

Leadership in Egypt

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BACKGROUND AND BRIEF HISTORY

Egypt is the most populous country in the Middle East and the North African region with approximately 89 million people as per 2015 estimates, and a real GDP per capita of USD 11,194, which furnishes the potential for an expanding consumer market (CIA, 2015). Egypt is, however, a relatively poor country. Forty percent of Egyptians receive an income of less than \$2 a day. The percentage of Egyptians below this poverty line has increased from 17.8% to 23% (Pike, 2015). Egypt has a large labor pool and low wages that permit comparative advantage in producing certain goods and services at low costs; however, it is constrained by a lack of skilled and competitive labor. The labor pool is growing at a rapid pace but the educational system in Egypt is not meeting the country's labor needs. The government and private sectors do not effectively address

If his heart rules him, his conscience will soon take the place of the rod. (Egyptian Proverb)

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education and training (Pike, 2015). According to Roudi (2011), Egypt is plagued by a brain drain characterized by many people, particularly younger people, emigrating abroad to find employment. It is home to 16 million people aged 15 to 24, approximately half of these live in rural areas, where the majority of the country's illiterates live. In 2006, over 80% of the unemployed were under the age 30, and 82% of the unemployed have had no working experience. This poses challenges for employers and potential investors in Egypt as it may be difficult to find employees with the needed skills for higher-level positions. Employers may find it necessary to develop and implement training programs. In addition, the management and leadership style that is required with unskilled employees may need to be more task oriented to ensure that employees can in fact carry out their duties.

Egypt is considered a regional power with substantial cultural and political influence, as well as being one of the largest and most diversified economies in the region; however, Egypt is a developing country and the Egyptian public sector performs poorly in many areas. For example, private banks are largely accountable for the development of retail banking, a field previously untapped by the public sector banks. The poor performance of the public sector banks can be attributed to the influence of cultural backgrounds. Banks depend mainly on seniority rather than efficiency when selecting management, and it is only recently, since March 2002, that there have been movements toward choosing managers with international experience and appointing them to senior management positions. Poor performance can also be attributed to leadership traits such as lack of global insight and wanting to maintain the status quo, and practices such as a lack of investment in technical infrastructure and under-developed information systems for better liquidity and risk management (Metwally, 2007).

Incidents in Egypt, over the past five years have affected regional relations. In 2011, the high levels of corruption and social inequality in Egypt led to a collapse of the government, resulting in political instability. Protests over political reform and social inequity spread and successfully caused a transformation toward a more democratic system. This resulted in the Muslim Brotherhood and Justice Party being elected and becoming the dominant power in 2012 (Abdou & Zaazou, 2013). The turbulent period right after the revolution brought hope, followed by a period of insecurity, particularly with the emergence of *Daesh*, a vociferously Sunni, fundamentalist organization (also known as ISIS or ISIL) that has dra-

matically affected regional relations. Their capture of territory in Syria and Iraq radically changed the nature of Middle Eastern geopolitics, causing millions of refugees to escape to nearby countries. In addition, the picture is further complicated by the actions of non-state players such as *Hizballah*. As such, regimes in the Middle East started reconsidering domestic security strategies along with their approach to regional security (Mabon & Ardovini, 2015).

In the following section, we turn our attention to cultural issues in Egypt and the impact of culture on leadership.

CULTURE

Aspects of culture, leadership, and motivation are areas of research that have been ignored in the past, particularly in the literature of developing nations, and such research is rare in Egypt, as elsewhere in Africa. In the following, we discuss the small number of studies that we found that included Egypt and focused on these issues.

