The Mediating Role of Leadership Behavior in Enhancing Success within a Diverse Team

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study aims to examine the mediating role of leadership behavior on the team process and team success. A conceptual model consisting of various processes and leadership behaviour is established and relationships that are hypothesized are examined using confirmatory Factor Analysis. A survey instrument and data from 250 team leaders in an Oil and Gas Company in Oman are used. The results indicate that partial mediation occurs between effective team process and team success when task-based leadership acts as a mediator. This research emphasizes the importance of leadership behavior within organizations while acknowledging that diversity extends beyond the work place to include society as a whole. Among the drawbacks are social desirability bias and common method bias. To lessen the bias, the authors have been cautious. The paper employs the leading diversity (LeaD)model for managing diverse teams through effective leadership. The application of the lead model in an Oil & Gas company with a diverse team represents a novel approach that can assist leaders in effectively managing their teams to enhance overall performance. **Keywords:** Diversity; Information Elaboration; Intergroup Bias; Leadership Behavior; Team Process

INTRODUCTION

The workforce in industrialized nations has become progressively more heterogeneous with the rising tide of globalization and competition. Personnel management must remain cognizant of and adapt to the diversity of traditions, faiths, and ethnicity. In the global industry, the increasing diversity of the workforce is a current trend (Du Plessis et al. 2012). Managing such a diverse workforce has become a significant challenge for contemporary organizations. The emergence of globalization, workforce diversity, and the intrinsic importance of endorsing diversity within organizations (Sung and Choi 2021) have compelled modern organizations to adapt their cultures to promote greater employee diversity. As a result, the integration of a diverse workforce poses considerable challenges for modern organizations (Telyani et al.2022)

Research has traditionally been addressed by examining the link between demographic distinctions among people-such as gender, education, age, experience, and their impact on organizational performance (Williams 1998; Telyani et al.2022). These characteristics are counted as important for defining fundamental differences, as they can prompt peoples' preferences, intolerances, and typecasts (Harrison et al.2002). A corresponding trend emphasizes delving into deep-level or less visible views of diversity (Harrison et al. 1998). This type of personnel diversity mainly originates from less visible attributes such as educational background, experiences, and other factors. Research indicates that cultural diversity in a team is a "double-edged sword" (Milliken and Martin,1996) which can increase as well as decrease team success. The two-fold nature of cultural diversity compels a complete consideration of moderating factors that moderate its negative effects and augment its positive effects (Knippenberg and Schippers 2007).

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Unlike traditional static experimental frameworks that presume continuous impacts of specific leadership behaviours across various team scenarios, the LeaD framework offers an active strategy for managing diversity. The model shows the leader's capability to adjust to these anticipated or existing demands while considering differences in individual needs that result from the process generated by mixed culture. The model offers practical awareness by identifying precursors of effectively leading groups, which organisations can improve through training and selection measures. Accordingly, the model supports leaders in managing diverse teams more effectively and helps organisations align leaders with teams to optimize performance. (Katja Raithel et al.2021).

Oman is characterized by its Workforce diversity. It is rapidly evolving into a vibrant pool of cultures, religions, races, and origins. The most recent data published by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (2024) indicates that the expatriate workforce in Oman had reached 1.8 million by the end of October 2024. In the wake of the signing of the World Trade Organization (WTO) treaty, the increase in global competitive pressures has driven Omani companies to enhance their competitive strategies on an International Scale leaving them with no alternative but to excel or face obsolescence. Organizations are increasingly required to transition towards flatter, more flexible, diverse, and globally oriented structures adapting to the limitations of their operating environments and moving beyond traditional management practices (Khan et al. 2010).

Omans' petroleum industry represents a high-value economic sector managed by a leadership group whose cultural environments often differ substantially from those of the workforce they manage. In the context of the Oil sector within GCC countries, Oman has exhibited a significant reliance on expatriate labour for essential technological capability and labor-intensive work. (Aycan et al. 2007). In organizations characterized by diverse beliefs and attitudes stemming from various cultural and national backgrounds, challenges and disruptions are often anticipated. Conversely, this diversity also serves to unite individuals from different backgrounds each contributing valuable skills that augment the organization's competitiveness and promote growth (Fassinger, 2008).

