



UNIVERSITY OF  
**STIRLING**

**A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT AND FUTURE  
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF THIRD-LINE LEADERS  
IN THE OIL AND GAS SECTOR IN KUWAIT**

**By**

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## **DECLARATION**

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Stirling, United Kingdom. I declare that this thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that this thesis has not been previously or concurrently submitted, either in whole or in part, for any other qualification at the University of Stirling or other institutions.

Signed

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## ABSTRACT

Whilst the topic of leadership has been widely studied it remains little understood, particularly at the first-level line of leadership, especially as it relates to developing countries such as Kuwait. This study critically analyses and presents the needs, skills and capabilities of frontline leaders working in the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector companies. It also examines how such needs and competencies can be developed so as to make these leaders more effective in leading functional units (teams) and to improve organisational performance overall. The study produces a frontline leadership needs and skills development framework that contributes to a better understanding of leadership in a Middle Eastern country (Kuwait), taking into account important contextual factors that influence leadership.

Influenced by a social constructivist philosophy and based on qualitative evidence gathered from 42 Team Leaders, the essential leadership needs neglected by previous literature (and possibly lacking in Kuwait) were: business knowledge, technical skills, leadership and managerial skills, communication skills, decision-making skills and change management skills. These leadership needs reflected what the third line leaders understood and personally believed to be essential leadership dimensions for them to be effective and to competently undertake their work. These leadership needs constituted the foundation for their present and future leadership development in order to enhance their leadership capabilities. However, no single methodology was identified as a 'one size fits all' solution to meeting the development needs of the Team Leaders. Nevertheless, on the job-training was considered to be the most effective approach to develop these skills and capabilities.

It is recommended that top management, and in particular human resources departments within the Oil and Gas Sector companies should continuously identify the needs of third-line leaders and focus on developing skills and competencies considered to be lacking and the most important by these frontline leaders, rather than offering a raft of seemingly unconnected development activities.

**Key words:** Leadership, frontline leaders, needs, capabilities, competencies, development, Kuwait, Oil and Gas Sector, social constructivism.

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# **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This introductory chapter provides the rationale of why the study was conducted and why leadership is important for organisations and the Kuwait's Oil and Gas sector in particular. The chapter explains the background to the study, which leads to the identification of a practical management problem that despite the plans to increase oil production to four (4) million barrels per day by 2020, production has remained steadily at about 2.7 million barrels per day (gulfnews.com, 2014). The underlying reasons put forward being lack of skills, particularly at third leadership levels, commonly referred to as Team Leaders, due to an accelerated *Kuwaitisation* (localisation) policy where Kuwaitis are fast accelerated to leadership positions thereby displacing skilled expatriates, but without having acquired the requisite skills (Alduaiji and Lyons, 2014).

Other reasons put forward for failing to increase production are due to political resistance by some Parliament Assembly members in order to conserve oil reserves for future generation and avoid fast depletion of oil reserves; restrictions on foreign participation in the energy sector preventing Kuwait from acquiring the technology and know-how necessary to exploit its heavy oil and natural gas resources. Following a critical review of the literature on leadership, it was noted that whilst the leadership phenomenon has been extensively researched, most studies have focused on top and middle level management at the expense of third-line level of leadership, which is commonly referred to as Team Leader position within Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector. It was also noted that the majority of the studies have been conducted in developed countries, and such findings cannot easily be generalised in developing countries such as Kuwait, because of their unique circumstances and different cultural and religious backgrounds, which influence leadership, particularly within the all-important Oil and Gas Sector for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Jepson (2009) highlighted the importance of differences in these different areas (i.e. cultural, contextual, organisational and structural differences), which all point to the need to challenge the universality of leadership values and themes. There have been longstanding debates regarding whether leadership varies across nations or whether

leadership constructs are generalizable across cultures (Avolio *et al.*, 2009; Den Hartog *et al.*, 1999).

Following a critical literature review, a gap was identified that the leadership needs of third-line leaders were not well understood and how such needs were influenced by contextual variables. Furthermore, the development of third-line leadership skills and capabilities provides an added opportunity for contribution to knowledge in the field of leadership. Furthermore, it is fundamentally important that with the advent of the *Kuwaitisation* (localisation) policy adopted by the government of Kuwait and as the existing leaders are succeeded by a new generation of leaders, their needs must be clearly understood from their own perspectives (a social constructivist perspective), and subsequently the development of such skills and competencies is necessary to ensure continuity and realisation of organisational objectives.

In addition, the emerging business environment now requires a new set of leadership skills that are aligned to the requirements of the future (O'Brien and Robertson, 2009). The dynamics and complexity of the Oil and Gas Sector places enormous demands on the management and leadership competencies at all organisational levels, but of particular importance to this study is the third level of leadership. A more comprehensive theoretical framework is therefore required to understand the processes and interactions underlying leadership needs and skills and the development thereof at this leadership level.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to lay the background to the study, clearly outlining the problem statement, both practical and theoretical, research objectives, which naturally leads to the formulation of the research questions and the rationale for undertaking the study, especially in due consideration to the context within which this study was conducted and the importance of the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector to the country's economy. Kuwait is part of the Arabian Gulf, a region which depends heavily on lucrative revenues from vast oil reserves and therefore the findings of the study can be applicable elsewhere in similar environment. Therefore, it is essential that the sector be well managed and led by people with the right competences. However, it is important to clearly explore and identify their needs, which are not known, so that any leadership development initiatives meet their current and future requirements. Furthermore, there is dissatisfaction with existing

theoretical and empirical foundations for leadership development, leading to a growing desire to validate leadership training and development efforts. Reflecting on the need for current research in the field, Packard and Jones (2015) stated that ‘No comprehensive analysis of managerial or leadership training has been done since Burke and Day’s (1986) cumulative analysis’ (p. 44). Thus, this current study also sought to explore how third level leaders characterise their leadership development needs.

## **1.2 Background to the study**

A critical review of the extant literature shows that there has been scant research that identifies the needs, skills and capabilities of third-line leaders who occupy the first level entry point of leadership positions and hence career progression (Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012) within the Oil and Gas Sector of Kuwait. There are many theories of leadership, but few provide any long-term solutions to the needs of third-line leaders; despite the fact that leadership is perhaps the most researched subject in business and management literature, it remains the least understood area of organisational behaviour. The majority of studies focus on senior level of leadership, which Senge (1996) categorised as executive leaders. The skills set for lower level leaders are not necessarily similar to those for middle and senior leaders. Furthermore, the nature of leadership is becoming even more demanding, complex and diversified as it is now being implemented at the frontline level (Liu and McMurray, 2004), as companies streamline and become leaner (cited in Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012).

Various theoretical approaches dominate leadership literature, including traits, behavioural, contingency, charismatic leadership, leadership-member exchange, transactional, transformational leadership, distributed leadership, servant leadership and authentic leadership theories. These perspectives inevitably focus on leader traits, abilities or skills, and behaviours. For example, the concept of transformational leadership earlier proffered by Bass (1990; cited in Goussak et al., 2011) and further developed by Kouzes and Posner (1995, 2010) and others still relies on the traits and abilities of the leader to transform a lacklustre organisation into a profitable one through the manipulation of employees’ motives. However, the emerging leadership paradigms seem to characterise leadership as a social (group) process (constrained by culture), whereby the ethics of individuals are

integrated into the mores of society. Similarly, Northouse (2013, p. 5) has recently defined leadership as ‘a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal’. Also, Smircich and Morgan (1982) stated that ‘leadership is realized in the process whereby one or more individuals succeeds in attempting to frame and define the reality of others’ (cited in Pandit, 2016; p. 64).

Whilst each of these approaches has its strengths, the various theories equally have their limitations, which have partly given rise to the evolution of leadership studies with the view to explain leader behaviours and effectiveness. Furthermore, whilst these theories have contributed to an understanding of leadership, no specific theory to date offers specific explanations to third-line leadership (Overby and Suvanujasiri, 2012). It can be argued that there is a certain value in focusing on the abilities, behaviours and characteristics of leaders, particularly when trying to understand their needs and developing a leadership development programme.

There is no universal consensus on the definition of leadership or how best to develop leadership and leaders, and according to Bolden (2004), the link between leadership and organisational outcomes is not well established and neither is there sufficient empirical evidence on the impact of leadership or development on performance and productivity. This study adopts Bolden’s (2004, 2005, 2010) view of leadership as a set of skills, qualities and behaviours exhibited by the leader that encourages the participation, development, and commitment of others within the organisation. It is a collective action orchestrated in such a manner as to bring about significant change while raising the competencies and motivation of all those involved: that is, action where more than one individual influences the process and hence the need to study third-line or Team Leaders (as they are commonly referred to within Kuwait’s Oil and Gas Sector companies).

Several authors (Bolden, 2004; Kotter, 1990; Robbins and DeCenzo, 2003; cited from Kolodziejczyk, 2015) have attempted to differentiate leadership from management, with the fundamental difference lying in their functions for organisations and society. The purpose of management is to stabilise the orientation of the organisation by maintaining successful patterns of action through the development and control of standard operating procedures (Robbins and DeCenzo, 2003; cited from Kolodziejczyk, 2015). Bolden and

Gosling (2006; cited in Alban-Metcalfe and Alimo-Metcalfe, 2013) argue that the distinction made between management and leadership (Kotter, 1990; cited in Kolodziejczyk, 2015) shifted the emphasis from the mainly technical requirements of specific job roles to the softer interpersonal qualities sought from people at different levels of the organisation, including those at the lower levels. A view is taken in this study that both are necessary for success in an increasingly complex and volatile business environment (Kotter, 1990; cited in Kolodziejczyk, 2015), and that leadership is just one dimension of a multifaceted management role (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003; cited in Fioravante, 2013).

As observed by Yukl (2013), organisations are operating in a dynamic environment caused by the increasing speed and turbulence of technological change, the influx of knowledge workers and the move towards a global and multi-cultural workplace. The Oil and Gas Sector is a highly technical area and extensive use is made of technology to explore and extract the resources from underground. Furthermore, due to the shortage of local manpower, the sector is heavily dependent on migrant workers, especially for many of the low-level positions and menial jobs that Kuwaitis shun. However, many of the leadership positions are now occupied by Kuwaitis as part of the localisation (Kuwaitisation) policy. This has implications in that the fresh incumbents need to be trained and be equipped with the requisite skills for them to perform at the expected levels. However, before such human resource development can take place, it is imperative that their needs are clearly delineated. Currently, the needs of such frontline leaders are not well known, possibly leading to leadership development programmes that may not necessarily meet their needs. Understanding their needs is a task that can be better accomplished if the leaders themselves are given the opportunity to speak for themselves and relate their own personal leadership experiences. It is however acknowledged that critical approaches to the study of leadership should pay attention to situations, events, institutions, ideas and social practices.

Having adopted an interpretive approach to leadership in sharp contrast to the traditional functionalist approach to the study of leadership, and thereby viewing leadership as a process, leadership training and development then ought to focus on those behaviours needed to ‘manage’ the outputs of the process, namely: the changed or social structures, roles and role expectations. Skills development then becomes an activity that converts a

capability to ability through the structuring and practice of a set of behaviours (Bolden, 2004; Burgoyne *et al.*, 2004). Development should then have as its goal the self-realisation needed for the individual to adapt and integrate personal wants and needs to those of the team. Leadership development must therefore focus on those skills required to solve current and future problems, to motivate people and to manage organisations to accomplish goals. Leadership development in this thesis is viewed as intervention processes that seek to expand a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles. Leadership development can thus be viewed as expanding the collective capacity of organisational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes in anticipation of unforeseen challenges and across a wide range of situations (Bolden, 2004; 2005; Burgoyne *et al.*, 2004).

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Several factors, which are partly explained in Chapter 2, give rise to the problems of not having skilled personnel to run the Oil and Gas companies in Kuwait. Kuwait is a relatively small country, with only about 1.4 million Kuwaitis who constitute about one-third of the country's population of almost 3.95 million. This means that the country has no choice but to rely on expatriates to work in many facets of industry and commerce, in particular those areas that Kuwaitis shun. However, in the government ministries and public sector companies, such as the Oil and Gas Sector, significant strides have been made to replace expatriates with Kuwaitis, especially in key managerial and leadership positions. However, this localisation policy commonly referred to as the *Kuwaitisation* policy is essentially one of affirmative action that promotes indigenous nationals to key positions by virtue of their nationality rather than their aptitude, and it is universally acknowledged throughout the GCC (where similar programmes are implemented) that the initial phase of localisation policies was botched because of the shortage of adequately qualified, skilled and experienced locals to perform key management roles.

The Oil and Gas Sector is a highly technical area that requires special skills, which skills have to be imparted to the local people through various forms of training and development. The human resource development (HRD) function has not been keeping close to the needs of the leaders, and in particular first-level line leaders, in our case. It can be argued that

HRD has been inwardly focused and more concerned with offering training and development products that may not necessarily be meeting the needs of the leaders themselves, hence there is a need to adopt a more constructivist approach and allow the leaders to narrate their own experiences.

Kuwait was classified as such a collectivist society. It is thus important to note that a penchant for ‘in-group collectivism’ is a defining element of leadership in Kuwait along with other Middle Eastern countries (Northouse, 2013). The majority of the Kuwaiti population are of Bedouin origin, wherein tradition and culture affirm the need for tribe members to stand by and defend one another. This might explain why favouritism and nepotism (*Wasta*) are considered normal in societies such as Kuwait, because of the need to look after the interests of group members. *Wasta* is a common phenomenon in the Middle East synonymous with cronyism, nepotism or favouritism in the West, and *Gaunxi* in China (Weir and Hutchings, 2005). Al-Rayis and Al-Fadli (2004) noted that the roots of *Wasta* lie within the collective nature of the society and its tribal nature, whereby loyalty is to people from the same tribe, group, clan and close family ties, as noted by Hosftede (2001).

In the Middle East, *Wasta* is well known, understood and tolerated rather than accepted by all. *Wasta* involves a paradox of being widely practiced and simultaneously denied by its practitioners and beneficiaries (Cunningham and Sarayrah, 1993; cited in Goodwin and Preiss, 2010).

The management problem arising from the above is that the Oil and Gas Sector is not performing as it should be and organisational objectives are not being met, as evidenced by the poor implementation of the Kuwait Project. For example, by comparing the relative costs of crude extraction, based on data compiled by Rystad Energy, the cost of production per barrel of crude oil is \$17.20 in Russia-compared to \$9.90 in Saudi Arabia, whilst Kuwait has the lowest cost at \$8.5 (2016 prices). However, the costs of refining are much higher in GCC compared to say the North Sea Oil and other countries. GCC countries seem to perform badly in the latter and this may be due to poor leadership although other factors may be involved. The result is that the country has not been able to produce and meet the target of four million barrels a day and if anything, production has steadily remained at 2.7 million barrels a day (KPC, 2010). Higher volumes may appear attractive as a way to drive

the revenue at lower energy prices. However, higher volume can lead to lower crude oil prices, may undermine revenue gains.

Whilst there could be other reasons why the objectives have not been met, it is argued in this thesis that the management and leadership in question may not necessarily possess adequate skills and competencies required to run the sector. Furthermore, the current and future needs of its leaders are not known, thereby rendering leadership development initiatives ineffective. It is therefore important to undertake research and gain insight into the needs, skills and capabilities of first-level line leaders within the Oil and Gas Sector of Kuwait.

#### **1.4 Aim and study objectives**

The main aim of the study is to gain greater insight to the needs, skills and capabilities of lower-level leaders within the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector and at the same time understand how best to develop their skills and capabilities, so that these frontline leaders become more effective and achieve organisational objectives and overall organisational performance. The specific objectives of the study are the following:

1. To critically review the literature in order to identify and establish how distributed leadership may contribute to our understanding of leadership effectiveness of third-line leaders within the Oil and Gas Sector of Kuwait.
2. To conceptualise a theoretical framework that links third-line leadership needs, skills and capabilities and the subsequent development thereof, with organisational performance, taking into account unique Kuwait's contextual factors.
3. To understand the specific needs, skills and capabilities required by third-line (junior) leaders working in Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector as constructed by themselves.
4. To consider the different approaches to leadership development that are more suitable to the junior leaders working in Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector.

5. To make recommendations for policy makers and managers/leaders to adopt in order to improve the effectiveness of frontline leaders and overall organisational performance within the different Oil and Gas companies of Kuwait.

Overall, the intention is to generally understand leadership and to develop concepts and new theory that explain leadership needs, skills and capabilities in the Oil and Gas Sector of Kuwait specifically, and within the Middle Eastern countries in general.

### **1.5 Research questions**

The major research question to be addressed by this study is as follows: *What are the needs and behavioural requirements/capabilities of third-line (junior) leaders within Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector, and how should such skills and capabilities be developed, and how useful is distributed leadership theory in clarifying skills and capabilities?*

The findings in this study attempted to answer the following sub-questions:

1. How do third-line (junior) leaders within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector characterise their needs, skills and capabilities required to effectively undertake their leadership roles and improve organisational performance?
2. How do the third-line (junior) leaders within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector experience the development of these skills and capabilities?
3. What are the specific capabilities required by the junior leaders working in Kuwait's oil and gas sector?
4. What are the policy measures and managerial recommendations that can be made to enhance leadership effectiveness and organisational performance?

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

The study is significant from both academic and practical perspectives because of the fundamental importance of the Oil and Gas Sector to Kuwait. As with the other GCC countries, Kuwait is cripplingly dependent on fuel exports, thus the scramble toward economic diversification (by employing locals and developing education and skills to

compete in the global marketplace) cannot be successful outside this privileged sector if it is not successful within it during this critical juncture in the economic development of the Middle East. The study makes theoretical, methodological, empirical and practical contributions.

Following a critical review of the literature, it was noted that most leadership studies have been conducted in Western countries, and there is lack of studies on leadership needs and development in developing countries such as Kuwait. Furthermore, many studies on leadership have been focused on senior and middle managers and there has been scant research of leadership at the front line, which is where the focus of this study lies. The needs and skills of these frontline leaders are not well known and have not been clearly identified (Townsend et al., 2016). More specifically, the study will contribute to how distributed leadership may contribute to our understanding of leadership effectiveness of third-line leaders within the Oil and Gas Sector of Kuwait. In addition, it is also not well known how best to develop such leadership skills. This view is shared by Lynham (2000, p. 1), who wrote that ‘there is a real deficiency of real, scholarly knowledge about leadership development’.

This study was therefore undertaken as a first step in understanding leadership in this non-Western setting. Thus, the results from this study should add to the existing body of knowledge in the leadership field by explaining the needs, skills and capabilities of frontline leaders in a developing country and how contextual factors such, *Wasta* and *Kuwaitisation* may influence leadership at this third-line level. This study expands the knowledge base of leadership and in particular the skills required by frontline leaders within Kuwait’s Oil and Gas Sector and how best to develop those skills. The study puts forward a conceptual framework that enables practitioners to clearly understand the needs of frontline leaders and discriminate between different bundles of development practices. It is believed that lessons from Kuwait’s Oil and Gas companies can contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of leadership in similar contextual situations elsewhere.

From a methodological point of view, the study contributes to research methodology by using a qualitative approach, in sharp contrast to the traditional quantitative studies that have been used in many positivistic leadership studies. Such an approach helps in the

development of concepts (theory) which leads to a better understanding of social phenomena in natural (rather than experimental) settings, giving due emphasis to the meanings, experiences, and views of all the participants (Glaser and Strauss, 1999; cited in de Casterle et al., 2011). If we limit ourselves to quantitative approaches to understand leadership, which presume cause- effect relations, then we may exclude much of the rich human experience of leadership. Furthermore, although generalisation is not the main aim of qualitative work, nevertheless lessons from Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector can be useful to other oil and gas companies, especially within the GCC, which is relatively homogenous in terms of culture and leadership practices.

From an empirical perspective and because of the richness of data obtained from in-depth interviews with participants who were purposively selected, the study makes an empirical contribution by identifying the needs, skills and competencies of Team Leaders and explores further how best to develop them. The experiences of the participating Team Leaders present rich empirical data that others can learn from, especially in future studies. This is particularly the case in environments that are not easily amenable to research by outsiders.

Kuwaiti oil revenues of \$64.83 billion comprised approximately half of the country's GDP in 2009 (World Factbook, 2010). It is therefore important that this sector is well managed and led. As the existing crop of leaders retire, they should be replaced with new leaders with adequate skills and competencies to assume responsibilities, hence there is a need to undertake a study that identifies the needs of such leaders and then put in place mechanisms to ensure that these skills and competencies are properly developed. Filling leadership vacancies, at both middle and senior levels, can only be adequately done if there is a pool of junior leaders with the requisite skills, otherwise it will prove to be difficult. The awareness of the inherent nature of leadership competencies at this level can help the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector to design action plans and focus resources to areas of greatest need by these frontline leaders. The identification of needs and required skills and competencies provides improved goal clarity, insight on how to become skilled in a given competency and a reference point for evaluation (Jantti, 2012).

To guide leadership development, clarity is needed on the needs of these first-level line leaders within the context, purpose and philosophy of the Oil and Gas Sector, to prevent a dichotomy between HRD initiatives and what the leaders really need. The study signals what it takes for these third-line leaders to be effective and the roles leaders play in sustaining this aim.

### **1.7 Thesis layout**

The thesis contains eight chapters, starting with this introductory chapter, which introduces the topic under investigation and explains the rationale for studying leadership, particularly as it relates to this first level of leadership within the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector. In particular, Chapter 1 introduces the important aspects of leadership (needs, skills and capabilities) in order for these first-level line leaders, commonly referred to as Team Leaders, to be able to competently undertake their duties now and into the future.

The chapter notes that whilst there has been extensive study of leadership, such studies have largely been conducted in Western and developed countries, and few studies have been conducted in developing countries such as Kuwait. The cultures in developing countries are fundamentally different, and it is argued that the context within which leadership is practised affects leadership. There is thus a void in the available knowledge base concerning leadership needs, skills and capabilities in these developing countries, which gives the impetus of undertaking this study in order to understand the context of first-level line leaders, and how best to develop them and contribute to a better and more informed understanding of leadership.

Chapter 2 provides the context within which the study is conducted and in particular brings to the fore the importance of the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector, which contributes 95% of the government's revenues (World Factbook, 2010). As such, it is fundamentally important that the leaders running this sector possess the requisite skills and competencies required in order to achieve organisational goals. It was highlighted that important projects such as the Kuwait Project, which is meant to increase oil production to 4 million barrels per day by 2020, has been derailed due to a number of reasons, one of which is the lack of competent leadership. The anticipated increase in production will require more operations such as drilling, wire-line logging, well completions and other related oil-field activities. These

activities in turn will require more highly skilled manpower and equipment by the upstream oil service companies, thereby justifying the need to identify the needs of leaders and develop their skills and capabilities, which is the subject of this research.

Several contextual factors that influence leadership are outlined, including historical background, high power-distance culture and Islamic religion, the indigenisation policy (*Kuwaitisation*), cronyism and favouritism (*Wasta*). These external factors affect the internal issues of operation and control and leaders should not only be aware of them but they must also respond and take steps to perpetuate strategic ‘fit’. For instance, many Kuwaitis were promoted to leadership positions by virtue of being Kuwaiti and not necessarily because they possessed the requisite attributes and skills. Thus, the chapter acknowledges that leadership needs and capabilities, which are required to perform various leadership roles vary in different countries and organisations, and this view is supported by Yeung and Ready (1995).

Chapter 3 operationalises the concept of leadership by giving a working definition and reviews the evolution of leadership, starting with trait theories and then ending up with a critical review of some of the contemporary theories of leadership, such as servant leadership and authentic leadership. Leadership is then viewed from an Arab perspective, where it is observed that leadership in these countries displays an arraying of small in-groups and large out-groups within organisations, establishing stark tiers of involvement. The implication is that workplace favouritism and discrimination (*Wasta*) results in creating barriers to those on the outside, while creating connections for privileged groups of people on the inside (Mameli, 2013).

Different leadership competency frameworks are reviewed and criticism is made of the universalistic/generic nature of competencies that assume a common set of capabilities regardless of the situation, individuals or task (Bolden, 2005; Swailes and Roodhouse, 2003). It was argued that there is no single model efficiently explaining leader behaviours. Furthermore, there is no specific theory that explains leadership behaviour and skills and the development of frontline leadership, which then partially justifies a social constructivist approach to studying and understanding leadership.

The study builds upon the taxonomy of leadership behaviour and skills (Bolden, 2004; Burgoyne *et al.*, 2004; Tubbs and Schulz, 2006; Yukl *et al.*, 2002) which embraces task-oriented, relations-oriented and change-oriented behaviours, which behaviours and skills were considered to be relevant to the oil sector, particularly for low-level leaders who are the focus of this study.

Chapter 4 builds upon Chapter 3 and reviews the existing literature on the development of leaders and their respective capabilities, in particular how junior leaders in Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector can be developed so that they can be more competent and assume more responsibilities, and become the future executive leaders of this important sector. The review is conducted in order to establish the gaps in the literature, gain a deeper understanding of the subject and to develop a framework that explains leadership needs and capabilities within the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector. In this regard, leadership development is concerned with 'expanding the collective capacity of organisational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes' (Day, 2001, p. 582). The literature review noted that leadership development literature is sparse, and there is a lack of empirical studies that link leadership development efforts to effective leadership performance in current organisational life. The chapter reviews various leadership development approaches including on the job training, mentoring and coaching, self-development and attachments amongst other approaches.

With the exception of trait theories, most perspectives affirm that leaders can be made, and that leadership development is a viable concept and practice. Thus, leaders can glean from many different kinds of experiences to develop new skills, values, abilities and knowledge. However, there is an evidence-based argument that some characteristics, particularly the emotional and motivational aspects of leadership, are more fixed and therefore cannot easily be developed (Nicholson, 1998). The chapter ends up with a conceptualisation of an integrated framework that incorporates leadership behaviours and capabilities, contextual factors and the development of such skills and capabilities (Figure 3.3).

Chapter 5 justifies the methodology used to collect and analyse data in order to gain insight into the needs of first-level line leaders and how best to develop their skills and competencies. Such justification is made from a philosophical perspective, whereby

because of the nature of the study it was deemed necessary to adopt an interpretive perspective of understanding leadership. A social constructionist ontology and subjective epistemology is adopted. As noted by Storey (2011), ‘contemporary approaches to leadership research are more alert to the interpretivist perspective which allows insight into the socially constructed nature of perceived ‘need’’ (p. 22). This necessitates gaining data on how individuals construct reality, related to the construction of language and meaning, the nuances of which are lost if they are quantified (Lee and Lings, 2008). There is therefore a leaning towards interpretivism as a philosophy for developing the required knowledge.

It is believed that the qualitative methodology employed and the research design, primarily using interviews, was the most appropriate to capture the essence of the participants’ experience. To this end, several in-depth interviews were conducted with 42 Team Leaders from seven companies selected from amongst the ten Kuwait Oil companies (see Appendix 2). Content analysis was used as a research method to capture the views of the lower-level leaders and help gain deeper insight into understanding leadership. In terms of analysis, we were looking for description of experiences and interpreting them in a non-judgemental way. Therefore, there was heavy use of direct quotes, pattern matching and making inferences.

Chapter 6 presents the qualitative evidence and frames the data obtained from interviewing 42 Team Leaders. The detailed transcripts consisted of over 500 pages of evidence, from which it was important to sieve through in order to understand the respondents’ perspectives about their leadership and development needs. Data was analysed as it was being collected based on: meanings expressed through word, analysis of non-standardised data requiring classification into categories and analysis conducted through the use of abstraction and conceptualization. Substantive findings were formed, which Erickson (1986) called assertions, a form of generalisation, and these formed the basis of discussion and formulation of new theory.

Chapter 7 is a discussion chapter whereby through axial coding, the dimensions of a category and how the categories relate to one another (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) were considered. Key to axial coding is the process of questioning or querying the data to answer

questions of when, where, how, why, and with what results. This begins the process of discovering relationships between the categories. Each of the codes were analysed using theoretical questioning (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), which is a procedure that helps identifications of properties, conditions, and consequences of key aspects of the phenomenon. This resulted with the development of a Front Line Leadership Needs and Development Integrated Framework that explains the leadership needs of Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector first-level line leaders and how best to develop their skills and capabilities (see Figure 7.1).

Chapter 8 concludes the study and suggests recommendations of enhancing frontline leaders within the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector and improve organisational performance. Thus, the study managed to bring greater clarity to the needs of these frontline leaders. For Team Leaders to be effective in this dynamic, market-driven environment they need to clearly identify their needs and have their skills and capabilities developed and become transformational leaders, whereby they can unleash energy and lead their teams to plan and carry out their work. Such skills and competencies need to be developed and various ways of skills development were suggested, chief amongst which was on-the-job training. The implications of the study are discussed in this chapter. This study is not without its limitations, which are identified and form the basis for further research.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has laid the foundation of undertaking the study and provides the research objectives and major research questions that need to be answered. It is noted that the needs of Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector's frontline leaders are not well known and neither have they been clearly identified and developed, thereby suggesting possible reasons why organisational objectives are not met. Identification of needs, skills and the development of such capabilities becomes particularly important because, apart from the fact that these are the people tasked with the responsibility of leading and getting the work done; they are the future senior leaders of this very important Oil and Gas Sector of Kuwait, in view of the country's heavy reliance on oil and gas revenues. It was also noted that there was no integrated theoretical framework that incorporates leadership needs and capabilities, contextual factors and the development of such skills and capabilities, so as to improve organisational performance, which is something that this research aims to address. In this

regard, contribution can be made by understanding how distributed leadership in Kuwait and other similar GCC countries can contribute to leadership effectiveness by third-line leaders and ultimately to organisational performance.

The chapter ends by giving an organisational outline of the thesis for ease of reference.

In order to have a better appreciation of the study and place the study into context so that we can begin to understand leadership within the Middle East, and Kuwait in particular, the following chapter provides a detailed study background, highlighting some of the contextual factors that influence leadership and career progression within Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector for third-level (junior) leaders.