Egypt is quite different from western countries in terms of beliefs, attitudes, communication skills, and work habits. Expressiveness and formality are common characteristics in the Egyptian workplace, while westerners are more informal and uncomfortable with social and power differences. Findings in Egypt using Hofstede's (1991) dimensions show Egypt high on power distance (a score of 70) and uncertainty avoidance (80), low on individualism (a score of 25), very low on long-term orientation (7), and moderate on femininity/masculinity (45). These scores suggest a culture that is accepting of differences in power where decisions will be made at the top. Employees prefer certainty and will accept top-down decisions that are clear and unambiguous. Decisions will likely be made collectively and work will be done collectively, with a short-term focus. Femininity suggests an emphasis on life over work, rather than on competition and tangible rewards. Interestingly, Elsaid and Elsaid (2012a) found that Egyptian respondents expressed a desire to decrease levels of power distance and to increase their future orientation. This suggests that management in the future may be less hierarchical and that attempts at instituting greater equality in the workplace may be viewed positively. In addition, the younger generation in Egypt is familiar with western thoughts about management and has introduced western ideas into the Egyptian environment and market.

The GLOBE study (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004) investigated culture and leadership in 62 societies and grouped Egypt with Middle Eastern countries—Morocco, Turkey, Kuwait, Qatar. Egyptians favored charismatic, team oriented, and humane leaders and were negative regarding self-protective and autonomous leaders. This suggests that if decisions are made at the top, those making decisions should exhibit charismatic traits, that decisions should be made in a team context, and that they should take the impact on their followers into account. Leaders in Egypt will be most effective when they fit with the cultural characteristics outlined here.

In addition, in Egypt, family-owned businesses are favored and the family is seen as central to the enterprise. In the west, individualism and self-identity are more dominant features and favoring the family is seen as negative and described as nepotism, a negative term in English.

Egypt's culture has also been influenced by major changes in its economic system. During the 1950s and 1960s, Egypt adopted a socialist approach that turned privately owned enterprises into state-owned ones, and decisions were centrally taken, thereby influencing the Egyptian mind-set, behavior, and culture. Although in the mid-1970s, Egypt adopted an open-door policy, which embraced western culture thoughts through education, joint development programs, and joint venture agreements (Metz, 1991), it was difficult to get rid of the management mind-set that prevailed during the socialist approach, and this mind-set can still be found.

A small number of studies have looked specifically at cultural issues and management, and included Egypt. These are reviewed briefly next.

Gentry, Eckert, Munusamy, Stawiski, and Martin (2013) examined the importance of certain leadership competencies to success in organizations. They looked at participants in leadership development programs in seven countries, China/Hong Kong, Egypt, India, Singapore, Spain, the UK, and the USA. The study found that challenges that ranked consistently at the top, in each country, were very similar, although minor differences exist. Challenges included developing managerial effectiveness, inspiring others, developing employees, leading a team, guiding change, and managing internal stakeholders and politics. In addition, leadership competencies such as influencing employees, resourcefulness, and change management were always seen as being essential to success in managers' organizations in all countries studied. All of these factors are likely to be particularly important considerations for leaders and managers in the Egyptian context.

In a cross-cultural study comparison between Egypt and the USA, Elsaid and Elsaid (2012b) examined how each gender viewed managerial positions, the stereotypes associated with each gender in managerial roles and the perception of women in managerial roles in Egypt and the USA. The study found that in the Egyptian sample both males and females held negative opinions of women managers. Conversely, in the US sample, women had more positive views of women managers than did their male colleagues. In the Egyptian sample, the English section female students had more favorable views of female managers than their Arabic section equivalents. Further, results of a cross-sectional descriptive study using a sample of 32 female employees, ranging in seniority from directors to secretaries, in three public sector organizations found that Egyptian women have always faced challenges in the workplace. Findings showed that it was commonly accepted among women that there was a preference for men regarding top management position, and women leaders were essentially gender oriented in terms of cooperation at work. Further, the majority of respondents believed that there were biases against women that made it difficult to step into historically male positions, thus confirming an organizational culture that is generally driven by male oriented standards. The study was able to identify a list of characteristics that described female management styles as being weaker and more participative than male styles which is seen as more autocratic (El Khouly, El Sedfy, & Marwan, 2014). This is not dissimilar to the situation found around the world that is generally referred to as the “think manager think male” syndrome (Punnett, 2015), nevertheless it suggests that gender issues continue to be a serious challenge in Egyptian culture.