Situations like this usher in novel ideas from diverse viewpoints that could yield far more effective solutions to evolving challenges. The altercation of opinions creates an environment of cultural tolerance that can lead to progress in workers' relations (Chavez and Weisinger 2008). It is hence essential that diversity be distinguished as a combination of correlated influences that are interwoven in a complex dimension. (Neal 2010) summaries that the majority of GCC research on diversity concentrates on either issue related to the effect of the national culture on the organization culture, expatriate workforce experiences or on matching locals to expatriates (Neal 2010). Ethnography stands out as the sole research approach that examines the dynamics of cultural groups operating collaboratively. This method offers a unique lens through which to consider the interplay among various cultural categories within a collective environment. However existing research often conceptualizes non-local workers as a monolithic entity that merely complements the local labour pool. As a result, there has been insufficient focus on the specific group contexts that embody this diversity with work dynamics within such settings remaining unexplored. Scholars such as (Neal 2010; Knippenberg and Haslam 2003) highlight that the effects of diversity are complex and multifaceted, largely depending on the frameworks through which it is understood. Furthermore, recognizing the nuances of group interactions and the implications of diversity is crucial for improving organizational performance.

There is not much empirical study on the efficiency of leaders in Oil and Gas projects due to the difficulties related to research in Oman, Researchers stated that leadership studies in the Middle East are nearly absent due to the intrinsic challenges involved in Organizational research there (House et al. 2004).In subsequent years the volume of leadership research in the Middle East region has improved incrementally. However, in Oman a country located on the Southeastern Coast of the Arabian Peninsula, research in the leadership field remains small due to obstacles associated with culture, language, and remoteness (Common, 2011). These hurdles create a research gap that this study seeks to close. For eg, the basis of much of the existing research into leadership in Oman is data gathered from people working in an office environment.

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Managing and leading a diverse team is a testing area and a distress for companies. This study is directed at workforce diversity in an Oil & Gas company in Muscat. The study is based on the LeaD model and will examine and assess four key dimensions -effective team process (as evidenced by Information elaboration and intergroup team bias), task-oriented leadership behaviour, person-focused leadership behaviour, and team success. By understanding how leadership behavior mediates the relation between these variables, organizations can develop strategies to improve team performance exploit cultural diversity, and achieve sustainable economic advantage in the global marketplace. The findings of this study serve as a foundation for the Personnel department plan to enhance and promote workforce diversity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Team diversity examines the extent to which colleagues vary in specific characteristics of interest, including demographic, job-related attributes, individual traits, affective dimension or cognitive perspectives (Knippenberg and Schippers 2007). The core conclusion of diverse team research is that diversity can constructively and adversely influence team performance and processes (Dijk et al. 2012). The primary motives for such phenomenon are well recorded in their comprehensive theoretical structure known as the Categorisation Elaboration Model (CEM) (Knippenberg et al. 2004) where they deliberate on how diversity can improve and reduce team performance. On one hand, dissimilar team members are likely to possess more diverse data and perspectives relevant to the task. By assimilating these varied viewpoints, diverse teams can accomplish advanced decision-making outcomes (Williams et al. 1998), be more imaginative (Knippenberg 2017b), and achieve better than the harmonized team (Knippenberg and Schippers 2007). Conversely, dissimilarity may lead team members to distinguish between an ingroup comprised of individuals comprehended as similar to themselves("us") and an outgroup consisting of those perceived as dissimilar("them") (Williams and Reilly 1998). The "us-them" categorizations can foster biases that favor the ingroup over the outgroup, reducing members' willingness to correspond and cooperate with unit members. When such a social categorization process occurs, it can hinder the interchange and combination of information elaboration (Knippenberg et al.2004) resulting in poorer performance. The beneficial and negative impacts of diversity are not inherently realized; they are influenced by the characteristics of team members, tasks, and situational context (Guillaume et al.2017 & Knippenberg and Mel 2016). The dual aspect of diversity is evident across all traits; however, it is particularly pronounced in the context (Dijk et al. 2012) of our study on International business. We define cultural diversity as it is commonly understood in this field, referring specifically to variety in nationality, while acknowledging the existence of cultural differences among nationalities (Ely and Thomas 2001). Cultural disparities are a recognized origin of adverse categories and intergroup prejudices (Williams, 1998).