## CHAPTER 2: KUWAIT CONTEXT

### 2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided the impetus and rationale for undertaking the study, which is about assessing the needs of the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector junior leaders and how best to develop their skills and capabilities. The dynamics and complexity of the oil sector places enormous demands on the management and leadership competencies at all organisational levels. In this regard, competencies are defined with terms describing certain stable personal traits (i.e. attributes such as intellectual capacity, self-confidence, emotional stability, openness to experience), behaviours, skills, values, and accumulated knowledge (especially knowledge related to the task, business, organisation and people) (Jokinen, 2005). As discussed below, many existing competencies frameworks are a combination of these factors. However, the competencies at the first level of leadership are of particular importance to this study, commonly referred to as the Team Leader position within the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector.

Leadership studies at this level have been very scarce and a more comprehensive theoretical framework to understand the processes and interactions underlying the development of leadership potential at this first level is required, particularly within Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector because of its critical importance to Kuwait's economy. The majority of Kuwaitis work in the government ministries and public sector, such as the Oil and Gas Sector, because of highly salaried sinecures, favourable work structure and social status (Saif, 2012).

The analysis of contemporary discourse and of recent literature by Storey (2011) revealed a cluster of what he calls enduring themes, namely: context; perceived leadership need; behavioural requirements and capabilities; and development methods. Each of the key factors interrelates with all of the others and together they form what Storey (2011, p. 20) calls a 'leadership constellation'.

However, before dwelling on the subject of leaders' perceived needs and capabilities, there is a need to put the study into context. This research inquiry is grounded in the social constructionist assumption that one cannot be outside and separate from processes of

knowledge (Cunliffe, 2009). Furthermore, Schuler *et al.* (1991) suggested that global corporations emphasise key leadership capabilities that are acceptable, feasible and legitimate within their cultural contexts.

The chapter begins by exploring the macro environment of Kuwait so that we can begin to understand the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector and its centrality to the country's economy, in addition to understanding the country's demography and why it is important to develop future leaders' skills and capabilities. The chapter also gives a brief history of the country's leadership after the Iraqi invasion in 1990, which precipitated an era of appointments to leadership positions based on nationality rather than qualifications or experience. The chapter also sheds light on the societal culture and its impact on leadership.

Other important contextual factors such as religion and *Wasta* (nepotism) are briefly reviewed in order to understand their impact on leadership and leadership development in Kuwait. It is noted that Kuwait is an Islamic state wherein Islam affects every aspect of living, including people's behaviours and work attitudes (Milton-Edwards, 2004), therefore its implications on leadership ought to be fully understood. Islam particularly emphasises the role of leadership as a significant instrument for the realisation of an ideal society (Abbas, 2009). By reviewing the Kuwaiti context, we will have a comprehensive appreciation of the contextual factors that influence leadership in Kuwait. Jepson (2009) highlights the importance of differences in these different areas i.e. cultural, contextual, organisational structural differences, etc., which all points to the need to challenge the universality of leadership values and themes.

## **2.2 Overview of the macro environment**

### *2.2.1 Politics*

Kuwait gained independence from Britain in 1961 and set up the first elected parliament in the Gulf Arab region in 1963. Prior to 2011, Kuwait's Parliament has a history of challenging the government, which is very unusual for a region dominated by ruling families. A majority of Deputies have to approve the state budget and all key laws in addition, they may exercise their right to question ministers (who are generally members of the royal family). These interpellations (parliamentary questions) often for cultural reasons

drive the ministers to resign rather than face a public interrogation, and in some cases have led the Amir (the head of state) to dissolve the Parliament.

Since the accession of Sheikh Sabah as the Eighth Amir of Kuwait in 2005, the Parliament has been dissolved seven times. The practical impact of parliamentary dissolution is to undo or at least delay some of the agreements by the previous government, so these may not be carried through by the next government, thereby affecting operations and the continuity of government (and the state sector, such as Oil and Gas). Not only does the dissolving of the parliament result in changes at the government level but in some cases changes are implemented at the organisational level, especially within the oil sector, because of the intricate relationship and involvement of the government in the oil sector as the core national asset, headed by a minister. For example, in recent years the Chairman of the Oil Sector, Al-Shuwaib, was forced to resign after disagreement with the government over policy issues of whether to go ahead and acquire shares owned by Dow, a petrochemical company that was jointly owned by US and Kuwaiti companies.

As explained in more detail later, Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector is wholly owned and run by the government; in most countries, including Kuwait, state ownership has been associated with inefficiency. Kuwait's Oil and Gas is characterised by high regulation, government domination, low competition, and low foreign participation, which is characteristic of most developing countries. There are, however, some government initiatives towards reducing its role, with diversification and possibly privatisation options being considered, especially in peripheral activities. The government would like to be less dependent on oil revenues, which can fluctuate with disastrous results for dependent countries, and to create private sector job opportunities, especially as the Kuwaiti national population increases (along with the burden of Kuwait's extensive welfare programme for nationals).

Furthermore, leadership appointments and career progressions tend to be made based on a political basis rather than on competence. This is particularly the case in Kuwait; most Kuwaitis find themselves working in government ministries and state-owned entities such as the Oil and Gas companies. Another important aspect in Kuwait is the role of women leaders both in the government and the oil sector.

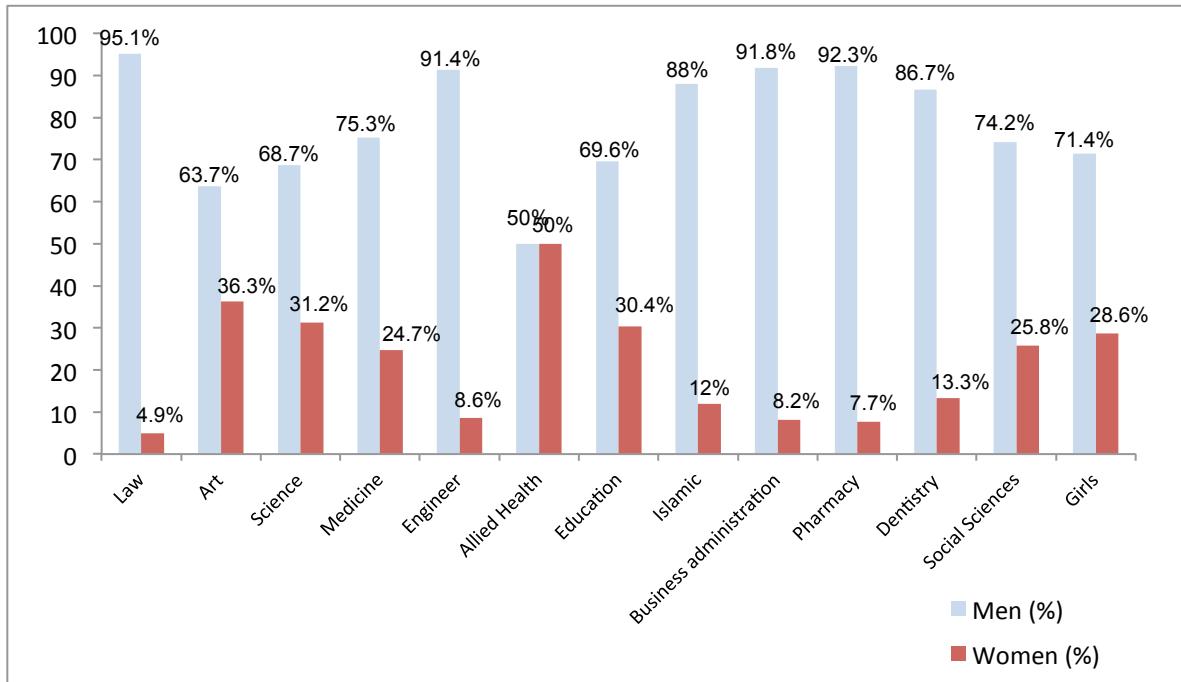
## *2.2.2 Women*

The first female suffrage was granted in 1962 but this was later revoked, only to be reintroduced in 2005 for the 2006 elections. The Parliament passed Law No. 9/99 in May 2005, giving women the right to vote and run in elections for the 50-seat National Assembly. Although none of the female candidates were elected to the House of Assembly, two women were appointed to the Municipal Council of Kuwait. Before the legislation of women's rights, many Kuwaitis (including both men and women) were against giving women the rights to vote and run for parliamentary elections. Many tried to deny this right through religious justifications and other conservative claims due to disapproving the idea of women surpassing men in society. According to Sidani (2000), the common religious teachings in the Arab world appear to promote a differentiation between gender roles. Also El-Basam (1995) mentioned that the social and religious traditions in this region have generated disapproval -among men and women - of women becoming supervisors or co-workers (1995, cited in Sidani, 2000). In general, women in the Arabian Gulf were perceived as only able to hold positions in certain working environments (e.g. nursing and education) and these positions would not be paid positions, as in the region it is still expected that men should have the main responsibility to work and earn money to support their families. It would appear that many of the difficulties and challenges that women face arise from the incongruity of the traditional women's role and many leadership roles as currently understood and practiced (i.e. the masculine associations of leadership as inherited from the Arab-Islamic and British colonial paradigms). This incongruity creates vulnerability whereby women encounter prejudicial reactions that restrict their access to leadership roles and negatively bias judgments of their performance as leaders (Belasen and Frank, 2012).

However, in the recent elections held in 2009, four women were successfully elected to be Members of Parliament and some women now occupy cabinet positions. As remarked by Al-Suwaihel (2010), after years of struggle for women's emancipation, the active participation by women has led to a new vision for their role in the Kuwaiti society.

There appears to be liberalisation of attitudes towards women's emancipation in Kuwait both at the government level and in the private sector. These changing trends appear to

have a strong influence on the rate of employment for women and on their professional development, and have increased the number of women in sectors such as education, as teachers and administrators but not so much in technical occupations within the Oil and Gas Sector in Kuwait, which is still considered a macho environment (see figure 2.1).



*Figure 2.1: Gender distribution in Kuwait University Faculties*

*(Secretary General's Office, Kuwait University)*

However, the advancement of women to leadership positions lags well behind that of their male counterparts and they still have a long way to get past the invisible glass barrier. For example, in Al-Khafji Joint Operations (KJO) [www.kjo.com.sa], which is one of the Joint Oil companies set up by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, there is not one single woman in a position of leadership, thereby illustrating the inherently patriarchal nature of the society. However, there could be other reasons why women do not want to work at KJO, due to the society's attitude towards career women.

Another important observation to make is that more women are graduating from the local university even with technical qualifications needed for the oil sector, but not many of them end up working in the oil sector, thereby creating a talent gap. It would therefore appear that there is a potential to develop women's leadership capabilities so that more women can

be seen occupying senior positions within the oil sector. With more women finding their way into the workforce and slowly assuming leadership roles, it is important to understand the intersection of gender and leadership (Jenner and Ferguson, 2009). Furthermore, and given the expanding presence of women in management and leadership positions, it becomes increasingly important to understand whether men and women share similar behavioural characteristics when performing leadership roles.

Another implication within the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector is that not many women are in key senior leadership positions. As a result, it would appear that the leadership styles reflect the power differentials seen in society as a whole (Fine, 2007).

### *2.2.3 The structure of the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector*

Kuwait is a developing country that has been experiencing rapid modernization and westernization based on exploitation of the world's fifth largest oil reserves. Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), established in 1980, encompasses all aspects of the oil industry. As a fully state-owned public entity owned by the government of Kuwait, it brings together all other state-owned elements of the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector under one corporate umbrella. KPC's total assets are more than 17 billion Kuwaiti Dinars (\$59 billion). KPC is a major contributor to the country's revenues and it is estimated that the revenues from oil comprise about half of the country's GDP (2009) (\$64.83 billion) (World Fact book, 2010). KPC owns ten subsidiaries inside and outside Kuwait. Figure 2.2 shows the three bodies governing the Kuwaiti oil sector, while figure 2.3 shows its subsidiaries.

# Kuwaiti Governance Model

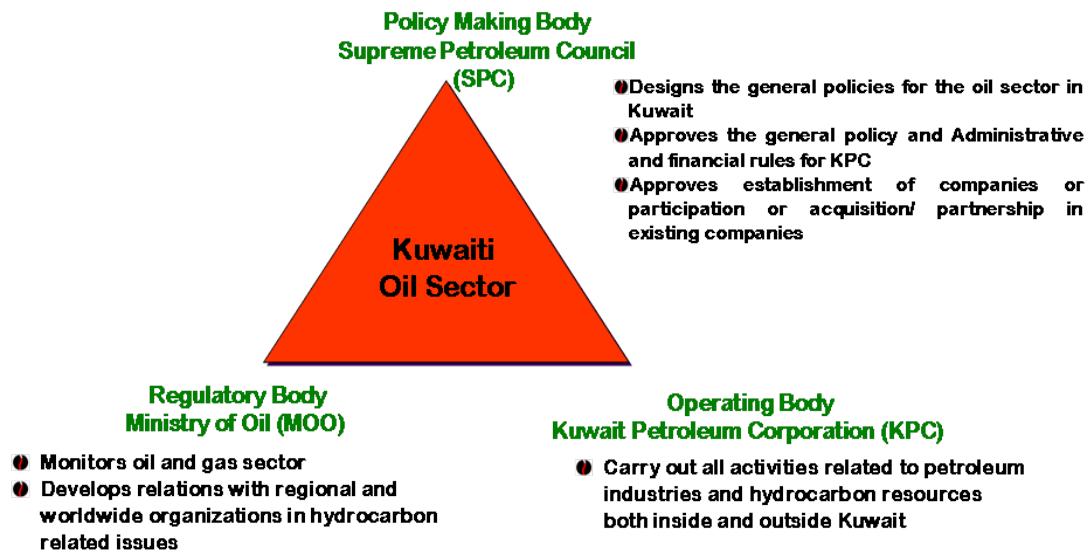


Figure 2.2: Kuwaiti oil sector governance model

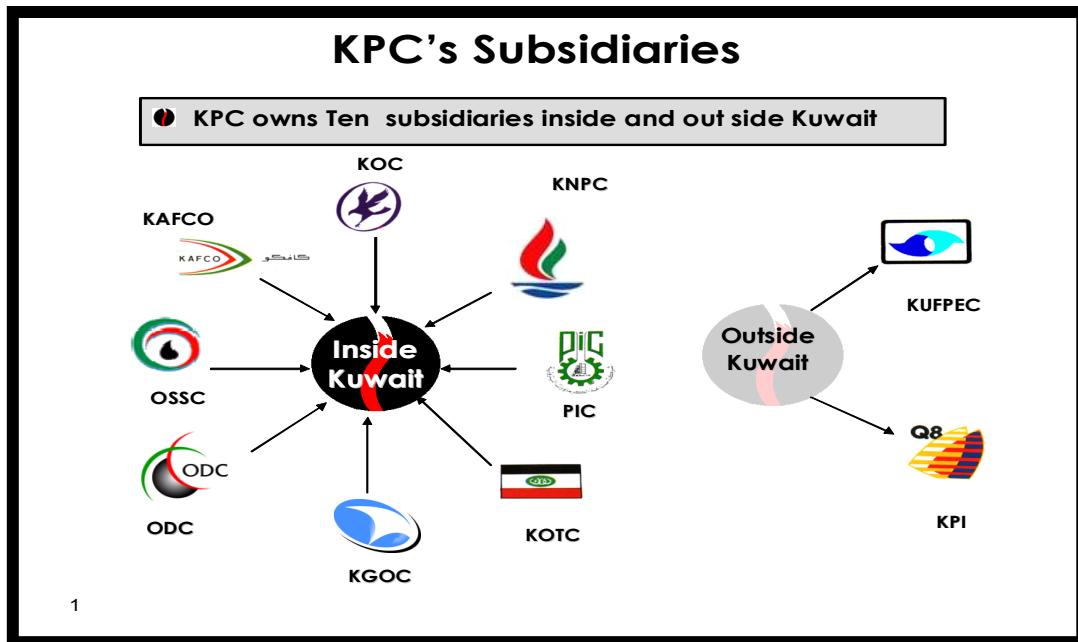


Figure 2.3: KPC' Subsidiaries

KPC was established in 1934 (owned by BP and Gulf Oil) and is responsible for the exploration, development and production of hydrocarbon reservoirs within the State of Kuwait.

Kuwait Oil Tankers Company (KOTC) was established in 1957 as a private company that has been transferred through time to be under the KPC's umbrella.

Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) was established in 1960 and is responsible for all refining and gas liquefaction operations in Kuwait.

Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC) was established in the 1961 and is responsible for fertilizer and petrochemical operations inside and outside Kuwait. It manages and operates fertilizer plants with a production capacity of 1 million tons per year of urea.

Kuwait Aviation Fuelling Company (KAFCO) was established in 1963 as a supplier aviation fuel at Kuwait International Airport and maintains the fuel storage tank depot.

Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) was established in 1983 and is responsible for exploration, development and production of crude oil and natural gas outside Kuwait.

Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) was established in 1983 as the international arm of KPC, involved in the refining, researching and marketing of petroleum products.

Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC) was established in 2002 and is responsible for oil and gas exploration, development and production in the offshore and onshore divided zone that is shared between Kuwait and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Oil Development Company (ODC) was established in 2005 and is responsible for overseeing all operations run by the IOCs in the upstream and manages operational services contracts signed between the two parties.

Oil Sector Services Company (OSSC) was established in 2005 and is responsible of providing services to KPC and its local subsidiaries in order to attend to their priorities.

#### *2.2.4 The Kuwait Project*

Favourable oil prices, the demand for more production, and the dependency of Kuwait on oil revenues encouraged the upstream national oil company (KOC) to increase its production. At the core of the Kuwait Project is a strategic plan to increase oil production

to 4 million barrels per day by 2020. This is an increase of about 1.3 million barrels/day compared to the 2006 daily production rate. This aggressive strategy requires planning, specifically in having competent leaders and the skilled manpower to meet the objectives set to meet this strategy.

For the 2020 strategy to take place, seven aspects must be implemented. KOC identified the following factors as the main drivers for implementing the 2020 strategy (KOC, 2011):

1. Developing production capacity
2. Maximizing reserves growth
3. Maximizing gas exploration and production
4. Health, safety and environmental commitment
5. Develop research and technology
6. Enhance corporate culture and image
7. Enhance support services

Although the above factors should be integrated and synchronized in order to fulfil the objectives of this strategy. Enhancing corporate culture and image is believed to be the key to the long-term development of leaders' capabilities and an integral part of all other factors.

The current and the anticipated increase in drilling and exploration activities will require more operations such as drilling, wire-line logging, well completions and other related oil field activities. These activities in turn will require more highly skilled manpower and equipment by the upstream oil service companies, thereby justifying the need to develop leaders' capabilities, which is the subject of this research.

In pursuance of this objective, Mr. Al-Khamees, an Assistant Secretary stated at the GCC 88<sup>th</sup> Human Resources meeting that there is an urgent requirement to develop Human Resource Management plans within the organization. He stated that 'we have to increase the competency of our workforce through the development of HR management so our employees can fulfil all positions of any discipline' (KOC, 2011, p.2).

Having oil as the main source of income for Kuwait and the implementation of KOC's aggressive 2020 strategy to meet the world's oil demand puts more emphasis on developing human resource management (HRM) to attract, develop and retain highly skilled manpower necessary to meet the short and long term objectives of the oil sector in particular and Kuwait in general. Therefore, understanding the technical skills and experience need for future development plans and the need to develop a generation to become future middle management and leaders is one of the most challenging tasks the industry and the country (indeed, the whole GCC region) is facing today.

#### *2.2.5 Population*

The population in Kuwait as of June 2009 was 3.443 million, of which 1.1 million were Kuwaitis and 2.34 million were expatriates ([gulfnews.com](http://gulfnews.com), 2014). There is concerted effort by the Government to increase the Kuwaiti population through giving families an additional income to encourage the expansion of the family, and lately the Parliament has been debating the prospects of awarding money to second marriages (it is customary to have up to four wives in Islamic tradition; although generally this is an embarrassing vestige of Islamic civilization for most modern Muslim-majority states, social reform and engineering within the GCC is always packaged in Islamic terminology and concepts).

*Table 2.1: Population of Kuwait*

	December 2008	June 2009	Difference	Changes
	(000)	(000)	(000)	%
Total population	3 442	3 443	1.1	0.03
Kuwaitis	1 088	1 103	14.9	1.4
Non-Kuwaitis	2 354	2 341	-13.8	-0.6

*Source: [gulfnews.com](http://gulfnews.com), 2014*

According to the statistics of the CIA World Fact Book (2010), in 2009 more than 580,000 Indians lived in Kuwait, making them the single largest expatriate community. The other nationalities are mainly Egyptian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Filipino and Sri Lankan residents. Expatriates from European, North American, African and Northeast Asian countries comprise a small portion.

A unique feature of Kuwait's population is that the Kuwaiti female population is slightly higher than that of male Kuwaitis, but as noted previously the role of these women historically has been that of housewives, responsible for taking care of their families while their spouses worked for the family and travelled for business (Tetreault, 2001). As a result, there are not many women in leadership positions and the situation is even more pronounced in the Oil and Gas Sector, where there are no female senior leaders.

### **2.3 Leadership in Kuwait and the aftermath of the Iraq invasion**

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 precipitated the Gulf War and dragged the whole region into upheaval. Many expatriates left the country and some never returned back to Kuwait. Others, particularly the Palestinians, were forced to leave the country because they were associated with support for Saddam Hussein. The departure of these expatriates left a significant technical knowledge and oil sector experience vacuum and the government at the time made the decision to replace expatriates with locals, even if they did not necessarily possess the requisite knowledge and experience to do the job. As a result, within the government and the oil sector, some people in leadership positions are there not because they are qualified or experienced for the job but simply because they are Kuwaitis.

This has generated an atmosphere where many young Kuwaitis expect to gain management positions in the oil sector without gaining the experience required for similar positions in European or American industries.

### **2.4 Kuwait's culture and its impact on leadership**

A review of societal culture is important from many angles; first, because it distinguishes one society from another, and from this study's perspective because it may impact on the style of leadership (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). The issue of leadership and its linkage to culture has often been overlooked in the literature, yet culture gives meaning to what leaders do and can either facilitate or impede the influence process, and it induces followers to respond and act in particular ways (Ali, 2009).

Hofstede (1983) named three reasons as why national culture is important to management. The first is political, whereby nations are viewed as political units with their own

institutions (e.g. forms of government, and legal, educational, labour and employer's association systems). The second is sociological, whereby nationality has a symbolic value to citizens (i.e. national culture as a part of self-identity). The third reason is psychological human reasoning is partly shaped by cultural factors (Hofstede, 1983). More specifically, from a 21<sup>st</sup> century perspective, culture not only shapes the art of leadership but also nurtures and facilitates the emergence of leaders (Ali, 2009).

House *et al.* (2004) contend that there are many factors that could contribute to the transmission of cultural values from the societal to the organisational level. One factor is that most people live their entire lives within a single society and become immersed in that society and its culture. Organisations within that society are therefore likely to precipitate structures and cultures that reflect the shared 'schemas' of the people who reside in that society. Given the emphasis placed on social relations, one would expect a high emphasis on participation in Kuwait, but that is in contradiction to the autocratic leadership style practiced in Kuwait.

Another factor, presented by House *et al.* (2004), is referred to as the Social Networking Theory. In other words, organisations are influenced by the social networks in which they are embedded and these social networks constrain the behaviours and choices of various actors within the network.

Furthermore, knowledge of societal culture is important, so that when cultures differ considerably, suitable forms of cooperation may be sought (Tung, 2008). In addition, adequate awareness of international variations in cultural systems can help to avoid expatriate failure (Tung, 2008).

Culture, like many concepts, is conceived differently so that there is no consensus on the concept. For example, Harrison and Huntington (2003) define culture as shared values, assumptions, and norms of behaviours. James (1999) defines culture more elaborately as consisting of a dynamic and complex set of values, norms, patterns of thinking, styles of communication and linguistic expressions. It is a way of interpreting and interacting with the world. Thus, a group of people has developed to assure its survival in a particular physical and human environment. What is common in these definitions is that culture is about values that are shared by a particular group of people. As noted by Hofstede (1980),

values represent what is desirable and generally they are a preference of specific states of affairs over others. Values tend to be long lasting, and although they may change overtime, others persist and are deeply cherished, and this is what distinguishes one group of people from others, and also differences arise as to how societies' value systems, and how they rank these values (Ali, 2009).

Not many authors have examined the cultural values of the Kuwaiti society and how in turn the culture influences its leaders. Therefore, limited literature was found discussing such issues and yet the cultural value system helps in establishing priorities, solving conflicting demands and categorizing whether a person is a leader or not (Shaw, 1990). However, some authors (Al Suwaidi, 2008; Ali *et al.*, 1997; Dedoussis, 2004; Hofstede, 1983; Kassem, 1989; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) have touched on some various aspects of Arab cultures and values, including those of Kuwait.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) in their study examined the Kuwaiti culture from the perspective of affective versus neutral culture, specific versus diffuse relationships, achievement versus ascription, and perception of physical environment. They found that Kuwaitis, unlike the general Arab countries, fall in the diffuse, affective cultures and tend to express their emotions very openly, thus Kuwaitis enjoy working in organisations that are friendly and lively, and they enjoy getting together to talk or socialise.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) found that 50% of the Kuwaiti respondents disagreed that the respect a person gets is highly dependent on their family background. Further, Kuwaiti people believe that nature should take its course and they just have to accept it the way it comes and do the best they can. They are often fatalistic, as expressed in the expression *Insha Allah* (God willing).

## **2.5 Taxonomy of culture**

Hofstede (2011a) view culture as a collective phenomenon, because it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment, which is where it was learned. Culture consists of the unwritten rules of the social game. The same authors argue that every group or category of people carries a set of common mental programs that

constitute its culture. Almost everyone belongs to a number of different groups and categories at the same time, which corresponds to different layers of culture:

- A national level, according to one's country (or countries for people who migrated during their lifetime).
- A regional and/or religious and/or linguistic affiliation level, as most nations are composed of culturally different constituent groups.
- A gender level, according to whether a person was born as a girl or as a boy.
- A generational level, separating grandparents from parents from children.
- A social class level, associated with educational opportunities and with person's occupation or profession.
- For those who are employed: organisational, departmental, and/or corporate levels, according to the way employees have been socialised by their work organisation.

A deeper understanding of culture was first conceptualised in the seminal work by Hofstede (1980, 1983; cited in Hofstede, 2011a) where he put forward four dimensions of culture based on a survey of IBM employees working in a number of countries. The countries were ranked in a hierarchical order based on a quantitative identification of the main dimensions for each national culture (McSweeney, 2002). Each country was scored according to a scale from 0 to 100 for each dimension; the higher the score the more that dimension was applicable in that society.

The survey which Hofstede (1980; cited in Hofstede, 2011a) used was taken from IBM's survey done on employee attitudes between the period 1967 to 1973. Hofstede (1980) believed that some questions in the survey were more related to values, which he considered to be the core of a culture. He defined values as 'broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others' (Hofstede, 1980).

Based on the analysis of the survey along with the theoretical explanation, Hofstede identified four cultural dimensions (he later added a 5<sup>th</sup> dimension in 1988 following his

work with Bond) and 40 out of 66 countries within IBM subsidiaries were given a specific scoring for each of the four dimensions, which are as follows:

1. Power distance,
2. Uncertainty avoidance,
3. Individualism/collectivism, and
4. Masculinity/femininity (Hofstede, 2011b).

These four dimensions are discussed in the following subsections.

### *2.5.1 Power distance*

The first dimension is power distance, which is the extent to which inequality exists and is accepted by members of a society. Power distance refers to the extent to which subordinates can express disagreement with their supervisor (Hofstede, 2011b). Power distance is likely to regulate individuals' appropriate relationships between supervisors and subordinates.

### *2.5.2 Uncertainty avoidance*

The second dimension was uncertainty avoidance, which refers to the structures within a society and the related society's intolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity. Uncertainty-avoiding societies try to minimize the possibility of uncertainty's existence by setting rules and regulations. Low uncertainty avoidance scores indicate the society has very open societal structures and people are free to discover their own truth, and exhibit different views from what they are used to. For example, the US scored 46 compared to 68 in Kuwaiti culture (Hofstede, 2011b).

### *2.5.3 Individualism versus collectivism*

Individualism versus collectivism is 'the extent to which individuals are integrated into groups' (Hofstede, 1991, p. 51). Individualistic societies depend upon individuals, whereby an individual is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family and friends. However, collectivist societies are built on cohesive in-groups, and individuals have strong relationships with their extended families, like grandparents and families of their relatives (uncles, aunts, and even non-blood related cousins). A society with low

individualism shares high loyalty and respect between members. For example, the US scored 91 for individualism, while Kuwait scored 38 (Hofstede, 2011b). The GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness) project identified that within the Kuwaiti society, people have a tendency to work in groups, and that individuals have fewer social interactions, but that these tend to be longer and more intimate. This is consistent with Hofstede's (Hofstede, 2011b) findings.

#### *2.5.4 Masculinity versus femininity*

The fourth dimension of masculinity versus femininity refers to the extent to which societies are pervaded by what Hofstede identified as masculine and feminine values. Masculinity refers to values like assertiveness, competitiveness and the focus on success, while feminine values refer to modesty, caring and the focus on solidarity values. There are two aspects of masculinity/femininity (Hofstede, 2011b). The first aspect represents the level to which a society promotes and rewards the masculine values over the feminine values, and the masculine societies have been found to score higher in achievement and motivation. House *et al.* (2004) contends that Kuwaiti society may be a higher human orientation society. Values of kindness, love, and generosity have high priority. People are urged to be sensitive to all forms of discrimination and are urged to provide social support to each other.