Cognitive style has been described as consistent individual differences in the organizing and processing of information, which is important in managerial learning and cognition. A cross-cultural comparative study of cognitive styles (Savvas, El-Kot, & Sadler-Smith, 2001), which was described as differences in the organizing and processing of information, in Egypt and Greece, Hong Kong, and the UK, suggested implications for style theory and management education, training and development. Findings of the study suggested that there were no statistically significant differences in style among undergraduates from the three countries; however, statistically significant differences were observed among post-graduates (in less closely matched sample) in their training experience, management, and styles. Among undergraduates, the educational models in the three institutions were largely based on western business school

models and this element likely influenced the cognitive styles across the samples.

In the second study, where samples were less closely matched, some differences were found. The UK participants were more intuitive than the Egyptian or the Hong Kong participants, and there were statistically significant differences between the UK and Egyptian MBAs; however, there were no statistically significant differences between Egyptian and Hong Kong participants. The results suggest that, at the graduate level several issues should be noted: (a) different domestic groups need to be aware of their own styles and those of other managers with whom they will come to interact (b) different home groups need to be aware of the impact of cognitive style differences and the ways in which these may appear in educational and training contexts (c) people of different home groups in training settings may employ the strengths of others in the group to bring balance and harmony to a task being achieved. In the workplace, the implications are similar. Managers who take overseas obligations need to be aware of the potential impact of style differences in effective leadership. Although there were no differences among undergraduates, management educators need to be conscious of a range of style differences which need to be acknowledged to achieve learning effectiveness (Savvas et al., 2001).

According to Hatem and Hearn (2003) an individual's degree of cultural competency can lead either to the success, enhanced effectiveness of persons, or can lead to limited career opportunities, and disappointment, particularly when people are unable or unwilling to recognize and appreciate other cultures' values, beliefs, and differences. However, to be aware of other cultures' values and beliefs, one has to be first aware of his own culture's values and assumptions. Understanding the realities of the cultural environment in Egypt is thus critical to a manager's ability to succeed in this context.

CURRENT EVENTS RELATED TO BUSINESS, INVESTMENT, LEADERSHIP

Starting in the 1970s, Egypt's government instituted structural reforms aimed at liberalizing Egypt's economy designed to achieve faster economic development. As a result, the contribution of the private sector to GDP growth increased from 20% in 1981 to 73 % in 2000 (American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt). Recent events in Egypt and the Middle East,

often referred to as the “Arab Spring” in the media, caused uncertainty and insecurity in the Egyptian economy where GDP reached a record low during the first quarter of 2011. Tourism is a significant source of Egypt’s reputation around the world because it has one of the “Seven Wonders of the World”. Any instability caused by political or economic complications directly affect Egypt’s tourism. For example, the Russian plane that was blown up on the borders of Egypt caused tourism to fall dramatically after the cancellation of the flights from Russia and Britain, accounting for two-thirds of Sharm ElSheikh tourists.

A wave of reforms came in the 1990s when the government initiated reforms to achieve faster economic development, a more competitive position and a sound business environment through privatization, financial liberalization, trade liberalization, export promotion, coordination between fiscal and monetary policies, and deregulation (Hassanein, 2004; Korayem, 1997). Reforms were also based on promoting transparency and adopting appropriate accounting and supervision standards. These reforms were intended to attract more investment and encourage competitiveness. Unfortunately, after the January 25, 2011, revolution, Egypt’s economic instability is deterring investors because the opportunity cost of investing in Egypt is high. With low levels of security, transportation deficiencies, rises in minimum wages, and constant workers’ strikes, investors would rather invest in other markets. Efforts to improve the economic environment include the government providing domestic laws and international commitments to protect foreign investors and encourage these investments. The main objectives of the Business Climate Review are to create a clear vision for investors to trust the Egyptian market’s future. The government’s massive efforts boosted investor’s confidence because now they have support from the government and are fully aware of the environment that they are operating in. In 2006, the Investment Reform Index has identified three essential elements that should be contained in Egypt to encourage investors: vision, roadmap of where to compete and how to compete (OECD, 2014).