Furthermore, cultural diversity in Multinational corporations is intrinsically linked to expatriate assignments, which presents challenges for International group members in effectively acclimating to the country's customs, population, and responsibilities, as well as for host country members in adapting to collaboration with foreign nationals((Black, 1991). However cultural diversity may also be linked to advantageous variations in viewpoints, expertise, and experience that could improve teamwork. This may be particularly true in the environment of Multinational companies where working in various nations is probably linked to gaining unique experiences and knowledge that can help resolve cross-border problems, which is a fundamental aspect of International Business (Katja Raithel et al. 2021).

Therefore, managing multicultural teams to avoid their possibly harmful consequences and enhance their good ones is a problem for global corporations ((Earley, 2002). One could argue that team leadership ought to take centre stage in this regard. Team leaders have a great deal of discretion on how they direct interactions with the team, compared to Personnel management techniques aimed at diversity and equity, which are unavoidably more static and less adaptive. They can therefore be more proactive and adaptable in how they lead the team (Knippenberg et al. 2013; Nishii et al. 2018; Knippenberg et al.2020).

(Knippenberg et al. 2013 and Ginkel et al. 2012) in their theoretical analysis of leadership and diversity of teams which dwells on the analysis established in the Categorization Elaboration Model, team leadership

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should capitalise on this position of direct and adaptive interaction with the team and should emphasise initiatives specifically designed to address the team's diversity. According to them effective leadership of diverse teams requires a fundamental comprehension of the team, also referred to as a diversity mindset which reflects on an understanding of the benefits of focusing on exchanging and disintegrating diverse perspectives as well the challenges of working with people who are different from you (Knippenberg et al.2013).

In conclusion, differences between team members may contribute to the explanation of how diversity influences team performance through two distinct mechanisms: Information Elaboration and Intergroup Bias. Although these processes can co-exist, they usually have a negative relationship with one process often being more important and predictive of performance than the other at any given moment. (Van Knippenberg et al. 2004). Intergroup bias reduces the likelihood of knowledge sharing in heterogeneous groups. On the other hand, Intergroup Prejudice is less noticeable when information elaboration is significant.

Introducing LeaD (Leading Diversity) Model

One core tenets of the Leadership Diversity (LeaD) model is that team dynamics and leadership behavior whether old or new, interact to affect team performance. This paradigm emphasizes how important it is for leaders to take on the role of guiding and controlling the influences of diversity within teams (Homan et al.2020). Rather than providing a comprehensive list of how a leader might impact team dynamics (Zaccaro et al.2001 & Zhao et al. 2019), LeaD emphasizes how leadership influences diverse teams' processes and how these processes connect to team outcomes. Functional leadership theories are consulted to determine the best leadership practices for overseeing these crucial procedures (Hackman and Walton 1986; McGrath, 1962). Effective leadership results from the interaction of the leader with the environment (Osborn et al. 2002)

In such scenarios, team leaders should aim to enhance team performance by adjusting their actions to meet the current or expected requirements of the team (Burke et al.2006, Fiedler, 1965; Kerr et al. 1974; McGrath, 1962; Zaccaro et al. 2001; Osborn et al.2002). This matching principle indicates that a leader's behaviour should address unproductive processes and strengthen effective ones (Kerr and Jermier 1978).