#### *2.5.5 Short-term versus long-term orientation*

The fifth dimension was long-term versus short-term orientation, which Hofstede and Bond (1988) also dubbed ‘Confucian dynamism’. This dimension deals with time orientation and consists of two poles: long-term versus short-term. The time orientation captures the extent to which people have a pragmatic future-oriented perspective rather than a focus on the present (Hofstede, 1991; Hofstede and Bond, 1988; cited in Hofstede, 2011b). People in societies characterised by a long-term orientation embrace future-oriented values such as persistence (Barkema and Vermeulen, 1997). However, Arab-speaking countries were not included in this study and thus no data is available from Hofstede and Bond's (1988) study.

These dimensions of national culture may help explain why some management practices work better in some countries but not in others. Multi-national companies have to pay more

attention to these cultural dimensions when operating around the world and have to adjust their management practices accordingly (Wheelen and Hunger, 2004, p. 234).

#### *2.5.6 Criticism to Hofstede study*

Although Hofstede's work has been widely embraced and utilised by many researchers in numerous disciplines, some researchers have expressed their doubts about the validity of Hofstede's dimensions, notably McSweeny (2002), who criticized Hofstede's methodology as being based on fundamentally flawed assumptions. McSweeny (2002) expressed reservations and challenges to the assumptions that Hofstede (1980) had made earlier in his work.

One of the reservations was how Hofstede generalized the whole nation in each country to be represented through few questionnaire responses, which were taken exclusively from a single company (IBM). Since IBM recruits people who tend to think alike and accept the IBM corporate culture, the samples can hardly be considered nationally representative.

Another reservation was in the manner in which Hofstede identified national culture in IBM subsidiaries. Whilst there are three non-interacting cultures existing in every organization which are: organizational, occupational, and national culture, each employee must be influenced by these three cultures. Hofstede argued that there was only one organizational culture (which was the IBM culture), given the fact that employees were matched occupationally. Therefore, Hofstede claimed that the questionnaire responses' differences reflected the national culture. McSweeny (2002; cited in Prowse and Goddard, 2010) considered that claim to be unrelated to reality, raising a question mark if it was possible that there was one single organizational culture in IBM worldwide, and if it was possible that every occupation have one single global culture.

Further reservation was in the opinions derived from the questionnaire responses; McSweeny (2002; cited in Prowse and Goddard, 2010) argued that there was a causal link made between individuals' values (as determinants) and individual opinions (as derivatives). The respondents were regarded as transmitters of national culture, the causal link would be problematic if opinions were insufficient, especially since respondents knew in advance the purpose of the questionnaires, also given that some questionnaires were

solved within groups, this could encourage respondents to manipulate their answers to the questionnaire, in order to improve their divisions.

Nations should not be equated with societies, as Hofstede himself acknowledged in more recent work (Khairullah and Khairullah, 2013). Societies are historically, organically developed forms of social organizations. The concept of common culture applies to societies, not to nations. However, Hofstede, in his study in 1984 considered dimensions of culture to be national rather than societal.

Podrug (2011) states that according to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), within nations that have existed for some time, there are strong forces towards further integration. Further, they argue that today's nations do not attain the degree of international homogeneity of the isolated, but they are the source of considerable amount of common mental programming of their citizens. Podrug (2011) adds further that Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) admit that using nationality as a criterion is a matter of expediency, because it is immensely easier to obtain data for nations than for organic homogeneous societies. This again supports the criticism about applicability of Hofstede's work when grouping Arab-speaking nations together. Not only do Arab people vary in behaviour and beliefs from one country to another, but within each country societal beliefs and values may differ. In addition, where the survey population includes dual nationals, the measurement of national trends may be distorted (Podrug, 2011).

Through Hofstede's scoring of the cultural dimension of Kuwaiti society, these cultural dimensions are capable of forming a unique set of values and societal norms, which influence people's practices, attitudes and actions, so they become distinguished from other societal groups. However, the cultural context can form and change the values of a society in which individuals live and work in, though over a period of time.

#### *2.5.6 Societal culture change*

Societies pass through a number of transformational phases that could result from economic growth and changes in technology as well (Karabati and Say, 2005). At present, Kuwait is going through such transformation largely because of the wealth brought by the oil revenues. The society has gone through a rapid evolution, without passing into gradual

transformational phases. After the discovery of oil, Kuwait changed from a society of humble merchants trading in horses, wood, spices, coffee, dates and pearls, to an immensely wealthy society depending on oil exports.

All that is best in the Arabs has come to them from the desert: their deep religious instinct, which has found expression in Islam; their sense of fellowship, which binds them as members of one faith; their pride of race; their generosity and sense of hospitality; their dignity and the regard which they have for the dignity of others as fellow human beings; their humour, their courage, their patience, the language which they speak and their passionate love of poetry. The new generation can have permanent jobs in the government and oil sector with permanent salaries and they do not have to risk their lives in tough jobs such as the long sailing journeys of yore, so a new society was born and a new set of values are developing.

The societal-effect thesis, on the other hand, suggests that a developing equivalence of technology in different countries does not lead to a similar convergence of managerial approaches (Child and Kieser, 1979, Barmeyer and Mayrhofer, 2014). Hofstede (1991, cited in Keating *et al.*, 2002) contends that technology will not influence all values and practices in a society.

#### *2.5.7 Values and practices*

Two components of culture arise from the above discussion, namely values and practices (Karahanna *et al.*, 2005). Values, according to Karahanna *et al.* (2005) refer to relationships among abstract categories that are characterised by strong affective components and imply a preference for a certain type of action. Values are acquired through life-altering experiences, such as childhood and education. They are acquired early in life through the family and neighbourhood and later through school (Daniel *et al.*, 2004; Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005; Karahanna *et al.*, 2005).

On the other hand, work practices are learned later through socialisation at the workplace, after an individual's values are firmly in place. Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) submit that symbols, heroes, and rituals are subsumed under the term practices; whereas values are

hard to change, but practices are easy to alter. Similarly, other authors make a distinction between values and practices (Erez and Early, 1993; Jermier *et al.*, 1991).

It is necessary to address the role of cultural values in the experience and outcomes of leadership both within and between cultures. Values can impact organisations in different ways. Since Kuwaiti society is considered to be a high power distance society, the decision-making process tends to be top-down driven. Organisations' structures are also expected to be of a hierarchical type of structure. Due to the collectivist nature of Kuwaitis, it is more likely to find that employees in companies tend to work in teams. However, it is also expected that employees will tend to spend their time socializing more than actually working, especially when the environment is friendly and lively (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). It is expected that higher positions in companies are occupied by more men than women and all these have implications on leadership development. Like many things in life, an exclusive focus on cultural values is insufficient to capture the complexity of culture.

## **2.6 Religion and its impact on leadership**

This section addresses the notion of leadership in Muslim countries and seeks to understand issues pertaining to leaders and leadership within an Islamic country, Kuwait. Kuwait is a predominantly Islamic country, consisting of about 65% Sunnis and 35% Shi'ite Muslims. There is freedom for other religions for as long as they accept the pre-eminence of Islamic religion in public affairs. As a result of these divisions, the concept of leaders and leadership has evolved across the centuries and has been largely influenced by the nature of power structure and sectarian allegiances (Ali, 2009). However, they both have a practical ideology (Islam) that tries to focus on equity among people, hard work, and the belief in one god, Allah. The internalization of Islamic concepts strengthens certain qualities such as honesty, trust, solidarity, loyalty and tolerance (Rees and Althakhri, 2008).

A contemporary Kuwaiti family is highly varied, and incorporates significant and uniquely blended elements of tradition and modernity. According to Tetreault (2001) it is not at all unusual for Kuwaitis and their families to be both 'modern' and religiously observant, just as it is common for 'traditional' Kuwaitis to embrace many of the trappings of modernity,

from their enjoyment of the Internet, mobile telephones and satellite television to their strong support for their daughters' educations.

In defining leadership in Islam, Daneshgara *et al.* (2013) and Thaib and Ramzan (2014) contend that Muslims base their behaviour as leaders and/or as followers upon the word of God as revealed in their holy book, the Qur'an. They believe that the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, modelled the way for Islamic leaders and followers for all times. Muslims conduct their work in the name of Allah and are therefore expected to be conscious of God's presence, and not let work commitments interfere with worship. This implies, for example, that they must interrupt their work at the time of prayers because prayer constitutes a very important pillar of Islam, and is an obligation for all Muslims (Graafland *et al.*, 2006); this reflects the implementation of religion in daily life, and the fact that religion is not separated from other aspects of life. Leaders are therefore required to meet their obligations to God as well as to discharge their duties towards their followers to the best of their abilities. According to Ali (2005, p. 146), the traditional view of Islamic leadership is that it:

‘is a shared influence process. Leaders are not expected to lead or maintain their roles without the agreement of those who are led, and at the same time, decisions made by these leaders were expected to be influenced by input from their followers. The process is dynamic and open-ended and the ultimate aim is to sustain cohesiveness and effectiveness’.

Beekun and Badawi (1999, 1999a) describe leadership from an Islamic perspective as having two primary roles of servant-leader and guardian-leader (Daneshgara *et al.*, 2013; Thaib and Ramzan, 2014). Servant-leaders promote the welfare of their followers and guide them toward what is good, while the guardian-leader protects the community from tyranny and oppression, promoting justice. From these perspectives, it would appear that the notion of Islamic leadership is very close to notions of leadership that exist in the mainstream literature, with differences most likely to come from the organisational context or the external context (Faris and Parry, 2011).

Islamic leadership principles are primarily derived from the following key sources: the Quran, the Prophetic Tradition, the Pious Caliphs and the Righteous Followers (Khan,

2007). There are many laws, principles and models, which Khan (2007) classifies into the following cardinal principles and values: (1) Faith and belief; (2) Knowledge and wisdom; (3) Courage and determination; (4) Mutual consultation and unity (fraternity and brotherhood); (5) Morality and piety (honesty and trust); (6) Superior communication; (7) Justice and compassion; (8) Patience and endurance; (9) Commitment and sacrifice; (10) Lifelong endeavour; (11) Gratitude and prayers. According to Khan (2007), these principles and their application are useful for every leader and they transcend racial, religious, and temporal boundaries.

Leadership in Islam is considered as a trust (*amanah*) and a responsibility. Whilst the Quran condemns oppression and authoritarian tendencies, there is a notable proliferation of autocratic leaders in both political and business organizations across the Muslim-majority countries. In the business world consultative, paternalistic, autocratic and authoritarian leadership has shaped the norms and practices in contemporary Muslim states (Ali, 2009), including Kuwait. Hudson (1977) attributes this to the primacy of coercive force and instability in the succession process of the Islamic polity, the centralized political system that has evolved since the end of colonization in many Muslim countries, foreign occupation and cultural discontinuity (Ali, 1995; Rees and Althakhri, 2008), and the domination of the *Jabria* (predestination) school of thought in many Muslim states legitimizes authoritarian action and the oppressive quality of leadership. Ali (2009) further argues that in societies that are infatuated with ideals (rather than pragmatic utilitarianism), attributes that facilitate the emergence of authoritarianism find fertile ground.

## **2.7 *Wasta* and its consequences**

*Wasta*, usually translated as nepotism or favouritism, is a common phenomenon in Kuwait and other Middle East countries, and it is more complex than these basic translations reveal (Al-Rayis and Al-Fadli, 2004). *Wasta* is an Arabic term that encompasses bribes (accepting payments in exchange for current or future favours or services), cronyism (hiring or giving contracts to friends), nepotism (hiring or giving contracts to relatives), and kickbacks (accepting a side payment in exchange for a contract)(Cunningham and Sarayrah, 1994; cited in Goodwin and Preiss, 2010), but this is only one side of a phenomenon deeply rooted in the social and collectivist structure of Arabic society, as mentioned previously,

whereby it is seen as a social obligation on leaders to care for their followers, including their families, friends and associates. *Wasta* is a rich subject for research in its own right, but for the purposes of this thesis we are particularly concerned with the appointment of people who might be under-qualified or inexperienced to leadership positions, by-passing qualified people simply because they have strong social networks that are used to get them favourable positions.

Al-Rayis and Al-Fadli (2004) note that the roots of *Wasta* lie within the collective nature of Arab society and its tribal nature, wherein loyalty is to people from the same tribe, group, clan and close family ties is expected and prevalent, as noted by Hofstede (2003) and discussed previously. *Wasta* is used as a mediation tool and has a long and honourable history in a tribal setting (Cunningham and Sarayrah, 1994). *Wasta* mediation binds families and communities together and this is seen to be beneficial to society as a whole, as well as the parties involved.

However, *Wasta* is not a harmless local curiosity; it has serious negative impacts, particularly in the appointment of people to leadership positions by virtue of their position or status in life as opposed to their skills, experience and competence (Cunningham and Sarayrah, 1994; cited in Goodwin and Preiss, 2010). It is therefore not surprising to see incompetent leaders in senior positions because of their strong affiliations with influential people in society. Such practices are rampant in the government and the public sector, where there is severe over-staffing due to the necessity to disburse oil revenues among the population (Alduaiji and Lyons, 2014). Furthermore, the only way to be promoted may be through *Wasta*. In such environments there is very little accountability and for one to be noticed and considered for senior positions, thus one has to use these social networks (Cunningham and Sarayrah, 1994; cited in Goodwin and Preiss, 2010). These promotional practices demonstrate the reason why there is a need to develop the capabilities of future leaders in Kuwait, particularly in the oil sector, because of its significant importance to Kuwait's economy.

Karam (2000) observed the same findings and suggests that the practice of employing staff on the basis of nepotism and favouritism has set the stage for widespread administrative corruption and diminishing employee efficiency. Al-Rayis and Al-Fadli (2004) additionally

state that diminishing employee productivity can be traced back to several factors, one of which is not having objective scientific standards for hiring and promoting personnel.

It follows that those appointed may not necessarily possess the requisite or necessary capabilities, experience and competences to meet the required demands of the organization or role, resulting in gross inefficiencies.

Since inefficiency is widely practised across many departments and organizations, the inevitable consequence is poor service delivery and low overall organizational output. Those qualified and skilled officials who are by-passed in the process are naturally demotivated, and because of most Kuwaitis' reluctance to join the private sector, they just resort to putting in very little effort. In an environment where use of social networks is the norm and not the exception, Kuwaitis are forced to seek safety in social networks and those with powerful and influential networks seem to get the most favours. This is yet another reason why it is important to ensure the next generation of leaders are developed and equipped with the necessary experience, capabilities/skills and competencies to be able to perform their work.

## **2.8 Chapter conclusion**

The chapter presented the macro-economic background of Kuwait and highlighted the significant role played by the oil sector and hence the need to ensure that the sector is properly managed and led to ensure continued viability and competitiveness of the sector. Other researchers have also conducted 'sector-specific studies of leadership and leadership development, and they have pointed to the importance of sector context when it comes to leadership development interventions' (Storey, 2011, p. 22). Thus, this study acknowledges that leadership capabilities that are required to perform various leadership roles vary in different countries and corporations, a view supported by Yeung and Ready (1995).

Several contextual factors, such as the small indigenous population and over-dependence on expatriates, societal culture and *Wasta* etc. have contributed and culminated in the lack of necessary leadership capabilities required to manage and lead the Oil and Gas Sector, resulting in many projects not being implemented and the sector not meeting its strategic objectives. Collectively, these factors illustrate the significance of context shaping the

agenda and meaning concerning leadership (Storey, 2011). The external environment affects the internal issues of operation and control, and leaders should not only be aware of them but they must also respond and take steps to perpetuate strategic ‘fit’. This makes it imperative to undertake research in understanding the needs and behavioural requirements/capabilities of leaders in this sector. It is important to understand the needs of each leader based on which they can be developed to be better leaders and meet the organizational needs. Similar to how employees are provided with training and development, leaders also need to development of personal skills and appropriate skill set. These skills may include the meta-skills of being able to learn and make sense of the new situation. James (2011) argue that rather than developing ‘idealised’, generic capabilities, leadership development needs to encourage leaders to understand and respond to their particular contexts and enact the skills and capabilities that are required for their situation and time. The ability to make sense of the situation and create a ‘tailor-made’ intervention is required. Thus, leadership development is not about a generic competence such as communication, for example, but the ability to understand what kind of message and what kind of conversation is needed and who should be invited to that conversation. This is an area that is only beginning to gain momentum, and very little research has been conducted in this regard, particularly as it relates to Kuwait’s Oil and Gas Sector. Furthermore, and more specifically as it relates to Kuwait, there is a need to have a new program of leadership development because there are not many experienced and skilled leaders with the requisite capabilities to be able to assume leadership responsibilities.

The next chapter critically reviews the literature on leadership, behavioural requirements and capabilities and perceived needs in order to gain breadth and depth of understanding and establish the gap in the literature.

## **CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW-LEADERSHIP, BEHAVIOURAL REQUIREMENTS/ CAPABILITIES AND NEEDS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

One of the defining challenges for the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector is to ensure that there is a steady stream of new leaders being developed to assume leadership positions as the old generation of leaders retires. Developing new leaders is very important in a country where people tend to retire at a relatively early age. This is necessary if the sector is to remain competitive and assume its central position within the economy of Kuwait. Augmenting the experience and capabilities of the senior leadership team is often the most visible sign of change in organisations that are becoming more strongly managed (Stid and Bradach, 2009).

There has been substantial research in leadership, but despite this work it has proven difficult to formulate interventions yielding tangible improvements in leader effectiveness and organisational performance, particularly for those leaders at the lower levels. Leadership studies in the Middle East are almost non-existent due to the inherent difficulty of conducting organisational research there (Dorfman and House, 2004).

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to critically review the extant literature on leadership behaviours and capabilities in order to gain breadth and depth of understanding as well as establish the gaps in the literature. In so doing, we can begin to appreciate the behavioural categories that might be relevant and meaningful for leaders in the oil sector of Kuwait before considering how best to develop such leadership capabilities, particularly amongst the lower level leaders, if the oil sector is to be able to achieve its organisational goals.

The subject of leadership development will be discussed in the following chapter, commencing with a critical review and discussion of some of the most influential leadership theories, which offer a valuable context for the consideration of wider issues about defining leadership capabilities and development approaches. Notwithstanding the importance of leadership capabilities at all organisational levels, the development of third line leaders is an area that until recently has not been well studied, which is what this thesis

will focus on. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to review the extent to which past and current research on leadership informs knowledge about leadership processes, behaviours and capabilities, particularly at the lower-levels of leadership, and identify theoretical perspectives that will inform this study.

If the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector leaders are to be effective, it is argued in this thesis that they would require different but related sets of capabilities in (a) task-oriented behaviours, which hinge on the ability to clarify task requirements and structure tasks around an organisation's mission and objectives (Bass, 1990, cited in Goussak *et al.*, 2011); (b) person-oriented behaviours, which rely on the ability to show consideration for others as well as to take into account one's own and others' emotions (Gerstner and Day, 1997); and (c) change oriented behaviours. Interpersonal skills are critical to planned organisational change implementation, because they enable leaders to motivate and direct followers (Yukl, 2009). To be adjudged a competent leader, an individual is expected to have the above range of capabilities in addition to accomplishing performance, i.e. displaying requisite behaviours. However, there is a need to define leadership within the context of this study in order to operationalize it; this is the subject of the next section.

### **3.2 Definition of leadership**

It is important to define the concept of leadership in order to research it in a systematic manner and operationalise it. This has been a persistent problem for researchers and theorists, rendering it even more difficult to create or produce competent and effective leaders (Amankwah *et al.* 2015). There is no universal consensus on the definition of leadership or how best to develop leadership and leaders. A clear definition of the concept continues to evade us despite being researched *ad nauseam*; there are as many (if not more) definitions of leadership as there are people who have attempted to define it (Ford, 2005). According to Bolden (2004), the link between leadership and organisational outcomes is not well established, nor is there sufficient empirical evidence on the impact of leadership or development on performance and productivity.

Leadership has therefore remained a largely ill-defined construct, although there is now a serious interest in leadership, as opposed to management. Simonet and Tett (2013) explained some of the fundamental differences between leaders and managers primarily in

terms of effectiveness and efficiency, respectively. Bolden and Gosling (2006) argue that the distinction made between management and leadership shifted the emphasis from the mainly technical requirements of specific job roles to the softer interpersonal qualities sought from people at different levels of the organisation, including those at the lower levels. Kotter (1990) summarises that:

‘Leadership is different from management, but not for the reason most people think. Leadership isn’t mystical and mysterious. It has nothing to do with having charisma or other exotic personality traits. It’s not the province of a chosen few. Nor is leadership necessarily better than management or a replacement for it: rather, leadership and management are two distinctive and complementary activities. Both are necessary for success in an increasingly complex and volatile business environment’ (cited from Kolodziejczyk, 2015; p. 125).

Despite the popular appeal of a distinction between leadership and management, Bolden (2004) cautions that there is some doubt as to whether they are really quite as separate as this in practice. Similarly, Mintzberg (1973, 1975, cited in Bolden, 2004) came to the same conclusion that far from being separate and distinct from management, leadership is just one dimension of a multifaceted management role. In a joint study with Gosling, they came to the conclusion that ‘... Just as management without leadership encourages an uninspired style, which deadens activities, leadership without management encourages a disconnected style, which promotes hubris. And we all know the destructive power of hubris in organisations’ (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2003, p.54). As a result, *leadership* and *management*, and *managers* and *leaders* have tended to be used interchangeably (Bolden, 2004). Nevertheless, current research in both mainstream management literature and organisational policy show evidence of a marked turn to leadership rather than management as the means to enhance organisational performance in contemporary organisations and as a way of solving organisational problems in the private and public sectors (Ford, 2005).

There is no universal definition of effective leadership, but it is generally defined as a type of social influence through which one successfully garners the help and support of others to achieve a common goal (Chemers, 2002; Northouse, 2013). The way the leadership style is

defined and understood is strongly influenced by researcher's theoretical stance (Bolden, 2004).

Bass and Stogdill's (1990) *Handbook of Leadership* provides one of the most comprehensive overviews of leadership theory and research. They define leadership thus:

'Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of the members. Leaders are agents of change—persons whose acts affect other people more than other people's acts affect them. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group' (cited in Okoji, 2014; p. 84-85).

This definition stresses that traits of the individual are important (change agents), the interaction with others is an element, and that group members' behaviour and motivation can be affected. There is no leadership without followership, and the concept is defined by the social interaction that occurs, which gives credence to a social constructionist view adopted in this research.

Leaders identify key issues relevant to organisational goal attainment and generate solutions or approaches that address these issues. Furthermore, with visionary and verbal acuity, leaders can transform organisations and win over employees' minds and hearts frequently beyond the terms of their formal employment contract (Kouzes and Posner, 2010). We can therefore say that in a general sense, 'leadership demands a sense of purpose, and an ability to influence others, interpret situations, negotiate and debate their views, often in the face of opposition' (Gold *et al.*, 2010, p. 6).

In this study we will adopt Bolden's (2004, 2005) view of leadership, which presents it as a set of skills, qualities and behaviours exhibited by the leader that encourages the participation, development and commitment of others within the organisation. This definition frames leadership not just in terms of specific but also in terms of the capabilities, knowledge, and skills that make effective leadership possible (Mumford *et al.*, 2000). However, in the same vein, it is acknowledged that it is very unlikely that a common definition of leadership is practically possible. As noted by Yukl (2002), 'most definitions

of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation' (p3).

Furthermore, this definition is reminiscent of the fact that effective leadership depends upon underlying bedrock of problem-focused and organisational cognition, which are topics that have received scant attention in the literature. Finally, we adopt the view that leadership is a complex phenomenon that depends on a process of influence, whereby subordinates are inspired to work towards organisational goals, not through coercion, but through personal motivation. Also of importance to note is that differences amongst researchers in how they conceive leadership may have led to variations not only on the selection of phenomena to investigate, but also into how these phenomena may be interpreted.

### **3.3 Theoretical leadership perspectives**

Oil companies worldwide tend to be large because of the diversity of activities involved, such as oil exploration, rigging, exploration, piping, refining, marketing and shipping. As such, it may not be possible for the person at the helm of the organisation to think for the whole organisation (Senge, 2006), and instead visionary initiative is needed throughout (Sosik and Dinger, 2007). As a result, great emphasis is being placed on individuals throughout the organisation to take a leadership role (Senge, 2006), even in relatively small, lower-level, and/or informal organisational spheres, which gives credence to the distributed leadership paradigm, as discussed further below.

According to Ogaja and Kimiti (2013) the research on leadership is disconnected partly because of separate disciplinary groups guiding theory and research, with organisational-level leadership research being generally the province of business scholars, and lower-level managerial leadership research having a strong grounding in psychology. This gives credence to the need to integrate leadership behaviour and capabilities with the development thereof, and this study contributes to the integration of these two areas. Researchers can mix and match the theories, or come up with just one that fits a setting and/or leader. Ultimately, the more that there is to work with, the better the analysis becomes.

### 3.4 Leadership levels

The point in the organisational hierarchy at which leadership occurs also plays an important role in leader self-development and leadership at three levels, which is commonly discussed in the literature (Reichard and Johnson, 2011). Although typical organisational structures of oil companies are hierarchical, as described previously, three general levels of leadership can typically be identified (Zaccaro and Klimoski, 2001), as shown in figure 3.1 below.

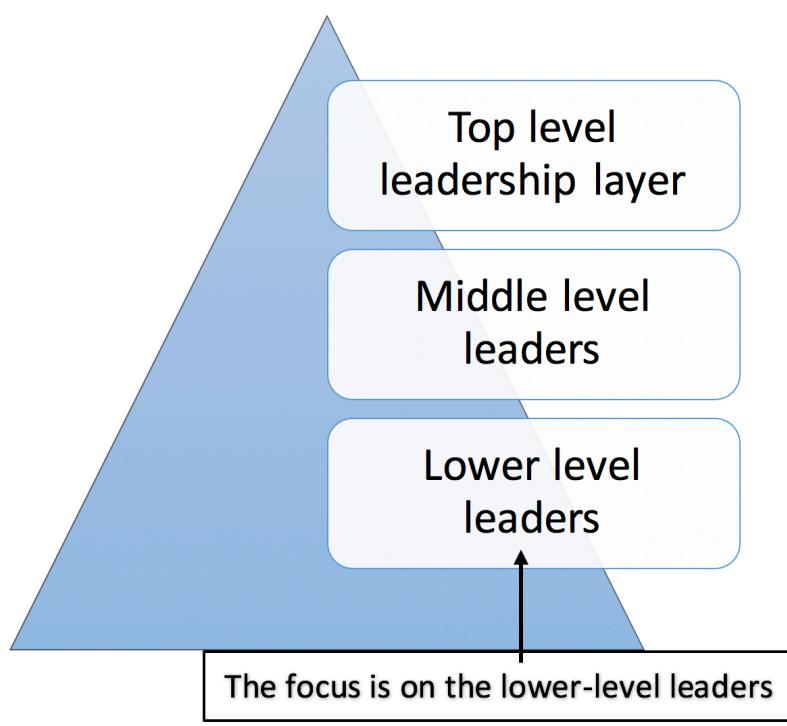


Figure 3.1: Levels of leaders in organisations

At the apex of the organisation is the top level that has the responsibility for establishing the organisation's vision and setting its broad objectives. In the middle of the hierarchy is the middle management, where leaders establish operational goals and coordinate the effort required to meet these objectives. As part of restructuring exercise, this level has been de-layered in some organisations as part of cost cutting measures and trying to make organisations much more responsive to customer needs (DeChurch *et al.*, 2010). At the bottom, leadership involves supervision where leaders hire and fire and allocate tasks. As noted by Zaccaro and Klimoski (2001), the leaders at these different levels enact the same

functions: direction setting, boundary spanning and operational maintenance, but in different ways, and they also have different time horizons.

The top leaders tend to have long-term planning horizons (DeChurch *et al.*, 2010; Jacobs and McGee, 2001), and typically within the oil sector in Kuwait this is 20 years, whereas at the low levels the time frame is much shorter, typically three months (a financial quarter).

DeChurch *et al.* (2010) highlighted differences in the nature of the boundaries the leader spans at different levels. Low-level leaders span boundaries between their units and other units within the organization, whereas top leaders increasingly span boundaries that link their unit to entities outside the organisational boundaries (e.g. in the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector companies, top-level management are heavily associated with the Government).

Another difference noted by DeChurch *et al.* (2010) is operational maintenance and coordination, which differs in the degree to which leader interaction is either direct or indirect, depending on whether one is at the lower or top level, respectively. The same authors acknowledge that coordinative behaviour is direct, whereas at higher levels it involves increasingly indirect actions, such as the establishment of operating procedures to routinize coordinative patterns.

At the lower level of leadership, the two major functional activities of leaders are monitoring activities and solution-implementation (Morgeson, 2005) to ensure goal fulfilment (Morgeson *et al.*, 2010). From a functional point of view, leadership is all about ‘organizationally-based problem solving’ (Fleishman *et al.*, 1991, p. 258). Therefore, without the requisite problem-solving skills and expert knowledge, leaders simply cannot be effective (Connelly *et al.*, 2000), and this gives credence to the importance of this current research.

Wilkens *et al.* (2006) introduced a competency model that distinguishes between competencies on different levels, which offers qualitative evaluation criteria for successful leadership behaviour. Whilst it is important to study the leadership capabilities at all these three levels, this study will focus on the leadership behaviours and capabilities at the lower levels, because it is believed that this is an area that has been under researched and requires greater attention within the oil sector in Kuwait. Furthermore, there is an eclectic variety of

perspectives on what defines the essence of leadership (DeChurch, 2010), but we will focus on the following perspectives representing different views of leadership: leader traits, leader behaviour and contingency approaches, transactional and transformational leadership, and distributed leadership, so that we can appreciate how the study of leadership has evolved over the years and at the same time appreciate the behaviours and capabilities of leaders at the lower-levels.

The larger the organisation, the more forms of leadership are likely to be found within all levels. Townsend et al., (2016) noted that most leaders who progress to the senior level generally do so by building on earlier, hands-on experiences. According to the same authors, successful leaders learn from their earlier experiences by reflecting on and analysing them to solve larger future challenges. Therefore, the focus of this study was on third line leaders.