LEADERSHIP LITERATURE

In this section, we consider human development and gender and how these relate to leadership. Egypt’s rankings in education, innovation, and labor indicate a low human development index (101 out of 169 countries). There is generally a low level of human development in terms of life expect-

tancy at birth, adult literacy rate, education, and so forth. The result is that the capabilities of the workforce to use resources efficiently are restricted by the low standard of education, innovation, and training that mean workers develop beyond a certain level. These difficult environments also degrade people's lives with inadequate health care, low quality education, and poor standards of housing, which in turn has an impact on skill and performance levels. According to the UNDP Human Development Index (2015), Egypt's Human Development Index score improved from 1980 to 2013 going from 0.452 to 0.682; however, its rank is still 110th out of 177 countries, putting it among medium human development countries. More enrichment tasks and activities are still needed to develop the leadership potential, and skills of the existing labor force.

Human development affects the quality of workers, and accordingly their efficiency. In communities with low scores of human development indicators, leaders may find it difficult to inspire people and motivate them to work. Leaders have a difficult role to play in this environment because they will have to put more effort to change and improve the workforce's poor skills and performance till they reach efficiency.

Gender is also an important consideration for employers and investors, and clear gender differences exist in the Arab World generally, and in Egypt, which is usually grouped with these countries. Men have monopolized leadership positions in Egypt and religious and paternalistic customs of leadership and authority continue today; however, there are examples of noticeable women leaders like Nawal El Saadawi, Hoda Shaarawi, Tahani Rashed, Azza Fahmy, and Tahany El Gebali who have managed to break through and attain top decision-making positions, in spite of the dominant stereotypes and restraints (Ezzat, 2014). The National Council for Women was established in 2000 to encourage gender equality in Egypt. Some may see this as a divergence from the role of women in Islam and in Arab society, but in reality Islamic history presents many models of equal opportunity and women success stories (UNDP, 2010). Nevertheless, various Arab Human Development Reports focus on the difficulties that Arab women face in education, work, and participation in business and political arenas. Equality efforts are slowly recording some successes but are still falling short of achieving key steps in realizing gender justice and comprehensiveness on an extensive scale. Leadership positions are mostly restricted to males, although the number of women in management is growing; however, these women are generally found at lower and middle management, not top management. The increase of women's involvement

in business has commonly been in clerical and first-line supervisory occupations (Robbins & Coulter, 2011). At the same time, women are progressively participating in economic and political activities and women's share in total employment is up to 20 %, and 11.6 % are also working at managerial and administrative positions. The percentage of females participating in the Egyptian labor force is constantly increasing at more than 5 % per year over the past year (The World Bank, 2015). Compared to other Arab countries, Egypt is the third best country in female share of administrative and managerial positions, but not in terms of parliamentary seats (Handoussa & Tzannatos, 2002). In comparing women in managerial jobs in Arab countries with several developed countries, great differences were reported. For example, less than 10 % of women had managerial positions in the Arab countries; whereas, 41.9 % women were in managerial positions in Australia, 36.3 % in Canada, 35.6 % in Germany, 10.1 % in Japan, 57.8 % in Philippines, and 50.6 % in the USA (Robbins & Coulter, 2011).

The Gender Gap Index scored the Middle East and North Africa region at 0.59 (the Report describes this as having closed just over 59 % of the overall gender gap) and this region ranks lowest worldwide on the economic participation and opportunity, and political empowerment aspects of the index (Hausmann, Tyson, Bekhouche, & Zahida, 2011). Egypt was among the lowest ranking countries. Although these scores are low, all countries are improving education and health opportunities and outcomes for women. A Gallup Poll reports that, worldwide, men are nearly twice as likely as women to have "good jobs". Gallup surveys, in more than 130 countries, suggested that 33 % of the worldwide population of adult males is employed full time for an employer versus 18 % of all women (Marlar, 2011). Employment varied widely by region, and the gap between men and women was widest in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia. In these regions, men were at least three times as likely as women to be employed full time. In the Arab world, people seem to trust men more, and in general the leadership prototype is a male figure. This makes it difficult for Egyptian women who aspire to leadership positions to do so. It also poses a challenge for women managers from foreign countries who are in leadership positions in Egypt. It is important that they understand the gender situation and are prepared to deal with it effectively.