Leaders Behaviour

On review of well over 65 unique leadership classifications, (Bass 1990; Burke et al. 2006; Fleishman et al.1991; House 1996; Judge et al.2004; Morgeson et al. 2010; Yukl 2010) leadership behaviour can be grouped roughly into two dimensions: task-focused leadership and Person-focused leadership. Task-focused behaviours help people understand their tasks follow procedures and gather important information while person-focused behaviour encourages social interactions and attitudes that promote good teamwork. (Burke et al. 2006; Fleishman 1991;Salas 1992;Yukl, 2010;Zaccaro and Klimoski 2002;Zaccaro et al 2001; Homan et al. 2020). By combining ideas from team diversity along with studies related to leadership theories, we suggest that person-focused behaviour fits the needs of diverse teams dealing with split and rift while task-focused leadership suits diverse teams involved in information-sharing and decision-making processes (Homan et al.2020). Specifically, when teams are facing Intergroup bias, leaders should work to reduce this issue by encouraging teamwork and addressing conflicts between relationships. On the other hand, when diverse teams are involved in information sharing, leaders can support this course by promoting task understanding and creating shared mental models. This strategy helps leaders meet the needs of diverse teams, which can clarify the inconsistencies found in previous research about leadership behavior (Homan et al.2020). To effectively align their leadership behaviours with team processes, leaders need three skills related to diversity: Cognitive understanding, social awareness, and adaptability. (Hooijberg et al. 1997; Zaccaro et al.1991). These skills facilitate leaders identify or assess the main team process and adjust their actions accordingly. By using cues to anticipate or evaluate team dynamics and develop these diversity-related skills leaders can better align their leadership styles with the needs of diverse teams, ultimately improving team performance.

Forecasting needs of diverse teams: Competencies of Leader

Following the identification or forecasting of Intergroup bias or information elaboration, leaders must display actions that focus on their teams' present or future requirements that result from the corresponding procedure

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(such as settling Interpersonal disputes in groups). Such behavioural flexibility is necessary to match function to needs (Zaccaro et al. 2001). Multi-cultural experiences which reveal groups to a wide-ranging spectrum of occupational scenarios and teach them about how people interact and communicate with one another in various (cultural) contexts can help people develop behavioural flexibility. These experiences give leaders the resources they need to effortlessly meet a range of requirements and recognize the actions that are (in)effective in a given circumstance. (Gutierrez and Sameroff 1990;Leung et al. 2008;Rockstuhl et al. 2011;Rosenauer et al. 2016;Tadmor et al. 2012).

One personality characteristic that embodies the ability to modify behaviour in various social contexts is another attribute that enhances leaders' behavioural flexibility (Paulhus and Martin 1998). Since it fosters agility in response to current requirements, interpersonal flexibility positively correlates with behavioural flexibility (Paulhus and Martin 1998). Similarly, there is a connection between behavioural flexibility and openness to new situations (Blickle, 1996), (Driskell, 2006) as openness is linked to being open to transforming, experimenting and being compliant in response to shifting circumstances (LePine et al.2000). These kinds of experiences may help leaders manage heterogeneous teams with greater behavioural flexibility. Conflicts, mistrust, dislike and a lack of cohesiveness are likely to be features of diverse teams that encounter Intergroup Bias (Knippenberg and Schippers 2007). We recommend that ahead of the team begins focusing on the task given, the leader must effectively control these detrimental intragroup processes. (Hewstone, 2002) (Sherif, 1969).In this regard, we contend that for a leader's action to be significant and effective, they must give the team the relational bonding that the team lacks by exhibiting, and complementing leadership behaviours ((Kerr and Jermier,1978). Focusing on people can tackle conflict and differences by reducing Personality threats as bias within the group can lead to a feeling of threat (Tajfel, 1982).

Divergent information, viewpoints and ideas are processed and exchanged in groups which participate in information sharing. Better performance is not always ensured by the association between information elaboration and successful team outcomes. E.g., when a team lacks a common mental way of the job (Klimoski, 1994) they are not adequately motivated to deliberate the task in detail (De Dreu, 2008)or concentrate more on general than distinct information (Gigone, 1993), (Stasser, 2003) the effectiveness of Information elaboration may be hindered. As a result, we suggest that leaders facilitate task-focused information processing and exchange to give an additional match. Leaders who focus on tasks, structure jobs and systems and help associates with a clear perspective for teamwork. In this environment, sharing information occurs based on goals, duties, aims or collective targets (Kaplan, 1994) (Lin, 2007). Leaders who focus on tasks often rely on feedback to operate as a team ((Tindale, 1989). Responses can offer the group real depictions of other people and the status of their tasks, which leads to better usage of informational diversity (Sniezek, 1990). Lastly, task-focused leaders employ rewards to differentiate the contributions of the team and each team member which enhances team accountability (London et al.1997; Nishii L. H. et al. 2018). Improving the team's sense of accountability can boost epistemic motivation which is the desire to put in the work necessary to gain a comprehensive, rich and deep understanding of a situation (De Dreu et al.2008; Kruglanski and Webster 1996; Chaiken and Trope 1999; Scholten et al.2007). According to (Kearney 2009; Kelly,2004; Van Kleef et al.2009), this type of motivation is linked to the attentive processing of task-relevant content and the discussion of unshared information.