### **3.5 Evolution of leadership**

This section reviews leadership theory to see how it has evolved over time and to ascertain the current debate on leadership so that we can appreciate where leadership capabilities and development fits in within such currencies.

#### *3.5.1 Traits*

The trait theory dates back to the ‘great man’ hypothesis of the Victorian historian Thomas Carlyle (1841/2007), which holds that history is shaped by the forces of extraordinary leadership. The ‘great man’ theory is interested in the personality traits which leaders intrinsically possess. This approach assumes that a ‘great man’ naturally holds the essential skills that allow him to perform as a leader. By identifying these essential traits, others can emulate them through simulated versions of leadership (Lawler, 2005; Amanchukwu1 et al. 2015).

However, the results of investigations relating personality traits to leadership have been inconsistent and often disappointing (Judge *et al.*, 2002). Early criticism of the trait theory emerged after the Second World War and must be understood in terms of the age of dictatorship and totalitarianism (i.e. under Fascism and Soviet Communism). Stogdill

(1948), despite observing some consistent relations, concluded that ‘The findings suggest that leadership is not a matter of passive status or of the mere possession of some combination of traits’ (cited in Lindner and Fogel-Dror, 2013; p. 7). The authors add that Stogdill concluded that no single trait or even constellation of traits clearly and consistently (i.e., across different situations) differentiated leaders from non-leaders. This, in a way gave rise to situational theory as noted by Bass (1990 cited in Goussak *et al.*, 2011) that ‘situation-specific analyses took over, in fact, dominating the field’ (p. 59).

### *3.5.2 Leadership styles and behaviours*

It can be stated that the inability to define a universally applicable set of traits led to researchers paying closer attention to how leaders act, rather than what they are, in some innate sense. Thus much of the research evidence switched attention to a focus on styles of leadership (Ford, 2005).

The depiction of leadership behaviour with the intention of delineating characteristic patterns or styles of behaviour exhibited by individuals in organisational leadership roles was partly as a result of the failure of the trait theory (Fleishman, 1953; Ford, 2005; Stogdill and Shartle, 1948, cited in DeRue *et al.* 2011). The inability to define a universally applicable set of traits led to researchers paying closer attention to how leaders act, rather than what they are, in some innate sense. Thus much of the research evidence switched attention to a focus on styles of leadership (Ford, 2005).

One of the most common approaches for understanding leader emergence and performance remains the behaviourally based model developed as part of the Ohio State leadership studies (Fleishman, 1953), which focuses on what leaders *do* as opposed to their traits (cited in Hernandez *et al.*, 2011). Leadership behaviour is the result not only of a leader’s independent choices and decisions but also of his or her reaction to a variety of influencing environmental factors and situational circumstances (Seiler and Pfister, 2009).

The behavioural leadership theory attempts to account for leader emergence and performance, and it isolates specific behaviours associated with effective leadership and the focus of research was centred on the initiating structure and consideration behaviours (House and Aditya, 1997; Judge *et al.*, 2004; cited in Sajjadi *et al.* 2014). Of importance to

this study is the taxonomy of narrowly defined behaviours that some studies have provided (see for example Fleishman *et al.*, 1991). Through this demarcation of initiating structure and consideration behaviours, the Ohio State studies (see Stogdill and Coons, 1957, Dujowich, 2014) effectively demonstrated that there are two core processes involved in running an organisation: managing and leading.

Behavioural leadership is very important to this study because the task-oriented and person-oriented behaviours (Stogdill and Coons, 1957, Dujowich, 2014), also referred to as ‘the initiating structure and showing consideration’ (House and Aditya, 1997), cover many of the day-to-day leadership activities in which leaders engage at the supervisory or lower level (Casimir, 2001; cited in Battilana *et al.* 2010), which Judge *et al.* (2004) suggested was a powerful model to analyse leadership effectiveness. For instance, structuring behaviour helps to clarify goals and paths to goal attainment (House, 1996); helps the group to define roles and allows for the integration of group members’ activities (Quinn, 1988); and supports planning and the coordination of group members’ various activities (Yukl *et al.*, 2002). For instance, Mumford *et al.* (2002; cited in Denti, 2013) note that amongst the various cognitive capabilities that might contribute to effective structuring behaviour by leaders, planning skills appear to be especially important.

However, behavioural theories still fail to provide consistent and compelling evidence for their validity across a wide range of contexts (Wang *et al.*, 2014). While the trait theory tends to imply that effective leadership is a matter of selection, the behavioural theory focuses more on the development of leadership capabilities and the need to consider subordinates’ views (Uchenwamgbe, 2013). However, there is not much emphasis on leadership needs and capabilities or even how to develop them, which is considered a component of good leadership in this thesis. Furthermore, it would appear that research on leadership behaviour in general has relied heavily on this common two-factor model of task-focused and people-focused, and although it has been shown to be related to leadership effectiveness, these approaches to studying leadership fail to identify the specific needs of leaders in order for them to be effective.

The leader’s structuring of the group includes leader strategies and behaviours used to structure the group for better performance on a particular task or to work towards a

particular goal (Mumford and Hunter, 2005). The impact of these behaviours on group performance is held to depend on the effectiveness with which requisite behaviours are executed (Marta *et al.*, 2005).

The behavioural theory provided us with an understanding that some aspects of leadership are more likely to be learnable. It also provided a foundation for many theory development efforts, including situational leadership theory.

### *3.5.3 Situational leadership*

Trait theories focussed on the individual leaders thereby underestimating the socially constructed nature of leadership and the roles of others in the organisation. Leadership is not a property of individuals, but an emergent, contextually-situated, relational process (Bolden, 2005; Yukl, 2009), therefore there was a need to consider the context within which leadership is situated and to consider what constitute effectiveness leadership in different situations.

Situational leadership is a form of contingency theory that focuses on the leader as much as the followers. Situational leadership suggests that leaders need to adjust their style of leadership based upon the circumstances and conditions that they encounter in their organisations and environments (Fiedler, 1967; Hersey and Blanchard, 1969; Vroom and Yetton, 1973, cited in Dede and Ayrancı, 2014). They ought to interact differently with their subordinates, depending on the situational attributes. Successful leadership is achieved by selecting the ‘right’ leadership style for the level of the followers’ readiness. There is therefore no single best way to lead; instead the leaders’ style should be selected according to the situation (Dede and Ayrancı, 2014). Leaders can be taught how to match the leader and their situations to enable the most leveraged use of a leader’s experience and knowledge. The assumption here is that for a given situation, there will be one best style of leadership. Thus, it differs from the universal approach that suggests that there is one optimal pattern of behaviour irrespective of the situation (Ford, 2005).

Fiedler (1967, cited in Dede and Ayrancı, 2014) distinguished between managers who are task- or relationship-oriented. Task-oriented managers focus on the task-in-hand to do better in situations that have good leader-member relationships, structured tasks, and either

weak or strong position power. They also do well when the task is unstructured but position power is strong, and at the other end of the spectrum when the leader member relations are moderate to poor and the task is unstructured. Such leaders tend to display a more directive leadership style. On the other hand, relationship oriented managers do better in all other situations and exhibit a more participative style of leadership (Bolden, 2004).

Yukl (2013) outlined that the situation, along with the leader and the follower, is one of the three main aspects under which leadership behaviour can be conceptualized and analysed at different levels (intra-individual, the dyad, the group, or the organizational). The criticism of this approach to leadership is that whilst someone can be a successful leader in one situation, that person can fail as a leader in a different set of circumstances. Thus, a new situation warrants a new and potentially different leader. The fundamental issue is whether society offers universal leadership training or selective training for a limited few.

Strength of the situational leadership theory is that it is applicable to a wide range of leadership settings and offers guidelines for interpersonal relations. Furthermore, leadership behaviour in a particular situation can be best understood only if the situational development over time is integrated into the analysis (Seiler and Pfister, 2009).

### *3.5.4 Charismatic leadership*

Charismatic leadership is defined as a social influence process that involves the formulation and articulation of an evocative vision, provides inspiration to motivate collective action, demonstrates sensitivity to environmental trends, and displays unconventional and personal risk-taking behaviour (Sosik and Dinger, 2007). It is thus an attribution made by followers who observe certain behaviours on the part of the leader within organizational contexts. Such behaviours are important because they result in leaders being role models for followers, who emulate and become committed to their leader as well as to the shared vision (Tănase, 2015). The issue of vision has been central to charismatic leaders to the extent that a visionary leader has been synonymous with a charismatic one throughout history; they have used their gift of inspirational articulation, making them catalysts for social, political or economic change (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978, cited in Bolkan *et al.*, 2011). Vision is central to the concept of charismatic leadership; some researchers have

inextricably linked the two by using charismatic and visionary leadership synonymously to accept their vision of the future and behave accordingly (Chung *et al.*, 2011).

Charismatic leaders, through their understanding of the people and events around them, construct and deliver compelling statements that inspire followers. Because visions are a means for such leaders to attract followers and promote change, effective envisioning processes require leaders to integrate aspects of their self-concept and personality into the vision (Chung *et al.*, 2011), which is why charismatic leadership is relevant to this study.

### *3.5.5 Transactional leadership*

With a rapidly changing global economy, various authors (e.g., Bolkan *et al.* 2011; Amanchukwu *et al.* 2015) of necessity shifted the emphasis of the role of the leader in visionary change from skills of internal (organisational) integration to also include external adaptation. This focus led to increased importance given to followers' perceptions of leaders and leader behaviours.

In this vein, Bass and Avolio extended Burns' theory of transformational leadership and applied it to organisational contexts (Avolio and Bass, 2004; Bass and Avolio, 1990; cited in Hussain *et al.* 2014). In the process, they developed several subcategories of transactional and transformational leadership to make these concepts more reliable.

Transactional leadership is an exchange process based on the fulfilment of contractual obligations and is typically represented as setting objectives and monitoring and controlling outcomes (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003). Transactional leadership can be understood to be a more common and traditional form of leadership based on an exchange between leader and follower that speaks to follower self-interest and then attempts to motivate behaviour through the promise of reward (Van Knippenberg and Sitkin, 2013).

The transactional framework of Avolio and Bass (2004; cited in Hussain *et al.* 2014) conceptualises leaders as those who bestow contingent rewards, engage in passive management by exception, and engage in active management by exception (Briscoe *et al.*, 2010). Contingent reward refers to behaviours focused on clarifying role and task requirements and providing followers with material or psychological rewards contingent on

the fulfilment of contractual obligations Sadeghi and Pihie (2012). Management-by-exception *passive* refers to intervention measures after noncompliance has occurred or when mistakes have already happened whereas management-by-exception *active* is about taking corrective measures to ensure that standards are met (Sadeghi and Pihie (2012)).

However, transactional leadership was limited to inducing only basic exchanges with followers. Bass (1985) suggested a paradigm shift in order to understand how leaders influence followers to transcend self-interest for the greater good of their units and organisations in order to achieve optimal levels of performance, which gave rise to transformational leadership (Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012).

### *3.5.6 Transformational leadership*

Burns (1978) felt that the earlier concepts of leadership were inaccurate, and according to him, leadership was more related to bringing about change, which he dubbed ‘transformation leadership’. He believed that the process of leadership, as initiated with followers by leaders, changed both leader and follower. It affected (positively) the morals, ethics, and attitudes of both leader and follower. He perceived transformational leaders as those who engaged and interacted with others to lead them to higher levels of motivation and morality. His framework inherently included both followers and leaders whom he saw as participating in leadership relationships in terms of dynamically and interchangeably engaging and transforming one another (Briscoe *et al.*, 2010).

According to Burns (1978), leadership was not a sub-set of management but a concept that had come into its own. Burns (1978) used the term ‘transforming leadership’ to describe a relationship in which ‘leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality’ (Chukwuemeka *et al.* 2014, p. 48). For Burns, leadership is quite different from wielding power, because it is inseparable from followers’ needs.

Transformational leadership suggests that leaders can move followers to achieve desired ends with an exceptionally high level of commitment. Transformational theory extends behavioural approaches to consider the actions of leaders who incite extraordinary effort on the part of subordinates and it is theorized to comprise the following five first-order factors, namely idealised influence (attributed), idealised influence (behaviour), inspirational

motivation, intellectual motivation and individualised consideration (Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012).

Individualized consideration is particularly important to this as it includes recognition of the differing needs of followers, individualized attention, and coaching. Van Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) see the above dimensions as ‘effects that are either unique to transformational leadership or as outcomes for which transformational leadership presumably is particularly effective’ (p. 4). However, current theories (Van Knippenberg and Sitkin, 2013) advance multi-dimensional conceptualizations of transformational leadership without specifying how these different dimensions combine to form transformational leadership, or how dimensions are selected for inclusion or exclusion.

The behaviours demonstrated by top and low-level leaders are oftentimes qualitatively different (Zaccaro, 2001). Specifically, at low hierarchical levels, individualized consideration could be more evident (Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012). Lower-level leadership could be characterized as being more task-focused and more technical than higher-level leadership, suggesting more active management-by-exception behaviours at the lower-levels.

Transformational approach has been widely embraced within all types of organisations as a way of transcending organisational and human limitations and dealing with change (Bolden, 2004). Although there is now wide acceptance of ‘transformational leadership’, there is still disagreement as to what it is and how it differs from managing. Like other leadership styles before it, transformational leadership does not offer a holistic perspective that fully captures what constitutes leadership. Furthermore, other authors (Gronn, 1995; Mameli, 2013) question whether there is little evidence in practice that the ‘transformational’ leader is any more effective with regards to improving organisational performance than his/her alternatives. Further criticisms of this approach is the excessive, almost evangelical role accorded to the transformational leader, who virtually unaided has the vision to guide the organisation through turbulent changes and crises.

However, transformational leadership theory with an emphasis on people-centred behaviours appears to provide a better definition and view of frontline leadership than the other theories of leadership. A central question that then needs to be addressed is whether

transformational leaders are born or made, and more importantly to the discussion at hand, how these skills can be imparted to the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector setting in a productive manner.

### *3.5.7 Distributed leadership*

It has been noted that leadership has primarily been viewed either as a person, role, or process (Yukl, 2013), with most studies looking at the phenomena in terms of the person (Hunter *et al.*, 2007). However, in reality, leadership is a complex, dynamic process in which the behavioural roles are undertaken by several individuals (Gronn, 2002) and exchanged across the leader and team level (Day *et al.*, 2004), which has promoted interest in the study of distributed leadership. These newer forms of leadership research examine leadership as a set of shared and distributed functions enacted by multiple leaders (DeChurch *et al.*, 2010). Distributed leadership suggests that leadership can be shared among leaders and followers. Distributed leadership combines both notions of the transformational leader as well as earlier trait and ‘great man’ theories. Distributed leadership acknowledges that leadership is comprised of a collection of behaviours that can be rotated among the members of the group (Erez *et al.*, 2002).

Although researchers have taken different conceptions of distributed leadership, four major characteristics of charismatic leaders can be identified overall: (1) a dominant personality, desire to influence others and self-confidence; (2) strong role model behaviour and competence; (3) articulation of ideological goals with moral overtones; and (4) high expectation of followers and confidence that they will meet these expectations (Northouse, 2009).

The strength in distributed leadership lies in the fact that team members may bring diverse skills and expertise to the table, which is an important precondition to the selective emergence of different individuals into the leadership role, failure of which there is no reason for different individuals to take on different aspects of the leadership role at different times (Friedrich *et al.*, 2009). Distributed leadership highlights the importance of other leaders in an organisation taking on other different elements of a leadership role as opposed to the person at the helm of the organisation. Senge (2006) similarly suggested that distributed leadership appeared learning-centred rather than leader-centric; in learning

organizations, leadership of the many would take priority over leadership by the few. Senge's embrace of distributed leadership treats learning as a feedback process and leadership as a transmission mechanism within an overall normative system of shared meaning. Thus, according to him, learning is not an individual behavioural attribute or capability but a 'double-loop' cognitive learning process that can be shared; and if everyone can participate in shared learning, then in principle everyone is capable of leading (Senge, 2006). This is a central tenet of distributed leadership, which may lead to overall team effectiveness through cooperation and coordinated action by multiple leaders with overlapping but different responsibilities (Gronn, 2002; Yukl, 2013).

However, in Arab countries such as Kuwait, even when followers were recognized as part of a process (such as in the leader member exchange (LMX)), followers have seldom been considered to be true partners in leadership to the extent that they would actually be responsible for making some leadership decisions and assessments. If anything, when subordinates were considered to be achieving leadership roles, they might have been seen as more of a threat due to 'emergent' leadership characteristics (Mameli, 2013).

A key criticism of distributed leadership theory is that although it is an important step in understanding the complexities of leadership, it does not fully account for the ways in which leadership is actually shared in real-world settings, and it might be very difficult to adopt in high-power distance societies such as Kuwait. The sharing of leadership responsibilities also assumes that the leaders at the other multiple levels have got the capabilities and can make leadership initiatives, which might not necessarily be the case unless these low-level leaders have been developed and equipped with leadership skills and capabilities. Distributed theory goes against both the trait and behavioural theories, because given the dynamic, multi-level nature of distributed leadership it may be difficult to isolate a causal link between leader traits or behaviours and outcomes.

It can also be said that the traditional leadership theories (traits, behavioural and situational, charismatic) have their roots in US organisational research and take a particularly individualistic view of leadership that reflects the Anglo-Saxon model. Contemporary theories (transformational, distributed and authentic) are beginning to redress this imbalance to more accurately reflect the cultural realities of other global contexts, but they

still remain predominantly Anglo-American in origin. There is a need to take into account the different contexts within which leadership is practiced. However, integrated frameworks of leadership that account for the development of junior leaders in organisations still warrant attention.

The constructs of leadership discussed form a path by which leadership influences team outcomes and effectiveness. What is now important is to understand the leadership skills and abilities that may affect personal effectiveness and overall organisational performance, particularly as it relates to the lower level leaders of the oil sector in Kuwait.

### *3.5.8 Servant leadership*

Servant leadership is another leadership style whereby altruistic leaders and their fundamental desire to empower and grow followers' abilities, as well as give back to the community, are examined. This is an unusual twist on matters, since we tend to think of leaders as wielding power, not sharing it or giving it away (Dierendonck and Nuijten, 2011; Sendjaya and Sarros, 2002). However, in this theory, selflessness is the central feature of the leader and the servant leader's chief motive is to serve first, as opposed to lead. This redefines the meaning and function of leadership power from 'power over' to 'power to', that is power as an enabling factor to choose to serve others. The very notion of 'servant as leader' is an oxymoron, and it may be difficult to think and act both as leader and servant at the same time - a leader who serves and a servant who leads. Servant leadership differs from most other leadership approaches for its focus on personal integrity and forming of strong long-term relationships with employees.

Servant leadership puts the emphasis on the acts of service, as opposed to the act of leading, of the leader and going beyond one's self-interest was the core characteristic of servant leadership. It is characterized as a more ethical (Bambale, 2014; Clegg *et al.* 2007) and people-centred theory of leadership. Part of the problem with servant leadership is to define the characteristics that distinguish it from other forms of leadership such as ethical or transformational. For instance, Patterson's (2003) model includes seven dimensions (love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment and service). It seems that from a theoretical point of view, one is inclined to include dozens of characteristics a leader needs

to display to be called a servant leader which are in turn hard to include in a methodological design, and may be hard to handle in practice.

The study by Hu and Liden (2011) demonstrated that servant leadership moderates the relationships between goal, process clarity and team potency, team performance and team organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs), which means that servant leadership helps in building effective team OCBs.

Although servant leadership, charismatic leadership and transformational leadership possibly share common biblical roots, the former has not been systematically studied and developed into a rigorously tested theory. However, because servant leadership principles provide the foundation for altruism, it can be a very good basis and foundation of organisational culture and of good service delivery because of the caring approach and appreciation of each other, as well as in the service of others. The development of others as well as seeking to serve them and meeting their needs (Covey, 2006) are the real motivating forces of servant leaders.

### *3.5.9 Post-heroic leadership*

More recent approaches to leadership have moved these heroic perspectives of leadership into a different dimension hereby referred to as post-heroic leadership. Post-heroic leadership was as a consequence of three trends: increasingly tumultuous changes in the corporate environment; rising dissatisfaction with the image of managers/leaders; and the recognition of the need to manage diversity in the workplace (Ford, 2005). Greater emphasis was given to followers, in terms of giving voice to all people in an organisation, including lower level leaders, to harness the collective intelligence of the workforce as part of a process of building new relationships within, across and outside the organisation (Ford, 2005).

Such approaches to leadership emerged from a fundamental critique of traditional leadership, and are rooted in the attention of critical theory (e.g. Alvesson and Deetz, 2001) to the issues of power and its exercise, inviting leaders to give their own account of leadership. As noted by Berry and Cartwright (2000), ‘to study leadership in an organisation separate from the social and political context which shapes it and is shaped by it is to

unnecessarily bound the study and perhaps to miss significant events and understandings' (p. 352). Through critical theory, the 'taken for grantedness' of leaders and leadership are challenged, and we begin to learn and understand better the leadership phenomenon. There is a need to rationally evaluate ideas from multiple perspectives to comprehend complex situations.

Critical thinking here requires engagement in processes of reflection, judgment, evaluation, and criticism that leads to decisiveness that is vital to achievement of intentioned outcomes. Assumptions are challenged and a more robust understanding of the causes and implications of problems and creative solutions are identified when critical thinking is engaged (Zori and Morrison, 2009).

### **3.6 The GLOBE study of 62 societies**

The Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) study is a unique project that comprehensively investigated effective leadership prototypes in major regions of the world, including countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (Kabasakal *et al.*, 2012). Data was obtained from organisational middle managers in three targeted industries: food processing, financial services and telecommunication services, which were industries determined to be present in all countries of the world but to be systematically different from one another.

The GLOBE study describes how each of 62 societies in the 10 regions of the world (Anglo, Latin American, Latin European, Nordic European, Germanic European, Eastern European, Middle Eastern, Sub-Saharan African, Confucian and Southern Asian regions) score on nine major dimensions of culture and six major behaviours of global leaders. These clusters reflect historical, religious and socio-cultural characteristics. Earlier research had clustering of cultures based on geographic proximity, religious, and language and ethnic commonalities. However, this study more clearly links clusters to work-related values and attitudes, and includes implications for economic development (House *et al.*, 2004).

The nine major dimensions included future orientation, gender equality, assertiveness, humane orientation, in-group collectivism, institutional collectivism, performance orientation, power distance and uncertainty avoidance:

1. Future orientation is the degree to which individuals in organisations or societies engage in such behaviour as planning, investing in the future, and delaying individual or collective gratification.
2. Gender egalitarianism is the degree to which an organisation or a society minimizes gender role-differences while promoting gender equality.
3. Assertiveness is the degree to which individual in organisations or societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships.
4. Humane orientation is the degree to which individuals in organisations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others.
5. In-group collectivism is the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty and cohesiveness in their organisations or families.
6. Institutional collectivism is the degree to which organisational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action.
7. Performance orientation is the degree to which an organisation or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence.
8. Power distance is the degree to which members of an organisation or society expect and agree that power should be stratified and concentrated at higher levels of an organisation or government.
9. Uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which members of an organization or society strive to avoid uncertainty by relying on established social norms, rituals, and bureaucratic practices. Hofstede's (1980) uncertainty avoidance version is shown to represent 'societal stress', whereas GLOBE's version reflects more the extent to which societies are 'rule oriented'. The decision to use either Hofstede's(1980) or GLOBE's version of uncertainty avoidance should depend on the focal construct of interest (Tung and Verbeke, 2010).

The six global leadership dimensions (or leadership styles) are labelled as: charismatic/value-based(C/V-B), team oriented (TO), participative (P), humane oriented (HO), autonomous (A), and self-protective (SP). The study establishes how these six CLT leadership dimensions vary as a function of the nine CLT cultural dimensions among the 10 regional culture clusters. Each is differentially valued by the different regions. For example, mean scores for participative leadership were highest and lowest for the Germanic Europe and the Middle Eastern clusters (House *et al.*, 2004).

Several explanations are tendered, but the GLOBE conclusion is that ‘it is likely that the pervasive influence of the Islamic religion is a key to understanding the Arab world’ (pp. 694-697). Even with the lower cultural leadership theory (CLT) scores, the universal ideas about and aspirations for an effective leader come through. Respondents in the Middle East look to a person who exhibits charismatic/value-based(C/V-B) and team oriented (TO) leadership style, as well as participative (P) and humane (HO) leadership, but not nearly to the extent indicated for other clusters. Effective leadership styles of participation common in the individualist West are questionable in the collectivist East. Asian managers heavily emphasize paternalistic leadership and group maintenance activities (House *et al.*, 2004).

Islam as the prevalent religion in the region acts as a unifying force by creating a common culture in the Middle Eastern cluster (Kabasakal and Bodur, 2002; Kabasakal and Dastmalchian, 2001). When compared to other GLOBE societies, basic features of the Middle Eastern cluster include societal practices that embody in-group orientation, masculinity, tolerance of ambiguity and limited emphasis on planning (Kabasakal and Bodur, 2002). The study also pointed out that while countries in the Middle Eastern cluster have commonalities in their societal cultural norms; each country also demonstrated variations on some cultural dimensions. Acceptable management practices found in one country are hardly guaranteed to work in a different country, even when it is a bordering nation (House *et al.*, 2004).

The GLOBE project is a cross-cultural study of leadership and culture in 62 societies which aims to develop an empirically based theory that describes the relationships between societal culture, organizational processes and leadership. The GLOBE research project examines culture as practices and values. Practices are acts or ‘the way things are done in

this culture', and values are the judgments about 'the way things should be done', the artefacts of human spiritual, moral and mental construct. Specifically, GLOBE is about culturally endorsed implicit theories of leadership (CLTs)—The study was a foundational shift in leadership thinking from individual leadership theory (ILT) to cultural leadership theory (CLT) (House *et al.*, 2004).

According to the implicit leadership theory of Lord and Maher (1993), individuals have implicit beliefs, convictions and assumptions concerning attributes and behaviours that distinguish leaders in three ways: leaders from followers, effective leaders from ineffective leaders, and moral leaders from evil leaders. These beliefs, convictions and assumptions held by individuals are referred to as individual implicit theories of leadership.

According to House and Javidan (2004), they found that 'if aggregated to the societal level of analysis, responses to the leadership questionnaire reflect the culturally endorsed implicit theory of leadership of the societies studied'. Thus, they report finding a:

'high and significant within-society agreement with respect to questions concerning the effectiveness of leader attributes and behaviour. Further, aggregated leadership scores were significantly different among the societies studied. Thus, each society studied was found to have a unique profile with respect to the culturally endorsed implicit theory of leadership'. (pp. 16-17)

The GLOBE study built on the foundation of ILT to develop a culturally endorsed implicit leadership theory (House *et al.*, 2004). Numerous examples demonstrate how societal and organisational culture can shape the ILT of their members (Javidan *et al.*, 2010). In a country with relatively high power distance values (e.g. Kuwait, Russia and Iran), children typically learn that the father is the ultimate authority in the family, and they show strong respect and deference to him. They learn that the father knows what is best and makes decisions for the good of the family. They also learn, through their interactions with their parents, that their role is to comply and follow the decisions and directives made by the father. As a result, in such cultures the collective ILT reflects elements of power and autocratic leadership. As adults, employees in organisations in such cultures are more accepting of high power distance values and autocratic leadership styles in their organisations.

The GLOBE Study noted that a penchant for ‘in-group collectivism’ is a defining element of leadership in the MENA cluster (Northouse, 2013). Although the Globe study noted the desire for participative and consultative management with all followers, or as much as can be achieved, the study revealed that what was being practiced was the opposite. Part of the problem with the GLOBE study about leadership is that it may not have been fully reflective of indicators relevant to the Arab/MENA region.

There is deep division among cross-cultural researchers as to what constitutes culture (that is, its key dimensions), how it should be measured, and what it implies for managerial practice. Another issue to take note of is stability of cultural dimensions/scores over time. It may be beyond the scope of individual research projects to actually measure the evolution over time of the adopted cultural dimensions, but it is nevertheless imperative to recognize explicitly the reality thereof (Tung and Verbeke, 2010).

An underlying assumption made in many cross-cultural studies (e.g. Hofstede, 1980; House *et al.*, 2004; Inglehart, 1997; Schwartz, 1994; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) is that they are premised on the assumption of cultural homogeneity within a given country. As Tung (2008, p. 45) warned, the ‘fallacious assumption’ of cultural uniformity can ‘risk the generation of results that mask or confound the phenomena under investigation’.

There were 18 scales to measure practices and values with respect to the core GLOBE dimensions of culture. In his critique of the GLOBE research, Hofstede (2004) points out that of the 18 measures used to differentiate between cultures, seven are significantly related to the country’s economic prosperity. This raises a vexing question: are some of the nine cultural dimensions (i.e., the independent variables of the study) a proxy for level of economic development? If so, realigning and framing the data to include economic prosperity as an independent variable would more honestly represent cultural variability as a function of economic development, not cultural values (Wilson, 2005). Overall, GLOBE extends the current knowledge-base by a more comprehensive conceptualization of cultural dimensions, even introducing new dimensions.

### **3.7 Leadership from the Arab perspective**

Very little is understood about the applicability of the concept of leadership in the Arab World in general, and the GCC states such as Kuwait in particular. Potential inadequacies of Western models have been highlighted in the past when being applied to non-Western countries (Smith *et al.*, 2006). In short, to better target applicable leadership skills to the Arab region and achieve cultural congruence that can yield increased usefulness, Arab understandings of the topic must be fully incorporated (Hofstede, 1980, 1984; House *et al.*, 2004).

