; Rost, 1991; Buchanan and Huczynski, 1997). This approach came as an answer to the question about the best way to lead, and dealt with the interaction between the leader's traits, the leader's behaviors, and the situation in which the leader exists. The basic assumption of this approach is that the effects of one variable on leadership are contingent on other variables. This concept was a major insight at the time, because it opened the door for the possibility that leadership could be different in every situation (Saal and Knight, 1988; Pierce and Newstrom, 1995).

Yukl (1989) revealed that research on situational leadership could be broadly assigned to two different categories; the situational factors and the way they influence the leader's behavior, and the specific leader behaviors and their efficiency in different situations. The question is whether the behavior or the situation is determined as the dependent variable. Several models to isolate these situational variables have proven more successful than others, and as a result, have gained wider recognition. Among these models the following five are widely recognized: the Fiedler model, Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory, leader-member exchange theory, the path-goal theory, and leader-participation model (Bass, 1990; Bryman, 1996; Robbins, 2003; Robbins and Coulter, 2003; Greenberg, 2003).

### The scope of the study

There are currently 13,809 industrial establishments in Palestine (PCBS, 2002), About 97 percent of which are classified as small and medium scale industries with 20 or less employees, and are not more than small businesses, craft workshops, and ateliers that are run by the owners and the members of their families besides some paid workers (Nasr, 1997, 2002, 2003; Sabri, 1998; Sabri, 1999). In the Palestinian context many researchers and experts consider the small and medium scale industries as those having less than 20 employees (Nasr, 1997; 2002; 2003 Sabri, 1998; Sabri, 1999). For purposes of the study, which attempted to explore the leadership styles in Palestinian industrial sector, these small and medium scale industries which account for 97 percent of the total Palestinian industries, were excluded from the research.

Another important characteristic of Palestinian industries is that 94 percent of them are considered family-owned businesses; and a unique characteristic of the family business is that it takes the issue of leadership as granted by virtue of family ties and heritage, without any consideration to proper planning and scientific qualifications. This exposes the future of organizations to high rates of risk and probability of being split out between future generations rather than having the opportunity to grow and develop. Another equally important characteristic is that only 28 percent of the Palestinian institutions were initiated by experienced entrepreneurs (Sabri, 1999), which means that the vast majority of these institutions are threatened by lack of experience, competence, and proper managerial knowledge. Thus, there is a critical need for the Palestinian economy to have effective leaders who are able to successfully go through all this change that we witness and create positive desired results. After all, leadership issues are of special significance to the transitional economies, taking into account that they are only developing their entrepreneurial economy. This is the case of the Palestinian economy that is going through a course of transition from being an isolated economy under occupation to an open economy under a new emerging national state. How much does the leadership style contribute to the success or failure of the Palestinian industrial institutions, and how appropriate it is to the demand of the upcoming twenty-first century are central issues that were addressed by this research, which was intended to provide answers to the following specific research questions:

- R1.* What is the profile of the Palestinian industrial sector leaders as to age, gender, type of relationship with the company, educational background, managerial experience, length of service in current position, length of service in current company, and the legal status of the company?
- R2.* Which leadership styles are utilized by Palestinian industrial sector leaders?
- R3.* Are these styles determined by the leaders' profiles, characteristics, traits, and behaviors, or by some other factors such as followers' characteristics or situational factors? In other words, is there any relationship between the demographic profile of the rated leaders and the style of leadership they employ?
- R4.* What is the prevailing style of leadership in Palestinian industrial sector, and how does it contribute to the success or failure of these institutions?

**The diagnostic model**

Employing the assumption that the leaders in transitional countries incline more strongly to the rigid leadership styles (Burns, 1978), and considering the fact that many positive correlations were found between the rigid leadership styles and productivity (Bass, 1990, p. 421), Bass' full range model of leadership was estimated to be the most appropriate for this research, since it covers a full range of leadership behaviors and styles from the highly transformational to the highly avoidant, and includes a wide variety of descriptive factors that encompass most of the variables used in the various studies conducted on leadership through the different leadership approaches from the traits, passing through the behavioral and situational to the contingency approaches (Avolio and Bass, 1991).

