

LEADERSHIP AND SUPERVISION IN SAUDI ARABIAN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT: *The Saudi Arabian Educational system shared the philosophical principles, in its foundation, which concentrated on the achievement of goals, thereby taking up authoritative styles of leadership. However, organisations are beginning to be more liberal in today's environment than in the 1940s and 1950s, and appealing to emotional intelligence as a tool and skill is needed for effective leadership. In the Saudi Arabian case, such developments are characterised by changes such as that of the educational supervisor having the role redefined to that of a director. This review tracks several parts; the first section helps western reader to understand the subtleties, complexities and intricacies of the Saudi Arabia education system and its approach to leadership system of education, history, culture and political contribution. This can lead to the larger extent understand if Emotional Intelligence is a provocation for better leadership of Saudi Arabian education sector or not. The second part is the growth of educational supervision in Saudi Arabia, focusing on the education system, and evaluates the impact of emotional intelligence as a necessary skill in leadership.*

KEYWORDS: Educational Leadership, Educational Supervision, Emotional Intelligence, Educational Administration

INTRODUCTION

Studying leadership in the Saudi Arabian context is imperative as the new generation of leaders need to cultivate pertinent skills that will allow them to become fundamentally and positively involved in the regions' decision making processes in order to impact the progression of the Saudi Arabian education system. Understanding leadership in the education context will allow for suitable inculcation of leadership skills. These skills include goal-setting, sound decision-making as well as problem-solving within the education system of Saudi Arabia.

Educational Supervision has been defined critically in the literature. This research critically reviewed a number of definitions within the last two decades. Supervision is a broad and multidimensional concept that varies from context to context. Essentially, a wide range of human factors (Milne 2009) mediates the complex and dynamic process. The term 'supervision' is often used in different settings to refer to a process where a senior member of a profession evaluates, monitors or oversees the work of a junior member of the process to promote effective performance (Bernard & Goodyear 2004).

The concept of leadership in Saudi Arabia context

Leadership is a multipronged concept and different scholars have critically defined leadership based on a particular setting or in reference to a specific discipline. According to O'Neil (2011), leadership involves guiding, commanding or exercising power over others to achieve certain goals. Similarly, Adair (2010) suggests that leadership involves planning, organising, directing,

commanding and supporting others in order to achieve goals. On the other hand, several scholars assert that leaders and their followers work as a team to achieve their outcomes. Northouse (2007) notes that leadership is a continuous process that involves an individual influencing a group of people in order to realise mutual objectives and goals. Similarly, Ciulla (2004) argues that, leadership can be described as an influence relationship between leaders and their followers that aims at realising common goals. In order for a leader to effectively influence other people so that they can realise certain goals, Wart (2005) suggests that leaders must have certain distinctive traits. He argues that leaders should have confidence, emotional maturity, charisma and effective communication skills.

Based on the perspectives explored, it is plausible to argue that, leadership essentially an influence relationship where a leader influences his followers towards the achievement of certain common goals. The extent to which a group of followers may also influence the leader, depends on the leader himself and context in which they work. It is also arguable that in order for a leader to be able to effectively influence his followers, he or she must possess certain distinctive behavioural qualities.

However, to further qualify the notion of leadership within Saudi Arabia we need to briefly discuss both management and leadership. According to Almed (2013) there exists a world of difference between management and leadership. Management emphasizes controlling schedules and budget and has little to do with visionary activity while leadership is basically oriented in idealistic change. In essence, leadership is the criterion for inspiring, aligning people, establishing direction and achieving change while management is characterised by the process of establishing budgeting and planning, solving problems, staffing and organising, and ensuring the smooth running of the functional aspects of the organisation. Arguably, however, an organisation needs all of these aspects to come together in order to effectively run. In light of this Witziers, Bosker and Kruger (2003) observed that there is a challenge in balancing management and leadership. As a result of the centralised system in Saudi Arabia, leaders are forced to implement government directives rather than lead through visionary activity and innovation, to process and action elements rather than decide upon a direction, and thereby seem to be more managerial in their approach. Emotional Intelligence in terms of leadership then has to consider that leadership in Saudi Arabia's current centralised system is predominantly functional, managerial, and as will be further discussed – transactional.