As teams evolve so may their requirements. Due to this, leaders must modify their ways that are dynamic and responsive as per the demands that team diversity generates. According to (McClean, 2019) a leader's action might evolve throughout time for a variety of reasons. Based on their research we propose that diverse groups can be viewed as a vibrant necessity or requirement that may encourage leaders with the requisite knowledge and abilities to modify their behaviour in multiple ways in response to the situation at hand. (i.e., shifting from person-focused to tasks-focused and vice versa. In other words, leaders have to exhibit behavioral dynamism changing their methodology over time under what is needed (Katja Raithel et al. 2021).

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METHODOLOGY

Survey questionnaire employed in this study was meticulously developed following an extensive review of relevant literature. This process entailed examining a wide range of scholarly sources to ensure the questions were well-grounded in established research and aligned with the identified core themes and issues. The objective was to construct a comprehensive instrument capable of capturing effectively the necessary data for the study. The final questionnaire consisted of 20 Likert scale items, allowing members to specify their choice on a measure from 1 - 5, where "1" represented "Never" and "5" indicated "Always".

For the data collection process, a structured Online Questionnaire, circulated through Google Forms which was validated was circulated to a sample of 250 team leaders employed in oil and Gas companies across Oman. Team leaders were chosen using Purposive sampling to ensure representation from various industry segments. This method ensured the collection of diverse views and perceptions, thus increasing the inclusiveness and validity of the research.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The Demographic analysis of the sample indicates a predominantly male representation, accounting for 63.5% of respondents, with females constituting 36.5%. With regards to age distribution,2.5% of the population were under 30 years old, and 20.7% were between 30 and 40 years. 30.6% were in the 40-50 yrs. range and a significant majority 46.3% were over 50 years of age. Regarding professional experience, the respondents exhibited diverse levels of tenure. Specifically, 16.1% reported having less than 10 years of experience, while 14.9% indicated approximately 20 years of professional experience. These demographic characteristics provide a comprehensive profile of the sample population, offering critical context for the interpretation and generalization of the study's findings.

RESULTS

Table 1: Reliability and Item Loadings of Effective team process influencing Leadership Behaviour and Team Success dimensions

Factor	Item/Indicators	Loading	CR	CA	AVE
Information Elaboration Team Process (INF_EL_TP)	I have set a procedure for sharing information with all team members	0.826			
	My team members are not afraid that their careers would be at risk if they commit a mistake	0.834			
	Online group discussion is provided to have a good network connection and share information	0.887	0.907	0.907	0.710
	Information elaboration has functionally enabled my diverse team members to convert their data reserves into solutions to difficult issues.	0.821			
Intergroup Bias Understanding Process (INT_BI_UTP)	I try to discuss and agree on a "give and take" approach	0.794			
	I explore issues with others to find solutions	0.878			
	I try to see conflicts from both sides and try to assess person's needs.	0.850	0.913	0.913	0.724
	When intergroup bias arises in my team, I tend to give more emphasis on strategies to have a collective decision	0.878			

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Task Based Leadership Behaviour (TSK_LD_BH)	I can carry out several complicated tasks simultaneously.	0.690			
	I enjoy challenging tasks	0.820	0.917	0.918	0.690
	My employees are encouraged to be creative.	0.916			
	I enjoy coaching people on new assignments.	0.861			
	I ensure that every detail is accounted for in complex tasks	0.850			
Person Focused Leadership Behaviour (PER_FC_BH)	I do not worry about jeopardizing relationships while correcting.	0.811			
	A great team is very important to me.	0.898	0.925	0.925	0.755
	I understand people need to connect as a group.	0.866			
	People-oriented leaders are able to provide a culture of innovation, creativity, and agility that contributes to the improvement of the organization and its ability to remain competitive.	0.898			
Team Success (TEM_SUCC)	I manage my tasks and ensure it is completed as per agreed upon cost.	0.877			
	Obtaining and allocating resources is a challenging aspect of my job.	0.748	0.903	0.903	0.700
	Accomplishing a goal or task as per agreed quality in important.	0.847			
	A task is monitored to ensure it is completed on time	0.868			