**The full range model of leadership**

Transformational and transactional leadership theory was first introduced by Burns (1978), and expanded upon by Bass in 1985, who proposed a theory of transformational leadership. According to Bass, transactional and transformational leadership styles are reflected by distinct, although not mutually exclusive, processes. This means that the same leader may use both types of processes at different times, in distinct situations. Moreover, Bass introduced his full range model of leadership and initially identified seven dimensions or variables that are needed in order to describe the existent leadership styles. These variables were: charisma, inspirational leadership, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, contingent reward, management-by-exception, and laissez-faire (Bass, 1985). To quantify these variables, and describe, in turn, the existent leadership style, Bass used the multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ), which is a questionnaire to be answered by the leader's subordinates, and describes the various leadership styles exhibited by the leaders. The three main leadership styles identified by this model are transformational style, transactional style, and laissez-faire style. According to Bass, a leader will exhibit each of these three main styles in combination. However, he proposed an optimal mix, which he argued should be preferred in order to perform active and effective leadership (Bass and Avolio, 1994).

Ever since its introduction, various attempts have been made to criticize, test, and/or develop the content of the full range model as well as the MLQ on which it is based (Rost, 1991). Some opponents conceive it as an important weakness that more factors measuring transformational leadership seem to be correlated, while others highlight the fact that factors measuring transactional leadership are missing in the MLQ questionnaire. More broadly, it has been discussed whether transformational leadership can, as revealed by Bass, be displayed at all levels in an organization or if it is only executives who display transformational leadership. Other concerns included the criticism that it lacked discriminative validity among the various factors comprising the survey (Yukl, 1989; Pierce and Newstrom, 1995; Bryman, 1996; Yukl, 2001).

Bass and Avolio (1993), concluded, after reviewing prior studies completed which utilized the MLQ that while the original factor structure presented by Bass in 1985 was theoretically sound, that in order to validate the measurement of a broader or "fuller range" of leadership styles, that a new version of the survey instrument should be produced. The latest version of the MLQ, which was called the (MLQ 5X-Short) consists of 45 items to be answered by the leader's subordinates. These items are rated using a five-point Likert scale with anchors labeled as 0 = not at all, 1 = once in

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a while, 2 = sometimes, 3 = fairly often, and 4 = frequently, if not always. It has been used in nearly 200 research programs, doctoral dissertations and masters' theses throughout the world (Bass and Avolio, 1995). This revised instrument, which was created in response to the above criticism, tests leadership style based on nine factors, or variables, as opposed to the original seven. The additional variables are:

- attributions regarding the leader's transformational style, which distinguishes between charismatic behaviors and attributions;
- management-by-exception – active; and
- management-by-exception – passive.

The latter two variables represent a division of the original management-by-exception factor tested in Bass's (1985) original instrument. An additional alteration from the original instrument is the change of terms from "charisma" to "idealized influence". By augmenting the above-described changes to the MLQ, Bass and Avolio (1995) have developed an instrument which measures a broader range of leadership factors, thus representing more consistently the full range of leadership styles. Together, the nine variables included in the latest version of the MLQ are: idealized influence (attributed), idealized influence (behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, contingent reward, management-by-exception (active), management-by-exception (passive), and laissez-faire. This enhanced ability to quantify leadership style has significantly refined leadership research and has led to a number of important observations regarding leadership studies (Yukl, 2001).

### **Research design and methodology**

The main purpose of the study was to ascertain and describe the characteristics of Palestinian industrial leaders and their leadership styles. The questionnaire survey form and the personal interview were the main instruments used to elicit data and information for analysis, and to form the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The questionnaire was administered to the first three highly placed administrators under the rank of the leader at each chosen enterprise in order to identify the employed leadership style by the leader of this enterprise and determine the outcomes of this style in terms of followers' satisfaction, effectiveness, and extra effort. The interview was conducted with the leaders of the chosen enterprises so as to get their demographic profiles in terms of their age, gender, type of relationship with the company, education, managerial experience, length of service at current position, and length of service at current enterprise. The purpose was to find out if there was any relationship between each leader's demographic profile and the leadership style he employs. Thus, two units of analysis were used; the individual unit to analyze the data concerning the leadership styles, and the dyad unit of analysis to analyze the outcomes of the employed leadership style that emerged from the interaction between the respondents as subordinates, and the rated leaders as supervisors. The type of the research design used in this study was the descriptive research design which aims to describe what exists, what events or outcomes are occurring, and identify the prevailing characteristics of a category, a behavior, a situation, a person, or an organization (Sekaran, 2000). The combination between the qualitative data generated by the structured interview with the leaders, and the quantitative data generated by the questionnaire that was administered to subordinates, as well as the dyad unit of analysis formed what is called a triangulation

research methodology, which was adopted for this study. This methodology combines between both the qualitative and quantitative methodologies, and thus, different methodological strengths and weaknesses will be cancelled out to produce more convincing findings and allow the capturing of a more complete, holistic and contextual portrayal of the topic under study (Mason, 1994). Furthermore, the data that was elicited through the survey instruments utilized in this study produced both quantitative and qualitative data. Thus, the rational choice was to adopt the triangulation methodology that permits dealing with both types of data from different perspectives and through different statistical measures.