It is worth noting here how leadership positions are obtained in Saudi Arabia. It possible for employees in the education sector to be promoted to a higher level in the hierarchy. In theory, length of service and qualifications are of paramount importance for anyone to be a leader. However, the nomination of a person to fill a leadership position in some cases is based on recommendations from friends in superior positions (Al-Aref & Al- Juhani, 2008). As Saudi researchers have noted, there are no formal criteria for the selection of Saudi school leaders and in particular school principals (Al-Aref & Al-Juhani, 2008; Al-Shakhis, 1984; Manuie, 1976). A number of criteria do exist with regards to the appointment of Educational Supervisors, however, these criteria which will be later detailed is quite vague and does not mention the emotional intelligence levels of the candidate. Therefore, school leaders are chosen in a somewhat unsystematic manner where the relationship between the candidate and the decision-makers often plays a significant part in the decision-makers choice. In this sense, it is difficult, without reform to the process of hiring and promoting leaders, to know whether these leaders would be capable of the aspects of leadership that reformers wish to introduce such as emotional intelligence. Without a criteria of leadership qualities established, it is difficult to

ascertain whether or not the introduction of Emotional Intelligence would be successful in Saudi Arabian leadership roles due to the lack of knowledge about these leaders' capabilities. Furthermore, establishing any kind of formal assessment for emotional intelligence would be complex and potentially impossible: it would be difficult to find an effective way to quantify the level of empathy or positivity that a person has, as further discussed in the Emotional Intelligence section.

Leadership Styles

It is necessary to discuss some of the leadership styles commonly used in education systems and other organisations. Voon (2011) points out that there are numerous forms of leadership styles some of which include transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, authoritarian leadership style, paternalistic leadership style, democratic leadership style, and laissez faire leadership styles. The two leadership styles which this section will focus on are the transformational and transactional styles. The focus on transformational styles of leadership is due to the style being most closely aligned to and most likely to accommodate Emotional Intelligence, which will be elaborated upon (Thomas, 2006; Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002). Transactional leadership is crucial to the discussion because it is the style which is used in most Saudi Arabian schools. Leadership styles can be defined as a leader's way of providing direction, enhancing motivation, and implementing plans (Blanchard, 2013). Swamy (2014) points out that leadership style has a significant influence on work satisfaction and organisation commitment. In addition, leadership style affects the trust of followers and their commitment to the attainment of organisational goals and objectives (Scott, 2003). As Blanchard (2013) postulates, the success or failure of an organisation is often determined by the kind of leadership style that is employed in that organisation. In the light of this, organisations need effective leaders who are in position to comprehend the dynamics within an organisation and adequately address the effects of change, which works well in relation to transformational leadership styles. However, in Saudi where the system is highly centralised and leaders predominantly function as actors of government directives, the power to change plans and redirect visions based on change is not something which they possess, and this complicates and limits the leadership styles available to Saudi Arabian educators.

Both transactional and transformational leadership styles are distinct (Alheezan, 2009). Jung (2001) indicates that transformational leadership style focuses on the overall development of followers as well as addressing their social, economic, and religious needs. Transformational leadership entails enhancing the consciousness level of followers on the expected outcomes and criteria of achieving them. Leaders who exercise transformational leadership style strive towards growth and development of followers, their moralities, their motivation level, and aim to enhance followers' abilities (Bogler, 2001). Transformational leadership style is focused on driving an organisation towards the realisation of its goals through motivation and encouragement and in the process transforming its followers in heart and in mind (Voon, 2011). Thus, transformational leadership focuses on the goals of the whole organisation and views the staff as a team heading in one direction (Yukl, 2002). In contrast, Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) note that transactional leadership is anchored to a relationship wherein the adherence of a follower to certain principles is exchanged for predetermined rewards. On the other hand, if a follower was to not fully participate in the plan or vision and not complete the task, they may face corrective or disciplinary action. In this way, transactional leadership style focuses on managing the behavior of individuals within an organisation rather than the overall organisation and its aims (Yukl, 2002). Bogler (2001) postulates that the underlying principles