Through researches, it can be seen how, in the Arab world, leadership seems to be more gendered. According to Yaseen (2010), many relevant studies have been done in the Arab world. She focused her study on women leadership because of which she can strongly cite evidences related on women leadership. A field study was carried out on the women in Egypt, in the new millennium, by Professor of Economics at Cairo University, Dr Abdurrahman Ahmad. The records the Egypt State Information Services (2006) show that 48.8 percent of Egyptian society is female, among the Egyptian scientists, 30 percent are women with most of them being in the medical sciences. Another fact being that in Egypt, from the age of 15-64, women represent 15.5 percent of the total workforce (Abdurrahman, 2004). Through meta-analysis, the study viewed the involvement of women in public leadership positions in Egypt between 1997 and 2008. The results of the study showed an increase in the percentage from 2.5 to 4.7 percent. Drs Anaam and Mowafaq, in association with 122 female respondents from different territories in Iraq, carried out an empirical study in Iraq, pertaining to the Challenges Facing the Arab Women to Occupy Leadership Positions. The results of the research presented a picture of women where they seemed content in their leadership positions with an ultimate aim to prove themselves, leading to better performance when compared to men (Mowafaq, 2004). The outcome of the research revealed the fact, as stated by 83 percent of the participants, that it was presence of the male executives which actually prevented women from occupying leadership positions in the Arab world.

Study conducted by Moore (2003), Zayed University in UAE, showed that though the rate of women surpassed that of men in university enrolment, yet their share in UAE's labor

force and the Gulf region is greatly low considering the world average of 40-50 percent. It can be seen that there has been just an increase of less than 7 percent since 1985 in women's economic participation. Since the 1970s, the rate of enrolment into the tertiary education has increased about 40 percent, and the women are seen in prominent positions in government and education sectors though only a 30 percent are placed in decision-making positions. Moore also stated that when it comes to the treatment of women, UAE is the best in the Gulf region, although gender equality is still a severe problem in the Middle East. Yet another study on the related topic, done by Gallant and Pounder (2008) focuses on both the opportunities and barriers seen in the sector of female employment in UAE. The UAE society, being a patriarchal one, to create changes in the age old views about a women's place in the family would be a really slow process.

Yaseen (2010) in her study showed that women in the Arab world surpassed the men on basically four transformational scales: that of characteristic account of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Based on these findings, it can be clearly stated that female Arab leaders definitely stand above Arab male leaders on idealized influence (attributed), generating an air of power and control, creating a total atmosphere of respect, to the extent of going beyond their own self-interest solely for the group's benefit. Though the male Arab leaders definitely exceed female Arab leaders based on idealized influence (behavior), it can be seen that these people tend to express more of their values and beliefs, with stress on the need of having a strong sense of purpose and mission consider the importance of moral and ethical consequences of decisions. A feature of the Arab women that allows them to exceed men on inspirational motivation is that they view the future very optimistically, and with great confidence, express with great interest on what is required to establish the firm's vision. Arab women are above men on intellectual stimulation; they re-check critical assumptions and ponder as to whether they are apt, looking for other views to tackle problems. Even in individualized consideration, Arab women stand above men; they do a lot more coaching, teaching, assessing individual needs, even help team members bring out their strengths.

The topic of gender-role stereotypes in the Middle East, taken by Sikdar and Mitra (2012) has revealed that people considering themselves more masculine (high male-gender identification) display higher intentions of opting a leadership role when compared to

people who consider themselves less masculine (low male-gender identification). This meant that it is not biological sex which is influential in taking up a leadership role, but the factor of identification with gender stereotypes. This male-gender identification may tentatively influence women's intention to take up leadership roles, which could force the women biased organizations to review the associated cement/glass ceiling effect. In the study, it was seen that people who consider themselves more masculine (high male-gender identification) display greater goals to follow task-oriented leadership style. Hence, it was concluded by Sikdar and Mitra (2012) that the contingency theory of leadership shows that leadership style is important and the success of a leader depends on the style utility as required in the situation. They suggest that more inquiry is required in the contingency demands of a situation, towards leadership role.

This gender focus probably reflects particular concerns in Arab society. Most of the existing leadership studies in Arab countries are gender based and particularly focused on women. In contrast, as stated earlier in this section, there is very little evidence on leadership studies in Kuwait and there is lack of studies focusing on leadership needs and development in general in the Arab world. There is lack of leadership studies particularly in Kuwait identifying leadership needs and development.

### **3.8 Leadership capabilities**

Capability theories examine the knowledge and skills held to underlie effective performance. These theories and models have contributed to the design of assessment and developmental interventions (Mumford *et al.*, 2000). Cascio (1995) contends that these models are particularly useful in describing the basis for effective action within unstable or changing environments.

By definition, capabilities are complex bundles of individual talents (abilities), attributes, skills and accumulated knowledge exercised through organisational processes, and unique styles that leaders need to possess and demonstrate in order to perform their roles and jobs competently and enable firms to co-ordinate activities and make use of their resources (Dess *et al.*, 2009). It is the capacity and ability of a person or team to perform some task; the skills that a firm employs to transform inputs into outputs. Capabilities are knowledge-based resources that combine action and cognition. Knowledge is what an individual

knows, an understanding gained through education and experience. It represents a mastery of a field of study, a professional or technical discipline, or a focused area of expertise.

These capabilities are rooted in the organisational skills and routines that serve as organisational memory to repetitively execute the sequence of productive activities without trouble. Battilana et al. (2010) regard skill as a specific expertise that can be taught. Skill is the knowledge on how to do something in a consistent and efficient manner, such as running a complex machine, performing an audit, developing a customer's financial plan, facilitating a meeting, or executing a sales call.

On the other hand, competencies are regarded as an aggregate of individual skills necessary to resolve more complex problems (Prewitt et al. 2011). These higher-order competencies are the personal attributes which underpin, and determine how and when, knowledge and skills will be used at an organisational level to address more complex organisational problems. Both *skills* and *competencies* are considered generic terms, and may be used in any context. At their core, these organizational skills and routines embody knowledge and competence in carrying out the productive activities that the firm is engaged in. Capability is therefore the ability to apply both skills and competencies in a particular context in a way that is perceived to add value.

Building on the basic idea that history matters, and that capabilities are rooted in contextually embedded knowledge underlying the production function, the knowledge basis of capabilities makes them firm-specific, socially complex and systemic. They reside in the collective memory of the personnel of an organisation (unique style). The more a capability is utilized, the more it can be refined, and consequently it becomes more sophisticated and difficult to imitate or replicate (experience effects). This characteristic manifests the dynamic or evolving characteristic of capabilities. It is about the ability to perform at the level required for competitive success and enable the organisation to fit the environment it is operating with the opportunities and threats (Zehir et al. 2015).

### **3.9 Competency frameworks**

In order to better understand the capabilities underlying effective organisational leadership, Mumford et al. (2000) contend that it is important to begin by identifying the performance

requirements imposed on organisational leaders. Just as the study of leadership has evolved over a period of time, the competency movement can be traced back to the work of McClelland (1973). Sparrow (1997) distinguished three main categories of approach: (1) management competencies, focused on technical/functional analysis of job roles to determine expected standards of workplace behaviours; (2) behavioural competencies, behaviours that lead to enhanced performance; and (3) organisational competencies, core competencies which shift attention from the individual to the organisation and business practices (cited in de Beeck and Hondeghem, 2010).

Hamel and Prahalad (1989) define competence as the collective learning in the organisation, especially how to coordinate diverse production skills and integrate multiple streams of technologies (learning curve effect) and they are the qualities that allow individuals to do their job. Competence therefore has to be seen and defined in the context of the position to be filled as the ability to effectively execute related activities and functions. Competences is described as innovative combinations of knowledge, special skills, proprietary technologies, information, and/or unique operating methods that are well integrated into the process and provide the product/service with benefits that customers value. Sustainable advantage is most likely to be built around a combination of activities and processes (competences) that are embedded in an organisation's culture and knowledge. It is what an organisation can do exceedingly well to gain advantage.

Some authors argue that the competency approach is becoming one of the most dominant models for management and leadership assessment and development (Miller *et al.*, 2001; Rankin, 2002). However, there has been criticism of the universalistic/generic nature of competencies, which assumes a common set of capabilities regardless of the situation, individuals or task (Bolden, 2005; Swailes and Roodhouse, 2003). Another criticism is that there is emphasis on current and past performance rather than future requirements, and that subtle qualities, interactions and situational factors are excluded (Bell *et al.*, 2002). However, our focus of discussion will be at the individual level (i.e. lower-level leaders) (capabilities) and not so much at the organisational level (competencies). Individual competence includes all the individual capabilities, knowledge and experiences of a leader; undoubtedly, individual competence is the foundation for successful leadership (Seiler and Pfister, 2009).

The Council for Excellence in Management and Leadership (CEML) was established in Britain to develop a strategy to ensure that the UK had managers and leaders for the future to match the best in the world. CEML conducted an extensive piece of research using primary and secondary data sources to identify a key set of management and leadership abilities (Perren and Burgoyne, 2001), which identified leadership abilities, which were grouped into three generic categories and eight meta-groups. The categories and meta-groups are as follows:

1. **Thinking abilities:** (1) think strategically;
2. **People abilities:** (2) manage self, (3) manage and lead people, (4) lead direction and culture, (5) manage relationships; and
3. **Task abilities:** (6) manage information, (7) manage resources, (8) manage activities and quality.

Several other generic and management leadership frameworks were also proposed depending on the circumstances and situation at hand (Minavand et al. 2013). The continuing variation in the competency frameworks echoes the problems of the early work on leader traits which also suffered from multiple and non-congruent profiles of leaders (Storey, 2011). CEML (2002) noted some commonly agreed core capabilities such as displaying vision, strategic sense, an ability to communicate that vision and strategy, and an ability to inspire and motivate. Many of the existing frameworks on competencies combine personal traits, behavioural skills, and knowledge into the same model indicating that competencies are configurations of behaviours, attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, intelligence and skills.

This study builds upon the work by Yukl *et al.* (2013) and Bolden (2004) on hierarchical taxonomy of leadership behaviour. As noted by Bolden (2004), when working with frameworks and standards there is frequently a temptation to apply them deductively to assess, select and measure leaders rather than inductively to describe effective leadership practice and stimulate debate. Furthermore, whilst there has been increased usage of targets, Tamkin *et al.* (2010) concluded that outstanding leadership is effective when it is

able to elicit commitment from people as opposed to being based on cruder forms of target setting and measurement.

### **3.10 Leadership behaviours and capabilities**

#### *3.10.1 Task behaviours*

Leadership problems tend to differ from routine problems in their complexity, novelty and information ambiguity, and the former are generally ill-defined, with no prescribed single solution, allowing the problem to be construed in a number of different ways (Mumford *et al.*, 2000). The same authors argue that the nature of the problems and their associated performance demands provide important clues about the kinds of knowledge and skills likely to underlie effective performance in organisational settings.

As noted by Yukl *et al.* (2013), there is lack of agreement about the behavioural categories that are relevant and meaningful for leaders, as there has been a proliferation of taxonomies on leadership behaviour (Bass, 1990, cited in Goussak *et al.*, 2011). The taxonomy categories were selected based on their relevance to the oil sector; because they could directly be observed; and more importantly they were informed by the literature on effective leadership (Yukl, 2013).

Arising from the behavioural theory (Fleishman, 1953), task- and relations-oriented behaviours were identified, which were referred to as consideration and initiation structure, and later termed as the concern for people and concern for production by Blake and Mouton (1982) in their managerial grid model. Task-oriented behaviours are used to improve productivity and reduce costs by eliminating unnecessary activities, duplication of effort, wasted resources, errors and accidents (Yukl, 2013).

As noted by Yukl, 2013), the main objectives of task behaviour include high efficiency in the use of resources and personnel and high reliability of operations, products and services. The point is to get work done as efficiently as possible, regardless of people's feelings and emotions. It is a functionalist view of management.

Task-oriented behaviours include short-term planning and scheduling of work activities, determining resource and staffing requirements, assigning tasks, clarifying objectives and

priorities, emphasizing the importance of efficiency and reliability, directing and coordinating activities, monitoring operations, and dealing with day-to-day operational problems, as discussed below.

### *Short-term planning*

Short-term planning tends to be closely associated with low-level leaders, as opposed to medium- to long-term planning, which tends to be the prerogative of middle and top management in an organisation. It is more operational in orientation and is concerned about ‘how to do it’, ‘who will do it’ and ‘when it will be done’ (Yukl, 2013).

Observable aspects of short-term planning are deriving short-term objectives that support corporate objectives and formulating short term plans and involving lower-level employees in accomplishing tasks. These plans must not just be written down; they must be implemented as well, which has been one of the greatest weaknesses of strategic management.

### *Clarifying responsibilities*

Effectiveness at task-oriented behaviours hinges on the ability to clarify task requirements and structure tasks around an organization’s mission and objectives (Bass, 1990, cited in Goussak *et al.*, 2011). As the plans are implemented, it is important that first they are well communicated, and that there is a buy-in from subordinates. The duties and responsibilities of subordinates must be clearly denoted, with individual targets set and agreed with subordinates. Within the oil sector in Kuwait, part of the problem is that there is over-staffing, and roles tend to overlap and are ill-defined, sometimes creating confusion and lack of accountability and responsibility.

### *Monitoring operations and performance*

This aspect of the work ensures that the work is done accordingly, and where possible corrective action is taken. It requires gathering information about the operation’s unit, having progress review meetings, taking corrective action where possible. Tools such as the Balance Score Card are being employed to facilitate this process and assess how well an organisation is achieving its objectives. However, within the Kuwaiti oil sector, a lack of

discipline and the inability of managers to take disciplinary action hinders organisational performance. Leaders ought to have such monitoring skills and the ability to take corrective measures.

Extensive research using survey questionnaires, critical incidents, observation and experiments have shown that task-oriented behaviours can enhance the performance of individual subordinates and small groups (Yukl, 2006).

### *3.10.2 Relations behaviours*

Also arising from the behavioural theory was a distinct need for leaders to show consideration, acceptance and concern for the needs of other people (Yukl, 2013). Similarly, findings were observed by Bass and Avolio (1990) in their transformational theory, expressed in their component of individualised consideration (cited in Nichols and Erakovich, 2013). These theories of leadership, particularly transformational leadership (Bass and Avolio, 1990), highlighted the importance of change-oriented behaviours, which may be related to leadership effectiveness (Yukl, 2013).

Yukl, 2013) raised the point that supportive leadership helps to build and maintain effective interpersonal relations, which is an important aspect in a collective society such as that of Kuwait. Interpersonal relationships could be one of the main reasons why women shun work in Kuwait, because traditionally it is considered primarily the responsibility of men to provide for their families.

#### *Developing*

The oil sector in Kuwait generally requires complex skills in various facets including geological surveying, planning, mining, bunking and marketing. Such skills require being developed, as identified in the individualised consideration element of the transformational theory (Bass and Avolio, 1990), so that employees can confidently undertake their work (Yukl, 2013). Individualized consideration provides a more supportive and developmental leadership function rather than an inspirational function (Bolkan *et al.* 2011).

#### *Recognising*

It is fundamentally important that leaders motivate their subordinates through recognising those that achieve and meet their targets by rewarding them through praise and other means, as this helps to boost staff morale. Inspirational motivation involves communicating high performance expectations through the projection of a powerful, confident and dynamic presence. Such behaviours evoke powerful emotional responses from followers that energize them to exert extra effort (Sosik and Dinger, 2007).<sup>-</sup>

### Consulting

The literature review identified the Kuwaiti culture as high-power distance one, which tends to be authoritarian. Although there might be some consultation in some cases, Abbas (1996) refers to it as pseudo-consultation, whereby leaders prepare employees to accept their points of view. In some cases subordinates are consulted, but their views are not necessarily incorporated. The potential benefits of *genuine* consultation include better decisions and greater acceptance of decisions by subordinates who will implement them or are affected by them (Yukl, 2013).

Relations-oriented behaviours are most useful for improving human resources and relations. Effectiveness at person-oriented behaviours relies on the ability to show consideration for others as well as to take into account one's own and others' emotions (Seltzer and Bass, 1990). However, the effectiveness of consultation depends on the situation such as the type of task, the urgency of the matter, availability of information and subordinates' willingness to participate in the decision-making.

### Empowering

Empowering includes delegating and providing more autonomy and discretion to subordinates and is likely to result in more commitment by subordinates to implement decisions effectively (Yukl, 2013). It is important to obtain employees' commitment to work in Kuwait, where work is not necessarily valued and considered the fundamental pillar of a person's life.

Decades of research show that relations-oriented behaviours by leaders are related to higher job satisfaction and lower turnover (see Bass, 1990; Goussak *et al.*, 2011; Yukl, 2013).

Relations-oriented behaviours can reduce stress, build mutual trust and cooperation, increase collective identification with the team or organisation, and facilitate performance by individuals and teams (DeRue et al., 2010).

### *3.10.3 Change behaviour*

Change-oriented behaviours are most useful for improving adaptation. Change-oriented behaviours include monitoring the environment to identify threats and opportunities, interpreting events and explaining why major change is needed. Monitoring of the environment both internally and externally is important change orientation behaviour in a dynamic global environment. It is important that leaders have as much information as they can concerning all their stakeholders. Such information must be analysed and interpreted and should inform future decisions. Research has identified that companies who monitor the environment are more likely to be successful (Dess et al., 2009).

### *Envisioning change*

The strategic management literature identifies the activity of constructing and delivering vision statements as an important function of the organizational manager or business strategist (Collins and Porras, 1994; Mintzberg, 1994; cited in Sushil, 2013). From transformational and charismatic leadership, it was noted that articulating an inspiring vision of a better future was an important part of leadership particularly if they are to influence their subordinates to be more committed to organisational goals and objectives and remain committed (Kouzes and Posner, 2010). Berson et al. (2001; cited in Sosik and Dinger, 2007) defined a vision statement as an inspirational message to followers that expresses optimism about the future, confidence in achieving positive future challenges and opportunities, while highlighting the intrinsic needs that can be met and connecting this all to the core values of the organisation. They argued that charismatic/transformational leaders craft vision statements that are more inspirational in their content.

However, vision statements are not unique to charismatic and transformational leaders or those in top management. Rather, leaders at various levels of an organisation provide followers with statements about future goals and the requisite actions needed to attain those goals. Without a sense of vision, inspiration and direction, HRM and leadership

development initiatives will not be integrated with business objectives and employees will lack the motivation and commitment to work towards shared organisational goals (Bolden, 2004).

#### *Encouraging innovative thinking*

This is similar to intellectual stimulation identified by Bass and Avolio (1990) in their transformational theory, whereby leaders ought to encourage innovative thinking by others. Research on the determinants of creativity and innovation provides additional evidence for the relevance of change-oriented leadership (Mumford *et al.*, 2002; Reiter-Palmon and Illes, 2004; Shalley and Gilson, 2004). Leaders can also enhance innovative adaptation by encouraging and facilitating collective learning, diffusion of knowledge, and the application of new ideas in the organization (James, 2002; Vera and Crossan, 2004).

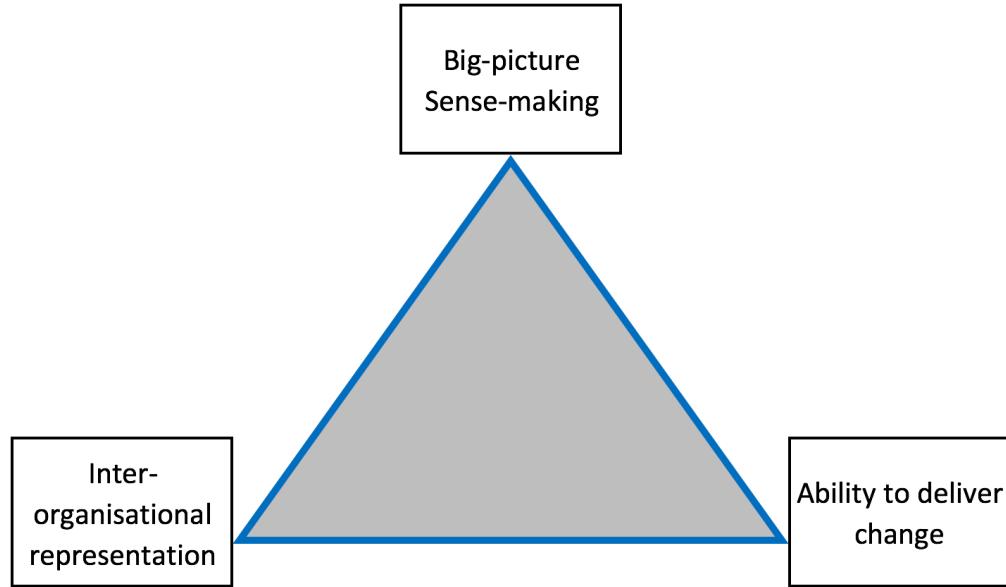
#### *Taking personal risk*

Entrepreneurial leadership requires taking risks, especially if change is to be realised in situations where there is stiff resistance and people are comfortable with the status quo; humans are generally latently unwilling to change (Yukl, 2013).

In summary, the leader must be able to communicate vision, establish goals, monitor progress and motivate subordinates as they attempt to implement a given solution plan. This requires flexibility in dealing with others and in adjusting plans opportunistically, as dictated by the demands of a changing social environment. Studies on change-oriented aspects of transformational leadership, such as inspirational motivation (vision articulation) and intellectual stimulation (encouraging innovative thinking) show that this type of behaviour can enhance individual and team performance (Lowe *et al.*, 1996).

#### *3.10.4 Behavioural requirements and competences*

The current work on behavioural requirements and capabilities can be organised into three categories, which Storey (2011) terms meta-capabilities, as depicted in figure 3.2.



*Figure 3.2: Meta-capabilities and behavioural requirements of leaders*

Big picture sense-making includes aspects such as the ability to scan and interpret the environment, assessment of organisation's strengths and weaknesses, construction of a sensible vision, mission and strategy.

Ability to deliver change includes skills of mobilizing support, communicating, energising and inspiring followers, active listening, adopting a supportive stance, enabling others through investing in their training and development and empowering them to take decisions.

The third meta-capability concerns inter-organisational representation, and this requires skills such as coalition building, understanding others' perspectives, persuasion and assessing client needs.

However, this competency framework has been critiqued for not reflecting the reality of the practice of leadership (Bolden and Gosling, 2006; Salaman, 2004; cited in Alban-Metcalfe Alimo-Metcalfe, 2013), hence there is a need to understand the needs from the perspectives of the stakeholders themselves.

### *3.10.5 Leaders' perceptions of their needs*

The leaders' perceptions of leadership capabilities provide useful information for understanding future leadership capabilities within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector. Where the onus lies on the individual to take responsibility to assess their own development there can be a lack of clarity. Nevertheless, the key to identifying and meeting needs is to involve the executives themselves in the design and review of any development programme that is to be introduced (Jackson *et al.*, 2003). Their needs should reflect what they understand or what they personally believe in as essential leadership dimensions.

Once the needs of these lower-level leaders and the organisation have been identified, the next step is to determine how best to meet them. Such an assessment should reflect their felt need to develop themselves along those dimensions and thus it should constitute the foundation for leaders' present and future leadership development.

## **3.11 Leadership effectiveness**

Emerging out of contingency-based thinking, attribution theory attempts to understand the nature of cause-effect relationships, especially in the way leadership is used to explain organisational outcomes (Jackson *et al.*, 2003). If organisational performance is poor, CEOs become vulnerable, regardless of their contribution to that performance. Conversely, if organisational performance is good, the CEO is given credit, regardless of how much or how little they contributed (Sambo *et al.* 2014).

The link between leadership development and capabilities is difficult to establish, partly because there are a multitude of other factors that interact to produce organisational results and many of these are intangible and cannot easily be measured. The same author recommends that when considering the effect of leadership within organisations, it is important to take a broad view of the notion of performance and to consider the impact of contextual factors. The Globe Study established leadership dimensions universally believed to contribute to effective leadership (integrity, visionary, inspirational, and team builder) and also established through statistical analysis the linkage between culture and leadership (Dorfman, 2004).

The influence of leadership can be assessed at different levels: individual, group, organisational levels and in some cases can traverse organisational boundaries. For simplicity, we will focus at the individual level where it is expected that the individual leader will become more effective.

Research shows that the management and leadership of people has a greater effect on productivity and profitability than the combined effects of strategy, quality, manufacturing technology, research and development (Zeus and Skiffington, 2001). This may be manifest through ‘hard’ measures, such as enhanced productivity, technical competence and/or knowledge and overall achievement of goals. It is also demonstrated through softer measures, such as improved self-awareness, communication and strategic thinking (Bolden, 2004) and overall ability to influence subordinates. However, in general, it is difficult to measure the impact of leadership on performance because of the wider range of influencing factors and often it is easier to measure the impact in terms of staff attitudes.

The underlying premise is that leadership development, as explained in detail in the following chapter, enhances individual capability and subsequently performance possibly via its impact on employee commitment and motivation. However, it is important to note that simply having capabilities does not necessarily mean that one will use them, as it must be accompanied by other management practices such as feedback and incentives.

### **3.12 Literature synthesis and conceptual framework**

As identified in the previous chapter, contextual factors are important when studying leadership. This notion is supported by Salaman (2004), who argues that leadership cannot be dissociated from the situational context, therefore we need to consider the broader social context of leadership within Kuwaiti oil companies, which were observed to have hierarchical structures, disjointed departments, high government intervention and policies, patronage, and over-staffing. Therefore, greater awareness is required for the adoption of culturally sensitive and locally-based approaches that take account of individuals' experiences, identities and power relations. Greater attention therefore needs to be paid to scrutinising contextual variables within studies of leadership, gender and managerial behaviour (Alvesson, 2002; Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003; Fletcher, 2004).

The majority of the prior empirical studies of leadership examined leadership largely as an individual phenomenon, focusing on the behaviours and skills of the leader. The chapter explored mainstream literature on leadership and found it wanting in terms of its failure to deliver a common understanding of the concept, in its generally uncritical accounts. The literature review noted that the study of leadership has grown both in the number of theoretical approaches to the topic as well as in complexity, constantly moving from more closed approaches to more open ones. As noted by Storey (2011), ‘contemporary approaches to leadership research are more alert to the interpretivist perspective which allows insight into the socially constructed nature of perceived ‘need’’ (p. 22).

The theory of leadership has consistently moved from a logically intuitive approach of trying to understand leaders from their traits, to looking more deeply into their skills, abilities, behaviours, and relationships (Mameli, 2013). It would therefore appear that there is no single model efficiently explaining leader behaviours. Furthermore, there is no specific theory that explains leadership behaviour and skills and the development of frontline leadership.

The literature reviewed the evolution of leadership, starting with leadership traits and the competency models of leadership, and what is clear is that although there might not have been consensus in these different studies, they have sought to address the question of what makes a good leader. Overwhelmingly, the leadership literature focuses on the senior level of leadership, which Senge (1996) categorised as executive leaders. An overlooked fact is that the leader of an organisation is the titular head, with the body of the organisation composed of a hierarchy of subordinate leaders. The successes of a leader, or the failures, are the successes (or failures) of this hierarchy. Furthermore, there is a paucity of literature examining lower-level level leaders, and in particular their capability needs and requirements for development, which is what this study attempts to address.

From the literature review, a key aspect that emerges is that there are various distinct aspects of leadership, starting with the innermost individual’s core personality, followed by individual’s values and then lastly individual’s leadership behaviours and skills (i.e. meta-competencies). Tubs and Schulz (2006) contend that:

'(1) the attributes in the innermost circle are more or less fixed at a young age and are unlikely to be changed as a result of leadership development efforts; (2) that a person's values are somewhat more malleable than personality characteristics, yet more stable and perhaps more resistant to change than behaviours; and (3) that the behaviours and skills are the most likely to be changed through leadership development efforts' (p. 29).

It is the behaviours and skills that this thesis will focus on particularly as it relates to first-level leaders.

The competency approach is criticised for tending to reinforce rather than challenge traditional ways of thinking about management and leadership (Bolden, 2005). The same author found that what leaders identify as important is substantially different from the factors represented in leadership frameworks. He further argues that:

'while competency models have an important role to play in leadership effectiveness, they only represent a fragment of the leadership "terrain" and over-dependency will fail to engage with the real problems of leading in complex and changing environments. Nonetheless, competency models are one way of looking at and developing leaders' (p. 57)

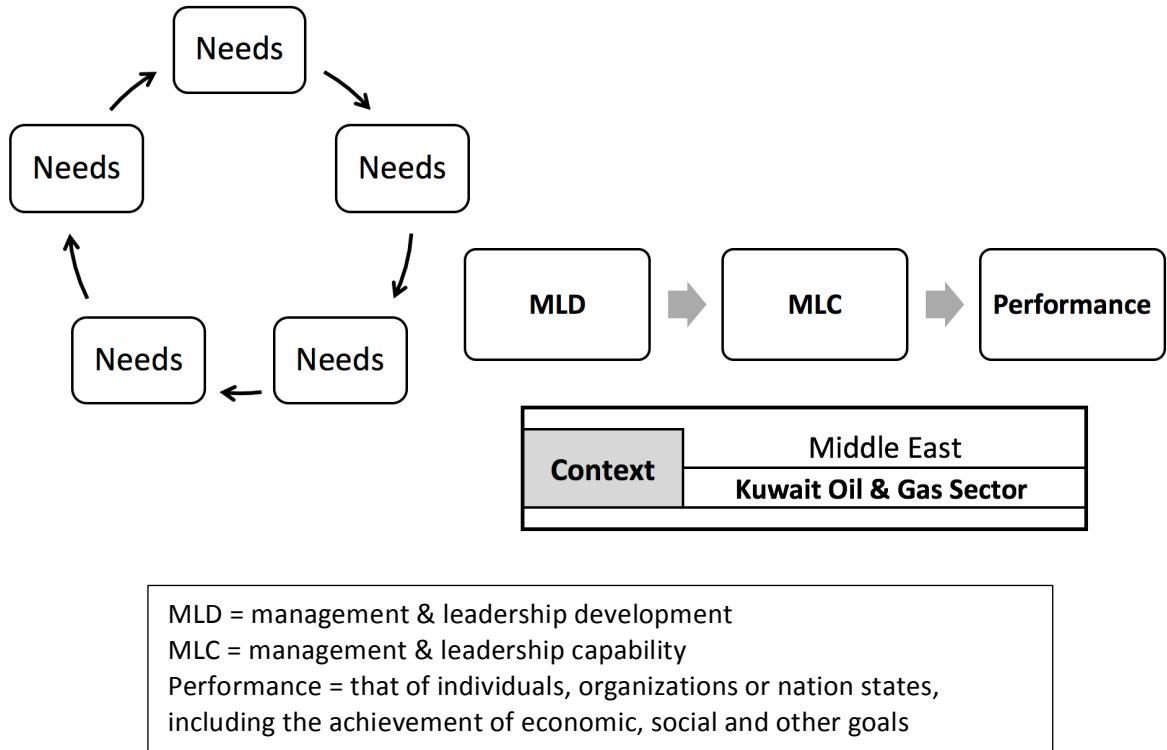
It is for that reason that this study seeks to investigate the capabilities of low-level leaders within the oil sector in Kuwait at an individual level. The study makes contribution to the extant literature on capabilities by arguing (and empirically demonstrating) that leaders' capabilities are often context-specific, and fruitful research in this area might emanate from enjoining an in-depth study of the capability needs and development requirements specific to the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector. A distinguishing feature of the study is the conceptualization of the notion of capabilities at a lower-leadership level within this industry, and ascertaining appropriate measures to develop these capabilities and examine their evolution and impact on organisational performance.