Table 1 illustrates the pertinent variables including their composite reliability, standardized loadings (correlation coefficients), and Cronbach's Alpha results obtained using the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) method. This analysis validates the measurement model, ensuring the constructs in question are both reliable and valid. This method was used to prove the proposed measurement model, which comprises of Effective Team Process (reflected by Information Elaboration & Intergroup bias team process), Task Based on Leadership behaviour, Person Focused Leadership Behaviour, and Team Success as shown in Figure 1. Further, in Table 1for each dimension, the standardized loading of items is given

Table 2: Discriminant Validity of the Measurement Model:

	INF_EL_TP	INT_BI_UTP	TSK_LD_BH	PER_FC_BH	TEM_SUCC
INF_EL_TP	**0.843**[*]				
INT_BI_UTP I	*0.808*	**0.851**[*]			
TSK_LD_BH	*0.677*	*0.810*	**0.831**[*]		
PER_FC_BH	*0.756*	*0.800*	*0.770*	**0.869**[*]	
TEM_SUCC	*0.717*	*0.825*	*0.760*	*0.824*	**0.837**[*]

* AVE (Square root) displayed in Table 2

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First, the questionnaire's psychometric qualities were evaluated by calculating the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. The cut-off value for fundamental research is 0.60, however Cronbach's alpha value spans from 0 to 1, with a value nearer to 1 indicating greater stability and consistency. The results of Cronbach's alpha are depicted in Table 1 indicating an acceptable consistency and stability of the instrument.

It can be viewed from Table-1, that composite reliability, for most of the dimensions showed a loading higher than 0.50. This proves the convergence. Cronbach alpha of each item is greater than 0.60, greater than the expected value. The Discriminate Validity results shown in Table 2 ascertain the discriminant validity among the latent variables.

Mediation analysis result:

The research hypotheses put forward in the conceptual framework (Fig 1) are examined for mediation analysis following the conclusion of CFA to confirm the validity and reliability of the items (Questions). The outcomes are shown in Fig 2 & Table 3
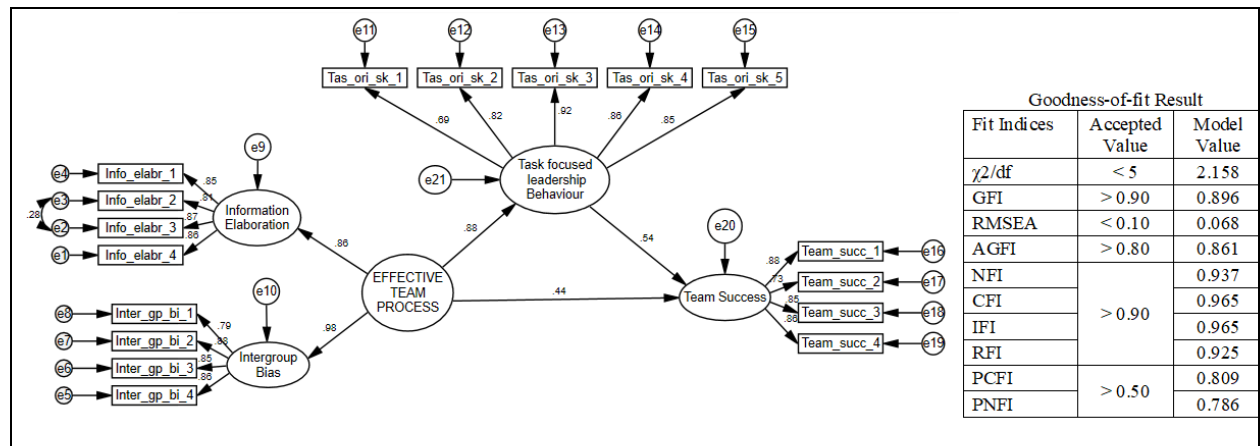