of transactional leadership styles include corrective action, contingent rewards, and rule enforcement. Educational leaders in Saudi Arabia exercise transactional leadership style as it is facilitated by the hierarchical, somewhat autocratic, and curriculum-based education system. In addition, the context in which the leadership styles exist is important. Transactional leadership is perceived to be effective in times of stability while transformational leadership is effective under circumstances where change is occurring. In a system as hierarchically organized as the Saudi system, and where change only comes from systematic and government issued initiatives, transactional leadership is appropriate. In systems which are more flexible and in which change can come from the dynamic and needs of the school, transformational leadership would be more appropriate.

Transformational leadership's central tenet to motivate and enthuse followers, inspiring them to follow the vision of the leader, is particularly relevant to emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is a skill which, in theory, enables a leader to positively motivate employees to move in a particular direction (Thomas, 2006). Kerry et al (2001) pointed out that transformational leadership reinforces teachers' commitment, enhances shared vision, promotes school culture, and influences the development of distributed leadership. An organisation's ability to innovate is also enhanced by transformational leadership styles as it is better placed to select its own goals and objectives, and pursue them based on the ideas of their leader or leadership team.

In Saudi Arabia, due to the hierarchical structure of the education system, transactional leadership style is the one most commonly employed. The evidence discussed above, however, suggests that if E.I was to be introduced fully within the Saudi system, this leadership style would have to change to one which is more compatible with E.I. Thus, In Saudi Arabia, the concept of emotional intelligence is not yet fully embraced. It is beginning to be implemented, however, as transactional leadership is still common it has not been possible for the system to fully establish its usage. Most of the leaders practice managerial roles such as controlling students and staff, monitoring, and keeping up with the requirements as stipulated by the ministry of education. In an attempt to address the challenges in Saudi Arabia's educational system and keep pace with social and economic development, a review of the topic of Emotional intelligence is required. The system would need to develop a learning setting that seeks to enhance the improvement of an organisation internally, thus facilitating the development and learning of staff (Sehab, 2007). Thus the challenge of how to implement E.I in Saudi Arabia must consider the development of leadership styles in order to facilitate its integration.

Supervision within the Educational Context

Educational Supervision has been defined critically in the literature. This research critically reviewed a number of definitions within the last two decades. Supervision is a broad and multidimensional concept that varies from context to context. Essentially, a wide range of human factors (Milne 2009) mediates the complex and dynamic process. The term 'supervision' is often used in different settings to refer to a process where a senior member of a profession evaluates, monitors or oversees the work of a junior member of the process to promote effective performance (Bernard & Goodyear 2004).

Burke & Krey (2005) consider supervision as a dynamic and continuous process that involves coordinating, supporting, and improving performance outcomes. Similarly, according to Rumsey (2013) supervision is a behavior that allows provision of guidance, support, and

corrective feedback for members' day-to-day activities. Milne (2009) argues that supervision may involve activities or processes such as collective goal setting, performance reviews, corrective feedback, and directing with the aim of enhancing performance, which seems highly transformational. On the other hand, Okafor (n.d.) considers supervision as a function of leadership that involves coordination and management of activities concerned with learning, a more transactional approach. According to Sullivan and Glanz (2009), supervision in the educational setting entails engaging in instructional dialogue with the main aim of increasing teaching and improving student performance. The supervisor engages or interacts with the teacher continuously by evaluating the teacher's progress, providing constructive feedback and encourages best practice in order to facilitate the teacher's professional growth and improvement in the way that they provide instruction to learners. In this case, teachers and supervisors perform such supervision roles as instructional leadership, classroom mentoring, staff development, evaluation, and curriculum and instruction development (Abdulkareem, 2001).