Interestingly, Crabtree (2012) reported that young adults in the region generally support the idea of gender equality. Most young men and young women in all Arab countries agreed that women should be allowed to

hold any job for which they are qualified outside the home (young men are somewhat less likely to agree). This may mean that the world of work for women will change as young men move into positions of power in politics and in the corporate world. Ladika (2013) supports this idea when she talks of the evolving role of women in the Middle East; she says that women are well educated, confident, curious about the world, and working to rise to positions of power in their societies. In June 2013, Arab businesswomen gathered in London to promote and highlight the role of their gender in Arab economies, and discussions focused on how women need to penetrate the professional sectors, and how education is the key to ensuring that this takes place (Ghaziri, 2013). This gathering highlighted the need to increase women's representation in the workplace at all levels, and in professions that are male-dominated such as economics, entrepreneurship, science, and law. It also sheds light on the importance of finding female role models that young girls who are prospective leaders can follow. Breaking down stereotypes that men are more trustworthy, reducing the discrimination on the basis of gender in education, and breaking the mind-set that women belong at home will improve the rate of female employment, empower them, and encourage the number of female leaders to grow and be recognized.

LEAD RESEARCH PROJECT

The Leadership Effectiveness in Africa and the Diaspora (LEAD) focuses on African countries and African perceptions of effective leadership (see Special Issue of the *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 2014). Egypt was included among the African countries studied. In the following pages we report the early results from this project. These results are based on two rounds of a Delphi process which asked participants to identify aspects of their culture and perceptions of leadership (Senaji et al., 2014).

In the first Delphi round, there were 12 participants from different professions and occupations including banking, non-governmental organizations, administration, procurement, and student affairs, with varied educational backgrounds including journalism and mass communication, computer science, engineering, business, and business administration. The age of participants ranged from 25 to 59 years, and one-third of the participants were males. One was not born in Egypt, but has been living in the country for 15 years. In the second round, ten of the original respondents completed the process.

In the first round, participants identified their ethnic or cultural background as Moslem (42 %), Arab (42 %), and Egyptian (58 %). It is interesting that respondents consider themselves “Arab” rather than “African” supporting the link of Egypt with Middle East and Arabia that is often used. This result also emphasizes the importance of religion in Egypt in agreement with MBendi’s work (2002). Participants described Egyptian culture as a forgiving and patient culture (33 %), conservative (25 %), diverse (25 %), moderately Moslem (8 %), considerate (8 %), ethical (17 %), liberal (8 %), and having potential for development (8 %).

Participants described effective leaders as charismatic (58 %), strong personality (33 %), having good communication skills (25 %), visionary (25 %), creative (25 %), and enthusiastic (25 %), inclusive (25 %) and decisive (25 %). Participants were also asked what an effective leader does. Eight said a leader helps group members to perform well, five said that he or she should have a vision, and four said that he or she should set goals and standards. In terms of leaders’ motivations, five said that leaders are motivated by challenging and interesting jobs, organizational support, and that leaders must feel influential to the organization. Other opinions were being appreciated, a clear vision, high self-esteem, the organizational culture, challenges, group members’ good interactions, and feeling important.

In terms of what motivates people, other than leaders, nine believed feeling important and appreciated motivates people, five thought it was financial benefits, and three thought achieving goals. Other opinions included believing in the leader’s vision, the organizational culture, fair treatment, inner drives, and feeling important and appreciated.

Participants named the following as effective leaders: Gandhi (42 %), Gamal Abdel Nasser (25 %), Anwar El Sadat (25 %), prophet Muhammad, mother Teresa, and Steve Jobs (17 %). Other answers, around 8 % were Oprah, Dr. Zoweil, Mandela, Hoda Shaarawi, Taalat Harb, Om Kalthoum, Bill Gates, Hitler, and Zein El Din Zidane. It is interesting to note the range of responses here, including religious, political, and business leaders.