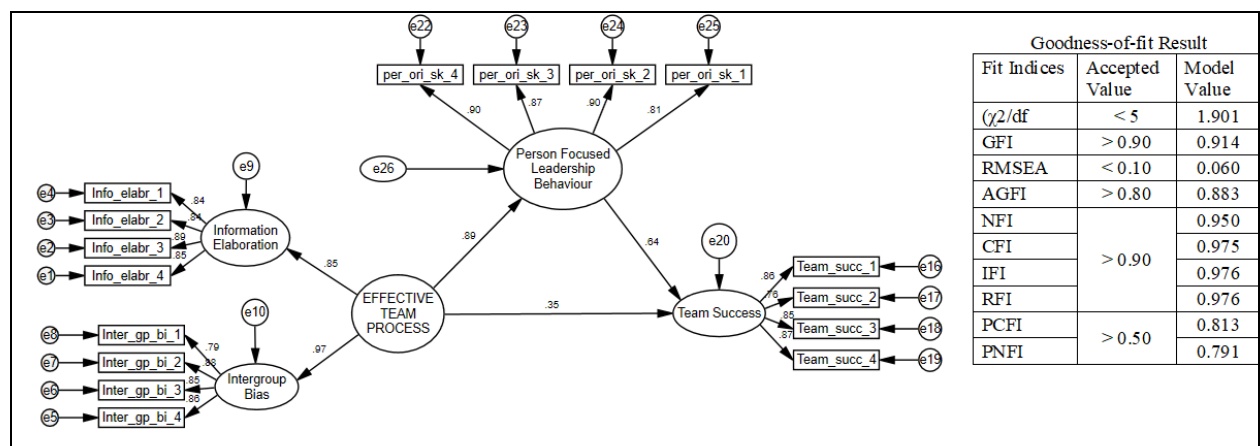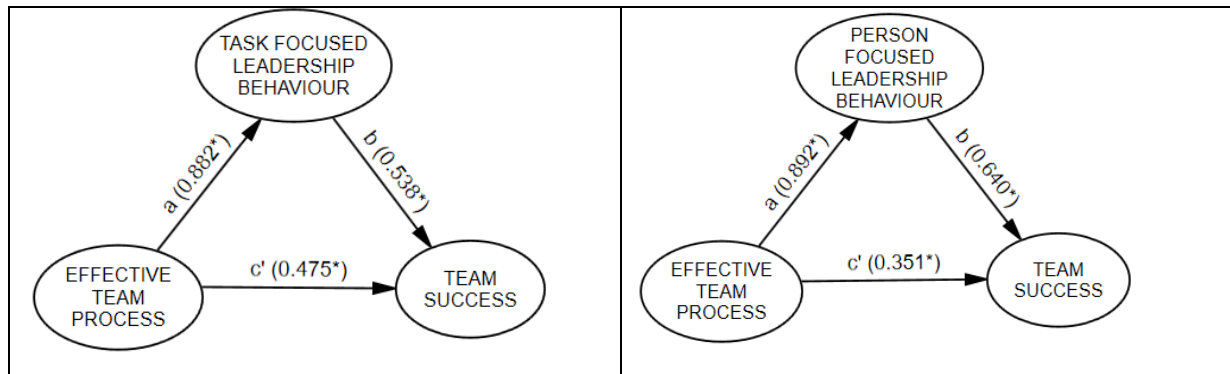**Fig 2: Mediation result of Task-Based Leadership Behaviour between Effective team process and Team Success**

Fig 3: Mediation result of Person Focused Leadership Behaviour between Effective team process and Team Success

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Fig 3a: Mediation result of Task focused and Person Focused Behaviour on team success

Table 3: Test for mediation effect of Mediation result of Task-Based and Person focused Behaviour between Effective Team Process and Team Success

(confidence level = 95 % & Bootstrap samples =2000)

	β	Boot S.E	Boot LLCL	Boot ULCI	p-value	Remark
A	0.882	0.039	0.791	0.947	0.001*	H_1 Supported
B	0.538	0.166	0.182	0.825	0.011*	H_2 Supported
a*b (Indirect)	0.475	0.145	0.181	0.740	0.009*	H_6 Supported
Direct (c')	0.442	0.169	0.136	0.796	0.005*	H_5 Supported
Total	0.917	0.039	0.821	0.976	0.002*	
D	0.892	0.045	0.784	0.963	0.002*	H_3 Supported
E	0.640	0.249	0.142	0.962	0.024*	H_4 Supported
d*e (Indirect)	0.571	0.228	0.184	0.913	0.016*	H_7 Supported
Direct (f')	0.351	0.249	0.021	0.850	0.041*	H_5 Supported
Total	0.923	0.038	0827	0.982	0.002*	

* Significant at 5 % level.