It is important that senior leaders in organisations recognize the value of subordinate leaders by initiating programs designed to create an effective leadership team. Most senior leaders think only of the small cadre represented by the senior management group.

Actually, the leadership team's membership is more inclusive, with leaders occupying leadership positions through the organisation's hierarchy (Ross, 2008).

The study builds upon the taxonomy of leadership behaviour and skills (Bolden, 2004; Tubbs and Schulz, 2006; Yukl, 2013) that embraces task-, relations- and change-oriented behaviours, and these behaviours and skills were considered to be relevant to the oil sector, and particularly important and relevant for low-level leaders who are the focus of this study. It is however important to understand how these behaviours and skills can be developed, which is the concern of the following chapter.

Task-oriented behaviours are most useful for improving efficiency, change-oriented behaviours are most useful for improving adaptation, and relations-oriented behaviours are most useful for improving human resources and relations. All three general types of leadership behaviour have implications for organisational effectiveness. As far as leadership development from a Western cultural perspective is concerned, the main barriers in Kuwait appear to be that tribal and familial interdependence remains deeply rooted, and this extends into both public and private organisations (indeed, the public-private distinction is of little utility in countries where governance and big business are pervaded by tribal oligarchies). The classical management preoccupation with efficiency remains compromised by traditional attitudes that place kin and tribal allegiances above all else. Leaders might be effective at task-, relations- and change-oriented leadership behaviours, or they might be effective at only one or two, or perhaps none (Yukl, 2013). Such variation in leadership behaviours has implications for leadership effectiveness, as shown in the conceptual model (figure 3.3).



*Figure 3.3: Leadership needs, development, capability & performance framework*

(Adapted from Bolden, 2004; Burgoyne et al, 2004)

Drath et al (2008) has taken up the usual assumptions that underline most of the leadership theory. Unlike the traditional belief that leadership cannot be fixed down, yet the field has been unified and enclosed by some basic assumptions. The belief is that: ‘In its simplest form [leadership] is a tripod – a leader or leaders, followers, and a common goal they want to achieve’ (Bennis 2007, p. 3). According to Drath et al (2008), this particular view carried off by leaders, followers and shared goals is not a proper creation. Due to this restricted notion, traditional feature has shaded the development of leaders with regard to their leader characteristics, improved influence of followers and shared goals. Though they are not really against application of ‘leadership tripod’ as a tool for particular theory and research, they do prefer a comparison and inclusion of another approach.

Drath et al (2008) is of the view that leadership is seen in terms of three main leadership outcomes: (1) direction: common agreement to the total goals, aims and mission; (2) alignment: cooperative means of organization and co-ordination of knowledge and work; and (3) commitment: the members are expected to be willing to view their own interests and benefit in a collective perspective. The production of these outcomes leads to the

essence of leadership. The crucial questions are not merely about inputs – of appointing good leaders, of ascertaining their good interactions with followers, and clear goals, instead they look towards effectively bring about the outcomes – on how people can jointly create a combined sense of direction and purpose, the types of alignment methods that suit them, and also how people can construct suitable conditions for commitment to the organizational strategy.

An issue for leadership development is enabling leaders to develop their full potential and to become the kind of leader to which they aspire. This requires methods involving personal insight and awareness; the leader needs to reflect on their personal history, their experiences and upbringing, their assumptions and values, and risk trying out new ways of being. The learning methods needed for this type of development require working in depth; for example, arts-based methods, theatre, using mythology and based on depth psychology to create learning designs which meet the requirement for whole person development (James, 2011). These methods help leaders connect with their values and align their aspirations for authentic leadership with their actions. Such programmes require a high level of tutor skill – novel methods, updating of content, shifting modes of delivery, and so on – to keep them fresh and relevant. The learning approach is that participants learn on the programme where they can experiment, and then afterwards apply this back at the workplace (James, 2011).

### *3.12.1 Conceptual framework*

Leadership development was considered an essential ingredient to acquiring the right capabilities, and ultimately via its impact on employee commitment and motivation, to organisational performance. It was noted that leadership development activities are often commissioned with little consideration of the underlying theories and assumptions on which they are based.

This framework carves out the core literature, identifies existing discourse and insights and identifies areas where there is a need to expand or deepen this knowledge. The chosen theoretical framework provides an understanding of the strengths and limitations of current knowledge.

Implicit within our framework is an assumption that leadership capabilities need to be developed, and only when that happens will a leader become effective. The manner in which improved leadership leads to enhanced performance is highly complex, and a much broader notion of performance needs to be embraced than one simply of enhanced productivity or profit (Bolden, 2004). In our framework, achievement of goals and the ability to influence subordinates are considered as important outcomes of leadership development and capabilities.

The focus is on Team Leaders who are the middle line managers that interact with both the employees and senior managers regularly. The focus is on these individual leaders, their capabilities and development needs.

The framework indicates that the needs of these Team Leaders need to be identified first, and that this is best done by the leaders themselves, based on their perspectives and what activities should be done. Currently, leadership initiatives have been implemented by HRDs possibly based on their evaluation and possibly based on what training would be available and not necessarily on the needs of these leaders. Although developing leaders is often framed as an externally facilitated process, it can equally be considered as a more personal and inward journey of self-discovery and self-growth to transform themselves and their organizations (Souba, 2006). It is also important that these Team Leaders identify the most effective way of leadership development so that they acquire the capabilities required for them to execute their work effectively. Thus the right-hand side flows from the design part of the left hand figure 3.3.

### **3.13 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter reviewed the evolution of leadership from trait theories to some of the newer forms of leadership, such as servant and authentic leadership. This was done because no single style of leadership fits every situation, therefore it is imperative to analyse a variety of approaches to leadership. Therefore, leadership was studied in terms of its content, namely, the behaviour and attributes of leaders, the situation they are in at the time, and process, namely the use of different types of power and social influence. Several depictions of leadership theories were noted, but some of them were not relevant to this study and hence were not reviewed in depth.

Critical views on leadership theory (Alvesson and Deetz, 2001; Ford, 2005) noted that the positivist approach tends to suppress variation in leadership concepts and practice in favour of an artificial universalism. The nature of theory and practice of leadership has implications on the development processes that must incorporate the power relations and the context within which leadership operates rather than to avoid them.

The study built upon the taxonomy of leadership behaviour by Yukl, 2013) and established that lower level leaders in the oil sector might be effective at task-oriented, relations oriented and change-oriented leadership behaviours, or they might be effective at only one or perhaps at neither. Such variation in leadership behaviours, we argue, has implications for leadership effectiveness as shown in the conceptual model (figure 3.3).

Chapter 4 seeks to understand the development of these capabilities and conscious steps taken to become a leader, and leadership development literature is appraised.

## **CHAPTER 4: DEVELOPMENT OF FIRST-LINE LEADERS AND RESPECTIVE CAPABILITIES**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to review the extant literature on leader development so that we can have an integrative framework of leaders' capabilities and development and begin to appreciate whether the development of these areas will enhance their behaviour and effectiveness. Through such a framework, insights can be offered into successful leadership and the chapter should culminate with the crystallisation of the major research question. The concept of leader development will be evaluated primarily from a social learning theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986, cited in Lunenburg, 2011).

Various forms of leader development exist, including formal training, job rotation, or off-site workshops where the instructor or coordinator of the program determines what and how the leader will learn (Reichard and Johnson, 2011). Some of these forms will be reviewed as they are considered to be important within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector. The emphasis will typically be on individual-based knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with leadership roles, which are the capabilities that enable people to think and act in new ways. This is an increasingly critical and strategic imperative for organizations that wish to survive and succeed in today's turbulent and highly competitive business environment; they need to develop leaders at all levels. This study views frontline leadership development as being crucial in that it is the entry point for potential career progression within the Oil and Gas Sector.

### **4.2 Leader development**

Chapter 3 noted that numerous definitions of leadership exist and that 'the differences are not just a case of scholarly nit-picking. They reflect deep disagreement about identification of leaders and leadership processes' (Yukl, 2013, p. 2). In order to investigate and understand the capabilities required by junior leaders of first-level line leaders and the development thereof to effectively undertake their work, it is important that this study provides an operational definition of leadership development. It is therefore prudent that leader development is clearly defined with regard to this thesis.

Leader development has been defined as ‘the expansion of a person’s capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes’ (Van Velsor and McCauley, 2004, cited in McDermott et al. 2011; p. 359), and involves drawing meaning to one’s learning experiences and undergoing an evolution in how one makes sense of experiences (McDermott et al. 2011). How to best develop these desired leadership capabilities remains a challenge for those charged with management developing.

Reddy and Srinivasan (2015) point out to Day (2000) observations drawing a distinction between leadership and management development in that leadership development involves preparing people for roles and situations beyond their current experience so that they can build capacity to deal with unforeseen challenges. On the other hand, management development equips managers with the knowledge, skills and abilities to enhance performance on known tasks through the application of proven solutions. He makes further distinctions between leader and leadership development, whereby leader development is about developing individuals in leadership roles, whilst leadership development is concerned with the development of the collective leadership capacity of the organisation. Leader development can thus be linked to the human capital of the organisation and leadership development to the social capital of the organisation (Iles and Preece, 2006). Therefore, the concept that distinguishes leader development from leadership development is social capital. The concept of social capital is an important element in understanding effective leadership development in the modern organisation. There are social resources embedded in the work relationships in an organisation that create value. Individuals build relationships and cooperate in the completion of organizational work. Commitments, mutual obligations, and shared trust are the elements that make social capital flourish (Christoforou, 2013). These interpersonal relationships are at the crux of success or failure for organisations of all sizes.

However, despite the conceptual differences, both Christoforou (2013) and Iles and Preece (2006) propose that leader and leadership development can and should accompany each other in a developmental programme. O’Toole (2001, cited in Dalakoura, 2010, p. 433) also distinguishes leader and leadership development stating that in the former case we should be asking ‘what qualities do we need to develop in our leaders?’, while in the latter we should actually be asking ‘what qualities do we need to develop in our organization?’

However, the terms have been used largely interchangeably because there is a significant degree of overlap (Bolden, 2010). The material point is that it is expected that the development of leadership at all levels will have the greatest possible impact on organisational performance, and in this study the development of junior leaders is considered an area that has been overlooked.

Leadership development can thus be viewed as expanding the collective capacity of organisational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes in anticipation of unforeseen challenges and across a wide range of situations. Leadership development emphasizes building and using interpersonal competence and expands the collective capacity of employees and the building of social capital. When leader development is systematically in place, it may result in an increase in the collective leadership capacity, or social capital, of the organisation.

McCauley *et al.* (1998, cited in Wakahu, 2011) provided a more focused perspective of leader development since it is a specific intervention process that seeks to expand a person's capacity in leadership roles. However, the focus in this thesis is on leader development, which focuses on an individual level process of building human capital (Reichard and Johnson, 2011). Leader development can therefore be considered primarily as an investment in the human capital of selected individuals, whereas 'leadership development' is an investment in social capital via the nurturing of interpersonal networks, cooperation and collaboration within and between people and organisations. The primary emphasis is on enabling people to think beyond the apparent restrictions of their current role and to develop the critical capabilities to move between operational and strategic modes as required - to balance an attention for detail with an understanding of the bigger picture. Both are important, although traditionally development programmes have focused almost exclusively on the former (Bolden, 2010). However, the boundary between leader, manager and personal development remains blurred.

As noted by Mumford *et al.* (2000, cited in Akrivou and Bradbury-Huang, 2011), leaders initially enter organisations as novices lacking basic concepts that provide them with an understanding of the work, organisational contexts, and leadership roles; as a result, junior leaders are likely to be initially closely supervised until such time as they acquire the

necessary capabilities and competencies to perform effectively. There are a multitude of skill sets and processes that need to be developed. As noted by Small and Irvine (2006), the skills possessed by members of the organisation make up the very basis of an organisation's capabilities and therefore, the identification of these skills, how these skills are used and developed is important. This area has not been well researched, particularly for junior leaders in the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector. Lynham (2000) identified eight core attributes about leadership development:

- 1) It occurs from early childhood and adolescent development.
- 2) Formal education plays a key role.
- 3) On-the-job experiences are important.
- 4) It occurs through specialized leadership education programs.
- 5) Leadership training focuses on three areas: improving a leader's knowledge, skills, and attitudes; training in success and effectiveness as a leader; and, training and education on leadership styles (Bass, 1990; Goussak *et al.*, 2011).
- 6) There are a number of factors that can act as potential barriers to its effectiveness.
- 7) It is a life-long process.
- 8) It is often confused with management development (Kotter, 1990; Kouzes and Posner, 1995).

Much of leadership development involves change in knowledge, skills, and abilities (Hannum *et al.*, 2007). According to Bolden (2010) the field of leadership development is dominated by individualistic approaches that seek to enhance the intrapersonal attributes, interpersonal qualities, cognitive abilities, communication skills and task-specific skills of individual participants.

The profound changes shaping the competitive business environment are affecting how organisations prepare leaders for present and future challenges. The same authors view leadership roles as those that come with and without formal authority, and leadership processes are those that generally enable groups of people (in this case lower-level leaders) to work together in meaningful ways.

The focus of leadership has recently shifted due to increasing global competitiveness, continuous restructuring activities, demographic changes in the workforce, customer

demands and rapid technological changes. Accordingly, leaders should have the capabilities and competencies to be able to deal with these challenges. For organisations to survive and succeed through such demanding conditions, exceptional leadership is needed at all levels. Furthermore, subordinates today expect their leaders to be more interpersonally competent in order to succeed in being truly influential as organisational leaders. Contrary to the myth that only a lucky few can ever decipher the mystery of leadership, Kouzes and Posner (1995, 2010) found that leadership is an observable, learnable set of practices.

There is no reason to consider that leadership development should be restricted to senior managers only, and indeed, there would be good reason to encourage this kind of development opportunity throughout the organisation to enhance collective as well as individual capacity. Purcell *et al.* (2008), in their analysis of HR practices, recognised the central role of first-level line managers (FLMs) in moderating employee experience. The nature of the required intervention, however, is likely to vary according to the job role, experience and personal abilities/attributes of participants. This is one of the reasons why this research is looking at leader development for the junior leaders within Kuwait's oil companies.

One of the earliest typologies of leadership development was by Conger (1992; cited in Clarke, 2012), who identified conceptual, skill-building, personal growth and feedback approaches as the core mainstream components of the leadership development field. Conger (1992; cited in Clarke, 2012) posited that successful leadership development is designed to accomplish four objectives: (a) refine certain teachable skills; (b) improve the conceptual abilities of managers; (c) tap individuals' personal needs, interests, and self-esteem; and (d) help managers see and move beyond their interpersonal blocks.

The benefits of leadership training and development include enhanced leadership capabilities and skills, increased confidence, broadened perspectives, increased communication skills and general effectiveness (Hannum *et al.*, 2007). Iles (1993, cited in Gomez, 2007) stated that leadership training and development are increasingly regarded as instruments of organisational change and a method of linking people performance with

business strategy. It is therefore believed that some aspects of leadership performance may be impacted by leadership development efforts, while others may not.

### 4.3 Social learning theory

The types of skills required by leaders are largely dependent on one's theoretical and philosophical views on the nature of leadership. Bolden (2010) states that the view of Campbell *et al.* (2003) is that the primary aim of leadership development is to enhance interpersonal influence over and above that which stems directly from a person's positional authority or legitimate power, and that the development of core influencing skills (including values that can serve as a 'moral compass': problem-defining and problem-solving skills, task facilitation skills, communication and motivational skills) should be the main focus. This is one of the reasons why leadership influence is an important outcome of our framework.

Bandura's social learning theory (1977, 1986, cited in Lunenburg, 2011), which was later renamed social cognitive theory (SCT) to more accurately reflect its emphasis on both learning and cognition, is based on the dynamic interplay between the person, the environment and behaviour. While cognitive constructivism emphasizes 'that all knowledge... only exists in the heads of human beings and that the thinking subject can construct his/her knowledge only on the basis of his/her own experience' (Glaserfeld, 1995; cited in Riegler, 2012, p. 246), social constructivism (Riegler, 2012) suggests that learning is a result of social interactions within a shared socio-cultural context. Linking the cognitive with the social interactionist view provides a more integrative perspective on learning (Ringberg and Reihlen, 2006). In his initial work, Bandura (1977; cited in Astray-Caneda et al. 2011) proposed that observational learning consists of four phases:

1. *Attention*: first learners pay attention to a model, usually someone they find important such as a mentor;
2. *Retention*: having observed the model, the learner must repeat the behaviour by mental rehearsal or practice to remember;

3. *Motor Production*: extending initial attempts to retain the behaviour, the learner now tries to replicate the model's level of expertise; and
4. *Motivation*: reinforcement is needed to sustain motivation to repeat the behaviour.

Bandura (1986, cited in Lunenburg, 2011) posited that the learning environment, individual behaviour and attitudes, beliefs and perceptions (collectively known as person factors) are all key variables that influence trainee development. These three factors are neither static nor independent but rather, they are all reciprocal and dynamic (Bandura, 1986, cited in Lunenburg, 2011). Bandura's (1986; cited in Al Dafaei et al. 2013) model is referred to as reciprocal determinism in which behaviour, cognitive and other personal factors, and environmental influences all operate interactively, as determinants of each other. The word 'determinants' refers to how the variables can change through differing conditions. More specifically, the theory describes learning in terms of an interaction between these three factors (Boyce, 2011).

The environmental factors include both physical (room size, lighting, noise, ambience etc.) and social (peers, managers and friends) factors. There has to be a 'fit' between the organism and the environment with which it interacts, because how an individual reacts in one context could change in another. These changes make learning within an organisational context very difficult.

Our perceptions of self-efficacy (how competent we believe we are likely to be in a given situation) influence the effectiveness of our interactions with our environment and with others. Bandura (1986, p. 391) defines the concept of self-efficacy as a 'judgement of one's capability to accomplish a certain level of performance'.

Thus, Bandura's (1977, 1986; cited in Huitt and Dawson, 2011) social learning (cognitive) theory provides a broad explanation of the variables that influence learning and development. The theory is relevant to this thesis because a great deal of learning and development involves the observation and our cognitive appreciation that recognizes 'our ability to think, to symbolize, to figure out cause-effect relationships, to anticipate the outcomes of behaviour' (Lefrancois, 1999, p. 41). Learning and development must translate into behaviour (performance) and it is a socially contextualized and situated

process of interaction with the socio-cultural environment. Such a constructivist view ensures that knowledge has a lasting effect, because it is situated within a particular context and integrated into the leaders' cognitive structures. To this end, Maurer (2002) proposed a model of employee learning and development orientation (ELDO) that includes cognitive, affective and behavioural constructs integrated with work context and content variables.

#### **4.4 Learning and development orientation**

Two central types of leadership development include training programs and experiential development activities (Yukl, 2013). Training programs tend to be more formal, occurring within a specific period and format, usually away from one's jobsite and with training professionals. Formal program techniques can involve lecture, case study, role-playing activities, behavioural role modelling, and simulations of organisational leadership situations (McCauley *et al.*, 1998).

On the other hand, experiential developmental activities are often more informal and are typically found embedded within one's regular job duties or within assignments to special projects (Yukl, 2013). Kolb and Kolb (2005, p. 194) described experiential learning as 'an idealized learning cycle or spiral where the learner touches all the bases—experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting—in a recursive process that is responsive to the learning situation and what is being learned'. This is achieved by incorporating activities, movies, and games to supplement and sometimes replace traditional classroom lecture as it encourages students' engagement and allows them to discover important insights (Kolb and Kolb, 2005).

Most of these types of programs are designed with the purpose of increasing 'generic skills' and 'behaviors relevant for managerial effectiveness and advancement' (Yukl, 2013, p. 156). Experiential techniques for leadership development may have greater effectiveness for learning and with application to real world situations outside the classroom (McCall, 1998, 2004; cited in Petriglieri, 2011). Many leadership skills can be learned experientially and involve many different techniques such as mentoring, coaching, and assignments to projects.

The traditional definition of mentoring is that of a senior leader in the organisation providing role modelling, advice, and support that may include assisting with organizational visibility and career advancement of the mentee (Murphy, 2012). Mentoring can be formal (featuring a structured program and assigned mentors) or informal, based on a relationship of free will between a more senior member of the organization and the developing leader.

An important consideration in the process of leader development is that leaders themselves should have a learning orientation (Dragoni *et al.*, 2009; McCauley and Van Velsor, 2004; cited in Klyvye, 2012). Hirst *et al.* (2004) also found that a learning orientation encourages and facilitates the learning of new knowledge about tasks and situations, which is incorporated into leadership behaviour. To be able to provide training for junior leaders in global leadership competencies for the future, the organisation must ensure there are people within the organisation that are willing to learn and acquire the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities (Prewitt *et al.*, 2011). This has not always been the case for the oil sector in Kuwait because of the work culture amongst Kuwaitis, as explained previously.

A learning orientation is associated with heightened motivation to develop capabilities through acquiring and mastering new skills, seeking challenges to grow and develop, and by regarding errors and negative feedback as instructive rather than threatening; all of which are instrumental for leader development (Day *et al.*, 2009). Conversely, those leaders who believe that ability is unchangeable may not be motivated to pursue learning and development activities (Day and Sin, 2011). Bandura (1986) has described human behaviour as activated by needs, instincts, impulses, and drives and beliefs thus intrinsic reinforcement that comes from one's self-assessment has a greater influence than extrinsic (externally administered) reinforcement (Lunenburg, 2011).

While senior and experienced leaders may continue to learn new knowledge, they are less likely to encounter totally novel events that challenge their well-established schemas about the practice of leadership, whereas lower-level leaders are likely to be on a steeper part of the learning curve, as they are exposed to new challenges. They are more likely to learn from these experiences and use this knowledge to refine and develop their leadership schemas (Hirst *et al.*, 2004).

Whilst it is believed that skills develop as a function of experience and time as one practices certain tasks, it is equally important that an organisation embarks on leadership development programs that may accelerate the acquisitions of such capabilities.

McCauley *et al.* (1998) in their *Handbook of Leadership Development* presented a model of leadership development and expanded the definition of leadership experiences to include a full range of experiences such as on-the-job experiences, developmental relationships, 360° feedback, feedback-intensive programs and skill-based training.

#### **4.5 Leadership development principles**

Keshavarz *et al.* (2013) consider ten principles of leadership development that are organised under three headings of strategic imperatives, strategic choices, and evaluation.

The strategic imperative principles are the overarching principles that set the scene for integrated management and leadership development that will benefit the organisation as well as individual organisation members. The strategic imperative principles:

1. Are driven from the top, with specialist support;
2. Drive the business with leadership development support; and
3. Consider the leadership concept, cultural differences and different development approaches.

The strategic choice principles determine the unique approach an organisation adopts in terms of:

4. Articulated framework for career and management development;
5. Varied degree of formal vs. informal development activity;
6. Growing your own vs. recruiting senior leadership talent;
7. Considered use of business schools and other external resources;
8. Leaders and managers; the value of competency framework, capabilities and performance management;
9. Retention and reward strategies.
10. An explicit and shared approach to evaluation.

Evaluation as described here relates largely to the processes of leadership development and the value placed on learning by participants, and by other managers perceiving that a difference has been made to peoples' capabilities (James and Burgoyne, 2001).

The following sections discuss some of these various forms of leader development experiences that are considered to be particularly important for the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector.

#### **4.6 Leadership development approaches**

Several leader development initiatives exist and they are informed by differing theoretical perspectives. Furthermore, a wide range of providers is available in the market; in some cases the practical issue of deciding which to select can be overwhelming (Bolden, 2010). The same authors argue that leadership development is provided by a complex mix of further and higher education, and formal and informal training provided by employers. A range of other suppliers (large and small training companies, management consultancies and professional bodies etc.) play into both the education and employer sectors. Social constructionist approaches to leadership development are concerned with 'not how to be good leaders, but instead how to look at the demands that have been placed on them and the ways in which those demands may be influencing who they are', which could be described as emancipatory (Ford *et al.*, 2008, p. 11). It is important to note our understanding that such narratives of leader development need to be understood as both socially situated and culturally mediated. If one is willing to accept the assumption that leadership can be developed consciously and intentionally, then this raises the complex question of how this is to be achieved.

##### *4.6.1 Experience*

The developmental school holds that leadership is grounded in experience (Mostovicz *et al.*, 2009). Action often speaks louder than words, and it is argued here that junior leaders in Kuwait may gain more from actually doing the work and getting results as opposed to reading about it. That significant learning can occur through first-hand experience is becoming widely acknowledged in the business world (Gitsham, 2012). This recognition has inspired industry-leading corporations to place experiential learning at the core of

programs that aim to equip organization leaders with the qualities that will enhance their development and help achieve sustainability goals.

#### *4.6.2 Coaching*

Leadership coaching is broadly defined in terms of a relationship between a client, junior leader in this case and a coach, which facilitates the client (junior leader) becoming a more effective leader (Douglas and Morley, 2000; Kilburg, 1996; cited in Lauzon, 2015). Visser (2010) view coaching as a practical, goal-focused form of one-on-one learning and behavioural change with the objective of improving individual performance and personal satisfaction, consequently enhancing organisational effectiveness. It is viewed as more directive through enabling the development of a specific aspect of a professional learner's practice, focusing on individual needs and the improvement of performance (Singh, 2014), with the coach as a critical friend (Wise and Jacobo, 2010). This thesis views coaching as a formal one-on-one relationship in which:

‘the *coachee* and coach collaborate to assess and understand the *coachee* and his or her leadership developmental tasks, to challenge current constraints while exploring new possibilities, and to ensure accountability and support for reaching goals and sustaining development’ (Ting and Hart, 2004, p. 116).

*Coachee* is a term used in the literature for the individual who is being coached (Ely *et al.*, 2010). It is therefore an experiential, individualized, leadership development process that builds a leader's capability to achieve organisational goals.

Coaching is conducted through one-on-one interactions wherein the protégé and coach have to work in partnership to achieve maximum learning and impact. It is therefore driven by the objectives, needs and preferences of the individuals involved and the organisation. It is expected that interpretations of a coaching initiative will be related to participants' change motivation, and ultimately to the extent of behaviour change (de Vries and Korotov, 2010). In addition to describing the coaching relationship, process, and result, it is important to highlight the unique aspects of leadership coaching compared to other leadership development programs or interventions; namely, a focus upon a dynamic one-on-one relationship between a coach and client (junior leader).

Coaching is thus designed and implemented on an individual level. In addition, there are certain capabilities and competencies that may be more appropriate for development through coaching, such as interpersonal skills, communication, self-management, and general leadership skills (Prywes, 2012).

It can be a relatively short-term activity or extended over a prolonged period, depending on the complexity of the skills required. McCauley and Douglas (1998; cited in Borkowski et al. 2011) refuted the assumption that a developmental relationship needs to be long-term or intense to be developmental. On the contrary, they found that effective developmental relationships can include such functions as shadowing a role model for several days, working on a short-term project with a cross functional team, or even seeing a colleague twice a year. El Rawas and El Seddawy (2015) point out to Lynham (2000) who indicated that managerial leadership development involves a person's career throughout their lifetime. The more important issue is whether the developmental relationship contains the elements of assessment, challenge and support.

Therefore, coaching should be viewed as a process rather than a discrete event, which is aimed at improving specific leadership skills, behaviours, attitudes or solving specific problems (Tobias, 1996) and/or strategies that translate into effective job performance and organisational outcomes (Ely *et al.*, 2010). Amongst the reasons of using the services of leadership coaches are a desire to increase self-awareness, to develop leadership skills, or to gain insights regarding a current or future situation (Blackman, 2006; Schlosser *et al.*, 2006).

As noted by de Vries and Korotov (2010), coaching needs to be purposefully and strategically applied, otherwise it may become a waste of time and money that dilutes the value of a development opportunity. For coaching to be effective, there is a need to incorporate agreed upon ground rules, timeframes, goals, and specific measures of success. During this phase, the coachee is given some primary supervisory responsibilities and some limited discretion as part of the capabilities development. In this way, coaching empowers the coachee to align 'thoughts, beliefs, goals, and actions to achieve desired, extraordinary results' (Reiss, 2007, p. 13).

Coaching effectiveness is enhanced to the degree that individuals are carefully selected for coaching, matched with a compatible coach, and are willing to change. In addition, each organisation brings characteristics (e.g., personality, values, beliefs and experiences), including readiness to be coached and commitment to the coaching program (Ely *et al.*, 2010). Coaching can address a range of very individualized issues from understanding the need for and learning of new skills to application of those skills to a very specific work situation and organisational context.