### **The sample**

The sampling process took into account the economic segmentation of the industrial clusters in West Bank which holds about 70 percent of the total Palestinian industries. About 60 percent of these industrial establishments are located in the three major cities of Nablus, Ramallah, and Hebron (Nasr, 1997, p. 11). Thus, it adopted the following economic groups in which the major Palestinian industries are concentrated based on the segmentation of the National Ministry of Economy:

- food, beverages and tobacco;
- textiles and wearing apparel;
- wood and furniture;
- paper products and publishing;
- rubber, plastic and non-metallic products;
- metals; and
- chemicals and pharmaceutical products.

Since, the generalizability of the findings was one of the main objectives of the study, a proportionate stratified random sample was chosen as representative of the whole population of Palestinian large-scale industries. This strategy of sampling was chosen to ensure that the proportion of the subjects represented in the sample from each stratum is the same in the sample as it is in the population. Thus, the elements are represented in the sample according to their population incidence, and this will improve the representativeness of the sample by reducing the sampling error (Black, 1999; Dillman, 2000; Sekaran, 2000; Creswell, 2003). The whole population was split into distinguished economic groups according to the economic activity, then a proportion of 25 percent subjects were drawn equally and randomly from within each stratum to ensure that they have the same proportion in the sample as they have in the whole population, and to ensure an effective and efficient representation of each segment in the population and obtain more valuable and differentiated information with respect to each group (Black, 1999; Dillman, 2000; Sekaran, 2000; Creswell, 2003). The sample contained 55 companies with three respondents in each besides the leader himself as a respondent to the interview. This gives 220 respondents in total. Ten companies refused to respond to both the questionnaire and the interview, which means a total number of 40 non-respondents. Thus, the final response rate was 82 percent, and such a rate reduces the possible error due to non-response bias, and provides the credibility to make accurate generalizations about the population.

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### Findings and results of the study

The analysis of the data gathered through the administration of the MLQ and the structured interview was carried out in terms of the posed research questions. Thus, the findings and results of this analysis pivoted around the following central issues:

- the demographic profile of the leaders and responding companies;
- the utilized leadership styles and their distribution;
- the outcomes of the utilized leadership styles; and
- the existent correlations and relationships between the utilized leadership styles and the demographic profile on one hand, and the outcomes on the other hand.

### The demographic profile of the leaders and the companies

The analysis of the data gathered through the structured interview with the leaders of the responding companies revealed the following results in terms of the leaders' age, gender, relationship to the company, legal status of the company, educational background, previous managerial experience, length of service at current position, and length of service at current company:

- As to the age of the leaders, none of them was under the age of 30 years, 11.1 percent were between the ages 31-40, 40 percent were between the ages 41-50, and 48.9 were above the age of 50 years. This means that the majority of the responding leaders were above the age of 50 years.
- In terms of gender, all the responding leaders were males. This demonstrates the fact that Palestinian women did not yet burst into the business and industrial world in Palestine as leaders or chief executive officers; it also reflects the mentality and corporate culture in Palestine and the Arab world which consider it as censured and abnormal behavior to have or nominate a female leader in their institutions.
- In terms of the leaders' relationship with the companies they work for, 44.4 percent of them were sole owners of the company, 42.2 percent were share holders and members of the owner family, and only 13.3 percent were employees. This means that 86.7 percent of the responding companies were family businesses.
- As for the legal status of the responding companies, 33.3 percent were sole proprietorship, 6.7 percent were partnerships, 37.8 percent were private corporations, 20 percent were public corporations, and 2.2 percent were cooperative institutions.
- As for the educational background of the leaders, one third of them (33.3 percent) had Tawjihi (Palestinian high school examination) or less, 13.3 percent had two-year college degree, and 53.3 percent had obtained a four-year university degree.
- As for the leaders' previous managerial experience, more than two thirds of them (71.1 percent) were without any managerial experience, 22.2 percent had 1-5 years of experience, and only 6.7 percent had between 6 and 10 years of experience.
- In terms of the leaders' length of service as a leader at the current company which he is working for, 13.3 percent of them had 1-5 years of service, 26.7 percent had 6-10 years of service, 28.9 percent had 11-15 years, 20 percent had 16-20 years, and 11.1 percent had above 20 years of service.