The direct effect of Effective Team Process calculated as the regression coefficient on Task-Based Leadership Behaviour dimension is 0.882 in task-based leadership. The result is statistically significant with a P value of 0.001 (p<0.05) (refer to Table 3 & Figure 3a). Correspondingly, the direct effect of the Task-Based Leadership Behaviour (mediator) on Team Success is 0.538, and this path coefficient is found to be significant (p-value is

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0.011, p<0.05). The direct path coefficient from Effective Team Process to Team Success is 0.475 and found significant (p=0.009, p<0.05).

The indirect influence of Effective Team Process on Team Success through Task-Based Leadership Behaviour is calculated to be 0.442 (0.882 * 0.538). This result is statistically significant with a P-value of 0.010(p<0.) as determined by bootstrapping methods. Hence hypothesis H1 is fully asserted. We conclude that when task-based leadership behaviour serves as a mediator, only partial mediation takes place between effective team process and team success because both the explicit and implicit paths are statistically important. For employees in the oil and gas sector, task-based leadership would essentially aid in partially increasing the relationship between effective processes and the success of teams, according to statistical research. The same is true for leadership behaviour that is person-focused (Magnus et al.2011)

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This study presents evidence of the flexibility of a leader within multicultural organizations. The impact of cultural diversity is heavily influenced by how culture is understood and governed at the top management. A lack of empowerment at the middle management and lower management, coupled with stringent control at the top level, complicates efforts to address the needs of various culturally diverse groups effectively. The lack of understanding the processes within the team is evident in issues such as group dynamics, ongoing conflicts, reduced interaction and weakened collaboration. (Al Muqarshi et al. 2020).

In the context of Oman, wherein the economic growth is depended largely on the expatriate workforce, there is an immediate need for an inclusive strategy to address the needs of culturally diverse workforce. Existing literature provides evidence that flexible leadership practices can mitigate adverse effects commonly associated with diversity while simultaneously harnessing its benefits (Al Muqarshi et al. 2020).

Despite the need for effective management of diverse teams, the findings indicate that the leaders lack the competencies to predict and manage the processes in their respective teams, Necessary training and workshops have to be conducted to ensure a leader identifies the situation and modifies the behaviour accordingly. In centralized industries like Oil & Gas it is essential to delegate a level of authority to the middle and lower management, this is crucial for leveraging diversity in ways that honor and embrace individual identities. A comprehensive understanding of cultural dimensions is essential when working with individuals from diverse backgrounds as it can greatly improve the exchange of information within the team (Al Muqarshi et al. 2020).

CONCLUSION

The LeaD framework provides a detailed model that concentrates on the crucial part supervisors play in managing the dynamics of a diverse team. While the principles of this framework are primarily based on organizational and social psychology, its implications extend beyond these fields and reach various disciplines. Diversity is not limited to organizations, it exists in educational institutions, communities, sports teams and broader societal contexts. As a result, the insight gained from the model is valuable for researchers and practitioners in fields like economics, sociology, sports, psychology, politics, science and education. For example, the LeaD framework can enhance sociological studies on managing community diversity by illustrating how leadership influences social cohesion. The research is aimed at promoting inclusivity and fair practices in organizational settings, which can help create diverse and supportive learning environments. By providing empirically testable ideas and outlining a clear path for future research, our goal is to encourage a more organized approach to studying leadership in diverse team situations. This collective effort aims to oversee the interactions within a multicultural team and how to leverage the benefits of such teams, creating a genuine strategy between the various aspects of team diversity and effective leadership within the organization. This approach will ultimately help organizations harness the strengths that come from diversity, leading to improved teamwork and better overall performance.

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