Leadership coaching often has several goals: improving a leader's behavioural range and flexibility, improving organisational management skills, increasing psychological and social competencies including interpersonal relationship skills and stress management, managing self and others during turbulent times, improving career management skills, improving management skills for conflicting personal and organisational needs, and improving facilitation skills for team and organisational effectiveness (Lauzon, 2015).

Leadership coaching differs from other leadership development in the following ways:

- A focus on the needs of the individuals as well as the organisation and the unique characteristics each brings;
- Requires the coach to possess unique skill sets that the individual lacks;
- Places a premium on the individual-coach relationship; and
- Demands process flexibility to achieve desired results (Ely *et al.*, 2010)

This means that the coach must possess certain characteristics – he or she must be: versed in the business and the skills the coachee needs, perceived by the coachee as competent, confident, independent, business savvy, patient yet action oriented, credible, trustworthy and confidential; and genuinely interested in the leader and the leader's business (Bozer and Sarros, 2012). Although there is debate about the qualifications of a coach, such a person must possess communication, analytical, assessment and feedback, planning, goal-setting and organizational skills, being characterized by creativity and resourcefulness, an ability to motivate, encourage, challenge and confront others, and results-orientation and accountability (Ely *et al.*, 2010). The underlying models of change adopted by coaches may

include the four general steps identified in the model of Saporito (1996; cited in Neves, 2014):

1. Setting the foundation and defining the context;
2. Individual assessment, including the 360° process;
3. Development planning based on feedback to the individual and a three-way discussion with the supervisor; and
4. Implementation that focuses coaching around development experiences.

Building upon the work of De Pater et al. (2010) Ting and Riddle (2006) suggested a slightly different leadership development model that consists of the following elements: assessment, challenge and support to make the developmental experience more meaningful. Van Velsor *et al.* (2010) concluded that when we look at any type of developmental experience- from training programs to job assignments- we find that they are most effective when all three elements are present.

According to Van Velsor *et al.* (2010), assessment provides relevant information to the participant from others regarding participants' current leadership strengths, level of leadership effectiveness, and primary developmental needs. It provides clues about how to close the gap between participants' current and ideal selves. This way, people are more likely to understand their situation and capitalize on a learning opportunity.

Van Velsor *et al.* (2010) described the element of challenge as an opportunity for exposure, experimentation, and practice needed to master the leadership role. According to the authors, challenging experiences force people out of their comfort zone. They create disequilibrium; causing people to question the adequacy of their skills, framework, and approaches; thus challenging experiences are the primary vehicle for development. Similarly, Ohlott (1998) asserted that 'the key element in a developmental assignment is challenge. By tackling unfamiliar tasks and seeing the consequences of their actions, people learn from the challenges of their assignments' (p. 130). Challenge serves the dual purpose of motivating development and providing the opportunity to develop.

The last element of their model consisted of support, which confirmed that the participants' efforts to learn and grow are valued by the organisation. Such support often comes from

other people (co-workers, family, friends, colleagues, coaches, mentors, managers), but can also stem from organizational norms and procedures that attach value to continuous learning and development. This is very much in line with Hofstede's (1991) research among collectivist cultures such as Kuwait, which found that reliance on support seems more natural. This tends to emphasize a supportive environment for personal growth and development. Furthermore, Bandura's (1986) research demonstrated that support helps to engender a sense of self-efficacy about learning (Lunenburg, 2011).

This means that the models for coaching vary depending on the coaching intervention, but it is generally guided by the needs, characteristics and experiences of the individual to be coached, the needs of the organisation, and the knowledge, skills, abilities and perspective of the coach.

Clearly, research is needed for a better understanding of the benefits and potential drawbacks of coaching within organisational contexts, and empirical work is still required to determine how well coaching enhances productivity in such organisational contexts. Furthermore, there is a possible stigma associated with being assigned a coach, because the main motives for participating are remedial in nature. Generally, participants in coaching report improved individual professional performance and increased job and career satisfaction (Day, 2001; cited in Çimer et al. 2013).

However, coaching can be used extensively across an organisation because of cost implications. For instance, in a review of the use of executive coaching, Carter (2001; cited in Govender, 2014) showed coaching to be very popular with large organisations and quite attractive to many managers. However, extending its use to wider populations of managers was limited by its cost and the restricted supply of high quality coaches. Furthermore, coaching can be viewed as a subset of mentoring (Murphy, 2012), and has much narrower concerns compared to the broadness of the term mentoring.

#### *4.6.3 Mentoring*

Reiss (2007) defines mentoring as the matching of a novice with a more experienced person in the same role (Reiss, 2007); and it is therefore a complex relationship based on a social exchange between at least two individuals (Boyer, 2003). Boyer (2003) advocates

that mentors should interact with their mentees in a way that ‘enhances engagement through increased relationships and guiding experience’ (p. 26).

The mentoring relationship between the mentor and mentee can be explored through the prominent learning philosophy of social learning (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011) where learning is from others through observation and modelling. The underlying assumption is that the mentee lacks certain knowledge and behaviours necessary to perform the job and learns by observing the mentor who functions as the stimulus to bring about the learning (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011).

Mentorship is assumed to foster teamwork, motivation, and help increase competency levels of mentees when incorporated into leadership development programs and organizational systems (Solansky, 2010). It is seen as a more effective component of development in context.

The purpose of mentoring is to increase the knowledge and productivity of the mentee and to enhance the performance of the mentee in the organization. Another purpose of mentors is to help their mentees to be more comfortable and secure in their roles as leaders (Reiss, 2007), which may be achieved by mentors spending more time with the mentees so that the latter will feel secure in sharing critical information about their leadership skills, questions, and goals. The mentor provides insight, tutors specific skills, serves as a confidant, and/or gives feedback on observed performances.

Generally, a more experienced leader forms a relationship with a less experienced protégé and provides two important functions (Yukl, 2013): psycho-social support (encouragement, coaching, counselling) and career promotion support (sponsorship, protection, challenging special assignments, exposure, and visibility to senior management).

In applying the principles of social learning to mentoring, it is suggested that if there is affinity between the mentor and mentee (may be as a result of the mentor’s in work ethics, career interests, and educational background) then the mentee is more likely to adopt the mentor’s behaviour in the workplace, especially if the mentee notices the mentor’s behaviour is met with positive results that the mentee wants to achieve (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). Mentoring requires an investment of time and the willingness of top executives to

make themselves available. From the CEO on down, mentoring should be recognized as an imperative leader activity.

Although there is the potential danger of overdependence on a mentor or advocate, the potential developmental benefits associated with mentoring far outweigh the risks associated with over-dependence, and the benefits usually relate to an increase in performance and performance intervention. For organisations, the benefits of mentoring can be broken down into four main categories of retention, promotion, productivity and personal and professional development (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011).

The line between mentoring and coaching is blurred; indeed, coaching has been proposed as one particular mentoring role (Reiss, 2007), along with sponsorship, challenging assignments, and exposure to senior management thinking. A mentor may also be a coach, but not all mentors are necessarily coaches. Although the relationship between mentor and mentee is usually positive, it is not without some pitfalls and risks as it can sometimes develop into a negative situation with a mentor possibly sabotaging a mentee or not providing the necessary career support (Kahle-Piasecki, 2011). There are various practical challenges associated with successful coaching and mentoring of leaders such as the time and financial resource demands (Suggett, 2006), the requirement for mentors and coaches to be trained (Hobson and Sharp, 2005; Hoigaard and Mathisen, 2009), whether it is better for the coaches or mentors to come from within or be outside of the organisations of the people they are working with (Ladegård, 2011; Wise and Jacobo, 2010).

#### *4.6.4 Classroom programs*

Formal classroom programs are used by organisations as one type of development practice although such programs are often not adequate (Day, 2001; cited in Çimer et al. 2013). Conger and Benjamin (1999) wrote that ‘the principle advantage of this approach is that it attempts to turn leadership into a set of teachable behavioural skills’ (p. 48). They contended that the success of skill-building approaches depends on how teachable and complex a particular leadership competency is. This point was further strengthened by Gosling and Mintzberg (2004) when they stated that there is a certain quality of conversation that takes place in a well-managed classroom that is almost unique, where the

fruits of experience, theory and reflection are brought together into a new understanding and commitment.

Day (2001) reports that classroom programs have several limitations, including the inadequacy of the programs in transferring knowledge to the incumbents as it is perceived as just theoretical and as a result, they are only partially effective for developing the complex, and often tacit, skills required for the workplace (Day, 2001). The same author points out that relatively little research has examined how leaders learn from their workplace experiences; as a result, there is movement toward understanding and practicing leadership development more effectively in the context of the work itself. The underlying premise here is that skills learned through solving work problems are likely to be practical and readily applied to leadership behaviour (Jones et al. 2011).

However, classroom-based training programs may not be very effective for leaders as they may be viewed as ways of merely dispensing information and most trainees may become just mere spectators with little active participation. Such programs may be flawed because of their inability to simulate work environments because the classroom-based experience takes place away from work and may be far from actual workplace realities. The context must be considered in any leadership development effort (Johnson and Cacioppe, 2012) and the context determines what will and will not be supported in transferring learning from the classroom to more applied leadership situations.

#### *4.6.5 Industrial attachment*

Another form of leader development that has gained popularity amongst employees within the oil sector in Kuwait is undergoing industrial attachment in a related industry in order to broaden their outlook, experience and keep-up with the latest development in technology. As a way to prepare graduates to join the private sector and equip them with the necessary skills required doing their work, the Kuwait government, through the Kuwait Fund, has been sending fresh graduates abroad for a period of up to six years as part of the training program. This gives the trainees the opportunity to experience the real-life working environment, especially for those who do not have such experience. However, Bramley (1999, cited in Sepeng and Miruka, 2013) in a wide review of the evidence found little support for the impact of off-the-job management education or for generic management

courses. He concluded that the most useful kinds of development relate to work-based activities such as giving and receiving detailed feedback, goal setting, and action planning.

#### *4.6.6 Self-development*

Self-development requires the individual leader to take on ‘the primary responsibility for planning, carrying out, and evaluating their own learning experiences’ (Ellinger, 2004, p. 159). Boyce *et al.* (2010, p. 7) extend this definition stating that leader self-development includes the leader ‘initiating, sustaining, and evaluating growth in their own leadership capacities and in their conceptual frames about the conduct about leadership’. It is thus a process through which leaders influence themselves to achieve the self-direction and self-motivation necessary to perform.

A leader engages in activities that address his/her own unique leader-specific development needs. Therefore, learning is centred on the leader, who directs and is responsible for the what, where, why and how of learning (Chung *et al.*, 2011). Self-leadership training helps them cope with the challenges that change may bring by having positive perceptions of their competence and immediate work environment. This means that the initiative is from the individual leader and not formally from the organisation or the leader’s immediate supervisor, or an instructor’s syllabus and designated sequences of job rotation. Self-led leaders tend to have a sense of impact because they anchor their self-definition in their organisational roles and devote themselves to the organization’s success.

In self-development, the leader determines which developmental activities to engage in, if any, and has control over learning (Reichard and Johnson, 2011). In essence, the leader decides what knowledge and skills are needed and then determines the pathway that best facilitates development in these areas, such as job experiences, seminar courses, workshops or professional conferences (Chung *et al.*, 2011; Noe and Wilk, 1993). As Day (2000; cited in de Vries and Korotov, 2010) noted, leader development focuses on individual-level development, such as the knowledge, skills, and abilities required by formal leadership roles.

Very often, such self-initiated development programs are valued by the organisation, therefore from this perspective, self-development can be viewed as complementing

organisational initiatives as it focuses on the leadership capacities. The result is not only an increase in individual leader capacity, but also the organisation's leadership capacity as a whole (Reichard and Johnson, 2011).

Several individual-level characteristics may predispose one to self-development. Boyce *et al.* (2010) identified five categories of individual characteristics that relate to self-development as: (a) general intelligence; (b) achievement striving (need for achievement, internal locus of control, and energy); (c) mastery orientation (self-efficacy, conscientiousness, openness to experience, learning goal orientation, intellectual maturity, and meta-cognition); (d) career growth (career experience, feedback seeking); and (e) work orientation (career motivation, job involvement, and organizational commitment). Other individual characteristics that relate to self-development were identified by Cortina *et al.* (2004; cited in Putter, 2010) to include adaptability, self-regulation and self-awareness. In addition to being motivated to lead, the individual must have 'the desire to develop or improve leadership skills and attributes through effort' (Maurer and Lippstreu, 2005, p. 5).

However, such initiatives may occur outside the individual's regularly scheduled workday, which means that sometimes the organisation is not aware of such self-development activities unless the leader himself/herself brings it to the organisation's attention on completion of such a development program. Although the importance of self-development initiatives has been acknowledged (Orvis and Ratwani, 2010), little work to date has empirically examined what makes a particular self-development activity effective.

Whilst other leadership development programs can be very costly to the organisation, self-development presents a more cost effective and adaptive strategies for developing human resources in an organisation and leaders in particular.

#### *4.6.7 Job assignment*

It is believed that training and development of a more active type, closer to work tasks, is more likely to improve performance. However, direct empirical evidence that this is the case is still lacking. As noted by Ohlott (1998), managers consider job assignment to be the primary source of learning. The challenges inherent in job experiences are typically more influential in their development than formal training and other non-work experiences.

Similarly, job assignments give leaders the opportunity to learn by doing – working on real problems and dilemmas. The same views were proposed by Lombardo and Eichinger (1989; cited in Orr et al. 2010), who proposed that a supervisory role can be developmental because it allows the leader to test different leadership styles on group performance. They asserted that work assignments that are complex, ambiguous, changing, and/or unpredictable provide opportunities for new and innovative solutions.

Similarly, Kouzes and Posner (1995) recommended job assignments as a natural development context due to learning that takes place from the people with whom one works, the positive and negative role models one encounters, and the tasks one performs. On-the-job experiences forces ‘managers to learn new skills on the run, learn to act when stakes (are) high, learn to work with trying people under trying circumstances, and learn to cope with an exhausting workload’ (McCall *et al.*, 1988, p. 59). The underlying assumption here is to provide managers with the relevant skills and knowledge required by organisations (Georgiades *et al.* 2013).

Ohlott (1998) identified five sources of challenge in job assignments: (a) transitions; (b) responsibility for creating change; (c) a high level of responsibility; (d) non-authority relationships; and (e) obstacles. Transitions propel a leader into new, different, or broader leadership responsibilities than previous ones. Responsibility for creating change could include being tasked with starting something new in the organisation, carrying out a reorganisation, responding to rapid changes in the environment, fixing problems created by a former incumbent, reducing staff, and taking over problem (incompetent or resistant) employees. A high level of responsibility is characterized by high visibility, pressure from senior leaders for key decisions, and responsibility to consider multiple functions and stakeholders. Non-authority relationships are a source of challenge because the leader must get the job done through people over whom he or she has no direct authority. Lastly, obstacles provide a developmental challenge because it may include leadership responsibility under adverse financial conditions, working in a context where there is unclear direction from senior management, starting a new project with few resources, or working with a difficult boss.

Under special assignment is included job rotation, which consists of making stretch assignments and goals for participants of leadership development and can encompass changes to their roles, functions, and geography to target skills development and an increased understanding of the business and industry (Day, 2001; cited in Çimer et al. 2013). A challenging job rotation assignment must require a development participant to go outside their comfort zone and to learn how to think and behave differently and adaptively (Chen et al. 2014).

#### *4.6.8 Multi-rater assessments and 360° feedback*

The use of 360° feedback and multi-rater assessments are important components of leadership development (Burgoyne *et al.*, 2004; Eid *et al.*, 2008) that have been adopted by the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector. However, concern has been raised about their usefulness in an environment where people feel that *they* are being evaluated rather than their *performance*. Zachmeier and Cho (2014) points out to studies by Kuchinke (2000) who expressed that feedback was a key component of any learning process, and it improves performance because it can result in increased self-awareness and more dialogue between leaders and subordinates. Increased self-awareness and a better capability to express and monitor one's own behaviours are frequently cited as goals of leader development programs. This is most often accomplished within an action learning approach, where leadership development is enhanced to the extent that structured opportunities for individual and group reflection are included in the form of 360° or multi-source feedback.

Siefert *et al.* (2001) suggest that repeated feedback is a condition which facilitates individual learning; this is because it keeps the target areas salient, it allows precise tracking of progress on certain behaviours and improves the raters' understanding and appreciation of the skills they are evaluating.

360° feedback, although increasingly in vogue, like many approaches is found to be most effective when integrated within a comprehensive development programme and is significantly affected by the following three factors:

1. A work context supportive of skills development;
2. The belief of the participant that people can improve their skills; and

3. A belief that they themselves are capable of improving and developing.

Important to the success of the feedback process is support from peers and superiors (Çimer et al. 2013; Mason et al. 2014), so that self-awareness is encouraged and behavioural change is motivated in a psychologically safe and healthy fashion. Mason et al. (2014) found 360° feedback to be a powerful lever for engaging leaders with their own needs for skill development and to be most useful when integrated into a development programme.

#### *4.6.9 E-learning*

The use of E-learning gained considerable interest and was sometimes presented as a programme or module within corporate universities (Hodgson and Watton (2015). Burgoyne (2001) found that companies were seeking to use E-learning alongside face-to-face leadership skill development rather than intending to replace personal contact in management development. Evidence from the CIPD training survey (2002) showed that, while e-learning was used by many employers, it tends to be used alongside other training methods and is more used for IT staff than for managers.

### **4.7 Leadership development and organisational performance**

Organisational performance is generally associated with goal achievement, and more specifically, remuneration (Ronda-Pupo and Guerras-Martin, 2012). It can however, be said that organisational performance is broader in scope than merely profitability and shareholder returns. The ultimate aim of organisational performance is change, ensuring the long-term survival and growth of the organisation in the long term. In achieving the organisation's objectives, it is presumed to achieve performance and hence ensuring the long-term survival and growth of the organisation (Nienaber and Svensson, 2013).

On the other hand, organisational performance refers to ability of an enterprise to achieve such objectives as high profit, quality product, large market share, good financial results, and survival at pre-determined time using relevant strategy for action. Organisational performance can also be used to view how an enterprise is doing in terms of level of profit, market share and product quality in relation to other enterprises in the same industry. Consequently, it is a reflection of productivity of members of an enterprise measured in

terms of revenue, profit, growth, development and expansion of the organization (Obiwuru *et al.*, 2011).

The empirical evidence that links the role of leadership in contributing to the achievement of organisational performance is lacking (Nienaber and Svensson, 2013); if anything, leadership's contribution to organisational performance is overestimated, as proposed by Nienaber and Svensson (2013). A number of actors are involved in organisational performance, from leadership, which sets the direction, to management that translates the direction, and employees that execute strategy (Nienaber and Svensson, 2013). A number of multi-faceted factors influence the performance of the organisation, which makes it difficult to determine the exact contribution of each role player and factor to organisational performance.

Nevertheless, organisational leaders are accountable for results that are within their control. Top management seems to cope with uncontrollable factors more effectively than lower-level management and staff (Burkert *et al.*, 2011), which may contribute to overestimation of the role of leadership in organisational performance. However, it should be pointed out that leadership is not the sole actor in organisational performance. The contribution of middle- and lower-level leaders and employees is also very important in organisational performance. Leadership is one with the most dynamic effects during individual and organisational interaction. In other words, the ability of management to execute 'collaborated effort' depends on leadership capability.

Lee and Chuang (2009) explained that the excellent leader not only inspires subordinate's potential to enhance efficiency, but also meets their requirements in the process of achieving organisational goals. The level of performance (low, moderate or high) is determined by the level of knowledge, skill and attitude (Chouhan and Srivastava, 2014). Boyatzis (1993, cited in Bolden *et al.*, 2003) used empirical data to show that having leadership competencies does not necessarily mean you will choose to use them. He suggests that the difference between management and leadership is part a matter of attitude, and that more management development needs to be aimed at encouraging people to enact the role of leader, not just giving managers the skills.

While a focus on the individual from an intrapersonal skills perspective (leader development) cannot be neglected, this work will focus on the interpersonal skills perspective (leadership development). Furthermore, while much has been written about the broad benefits of investing in leadership development, the empirical studies are still few and this is more the case for organisations in developing countries such as Kuwait concerning the specific impact on organisational performance of training and development of managers and leaders.

In a study of the state of leadership in UK organisations, Horne and Stedman Jones (2001; cited in Brookes, 2011) concluded that where systematic implementation of leadership development existed, it was related strongly to the perceived quality of leadership in that organisation and organisational performance. The latter was measured by self-reported estimation of financial turnover during the past three years. The leadership development methods perceived as most effective were found to be formal mentoring, project management and 360° feedback.

As competencies are strengthened within a leader they will be more likely to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their organisation as well (Mamelis, 2013). The link between leadership development, individual capability, individual performance and organisational performance tends to ignore the possible importance of how managers/leaders work with other people in networks and teams. Organisational culture and its social relationships are likely to influence the extent to which a manager can translate his or her capabilities into performance (Burgoine *et al.*, 2004; cited on Bolden, 2010). Positive cultures, good management processes and networks may make the organisational benefit of capabilities much higher than the ‘sum of the parts’ of individual managers. The general evidence is that not all that gets learnt by people in the way of leadership capability gets used to contribute to performance and create value. Understanding how to make better use of this resource could be great practical as well as theoretical significance and potentially a very cost effective way of getting more value out of leadership development.

Understanding the effects of leadership on performance is also important because leadership is viewed by some researchers as one of the key driving forces for improving a firm’s performance. Effective leadership is seen as a potent source of management

development and sustained competitive advantage for organisational performance improvement (Avolio, 1999; Rowe, 2001; cited in Gupta, 2014). For instance, transactional leadership helps organisations achieve their current objectives more efficiently by linking job performance to valued rewards and by ensuring that employees have the resources needed to get the job done (Zhu *et al.*, 2005; cited in Mahdinezhad *et al.* 2013). Visionary leaders create a strategic vision of some future state, communicate that vision through framing and use of metaphor, model the vision by acting consistently, and build commitment towards the vision (Avolio, 1999; cited in Gupta, 2014). Zhu *et al.* (2005; cited in Mahdinezhad *et al.* 2013) suggested that visionary leadership will result in high levels of cohesion, commitment, trust, motivation, and hence performance in the new organizational environments.

Mehra *et al.* (2006) argue that when some organisations seek efficient ways to improve their competitiveness, a longstanding approach is to focus on the effects of leadership. Team Leaders are believed to play a pivotal role in shaping collective norms, helping teams cope with their environments, and coordinating collective action. This leader-centred perspective has provided valuable insights into the relationship between leadership and team performance. According to Saasongu (2015) some studies have explored the strategic role of leadership to investigate how to employ leadership paradigms and use leadership behaviour to improve organisational performance (for example, Judge and Piccolo, 2004; Judge *et al.*, 2002; Keller, 2006; Purcell *et al.*, 2004). This is because intangible assets, such as leadership styles, culture, skill and competence, and motivation, are seen increasingly as key sources of strength in those firms that can combine people and processes and organizational performance (Saasongu, 2015).

According to Kasemsap (2013), Fenwick and Gayle (2008) in their study of the missing links in understanding the relationship between leadership and organisational performance, concluded that despite a hypothesised leadership-performance relationship suggested by some researchers, current findings are inconclusive and difficult to interpret.

From this review of related literature, it is evident that although some scholars believe that leadership enhances organisational performance, others contradict this; different concepts of leadership have been employed in different studies, making direct comparisons virtually

impossible. Albeit the focus of this study is not to establish the direct link between leadership development and organisational performance, although it is believed that competent leadership enhances organisational performance, for the reasons cited above.

#### **4.8 Literature synthesis and crystallisation of major research question**

In deciding an appropriate approach to leadership development, organisations need to consider the theoretical and philosophical assumptions upon which different forms of provision are based, and to articulate a clear rationale as to how leadership development may lead to enhanced individual, group and/or organisational capability and subsequently impact upon performance (Burgoine *et al.*, 2004; O'Brien and Robertson, 2009). The literature review noted that leadership development literature is sparse and there is lack of empirical studies that link leadership development efforts to effective leadership performance in current organisational life, particularly as it relates to lower level leaders in developing countries such as Kuwait. This view is shared by Lynham (2000, cited in Bagher, 2015, p. 183) who wrote that 'there is a real deficiency of real, scholarly knowledge about leadership development'. It was also observed that leadership development plan does not successfully fit all circumstances and participants, and that organisations recognize the need to attend to the variable contexts of leadership development (Johnson and Cacioppe, 2012). Thus, leadership development is concerned with 'expanding the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes' (Wahat *et al.*, 2013, p. 298).

There is general agreement that learning will be constrained, or enabled, by the nature of the organisation, its structures, size, objectives and people (Argyris, 1994; Cilliers and Terblanche, 2010; Dalakoura, 2010). Argyris (1994) draws attention to the informal rules and assumptions that operate in the workplace and the ways in which these affect behaviours. The effectiveness of leadership development will be facilitated or inhibited according to the context within which it is to be used. As also noted by James and Burgoine (2001), generic leadership competencies learned out of context may not enhance a person's capacity for leading in the organisation. People need to understand the heart of the organisation and connect their leadership development to the organisation's challenges.

Although it has been argued that it makes sense to consider management and leadership as aspects of the same thing, it is the case that very different development traditions have grown up around leadership and management respectively.

Large gaps remain in the research in terms of exploring and assessing the capabilities required by lower-level leaders and how best to develop them in order to achieve effectiveness and organisational performance. Clarifying the unique capabilities and leader development experiences of lower level leaders is important for building both the knowledge base of the literature and identifying effective development practices and such needs are not well known.

Much of the leadership development literature to date has focused on application and decisions about technique, leaving out the impact of diverse learning styles, participants' culture and expectations, and unique development needs based on these differences (Delakoura, 2010). This research study attempts to address some of these issues by exploring the way lower-level leaders attribute meaning to and describe their leadership needs and development experiences.

A key objective of this research is to identify the leadership needs of third line managers in the Kuwait Oil sector and provide recommendations to develop the leadership needs. Most of the studies on leadership focuses on their impact on the followers and the organization and how factors such as culture, environment and leader-member exchange and other such factors impact leadership and the type of leadership that is practiced. As has been shown earlier there is lack of leadership studies particularly focusing in the leadership needs and development.

Furthermore, there has been lack of studies third-line managers and their needs and development. Third-line managers are the junior managers. Large organizations such as the Kuwait Oil & Gas, have several level of leaders. The third-line managers are the ones who interact and communicate constantly with the employees and the management. In other words, they are the link between the top managers and the employees. It is the responsibility of the third-line managers to get the work done efficiently. Lack of understanding the development needs of these third-line managers can lead to inefficiencies

in their performance and relationship with employees and top managers, resulting in organizational performance issues.

Most of the leadership studies that account for leadership effectiveness do not focus on identifying leaders' needs and developing the capabilities of junior leaders/managers, yet this is where the talent pool resides. The argument within this thesis is that Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector needs to strengthen itself by identifying junior leaders/managers' needs and developing such leadership capabilities. However, before such leaders can be developed, it is fundamentally important to establish their capabilities and development needs. It is important to ensure that organisational skills and competencies remain of an appropriate mix and measure.

These needs for leaders emerge at different places and times, but it is argued that the heartland of leadership comprises a set of behaviours and capabilities. As De Church et al. (2010) noted, very little leadership research is aimed at explaining how individual activity is synchronized and collectively harnessed in a manner that ultimately translates into team, unit, and organisational effectiveness. Furthermore, many leadership theories tend to be narrowly defined around decision-making, motivation, or other concepts and fail to synthesize topical domains or integrate across disciplines such as combining leadership capabilities with development (Day, 2011).

Bolden (2011) states that "*distributed leadership is not something 'done' by an individual 'to' others, or a set of individual actions through which people contribute to a group or organization . . . [it] is a group activity that works through and within relationships, rather than individual action*" (p. 251-252). This is in line with the argument by Day (2011) who talks about combining leadership capabilities and development. The emphasis is on providing the required leadership responsible to the third line leaders. And for third line leaders to handle their responsibilities, their individual needs should be understood and developed and thereby empowering them.

More specifically, among the lower-level leaders of the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector, it is unclear whether a comprehensive taxonomy of leader tasks that explicitly take into account functional performance requirements has been formulated, rendering any leadership development programmes less effective or ineffective. This study attempts to address this

limitation and propose an integrated framework of leadership behavioural requirements and capabilities, particularly for those low-level leaders. There is growing evidence that leadership behaviours and capabilities, and the development thereof, influence the success or failure of an organisation (Bommer et al., 2005; Gold et al., 2010). This is further supported by Van Knippenberg and Sitkin (2013) who suggest that: ‘for research in management, central questions are: what makes people in leadership positions effective in mobilizing, motivating, and inspiring followers? Through which characteristics, behaviours, and processes may leaders invite desired follower attitudes and behaviour in pursuit of collective objectives?’ (p. 2).

Finally, there is lack of adequate leadership studies in Kuwait Oil sector. The literature search also revealed that there is lack of overall studies in Kuwait on leadership. Several of the studies that are used in this research in relation to Kuwait have been carried out several years before. Therefore, this study has relied more on the studies that have been carried out outside Kuwait.

The findings of this study will therefore add to existing literature and the gap in leadership studies focusing on third-line managers in Kuwait especially but with relevance beyond Kuwait to similar situations internationally.

Whilst the influence of leadership on performance may not be very apparent, Bolden (2004) highlights that *what* leaders do is not as important as *how* they do it. Thus, an integrated approach aligned with the strategic objectives of the organisation is more likely to be effective than any number of stand-alone initiatives (Bolden, 2004). He also highlights that it is the leaders’ influence upon employee motivation and commitment that appears to have the greatest impact, rather than any specific characteristic or behaviour of the leader *per se*. For this reason, our framework considers leadership influence on subordinates as an important outcome of the framework. Lastly, Bolden (2004) also suggests that the development of capabilities alone is not sufficient to improve performance. Instead, it requires the provision of constructive feedback, appropriate support and encouragement to take on management and leadership responsibilities. Finally, leadership needs to be considered within the wider context of the organisation and the context can be enabler to organisational outcomes. From an employer’s perspective, the

primary triggers for investing in leadership development have been the rapidly changing nature of the external environment, closely followed by business needs and HR strategy.