As evident in the section above, the way in which supervision is conceptualised may vary from context to context. From an educational standpoint, supervision has been defined as a leadership intervention that involves providing guidance and feedback on matters regarding personal, educational, and professional development (Kilminster et al., 2007).

Supervision in the Saudi Educational Context

The Ministry of Education of Saudi Arabia in 1999 defined supervision as "An artistic, democratic, humanistic, and inclusive, leadership process that aims to evaluate and improve the educational processes in all its aspects" (Ministry of Education, 1999, p. 2). However, in practice this is a definition which may be questioned and will be later. Beach & Reinhartz (2000) in their study further acknowledged the complexity of the supervision process and focused on the relationship between supervisors and teachers but also included other educators and stakeholders in a collegial, collaborative relationship aimed at promoting the career-long development of teachers. Almannie (2015) provided additional information in which the selection criteria for the educational supervisors have been included. The criteria are as follows:

1. At least a B.S. degree in education with a minimum of a "C" average.
2. Working experience in teaching for at least four years.
3. Have an evaluation of "excellent" or higher in teaching for the last four years.
4. Have the ability to communicate and influence others.
5. Follow innovations in the relevant field.

The fourth aspect here, which states that Educational Supervisors should have the ability to communicate and influence others may be the most related to emotional intelligence and highlights an awareness that Educational Supervision relies highly on interpersonal relationships for success. However, as discussed earlier, the current system is fraught with tension in the interpersonal aspects. Whether emotional intelligence will serve to bridge this gap between educational supervisors and those they supervise, and whether that can be done effectively in the context of Saudi Arabia, is one of the key aims of this project.

History of Educational Supervision in Saudi Arabia

To understand the current trend of Educational supervision in Saudi Arabian schools, the Ministry of Education was established in 1952 as the General Directorate of Education. The Inspection Department within this Ministry was established in 1957, more than thirty years after the General Directorate of Education was founded. Unfortunately, the available literature does not offer insightful information for the period between 1952 and 1957 hence; some scholars have assumed the old system continued during this period. After 1957, Educational Supervision evolved through four main stages that include administrative inspection, instructional inspection, district supervision and educational supervision (Ministry of Education, 1999).

1. A central administrative inspection unit was instituted in 1957 and inspectors were appointed whose duties strictly involved visiting learning institutions in Saudi three times a year to conduct both administrative and instructional inspection to enforce the set regulations (Ministry of Education, 1999).
2. Instructional inspection was founded in 1964 to serve as a Department of Technical Inspection. It comprised both scientific and educational factors of inspection thus making a clear distinction between the administrative and instructional inspection (Ministry of Education, 1999). The appointed supervisors were to identify deficits that could be noted in the work of the teachers, but were still centrally based.
3. District Supervision offices were established in 1967 within the regional districts. These departments merged with the elementary, intermediate, and secondary schools' department and were centrally controlled but regionally based. The supervisors conducted their inspection tasks within their allocated district and were to submit their report to the Inspector at the Ministry of Education once every two years (Ministry of Education, 1999).
4. The term "Educational Supervisor" began to be used officially in 1997 when it replaced the term "director" (Ministry of Education, 1999). Since then, Educational supervision has remained a topic widely researched and discussed in seminars, professional development conferences and workshops. This is the current form of supervision in Saudi Arabia (Almannie, 2015).