- In terms of the leaders' length of service at the current company which he is working for, 13.3 percent of them had 1-5 years of service at the current company, 22.2 percent had 6-10 years of service, one third of them (33.3 percent) had 11-15 years, 20 percent had 16-20 years, and 11.1 percent had above 20 years of service.

### **The distribution of the utilized leadership styles**

After the analysis of the data gathered through the multifactor leadership questionnaire, which included the derivation of the scores for each leadership style, the following facts were observed:

- Of the leaders, 28.9 percent adopt and utilize the transformational style as their dominant style of leadership.
- Of the leaders, 60 percent utilize the transactional style as their dominant style of leadership.
- Only 11.1 percent of the leaders utilize the laissez-faire style as their dominant style of leadership.

### **Outcomes and leadership styles**

Generally speaking, the outcome of the utilized leadership style measured in terms of extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction, was very low, expressing a high degree of dissatisfaction among employees. Of the rated leaders, 76 percent gained an outcome score less than (2), while only 24 percent of them gained a score greater than (2).

The highest outcome scores were associated with the transformational leadership style (average outcome = 2.68), while the lowest outcome scores were associated with the transactional leadership style (average outcome = 1.01). In fact, the strongest statistical relationship discovered in this study was the correlation between transformational leadership style and the outcome variable. The outcome variable is composed of three different variables, each of which has four questions assigned to it in the multifactor leadership questionnaire. These three variables are: extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction with the leader. A strong positive relationship was found between the outcome variable and transformational style with Pearson correlation coefficient of (0.961), a positive relationship between the outcome variable and transactional style with Pearson correlation coefficient of (0.278), and a negative relationship between the outcome variable and laissez-faire style with Pearson correlation coefficient of (-0.440). These findings correspond with previous studies utilizing the MLQ that transformational leadership style leads to higher rates of satisfaction among employees, less rates of satisfaction are associated with transactional style, and the indication of laissez-faire characteristics leads to dissatisfaction with the leader.

### **The linear model between the leadership styles and the outcome variable**

To study the relationship between the utilized leadership style and the outcomes of that style a model was predicted under the assumption that there is no problem with missing data, violation of assumptions, or outliers, and that the split sample validation will confirm the generalizability of the results. The level of significance used was 0.05, and the standard regression analysis was applied since our point is to evaluate the relationship between a set of independent variables and a dependent variable. The model used to estimate this relationship was the following:

$$\hat{Y} = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3.$$

Where:  $\hat{Y}$  is the estimated outcome variable; ( $a$ ) is the constant –  $y$  intercept;  $b_1$  is the slope associated with the transformational style ( $x_1$ );  $b_2$  is the slope associated with the transactional style ( $x_2$ ); and  $b_3$  is the slope associated with the laissez-faire style ( $x_3$ ).

### Summary of the variables in the model

The constructed linear model related the dependent variable “leadership style outcome” with the three independent variables: transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, and the laissez-faire leadership style. Table I describes the four variables included in the model. It can be noticed that the mean of the outcome variable is about (1.51) with standard deviation of (0.85), and median of (1.09), which means that the rate of satisfaction among employees is generally very low, and this indicates a high degree of dissatisfaction that leads consequently to low rates of productivity and effectiveness.

### Model estimation

The linear regression analysis was used to estimate the relationship between the dependent variable and the set of the independent variables. The least squared method showed that the model can be estimated through the following equation:

$$\text{Outcome} = 1.118 \times (\text{transformational}) - 0.184 \times (\text{laissez - faire}).$$

Where the constant (1.118) is the transformational coefficient, and the constant (–0.184) is the laissez-faire coefficient. This means that through this equation we can estimate the score of the outcome once we had the scores of both the transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles.