In the second Delphi round, there was consensus that Egyptian culture valued religious beliefs and behaviors, social behaviors, relationships, and interactions among people. Most of the participants believed that a good education contributes most to being an effective leader, followed by social level and financial stability, which contributed almost equally. The words “honesty” and “understanding” were seen as important traits of leaders. Words/terms to describe what motivates leaders or managers

were justice, followed by financial rewards, and then community service. In terms of people (other than leaders or managers) extrinsic rewards were very important, including supervision and relationship with supervisors, organizational policies, working conditions, salary, status, security, their relationship with colleagues and subordinates, and personal issues. Given the general level of poverty and education described earlier, it is not surprising that extrinsic factors would be important, as we can think of many Egyptian workers as concerned with the more basic needs. A successful leader should be able to understand what motivates the workforce, and recognize individual differences, before matching people to jobs, and linking rewards to performance. He or she should be aware of cultural differences, the priorities of the workforce, show care and concern for employees, check the system for equity, and design appropriate motivational and reward programs that fit the needs and goals of the diverse workforce.

The consensus in the second round on effective leaders was Nelson Mandela, followed by Martin Luther King, Barack Obama, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau. The majority are political leaders and two won Nobel Prizes suggesting that leaders are seen not only as strong and visible but also making outstanding contributions for humanity. From a practical perspective leadership behaviors that emphasize concern, consideration, and mutual trust and respect for group members' ideas and feelings, relative to leaders' concern for production. Charisma, having a strong personality and good communication skills are also relevant and a leader should have a vision, be creative, and enthusiastic. Our findings also highlight the importance of educational background and experience to effective leaders, which aligns with previous studies of Kotter (2001), Peters (2002), and Zalesnik (1992). Moreover, our findings highlight the importance of the honest and fair role the leaders play and their support to subordinates, which agrees with earlier studies of Brynjolfsson, and Yang (1997), Brewster et al. (2000).

A majority of participants, about 75 %, believed that feeling important and appreciated motivates people, and managers should think of enhancing employee empowerment. Although in the second round, extrinsic rewards were perceived as very important to motivate people more attention should be given to reconsidering pay scales in Egypt, which agrees with the study done by Hatem and Hearn (2003). Whereas most of the participants agreed on most of the leadership traits and motivators in the Delphi first and second rounds, there was less consensus as to what moti-

vates people (other than leaders) to work hard, and answers differed when asked to nominate three to five people whom they consider to be, or to have been effective leaders.

INSIDERS' AND OUTSIDERS' PERSPECTIVES

We sought comments of working people, both outsiders (foreign nationals in Egypt), and insiders (local managers working in Egypt), about leadership style, leadership in Egypt, and what advice could be given to managers working in Egypt. These are presented on the following pages. Some names have been disguised at the interviewee's request.

Insiders' Perspectives

M. Boushra, an Egyptian manager at a pharmaceutical company said: "As you know leadership style differs vastly from one leader to another, yet generally speaking, leaders in Egypt are mostly authoritative in nature with the 'leader knows best' style". In many situations I have seen leaders who have been promoted mainly because they are subject matter experts and have done their jobs quite well as individual contributors. Foreign leaders tend to come with one of two approaches, the first approach is the amiable/collaborative/delegating style, which might be perceived by the Egyptian employees as weak leadership and lack of direction. The second approach is Mr./Mrs. fix it approach. Usually those leaders come on a mission to Egypt to adjust and improve performance for a certain amount of time. The shortcoming of this style is that usually goals are short term and mostly previous good work is not celebrated or recognized due to the exaggerated focus on inducing change. Boushra believed that the most important cornerstone for successful leadership is building trust with employees, spending time to understand their ideas, problems, and complaints and that should be with all employees not a selected group. Second, clear direction and vision needs to be there followed by strict clear milestones that assure success. Third, standing strong in front of obstacles. Boushra advised that managers coming from other countries to work in Egypt should spend some time to understand the culture. "People might do their Jobs different than what you are accustomed to but this does not mean that they are not productive. And most important of all, show respect and sense of equality between the leader and the rest of employees," he said. Whereas for emerging Egyptian leaders, Boushra said: "Let

go! and allow mistakes to happen and bit by bit delegate authority and decision making to your employees for better productivity.”