Efficacy of Supervisors' Role and Issues Educational Supervision is facing in Saudi Arabia

As previously noted, an Educational supervisor is an expert in a specific field of study helping teachers in solving educational problems and developing professional skills while also improving their ways of teaching for the educational process to go in the right direction. Therefore, educational supervisors play the important role of educational development. Educational Supervisor are expected to oversee the management of schools, carry out inspections, supervise, support teachers and provide guidance on how to improve student outcomes. They also monitor, inspect and assess teaching practices

Drawing on the findings of Abdulkareem (2014) and Al Nazer & Mohammad (2013) it is evident that supervisory practices in the Saudi education system have evolved with time. In the past, supervisory leadership only focused on inspection, control, identifying defects in performance and retribution. However, in modern times supervisory practices have changed

with the concept of educational direction, involving the development of teachers and cooperating with them as opposed to judging, controlling and identifying defects in teacher's performance. In this case, the supervisor engages with the teacher often by assessing the teacher's progress, providing constructive feedback and encouraging best practice to enhance the teacher's professional growth and outcomes (Abdulkareem 2014). Moreover, Al Nazer & Mohammad (2013) noted that supervisory leadership has taken the frame of human relations and focuses on developing teachers and improving their method of instruction. However, whether this occurs in practice in Saudi Arabia is a site of contention.

Although supervisory practices can be associated with positive outcomes, in its entirety it is a complex undertaking mediated by a number of factors, marred by a wide range of challenges. In this regard, Alkrdem (2011) suggests that supervisory practices may not be valued in some school contexts due to inconsistency, biases and because many supervisors lack the necessary skills, and do not effectively improve the schools in which they're stationed. Consequently, this leads teachers to not take them seriously or pay them any heed, leading to lack of professional development (Alkrdem 2011). These issues are caused by the fact that supervisory practices in Saudi Arabia are not standardized and are based on tradition, rather than the 'creativity' as described by the Ministry in its official description, and the personal preferences and experiences of supervisors, rather than in democratic proceedings. Typically, supervisors are appointed without prior training or preparation and thus how they carry out their duties is dependent on their personal abilities, personalities, qualifications, and willingness to work (Alabdulkareem 2014). Supervisors were found to be lacking in the needed supervisory skills and were thus not taken seriously by teachers. For instance, during the supervisory process some teachers tend to show less enthusiasm, engagement, and commitment towards the process.

Alhwiti (2007) contends with the notion that there are no comprehensive plan and guidelines for implementing supervisory practices by arguing that the government through the Ministry of Education has provided a general framework for supervisory practices. For instance, in 1997, the Ministry of Education introduced new standards and guidelines for supervision. These standards and guidelines require that supervisors should carryout collegial supervision and focus on activities that enhance staff development (Abdul-Kareem 2001). Nonetheless, the framework provided lacks specific guidelines on how supervision should be implemented. In some instances, supervisors lack proper insight or knowledge of best practices for supervision, and thus they fail to execute their duties accordingly. This was further reported by Idrees (2002) who confirmed a shortcoming of the supervisors in their field performance as they overlook many of the supervisory practices and lacked sufficient supervisory efficiencies. As a result, many teachers have gradually become dissatisfied with how supervisory practices are carried out and do not see the benefits of supervision (Abdul-Kareem 2001; Alabdulkareem, 2014).

Al-Harbi (2006) embarked on research to identify the obstacles as perceived by the supervisors themselves found within the Al-Rass area in Saudi Arabia. He noted that lack of trust between the teachers and the supervisors was a major hindrance, which again questions the ministry definition of educational supervision as 'inclusive' and 'democratic' leadership which would imply positive interpersonal relationships that focuses on personal development. Furthermore, a lack of cooperation from the principals and the amount of office and paper work that the supervisors must complete contribute to the major obstacles to educational supervision in Saudi Arabia (Idrees, 2002; Fitzgibbon, 2004; Al-Harbi, 2006). In summary, Educational Supervisors lack training and qualifications that will provide them with knowledge of the field, their

practices are not standardized and much of their time is spent in administrative duties rather than in developing educationalists, and their relationships with those they lead leave much to be desired. These problems must be addressed if educational supervision is to be something which improves the educational system in Saudi Arabia. Most specifically to this research, emotional intelligence could potentially be used to ease the problems of relationships and tensions between the leaders and followers and help to create an atmosphere in which educational supervisors are both respected and considered helpful; thereby their advice is listened to. However, this can only be achieved if they are simultaneously offering the correct advice and their practices benefit their followers, who will obviously not take them seriously otherwise. As such it's clear that these aspects interlink and one alone cannot be the answer.