As Table II shows, for the independent variable transformational style, the probability of the statistic ( $t = 21.512$ ) for the  $B$  coefficient is less than (0.05), thus, we reject the null hypothesis that the slope associated with transformational variable is equal to zero and conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between the transformational leadership style and the outcome variable. The same interpretation was applied to the variable laissez-faire style which was also included in the model since the probability of the statistic ( $t = -3.472$ ) is less than (0.05). On the other hand, the remaining independent variable (transactional style) was excluded from the model since the probability of the statistic ( $t = 0.391$ ) is greater than (0.05), which means that we accept the null hypothesis that the slope associated with the independent variable “transactional style” is equal to zero. This does not mean that the transactional style has no effect on the outcomes, but it means that we cannot predict or estimate the score for these outcomes through using the score of the transactional style or the probability of its occurrence. In fact the study revealed that he lowest

	Mean	Standard deviation	Median
Outcomes	1.5088	0.85336	1.09
Transformational	1.7396	0.69428	1.46
Transactional	2.0680	0.27380	2.10
Laissez-Faire	1.3450	0.66347	1.18

**Table I.**  
Descriptive statistics for variables in the model

outcome scores were associated with the transactional leadership style (average outcome = 1.01). The constant (*a*) was also excluded from the model since the probability of the statistic ( $t = -1.171$ ) is greater than (0.05).

The ANOVA analysis, shown in Table III reveals that the probability of the (*F*) statistic (220.961) for the overall regression relationship is less than (0.05), i.e. less than or equal to the level of significance of (0.05); thus, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between the set of the independent variables and the dependent variable, and we support the hypothesis that there is a statistically significant relationship between the set of independent variables (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles) and the dependent variable (outcome).

The estimated model registered 94.2 percent coefficient of determination, which means that 94.2 percent of the variation in the outcome variable can be explained by the variation in the score of the utilized leadership styles. The other 5.8 percent of the variation in the outcome variable are uncounted for in the model and can be explained by some other factors (Table IV).

**The relationship between the utilized leadership style and the demographic profile of the leader**

Since, both the leadership styles and the demographic variables are qualitative in nature, a cross tabulation analysis was conducted to study the relationship between the

**Table II.**  
Regression output for model estimation

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
		<i>B</i>	Standard error	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-0.291	0.249		-1.171	0.248
	Transformational	1.118	0.053	0.909	21.152	0.000
	Transactional	0.050	0.127	0.016	0.391	0.698
	Laissez-Faire	-0.184	0.053	-0.143	-3.472	0.001

**Note:** <sup>a</sup>Dependent variable: outcomes

**Table III.**  
ANOVA analysis

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
1	Regression	30.176	3	10.059	220.961	0.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	1.866	41	0.046		
	Total	32.042	44			

**Notes:** <sup>a</sup>Predictors: (constant), laissez-faire, transactional, transformational; <sup>b</sup>dependent variable: outcomes

**Table IV.**  
Coefficients of determination of the model

Model	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Standard error of the estimate
1	0.970 <sup>a</sup>	0.942	0.937	0.21336

**Note:** <sup>a</sup>Predictors: (constant), laissez-faire, transactional, transformational

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utilized leadership style and the demographic profile of the rated leaders in terms of age, gender, type of relationship to the company, legal status of the company, educational background, previous managerial experience, length of service in current position, and length of service at current company.

Based on the analysis of the interview the following observations were made:

- The Palestinian corporate culture, mentality, code of ethics, values, and beliefs seemed to play a major role in determining the choice of the Palestinian leaders concerning what leadership style to employ. As observed by the researcher, most of the targeted leaders believe that being a leader means being strict, vigorous, serious, firm, and task-oriented.
- The Palestinian context which is characterized by political fluctuations, economic instability, Israeli occupation with its exoduses and discharges, besides its being a transitional country that is moving towards independence probably played a major role in driving the industrial leaders in this country towards utilizing the strict and rigid leadership styles as indicated by Burns (1978) who found that the leaders in transitional countries incline more strongly to the rigid leadership styles.
- The perceptions of the Palestinian industrial leaders about their subordinates seemed to play another role in the leaders' inclination towards the transactional behavior. Many interviewed leaders justified their strict and rigid behavior with their subordinates by the characteristics and personal traits of those subordinates. They believe that the majority of the Palestinian workers do not show any kind of loyalty towards their work, and they generally tend to be unproductive, lazy, insincere, fraud, and grumble.