M. Ramadan, an Egyptian, and the Chief Financial Officer of CPC International, believed that, in Egypt, the most effective leadership style mainly rotates around the idea of telling people what to do and guiding them in their roles, and constantly checking their progress, within the organization. Ramadan held that to perform well, people need to know their roles within the organization. For emerging leaders, his advice was to try to listen to everyone and to consider the level of education upon dealing with people.

M. Naguib, a young Egyptian general manager at Wah Lung company, and supervising around 100 employees, described leadership in Egypt as: “Leadership in Egypt mostly is dictated and mandated to get the job done. Commanding others to follow you is the most common leadership style used.” Also, he believed that the leadership friendly democratic approach that is adopted by foreign visiting managers is effective only in offices and management, but for factories and in dealing with workers, that would not usually succeed. “Nevertheless, for emerging leaders my advice would be to try to be democratic. You can’t be commanding unless employers trust you with your vision. Employers every now and then need to see and believe that you know what’s best,” declared Naguib.

Outsiders’ Perspectives

B. Swanson, a US citizen working in Egypt said: “Leadership in Egypt is too top heavy, top down leadership”. “In America more people are pragmatic.” However, in Egypt, he believed that authoritarian is the leadership style that is most effective. “Moreover, a great challenge to leadership in Egypt is that many leaders are not forthcoming,” he said. Swanson recommended that foreigners working in African countries should listen to those who have been there for a while.

K. Jones, an American who worked for ten years in Egypt believed that there is a global crisis in leadership. She said: “One similarity is the willingness to engage in ‘spin’—the willingness to engage in diversionary tactics to keep the public misinformed; the inability to address all sides of an issue and take a stand; and corruption—leaders (globally) use office for personal gain.” Throughout the ten years she worked in Egypt, Jones noticed that there is no separation of church and state, autocratic rule, no checks and balances to check absolute rule of president, the constitution

is weak. Jones believed that the most effective leadership style in a host African country would be progressive leadership that teaches citizens concepts of public good and public service that uses an incremental approach to build constituent voices. As regards the leadership challenges that she faced while working in Egypt, she said: “hiring practices that focus on personal relationships instead of competency; in loco parentis model of student engagement; inconsistent communication and misinformation from superiors; unsupportive supervision, lack of planning causing avoidable crises, unbalanced focus on title and status instead of execution and staff development, complex web of patronage.” Jones recommended the following for foreigners going to host African country:

1. Listen and observe.
2. Respect the host culture and people.
3. Simultaneously lead and follow.
4. Carefully cultivate allies across campus/company over time
5. Address corruption immediately and directly no matter how small the infraction.
6. Employ principle-centered leadership—make decisions according to core principles.
7. Model the behavior you expect from others.
8. Speak truth to power regardless of consequences.
9. Do not confuse the personal with the professional—most everyone around you will.
10. Be an eclectic leader—employing different styles depending on context or situation.

Another foreign respondent (outsider) recognized that leadership styles differ in Egypt because in the Egyptian society most of the leaders use an authoritative manner and foreign employees and managers must become acquainted with the Egyptian culture to effectively interact within the workplace.

SUMMARY

This chapter is intended to provide helpful information and added value to the management and leadership fields for academics, executives, and the community in general. There is relatively little literature on Egypt, or issues of culture and management or leadership in this context. We have pulled together what literature we could find to give a general sense of Egypt and what one can expect there. In the Delphi study, most of the participants agreed on most of the leadership traits and motivators in the first and second rounds. We also discovered in the Delphi study and the opinions provided by insiders and outsiders that participants are aware of and believe that effective leadership is important to success.

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