Additionally, supervisory leadership practice is a complex undertaking that is influenced by a number of factors. One of these factors is culture. Culture has been defined as a complex system encompassing knowledge, belief, morals, laws, custom, and habits acquired by an individual as a member of the society" (Samovar 2011). According to Davey (2013) is a way of life and thinking shared by a particular group of people. It comprises of values, assumptions, experiences and behavioral patterns. It is an orientation system of collective values which are unconsciously and automatically applied thus making the behaviours of group members predictable to a certain degree. Culture shapes human behaviour and particularly influences how people interpret information and communicate. In the same line, Richerdson & Boyd (2008) argue that culture is acquired from other members of their societies through imitation, teaching and other means of social transmission. Falicov (1995) asserts that supervisory practices are mediated by culture. Culture embodies supervision in that supervision is understood as an inter-subjective process that aims to address ambiguous problems and construct shared meanings that are often cultural (O'Byrne and Rosenberg, 1998). Supervision is interpreted based on personal judgments of people within a particular culture. O'Byrne and Rosenberg (1998) further claim that, culture constructs supervision in a way that supervision can be understood as an inter-subjective process that functions around addressing ambiguous problems and involves the construction of shared meanings that are often cultural, and the emergence of professional identity (O'Byrne and Rosenberg, 1998).

Moreover, supervisory practices are mediated by the responsibilities of the supervisor based on the policies of the organisation and the codes of practice of the profession. Furthermore, the supervisors exercises legitimate power to reward or withhold reward, as well as personal power, in which more disclosure is required from them and the supervisee, and charismatic power, which is based on relationships characterised by acceptance or rejection, which can create genuine difficulties (Davys and Beddoe, 2010). The inclusion of these powers makes supervisory practice a complex process. As a result, there is need for supervisors and those that they supervise to negotiate a position of mutual agreement in order to advance practice. In this regard, Zepeda (2007) argues that, supervisors should work with teachers in ways that promote a collegial relationship and the development of their profession. Similarly, Sullivan & Glanz (2009) note that supervisory practices should be responsive to the needs of teachers. Institutionalising a multicultural, emotionally sensitive, and interactive leadership management program has been posited as a way to solve the issues in Saudi Arabian institutions such as this one (Algarni & Male 2014). However, how to institute this type of program in Saudi Arabian institutions such as the Educational Supervisory Office is a question that needs to be balanced: in terms of emotional sensitivity and interactive leadership, emotional intelligence is an area which claims to aid in this regard.

Female leadership within Saudi education context:

There is limited research work that has focused on the leadership roles of Saudi Females within the educational system. Abdulkareem (2001) for instance alienated female teachers from his study on the supervisory practices as perceived by teachers and supervisors in Riyadh Schools. He noted that the education system for male and female in Saudi Arabia are independent organs with the Ministry of Education being concerned about the males' education while The General Presidency of Girls Education managing the females' education system (Abdulkareem, 2001). Alomair (2015) reported that despite the advancement that have been witnessed in the female education in Saudi Arabia gender disparity is still a major concern that is evident in various sectors. However, it is firstly worth noting the progress which has been visible in gender disparity in the education sector. The Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia confirmed that for the first time in the history of the Saudi Educational System the academic year 2012/2013 recorded a balanced number of male and female students that enrolled in the Saudi schools at 2,345,36 (Ministry of Education, 2014). Further, it was reported that there were now less male teachers than female teachers who were reported to be more than 250, 000 (Ministry of Education, 2014). a figure concurrent with the increase in female education, as female teachers were needed to teach girls in accordance with the segregation laws. Across the Saudi Universities, females who graduated constituted 56.6% of the total number enrolled in the same academic year, more than their male counterparts (Ministry of Economy and Planning (8th development plan). Saudi Press Agency (2012) prior to these statistics had reported more than 34,000 female students were under Saudi Government Scholarship to pursue their higher education in more than thirty-one countries abroad. Bearing in mind this huge advancement in female education, and female positions as educationalists, more specific information must be gathered about the position of female leaders in Arabic countries, specifically Saudi Arabia, and furthermore, the way they are socially and culturally considered within the region.