The findings of the cross tabulation analysis can be summarized as follows:

- In terms of age all the rated leaders were above the age of 30 years. 11.1 percent of them were in the age range 31-40; 40 percent of them were in the age range 41-50; and 48.9 percent were above 50 years. A positive linear relationship was found between the age of the leader and his inclination to utilize the transformational leadership style (20 percent of the transformational leaders were between the ages 31-40, 38.9 percent of them were between the ages 41-50, and 42.8 percent were above the age of 50 years). This means that as older and more experienced as the leader becomes, as more inclined to utilize the transformational style he gets.
- In terms of gender, all the rated leaders were found to be males without any female at the rank of leader among the responding companies. This might be explained by the corporate Arab culture, mentality, values, code of ethics, and beliefs which consider it as censured and abnormal behavior to have or nominate a female leader in their institutions.
- In terms of the leader's type of relationship to the company, owner leaders were found to be less inclined to utilize laissez-faire leadership style, and more prone to be transactional leaders, while employee leaders had the greatest percentage among those who were rated as laissez-faire leaders. This was indicated through the critiques of some raters who described the behavior of their leaders as having "a high rate of absenteeism for personal reasons, and unconcern in achieving the company goals as long as their personal goals are fulfilled."

- In terms of the legal status of the company, sole proprietorship companies' leaders were found to be less inclined to engage in laissez-faire leadership behavior, and more prone to be transactional leaders, while 33.3 percent of the leaders who were found to utilize the laissez-faire style were leaders of partnership companies and public corporations, respectively. About 52.9 percent of the private corporation companies' leaders were transactional, and the rest (47.1 percent) were transformational. All the cooperative companies' leaders were found to utilize the transactional leadership style.
- In terms of the leaders' educational background, it was found that education is positively related with transformational leadership style. The less the leader's educational background, the more he gets prone to engage in transactional leadership (80 percent of the transactional leaders had Tawjih or less), and this tendency decreases and moves towards transformational behavior as he gets more educated (66.7 and 29.2 percent of the transformational leaders had a community college degree and a university degree, respectively).
- In terms of the leaders' previous managerial experience, the more past experience the leader has, the more prone he becomes to utilize the transformational style (25 percent of the transformational leaders were with no previous managerial experience, 30 percent of them had 1-5 years of experience, and 66.7 percent had 6-10 years of experience).
- As for the variables length of service at the current position, and length of service at the current enterprise, the cross tabulation analysis was identical, which means that most of the leaders started their work at the company as leaders. This might be explained by the fact that 86.7 percent of the rated companies were family businesses that take the issue of leadership as granted by virtue of ownership and family ties. Again, it was found that the more the leader remains in his position, the more he becomes inclined to utilize the transformational style (33.3 percent of the transformational leaders had 1-5 years of length at current position and enterprise, 60 percent of them had 6-10 years, 66.6 percent of them had 11-15 years, 80 percent had 16-20 years, and 90 percent of them had above 20 years of length).

### **Transformational and transactional leadership in the Palestinian context**

The vast majority of the surveyed Palestinian leaders (60 percent) were found exhibiting transactional leadership qualities, and thus, employing the transactional style as their dominant leadership style. While only (28.9 percent) of them were found utilizing the transformational leadership style. Consequently, the outcomes of this leadership process in terms of extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction among employees were very low (average 1.01). This very low rate of satisfaction, and thus, high degree of dissatisfaction among employees has dangerous effects and consequences on the overall performance of the organizations. High rates of absenteeism and voluntary turnover, as well as the low productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness among employees are examples of such dangerous consequences. This issue should be given the greatest care, concern, and attention from both the leaders of the Palestinian organizations and the related decision makers if they want to develop and enhance the competitive capacity of the Palestinian economy.

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### Recommendations of the study

The study reflected a set of characteristics and facts about the Palestinian industrial sector concerning the leaders' behavior and their utilized leadership styles; it also examined the outcomes and effects of these utilized styles on the production process in terms of extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction among employees. In general, these facts and findings demonstrate that the Palestinian industrial sector, when appraised in terms of Bass' full range model of leadership and transformational theory, is found to suffer from structural distortions in terms of management policies and behaviors, utilized leadership styles, leadership appointment policies, and employees' reactions toward both their companies and their leaders. Consequently, these distortions hindered this sector from playing an effective and outstanding role in the process of the national economic development. Furthermore, it resulted in a great decrease in employee productivity, and eventually a raise in production costs, and lowered the competitive capacity of the products. In sum, the Palestinian industrial sector with its current structure and utilized leadership styles is incapable of playing its required and expected role as a leading participant in the Palestinian comprehensive and sustained economic development. Its distorted managerial structure and behavior will also impede it from the effective participation in building a strong and independent national economy that is capable of competing and standing in face of the various obstacles and challenges imposed on it locally, regionally, and globally.

