

**Leadership in context: A case for exploring Bass' Leadership Continuum Theory in
Jordan's Ministry of Health hospitals**

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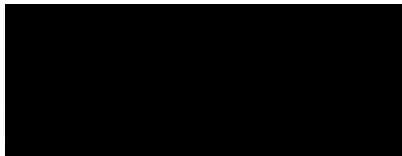
School of Health

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AUTHENTICATION

I certify that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due references are made in the text of the thesis.

I also certify that the substance of this thesis has not been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution.



Samir Albalas
30/12/2014

DEDICATION

To

My Father, mother and my elder brother for their love and affection throughout their lives and for their tireless efforts

To

My ever-loving wife and my lovely daughter Rahaf and my dear son Mustafa for their patience, love, support, encouragement and understanding throughout this time

To

My brothers in law, my brother, my sisters and their families for their prayers

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ABSTRACT

Can a leadership theory, which favours a Western-dominated paradigm, be applied in a Middle Eastern context? If applied, could leaders who are tasked to lead—based on their position, title and level of responsibility within an organization – exhibit specific leadership styles that are representative of the collective whole (paradigm)? If not, what underlying factors could be identified that differentiate cultural traits or behavioural patterns of leadership? Generally speaking, leadership may be best defined as the ability to influence or build capacity in the workforce to perform to the highest possible level or maximum capacity (Bass, 1990a; Gardiner, 2006).

After all, leading and exhibiting leadership qualities, regardless of context, should be “easy” to identify. It is not. This study considers that leadership is not only elusive but possesses transient qualities or styles based on ever-changing contexts. A mixed methods approach is proffered to investigate leadership styles as perceived by top, middle and lower levels of Ministry of Health hospitals in Jordan in an effort to identify commonalities and difference.

Through the use of a survey questionnaire, the first part of this study uses Bass’ leadership theory (1985) to identify perceived leadership styles – specifically transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire – in an attempt to measure staff willingness to exert extra effort, leadership effectiveness, and staff satisfaction. This portion of the study seeks to explain if leadership exhibited in Jordanian hospitals can be generalized to other like-oriented leadership qualities from other parts of the world. The intent is to confirm whether Bass’ transformational leadership theory can be applied within a Jordanian context.

The second part of the study seeks to better understand the complex nature of hospitals in Jordan by means of interviewing hospital employees at mid and top levels. The objective is to collect rich data concerning the respondents’ perceived notions of effective hospital leadership through specific characteristics and attributes, how they self-describe and identify with leaders they would like to emulate, and how they would consider building a leadership program for the Jordanian context. This qualitative exploratory approach helps to identify the importance of Islamic ideology and teachings for leadership development in Jordanian hospitals.

The quantitative findings confirm that Bass' leadership theory can be justifiably applied within a Jordanian context; however, examination of the qualitative portion of the study highlights the leadership attributes unique to a Middle Eastern (Jordanian) workplace. A supplemental leadership model is proposed, which is likely to be more applicable within Jordanian context. In addition, a retrospective commentary on Arab Spring is offered in an attempt to describe the unforeseen complexity of events that occurred – specifically the crisis in Syria – during data collection and analysis.

ABBREVIATIONS

AMBE	Active Management by- Exception
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CR	Contingent Reward
DDS	Demographic data sheet
EEF	Extra Effort
EFF	Effectiveness
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IATA	International Air Transport Association
IC	Individualized Consideration
IIA	Idealized Influence or Charisma - Attributed
IIB	Idealized Influence or Charisma -Behaviours
IM	Inspirational Motivation
IS	Intellectual Stimulation
JSTOR	Journal Storage
JUH	Jordan University Hospital
KAUH	King Abdulla University Hospital
KHCC	King Hussein Cancer Centre
LBDQ	Leaders and leadership Behaviours Description Questionnaire
LF	Laissez-faire
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MBEA	Management by Exception-Active
MBEP	Management by Exception-Passive
MCH	Maternal and Child Healthcare
MLM	Mid-level Leader/Managers
MLQ	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
MOH	Ministry of Health
MREC	Medical Research Ethics Committee
OM	Operations Management
RMS	Royal Medical Services
SAT	Satisfaction
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TLM	Top-level Leader/Managers
TTL	Transactional, Transformational, Laissez-Faire
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
UNE	University of New England
UNE HREC	New England University Human Research Ethics Committee
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States of America

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