Female leaders in both the public and private sectors have been slowly but definitely increasing, (Hanan Al Ahmadi, 2011). Women are attaining a greater role in public life in both public and private sectors, and are beginning to take a greater part in the key decision making processes, however, this is not to say that their role is the same as that of men in these positions: the challenges they face as women in leadership positions must be considered (Al Ahmadi, 2011). In a study considering three Arab Gulf countries which neighbor Saudi Arabia (UAE, Oman and Bahrain) it was discovered that challenges faced by women included negative attitudes towards working women, cultural taboos for a working woman, and a lack of trust or confidence in the skills of women in terms of leadership, management, and decision making (Wilkinson, 1996). Similarly, Shahine (1997) argues that the conservative beliefs of traditional Arabic societies, specifically Egypt, prohibit and provide obstacles for the advancement of women in career and public life. She also notes that the beliefs and stereotypical characteristics of leaders are more clearly associated with men than with women and this has led to the negative attitudes towards female leadership (Shahine, 1997). Elamin and Omair, (2010) point out that these stereotypes and negative attitudes towards women in employment are reduced amongst younger and more educated Saudi Arabian males, which perhaps indicates progress.

Interestingly, however, studies have found that these are common problems across world cultures regarding female leadership and management which include stereotyping, a lack of role models, and a lack of access to training (Stead and Elliot,2009). This stereotyping relates back to the gender binary which seems often to transcend cultural binaries. Beliefs pervade that certain roles are more appropriate for women: domestic, care giving jobs such as teaching or

nursing are amongst the most culturally accepted forms of employment for women worldwide (Elamin and Omair, 2010). Indeed the Ministry of Economy and Planning note that 85.5% of the female labour force are employed in the education sector, and that diversification of jobs is necessary (8th development plan ch.17). These stereotypes often prevent female advancement: in a review of the research on gender and leadership across various culture, Shimanoff and Jenkins (1991) state: 'Research has demonstrated that there are far more similarities than differences in the leadership behaviours of women and men, and that they are equally effective. Still, women are less likely to be preselected as leaders, and the same leadership behavior is often evaluated more positively when attributed to a male than a female' (p.504). Further, Effendi (2003) argues that it is patriarchy and the way patriarchal societies interpret Islamic teachings to create a culture which places women in these roles, a feature not distinct from the history and arguably present of western societies. As such, it seems that contrary to a prevailing perspective of the conservative traditional values of Saudi Arabia and other Arabic countries being the aspect which holds women back, the specific gender grievances and challenges do not seem particularly relevant to these Arabic countries but issues in many developing and developed nations. Al Ahmadi, (2011) reported after assessing the roles of 160 leaders in Saudi Arabia that cultural and personal concerns (the fact that women have domestic duties that may be ingored if they work) were the two least important aspects of challenges facing women in Saudi Arabia: more important was access to training, systemic issues, and resource issues. She states that the changing of ideas regarding the status of women are in many cases advancing faster than the system's development, although the system itself is trying extremely hard to empower women and give them the resources they need (Al-Ahmadi, 2011). This does not mean that stereotyping and a lack of appreciation or confidence in female leadership and management are not problems in Saudi Arabia, but that these problems are not contained to Saudi Arabia itself and therefore not entirely specific to the culture, context or environment. Further, this is complicated and somewhat nuanced when we consider leadership positions within teaching, a role which is considered particularly appropriate for female work in even conservative and traditional value systems.