Therefore, and based on the fact that the Palestinian industrial sector is one of the main and essential constituents of the Palestinian economy, and the one that is entitled to play a leading role in the Palestinian comprehensive and sustained economic development in the long run; the decision makers in this sector, along with the national economic policy makers should pay more attention, care, and concern to this vital sector through the formulation and adoption of the appropriate structural, presidential, and industrial strategies that enhance its competitive capacity and enable it to achieve high rates of growth and eventually comprehensive economic development. To participate in this process of enhancing the competitive capacity of the Palestinian industrial sector, the researcher, based on the findings of this study, addressed the following recommendations for both industrial companies' decision makers and economic policy makers:

- The appeal of transformational leadership style in terms of its association with high rates of satisfaction, productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency indicates that decision makers at both public and private Palestinian industrial institutions should be considering the leadership characteristics of leadership candidates when conducting a job search for a new top administrator and in the selection process of employees in general.
- Students of management and administration at local universities should be offered the opportunity to become familiar with the variables that define transformational leadership so as to better prepare them for effective futures in leading and managing national institutions.
- Palestinian industrial leaders should frequently reconsider and evaluate their leadership styles in terms of outcomes, effectiveness, and efficacy since these variable do have a major role in raising productivity and enhancing the over all performance of the company.

- Palestinian industrial leaders should seek personal development, training, and education so as to enhance their performance and leadership skills, and eventually enhance the overall performance of their institutions.
- The government should positively contribute in establishing leadership training centers on a national basis to provide the local business market with the latest training courses and innovations in leadership science and skills.
- Local universities are advised to add leadership courses to their management programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. They are also advised to consider the idea of offering special evening courses and programs in leadership to be addressed to Palestinian business leaders and top executives, so as to develop and enhance their performance, and offer those who did not complete their education the opportunity to do so.
- Being family businesses in general, Palestinian industrial institutions should reconsider their leadership transition policies. They should stop considering leadership as granted by virtue of ownership; being the owner does not necessarily mean that you are the best and most effective. Thus, new transition strategies should be formed and adopted, in which leadership is granted to the most effective, and the best either from within the owner family or outside it on the basis of “selection of the best.”
- Effective leadership is a principal key to success, this is the general notion that should be practically applied, and one of the main goals that should be seriously sought if we want for our national economy to prosper, develop, and acquire the competitive capacity. Even if the situational factors are not encouraging, effective leadership is still capable of doing something; it can change the situation, the mentality and the behavior of the subordinates, since being a change-agent is one of the major determinants of effective leadership.
- Transactional leaders should reconsider their choice of this style of leadership since it results in negative effects on employee satisfaction, effectiveness, and efficiency (mean for the outcomes of the transactional style = 1.01). The appeal of transformational leadership style in terms of its correlation with high rates of satisfaction, efficiency, and productivity should form as an incentive for them to change their style and engage in transformational behavior and utilization. The high rates of satisfaction among employees lead to high rates of productivity, and these in turn lead to low rates of production costs that maximize the return and enhance the over all performance of the organization and increase its competitive capacity.

### Conclusion

This study has adopted the concept of transformational and transactional leadership in an attempt to study and explore the leadership styles utilized in the large-scale Palestinian industrial institutions, and to find out the outcomes of these utilized styles in terms of extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction among employees. Proponents of transformational leadership theory have claimed that transformational leadership is the most effective and efficient leadership style in any setting. The findings of this study indicate that it is certainly the most satisfactory style of leadership, and it can be applied and utilized successfully in the Palestinian context. The significant rating of

transformational Palestinian leaders as satisfactory, effective, and efficient suggests the conclusion that leaders with such leadership skills should be sought after by Palestinian institutions. Additionally, educators in higher management education should include the teaching of this leadership theory as an important part of the graduate curriculum. Unfortunately, the findings also indicate that the majority of Palestinian industrial leaders utilize the transactional leadership style, and thus, registering very low rates of satisfaction, effectiveness, and efficiency. This suggests the urgent and vital need for rehabilitation, restructuring, and reform in Palestinian institutions, and serious pursuit among Palestinian leaders toward developing their leadership concepts and skills so as to achieve success, prosperity, and distinctiveness for their institutions in this competitive and ever-changing global economy.

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