Female leaders in general education between elementary, intermediate, and high school are not widely researched in Saudi Arabia. However, research does exist on female academics in higher education which provides a useful context in which to start. In terms of leadership positions, women in higher education across western countries such as the U.S are still underrepresented (Bonebright et al., 2012; White, 2012; Lapovsky, 2014). Also, when women rise to acquire leadership positions in educational systems Madsen (2012) reported that they often land on lower academic ranks as compared to men. Lapovsky (2014) and Cook (2012) attributed this scenario to the challenges that women are likely to experience such as the invisible rules within various institutions, personal circumstances and other forms of discouragements they face in advancing their careers. In Saudi Arabia, cultural values and not necessarily Islamic values lead to segregation in schooling and many other aspects of public life, which continues into general and higher education, and also requires female staffing to maintain the gender integrity. As such, Saudi Arabian institutions provide a female only space in which females lead females potentially free from the previously discussed negative attitudes towards women from males in the region. It also allows women to take up leadership positions which, due to societal, cultural and patriarchal attitudes they may not have succeeded in getting if competing against males. Gartzia and van Engan, (2012) specifically looked at one case study of a single sex higher education institution in Saudi Arabia, which provided education in subjects not general considered feminine, in order to look at the notion of female leadership in institutional practice. They note, 'Single-sex academic institutions could provide an excellent

opportunity to determine whether the behaviours of leaders are gender stereotypic' (Gartzia and van Engan, 2012, p.288). They state that 'generally speaking – female leaders tend to be democratic, interpersonally oriented and transformational, while male leaders are likely to adopt more autocratic and task oriented styles of leadership' and note that they avoid describing leadership in masculine terms when asked (Gartzia and van Engan, 2012 p.292;296), a view held by many of the researchers previously discussed, though not one which privileges one system over the other: both yield similarly effective results. Though this research is enacted within a higher education setting, the results are relevant here. What is worth further questioning however is the relationship between these gender differences in leadership at the general education level and perhaps more importantly the use of emotional intelligence.

CONCLUSION

The Saudi Arabian Educational system shared the philosophical principles, in its foundation, which concentrated on the achievement of goals, thereby taking up authoritative styles of leadership. However, organisations are beginning to be more liberal in today's environment than in the 1940s and 1950s, and appealing to emotional intelligence as a tool and skill is needed for effective leadership. In the Saudi Arabian case, such developments are characterised by changes such as that of the educational supervisor having the role redefined to that of a director. This review tracks several parts: the first section helps western reader to understand the subtleties, complexities and intricacies of the Saudi Arabia education system and its approach to leadership system of education, history, culture and political contribution. This can lead to the larger extent understand if Emotional Intelligence is a provocation for better leadership of Saudi Arabian education sector or not. The second part is the growth of educational supervision in Saudi Arabia, focusing on the education system, and evaluates the impact of emotional intelligence as a necessary skill in leadership. The education system of Saudi Arabia has undergone significant transformation. To fully understand the current climate of Saudi Arabia, it is essential to review this process of transformation in terms of the historical, cultural, political and social positions and transformations. Over the years, the education system in Saudi Arabia has undergone significant metamorphosis and Saudi government has instituted a wide range of reforms in an attempt to improve education standards and outcomes, facilitate improvements and ensure that high standards of education standards are upheld to keep pace with the global environment and knowledge economy. Leadership itself has become an increasingly prominent aspect of educational reform worldwide. Emotional Intelligence is often considered a significant aspect of leadership, but it is in its early stages in Saudi Arabia. Its recognition and adoption may improve leadership practices, particularly among Educational supervisors and contribute to national and international understandings of leadership in Saudi Arabia. Studying leadership in the Saudi Arabian context is imperative as the new generation of leaders need to cultivate pertinent skills that will allow them to become fundamentally and positively involved in the regions' decision making processes in order to impact the progression of the Saudi Arabian education system. Understanding leadership in the education context will allow for suitable inculcation of leadership skills. These skills include goal-setting, sound decision-making as well as problem-solving within the education system of Saudi Arabia.

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