### **Major Research Question:**

This leads to the crystallisation of the major research question to guide the research, which is framed as follows:

The major practical research question to be addressed by this study is as follows: *What are the needs and behavioural requirements/capabilities of third-line (junior) leaders within Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector, and how should such skills and capabilities be developed, and how useful is distributed leadership theory in clarifying skills and capabilities?*

### **Minor Research Questions:**

The findings in this study attempted to answer the following sub-questions:

- How do third-line (junior) leaders within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector characterise the needs, skills and capabilities required to effectively undertake their leadership roles and improve organisational performance?
- How do the third-line (junior) leaders within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector experience the development of their needs, skills and capabilities?
- What are the specific capabilities required by the junior leaders working in Kuwait's oil and gas sector?
- What are the policy measures and managerial recommendations that can be made to enhance leadership effectiveness and organisational performance?

### **4.9 Chapter conclusion**

The thrust of any leadership development program is to enhance the capabilities of leaders who can ‘think outside the box’ in finding successful solutions to problems and then work on strengthening this ability. This review cites theoretical and empirical literature that contributes toward better understanding of capabilities and the development thereof. It was

observed that much of the contemporary development literature has focused on general recommendations without a lot of attention to the important dimensions of context, assessment of leaders' capabilities and development needs (Derr *et al.*, 2002), particularly of lower-level leaders in developing contexts such as the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector. Leadership does not just exist at the top of an organisation, and many organisations consider that leadership qualities are needed at all levels (James and Burgoyne, 2001).

Leadership development is geared to creating new capabilities, therefore an important question that needs to be addressed is whether leadership development increases capability, performance and other qualities (Bolden, 2004). Furthermore, we put forth the proposition that leadership development is a social phenomenon and that learning takes places within a social context. Thus, learning is responsive to interaction with others thereby advocating a social constructivist approach to understanding leadership.

An integrated framework that incorporated leadership behaviours and capabilities, and the development thereof and contextual factors was conceptualised (see figure 3.3). The literature review noted that leader development through job experiences, such as on-the-job-training, coaching, mentoring, industrial attachment etc. have emerged as powerful sources of learning for leaders (Delakoura, 2010; McCauley and Brutus, 1998). However, leader development is not only the result of traditional, classroom-type training programs, but rather the result of a series of well-coordinated activities aiming at developing leaders. In addition, leader development should be integrated into everyday practices and thus become a part of the culture of an organisation. This research has emphasised the need to develop leaders at all levels, and particular focus has been devoted to junior leaders.

Leader development ought to be considered in the context of an organisation's requirements. Therefore, there is no 'one size fits all' solution and no single way in which leadership development creates this capability. Rather, there are many different forms of leader development that can generate many different forms of leadership capability, which in turn can increase performance in different ways. An important assumption built into our framework is that leader development is integrated with the organisation's aims; it supports what one wants to achieve (James and Burgoyne, 2001). This study views lower-level leaders' needs assessment and the development thereof as being crucial, in that it is the

entry point for potential career progression in any organisation. The next chapter discusses the research methodology and how the data was obtained and analysed.

## **CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Following a critical review of the extant literature on leadership behaviours and capabilities amongst junior managers in the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector, and putting the study into context, this chapter presents the research design and methodology used to collect and analyse the data in order to answer the major research questions and achieve the study objectives. This chapter provides a framework for gathering data and probing the evidence in order to have a deeper understanding of leadership and in particular the needs, skills and capabilities of frontline leaders working in Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector. As noted by Kraus *et al.* (2006), evidence from developed economies cannot be applied indiscriminately to developing countries due to different cultural, political and economic conditions (Myres, 2009). Therefore, it was necessary to collect the data from the frontline leaders themselves so that we could gain a deeper understanding of their needs.

The chapter begins by restating the study objectives and major research questions, followed by a detailed justification of the methodology from a philosophical perspective. The epistemological and ontological underpinnings of the research design are explained, including tools for data collection, and the process of data collection and analysis are discussed and justified, thereby ensuring external validity and reliability. Briefly, ontologically and epistemologically, positivist research has dominated the study of leadership, whereby each set of studies is seen to build on the findings of earlier ones. Furthermore, many studies of leadership have focussed on quantitative empirical research, and whilst there is some evidence of a move towards methodological diversity (Bryman, 2004), there is a dearth of qualitative studies, whether of hypothesis-driven or of an interpretive nature, which is astonishing given the problems in defining leadership concepts; emerging or poorly defined areas of research are considered to be uniquely suited to exploratory qualitative approaches (Ford, 2005).

In order to collect appropriate data to answer these major research questions, the philosophical underpinnings of the research need to be discussed as that determines how the research was conducted and this is briefly provided below.

## **5.2 Epistemological and Ontological Underpinnings**

Philosophical differences matter when conducting qualitative research because they affect judgments about how data is collected analysed and interpreted (Piekkari *et al.*, 2009). The philosophical differences are largely determined by the underlying epistemological and ontological assumptions (Burrell and Morgan, 2000). When establishing knowledge about an aspect of reality, assumptions about the nature of reality under investigation (ontology) and about the nature of knowledge (epistemology) are made.

Many quantitative researchers in leadership work from the assumption that there is an absolute truth (a ‘reality’) which they are trying to discover. They adopt a positivist perspective, which espouses that the truth is out there and through objective data collection and analysis the one true definition of leadership will be realised (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 1991). For these researchers, knowledge (and the researcher) is objective and neutral. This belief about knowledge has been called ‘objectivism’ and the theoretical framework it implies is called ‘positivism’. This was the predominant paradigm in academic studies from the Enlightenment to the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, when the relevance of this objectivist belief about knowledge began to be challenged when applied to increasingly complex modern human organisations and societies (and indeed with acknowledgement of the deep complexity of the human psyche concurrent with the genesis of psychiatric studies). Many of these challenges have come from studies of social phenomena, such as individual and group behaviour. While quantitative research remains the root of natural sciences, most qualitative researchers today share a different belief about knowledge, called ‘constructivism’, which is at odds with the ‘theoretical underpinnings’ of quantitative methods, which holds that the reality humans perceive is constructed by our social, historical, and individual contexts (Kuper *et al.*, 2008).

An extensive paradigm debate was conducted from the 1970s to 1990s exploring the incompatibility of positivism (and its variants) at one end of a set of philosophical dimensions and constructivism (and its variants) is on the other. The various descriptions of the constructivist philosophical framework share the view that individuals create, negotiate, and interpret meanings for their actions and for the social situations in which they exist (Kuper *et al.*, 2008). In most versions there is no such thing as an objective truth existing

outside or pre-existing the observer; objectivity is a chimera (Lincoln and Guba, 2003) and there are multiple subjective realities, rather than a single objective one. Positivism and constructivism are said to be alternative paradigms, a term used to refer to the basic beliefs, or axioms that dictate methodological preferences. Positivists and constructivists have different basic beliefs on the nature of reality, knowledge, causation, and so on.

Interpretivist/constructivist approaches to research have the intention of understanding “the world of human experience” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 36), suggesting that “reality is socially constructed” (Mertens, 2005, p. 12). However, Cohen & Manion (1994) can be understood as implying that interpretivism and constructivism are the same or very closely related perspectives. This is not necessarily true. The interpretivist/constructivist researcher tends to rely upon the “participants’ views of the situation being studied” (Creswell, 2003, p.8) and recognises the impact on the research of their own background and experiences. But not all interpretivistic research is constructivist. Constructivists do not generally begin with a theory (as with post-positivists) rather they “generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meanings” (Creswell, 2003, p. 9) throughout the research process. The constructivist researcher relies mainly on a qualitative data collection methods and analysis. It is also argued the it can also be a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods (mixed methods). Creswell (2003) and Yanow & Schwartz-Shea (2011) claim that interpretivist researchers discover reality through participant’s views, their own background and experiences.

Interpretivists believe an understanding of the context in which any form of research is conducted is critical to the interpretation of data gathered (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). According to Willis (2007), interpretivism usually seeks to understand a particular context, and the core belief of the interpretive paradigm is that reality is socially constructed. In order to explore understandings of third line leaders, an interpretive methodology provides a context that allows me to examine what the participants have to say about their experiences on leadership practices, needs and development. Interpretive research is more subjective than objective. Willis (2007) argues that the goal of interpretivism is to value subjectivity, and “*interpretivists eschew the idea that objective research on human behaviour is possible*” (p. 110).

According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) data collection in constructivist/interpretivism method can be through the use of various tools and methods, such as, interviews, observations, document reviews, and/or visual data analysis. One of the most common methods is the use of interviews, which has also been applied in this research.

Burrell and Morgan (2000) firmly established the notion of a paradigm (and therefore ‘paradigmatic inquiry’ and ‘paradigmatic divide’, leading eventually to ‘paradigm war’) in the realm of organisational theorizing. Their central thesis was that ‘all theories of organisation are based upon a philosophy of science and a theory of society’ (p. 1) and they conceptualized theoretical positions in terms of assumptions about ontology, epistemology, human nature, and methodology, which in turn led to the generation of the famous 2 x 2 matrix, which parsed and categorized social scientific theories into four unique paradigmatic positions: functionalist, interpretive, radical structuralist and radical humanist.

Similarly, Lee and Lings (2008) postulated four terms for different concepts of the knowledge generation process, which can differ according to how one perceives the world and what one can know about it. These include ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology, as briefly explained below.

### *5.2.1 Ontology*

Ontology is the study of the nature of reality (i.e. a set of beliefs about what the world we are studying actually is, whether reality is objective and independent of our perception of it, or whether reality is subjective and is constructed by those who experience it). Whether or not the world has a ‘real’ existence outside of human experience is a metaphysical question of secondary importance to the pragmatic researcher, who for expediency must make certain assumptions.

For positivists, most assuredly there is a ‘real’ reality ‘out there’ apart from the flawed human comprehension of it. The underlying premise of positivism is that the task of researchers is to assay reality rather than to create or interpret it. There is an underlying objective reality, or at least a set of laws and principles governing how things work, which can be discovered (e.g., why a rock falls when a hand lets it go; what gives a firm a competitive advantage). Such approaches tend to assume that the study of organisations can

be undertaken in a similar way to studies within the natural sciences, and would see leadership as existing as a social reality which can be studied in a similar way to the natural world (Boje *et al.*, 2001). Thus positivist researchers undertake research in order to collect facts, to search for the truth and to explain and predict the organisational world

It would appear that the rules regarding knowledge are more transparent from the positivist perspective with formalised procedures for establishing and testing hypotheses scientifically. The test of scientific rigour tends to be judged by the degree of replication and generalisation of the research findings. However, this positivist perspective is criticised for disregarding the filtering and constraining influences of people's existing beliefs and values, and the effects of power and politics in organisations, when considering alternatives and selecting courses of action.

A contrasting perspective by anti-positivists necessitates gaining data on how individuals construct reality, and it is construction of language and meaning, the nuances of which are lost if they are quantified. Anti-positivists (Alvesson, 2002) or constructivists provide a critical advance beyond positivism by being cognisant of the value assumptions and implications of organisation studies research and the researcher is not a detached observer, but is part of the social world being studied. It is believed that the study of leadership is best done through understanding how the low-level leaders see themselves and their world. It attempts to explain how their expectations, framed within the contextual and cultural assumptions and presuppositions, directly influence the meaning they derive from their experiences, which is a subjective view of the world.

The junior leaders need to be open-minded and explore their self-understandings that are systematically embedded in mind-sets, worldviews, values and experiences, which Senge (1990, p. 8) refers to as mental models that are 'deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures and images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action'. This study therefore adopts an anti-positivist ontology.

### *5.2.2 Epistemology*

Epistemology follows from ontology and is the study of what we can know about reality, and is dependent in many ways on what you believe reality to be. It is the study or theory of

nature and grounds of knowledge, especially with reference to its limits and validity (Honderich, 1995). For example, can we generate unbiased, generalizable knowledge about the world, or is this knowledge specific to a particular time and place? Generalisation is in essence the idea that we can apply our specific results to a wider context than just the one that we studied.

The first important step in assessing the conception of leadership behaviours and capabilities in a developing country (Kuwait) is to identify the theory's underlying epistemology. In specifying how any integrated set of knowledge claims are justified, epistemological considerations circumscribe the framework in which theorizing is conducted, and imposes constraints on the content and structure thereof (Evers and Lakomski, 1991). Thus, the bounds specified by epistemology provide the standards against which knowledge claims can be evaluated (Allix, 2000).

Validity and reliability are the criteria used for justifying knowledge produced within the positivistic tradition. These criteria are based on an objectivist epistemology that refers to an objective, knowable reality beyond the human mind and that stipulates a correspondence criterion of truth (Klenke, 2008). Similarly, a common criterion for establishing reliability within the positivistic research tradition is whether scientific results can be duplicated under identical conditions (Sandberg, 2005). Reliability is said to be established when repeated measurements of objective reality give similar results.

The nature of ‘normal science’ served to significantly loosen the hold of logical positivism and permitted the emergence of a variety of theoretical approaches such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, ethno-methodology, critical theory, and post-structuralism etc., which are interpretive traditions. The roots of the interpretive research tradition are many, and it is not a single unified approach. The more influential approaches are various forms of social constructionism (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Giddens, 1984, 1993, cited in Reihlen and Apel, 2007), critical theory (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000;), ethno-methodology (Silverman, 1998), interpretive ethnography (Van Maanen, 1995), symbolic interactionism (Prasad, 1993), discourse analysis (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2000), deconstructionism (Derrida, 1981), gender approaches (Calas and Smircich, 1996), institutional approaches (Scott, 1995) and sense-making approaches (Weick, 1995).

Despite the great variety of approaches, what unifies them is their phenomenological base, which stipulates that the person and world are inextricably related through lived experience of the world (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, cited in Reihlen and Apel, 2007). Hence, within interpretive approaches, the human world is never a world in itself; it is always an experienced world, that is, a world that is always related to a conscious subject, and this is a perspective adopted in this study. Understanding the capabilities required by low-level leaders and how best they can develop these capabilities is best examined from an interpretive perspective, which is favoured in our research because of the need to bring out the intrinsic views of the low-level leaders themselves.

Since it is meanings and values, rather than facts, which have to be invoked in justifying the aspired ideal, and in motivating behaviour towards those ends, an interpretive perspective is the preferred epistemology as it fully illuminates the experiences of those being studied.

Instead of assuming an objectivist epistemology for the existence of objective reality, reality is socially constructed by continuous negotiation between people about the very nature of that reality. Quantitative description limits what can be learned about the meanings participants give to events. Moreover, in quantitative description, researchers leave less room for the unanticipated (Holloway and Todres, 2007).

### *5.2.3 Axiology*

Axiology is the study of the nature, types and criteria of values and value judgements (Nichols, 2004). Axiology is in essence the aims of a study; it follows from ontology and is about whether you try to explain and predict the world or seek to understand it. Values feed into the inquiry process in several ways: choice of the problem, choice of theoretical framework, choice of major data gathering and analysis, choice of context, etc. It is important to know the values (axiology) at the different oil companies and understand the perspective that low-level leaders hold, without making judgements whether one is right or wrong. Furthermore, when studying people of an ethnic grouping (i.e. Arab people) and their values and characteristics, it is necessary to acknowledge feelings and sensing as valid items of study (Silverman, 1998). It is important to understand their worlds and their

organisations and themselves, and to do that there is a need to take a constructionist perspective.

#### *5.2.4 Methodology*

The boundary between method and methodology is blurred, but within this thesis, methodology is defined as a structured set of methods or techniques to assist people in undertaking research (Mingers, 2003). Methodology is about how you are going to go about your research and is fundamentally dependent on the first three (ontology, epistemology and axiology). Depending on the defined research problem, and the nature of the information gathered, the choice of methodology can be qualitative, quantitative or a combination of both (Yin, 2004).

**Quantitative research** approach according to McDaniel and Gates (2006) is both structured and formal and involves the use of structured questions, where the response options have been predetermined and a large number of respondents are involved. Quantitative is used as a synonym for any data collection technique (such as a questionnaire) or data analysis procedure (such as graphs or statistics) that generates or uses numerical data (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The measurement must be objective, where little information from each subject is collected, but allows for many subjects to be studied. The information is then transformed into numbers and amounts, and later gets analysed statistically in order to draw conclusions. The objective of using this research approach is to develop and employ mathematical models, theories and hypotheses pertaining to natural phenomena. One of the key distinguishing characteristics is the scientific method, which allows researchers to test their hypotheses and rely on objective measures (data) to support their findings. However, and as noted before methodological procedures and claims for objective knowledge have significant theoretical limitations for advancing our understanding of human and organisational phenomena (Lincoln and Denzin, 2003).

**Qualitative research** relies on collecting, analysing, and interpreting data by observation. Qualitative is used as a synonym for any data collection technique (such as an interview) that generates or uses non-numerical data (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). To be able to capture the richness and fullness associated with qualitative data, they cannot be collected in a standardized manner like the quantitative data. In this research, and based on the research

purpose and research questions, the study can best be accomplished by using a qualitative methodology. Reality is constructed between social actors as they interact with each other and the methodology will unavoidably be subjective. Data does not exist independent of the research itself; it is a subjective and interactionist framework (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008).

### **5.3 Research Design**

A research design is a framework that is concerned with finding answers to the research questions i.e. ensuring that we collect the appropriate data in order to explore or test our theory and answer the major research questions (Lee and Lings, 2008). The major components of the research design include the unit of analysis, research question, and data gathering instruments, classification, presentation and analysis of data. The design ought to be linked to the paradigm or perspective being used.

Different research designs tend to be associated with different methods of data collection and some designs are more appropriate for certain research questions than others (Lee and Lings, 2008). For instance, experimental and quasi-experimental designs can be used as a way to establish causal relationships. This research adopts a case study method, which focuses understanding on the dynamics present within a particular setting (Yin, 2004), in this case the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector. A case study provides a depth of data that questionnaires or surveys do not readily provide, and it requires an approach in which observation, contextuality and detailed description are important (Heijes, 2011).

#### *5.3.1 Kuwait Oil & Gas Sector (Case Study)*

The Oil & Gas Journal of January 2013 revealed that Kuwait's territorial boundaries stored approximately 102 billion barrels of proven oil reserves, which is almost 6 percent of the world's total. In the midst of all the countries, Kuwait gained the sixth rank in terms of oil reserves in 2012. The Partitioned Neutral Zone (PNZ), which Kuwait shares on a 50-50 basis with Saudi Arabia, holds the additional reserves. The Neutral Zone has a storage of an additional 5 billion barrels of proven reserves, totaling Kuwait's oil reserves to 104 billion barrels.

KPC - Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, Kuwait's national oil company, along with its subsidiaries control the entire oil sector right from upstream to downstream and even the exports. Kuwaiti government has the ownership and controls the development of the oil sector. Kuwait's oil sector is supervised by the Supreme Petroleum Council (SPC), which also sets the oil policy. The Prime Minister, at the head of the SPC, the rest of the council consists of six ministers and six representatives from the private sector, all with a serving period of three-year terms, being selected by the Emir. The Ministry of Petroleum keeps a check on the policy implementation in both the upstream and downstream portions of the oil and natural gas sectors.

Both the domestic and foreign oil investments is managed by the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC). In 1975, the Kuwaiti government took over the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), the upstream subsidiary of KPC, thereby managing related upstream development in the oil and gas sectors. The downstream sector is run by the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), while the petrochemical sector is handled by the Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC). KNPC and the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) jointly screen the export operations.

The Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (Kufpec), deals with the foreign interests of KPC and the KPI (Kuwait Petroleum International) handles the international upstream development and downstream operations. In the status of being a privately-held company, Kuwait Energy Company (KEC) has achieved a number of foreign links over the past decade, including interests in Yemen, Egypt, Russia, Pakistan, and Oman (EIA, 2013).

### *5.3.2 Unit of analysis*

A well-specified unit of analysis is critical to the development of a decent theory (Birks and Mills, 2011; Rule and John, 2011) given that it minimises the possibility of making conclusions on one unit of analysis based on the analysis of another (Durrheim, 2012; Rule and John, 2011). For a study that is examining leadership needs, behaviours, skills and capabilities of leaders, the unit of study in this case are the low-level leaders.

### *5.3.3 Research approach*

Choosing the most appropriate research approach is vital as it indicates how the research questions can be best answered or at the very least explored. In any study, the selection choices of deductive, inductive or a mixture of both approaches is available as already discussed under the methodology section above.

In general, the two ways of drawing conclusions on a research topic can be through a deductive or inductive approach (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The deductive approach begins by accepting the idea of a theory about the topic of interest and narrowing it down into more specific hypotheses that are testable. Further narrowing down could be done after collecting observations to address the hypotheses. This will ultimately lead the researcher to be able to test the data to confirm the researcher's original theories. Saunders *et al.* (2009) indicate that when starting research from a deductive position, one should use an existing theory to shape the adopted approach.

The inductive approach starts by moving from specific observations to broader generalization and theories (Trochim, 2006). With an inductive approach, research would be concerned with the context (i.e. where the event is taking place). It initiates with specific observations and measures which begin to detect patterns and regularities, and then formulates some of the tentative hypothesis that could be explored, and finally ends up developing some general conclusions or theories. The inductive approach is more open-ended and explanatory and as already been justified this study is best explored using an inductive approach.

### *5.3.4 Research Purpose*

As stated by Trochim (2006), researches can be classified in terms of their purposes into three forms: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive, which will be detailed as follows:

Exploratory research is a type of research conducted because a problem has not been clearly defined. Trochim (2006) explain that exploratory research is conducted with the purpose of defining and clarifying the nature of the problem and when it is unclear what characteristics and relations are important. Since conclusions are too difficult to be drawn

out, the objective is to identify the information needs and problems for future research. Saunders *et al.* (2009) identified the three principle ways for conducting exploratory research as:

- Searching of the literature;
- Talking to experts in the subject; and
- Conducting focus group interviews.

Explanatory research attempts to explain the cause-effect relationships involved in a certain phenomenon, in order to test and build theories (Trochim, 2006). It is useful to test whether one event causes another (Hair *et al.*, 2006). As it is designed to be used when the research field has matured; it tries to explain the course of events and relate how things happened. In doing so it seeks to indicate the relation between variables by adopting methodologies, such as identifying the relation between variables in terms of the quantification of data (e.g. direct or indirect proportionality). The data collection of such researches takes the form of:

- Experimental and quasi-experimental;
- Experimental control;
- Structured direct and indirect observation;
- Qualitative/ inductive; and,
- Surveys that are representative, longitudinal (over a period of time), cross-sectional and independent of a specific context.

Descriptive research design is more extensive and tries to describe different characteristics of a phenomenon or a population based on some previous understanding of the nature of the research problem. It is usually structured and specifically designed to measure characteristics in the research questions and describes the ‘who, what, when, where and how’ of a situation, not what caused it (Trochim, 2006). The objective in this approach is to describe an accurate profile of persons and events of situations. It is quite necessary to have a clear picture of the phenomena in which the researcher wishes to collect data prior to the data collection process (Saunders *et al.* 2009).

Due to the lack of relevant studies in similar areas in Kuwait or the region, this study is mainly exploratory and therefore descriptive to some extent. It is descriptive as it discussed

the results of the interviews to provide a cumulative view of the existing leadership environment. At the same time, it is exploratory as the research follows qualitative methods of collecting data through personal interviews. The interviews were focused on identifying the needs of the leaders in accordance with their development plans. The questions explored the current needs of leaders and the need for development as well as the issues that they face in the development of third line leaders in the oil and gas sector (see section 5.2 for interpretivism vs social constructivism). Interviewees were selected purposively (see section 5.5.5)

#### **5.4 Interviews**

The empirical data for this research has been collected through interviews. These were personal in-depth interviews. The interviews were conducted on individual basis. The interview provides more in-depth information and provides a face-to-face opportunity to capture what is communicated non-verbally. Patton (2002) suggests that non-verbal communication is important but cautions researchers not to misinterpret cross-cultural cues.

The interviews were conducted in the form of a dialogue, because generating verbal descriptions of lived experience becomes a one-sided activity when the researcher merely poses questions and the participant answers, and it is unlikely to achieve high communicative validity (Sandberg, 2005). Instead, verbal descriptions were generated through dialogues, which conveyed openness toward the research object.

As this study was not about testing hypotheses, but was an exploratory study to understand the leadership behaviours and capabilities of low-level leaders, the researcher started the interviews with open-ended questions and gradually moved toward semi-structured interviews. Interview guidelines were elaborated and substantiated with follow-up probing questions, such as ‘what do you mean by that; can you explain that further; and can you give an example; as opposed to what?’ Using questions in combination with follow-up questions enabled the researcher to constantly focus on participants’ lived experience throughout the interviews and thus better understanding and provide value to the topic discussed.

#### *5.4.1 Interview guideline*

The literature reviews in the two preceding chapters informed the development of a theoretical framework for addressing the major research questions. The interview guideline (see appendix 1) was used to ensure consistency in each interview, but exactly how the questions were asked varied from one participant to another, depending upon how they answered the questions. The less structured the interview, the less the questions are determined and standardised before the interview occurs.

True to the semi-structured format, initial questions were broad, general and designed to elicit a story (rich in detail) about their experiences. After the experiences were reported and rapport was created, the interview gradually moved toward more specific questions concerning the subject of interest. According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), questions should be asked in a way that maintains the free-flow of conversation, while obtaining specific answers that yield rich information from which to draw new perspectives, the building blocks of new theory (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). There was a list of core questions that defined the areas to be covered; these were guided by the literature review and conceptual framework.

The initial set of questions was guided by the set of concepts underpinning the tentative conceptual framework. This was in-line with Eisenhardt's (1989) model, which indicates that the researcher can start with the research questions and *a priori* expectations based on the extant literature. Further, the questions were refined during interviews with probing questions depending on the participants responded to the questions.

The research questions were based around broad areas that covered general questions about current job, leadership role and scope of influence, contextual factors that impacted their leadership skills and abilities, what they perceived to be their needs beyond the programme in terms of their confidence in their current leadership role, their immediate development needs and what would help them to meet these needs.

In line with an interpretivist, qualitative approach, wordings cannot be standardised because the interviewer will try to use the person's own vocabulary when framing supplementary questions. Also, during the course of the qualitative study, the researcher

introduced further questions as he became more familiar with the topic being discussed and also because of the need to pursue certain line of thought.

Participants were allowed to expound upon certain information. Interviews were semi-structured around a set of root questions that covered the various aspects of leadership behaviours and capabilities and development thereof. Each root question was followed by a number of probe questions to flesh out detail in the interviewees' responses. The interview questions were based on past literature on leadership behaviours and capabilities. The 'needs' are those skills and abilities that the participants believe they required in order to perform their work but it is recognized that senior leaders might well identify different needs for these first-level line leaders. Expectancy theories of motivation have long placed an emphasis upon the importance of identifying self-perceived needs in the workplace and planning of development programmes (Gentry *et al.*, 2013; Vroom, 1964).

It was important that the questions were stated in clear and concrete terms for participants to understand and answer truthfully as best as they could, enabling them to share their experiences as freely as possible.

#### ***5.4.2 Pilot study***

Before the study was launched, a pilot study was tested on a few selected people in order to solicit their opinions and also to ensure that the participants fully understood the questions. Patton (2002) said that good questions in qualitative interviews should be open-ended, neutral, sensitive, and clear to the interviewee. The detailed interview design emerged from discussion held with five low-level leaders who reviewed the questions. Their comments and suggestions were incorporated in the final interview protocol and how the interviews were to be conducted.

The comments of the pilot test sample, pertained to making the questions more suitable to the Kuwait Oil and Gas sector. As stated earlier, since the interview questions were designed from studies that were carried out outside Kuwait and in non-oil sectors, there was need to make sure that the interview questions suited the type of work and development needs of the leaders in the Kuwait Oil and Gas sector.

The modified questions were sent back to those who had pointed out the need for corrections, so that they could verify and approve that the changes fit the interview requirements with the leaders in the Kuwait Oil and Gas sector.

#### *5.4.3 Conducting interviews*

This section explains how the interviews were conducted in order to obtain rich data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on the basis of a loose structure consisting of open-ended questions that define the area to be explored, at least initially, and from which the interviewer or interviewee diverged in order to pursue an idea in more detail.

The researcher explained the purpose of the research, emphasising the importance of the study. An introductory letter seeking management approval had already been obtained, which explained what was involved and the likely duration of the interview and it gave assurances about confidentiality.

Interviews were conducted at the interviewees' convenience, and for some participants they were held in the evening. The setting of an interview affects the content, and it was preferable to interview people at the workplace.

Qualitative interviewers try to be interactive and sensitive to the language and concepts used by the interviewee, and they try to keep the agenda flexible. They aim to go below the surface of the topic being discussed, explore what people say in as much detail as possible, and uncover new areas or ideas that were not anticipated at the outset of the research.

It was vital that the researcher fully understood respondents' meanings instead of relying on their own assumptions and this was achieved through further probing of interviewees and asking them to clarify issues. This was particularly important because of the potential for misunderstanding. Lastly, when asked, 'Is there anything more you feel I should have asked about leadership needs and development of such needs?' the response was consistently 'no', and words to the effect that we had thoroughly covered the subject, indicating that all needed discussions on the topic was covered.

It was important to start with questions that the interviewees could answer easily and then proceed to more difficult or sensitive topics. Unlike quantitative interviews based on highly

structured questionnaires, the order in which questions were asked varied, as were the questions designed to probe the interviewees' meanings. Most interviewees were willing to provide the kind of data the researcher wanted, but they needed to be given clear guidance about the amount of detail required. The researcher's duty is to avoid imposing structures and assumptions as far as possible.

#### *5.4.4 Recording interviews*

There were various ways of recording the interviews, including field notes during and after interviews and audio-recording. Although writing notes at the time can interfere with the process of interviewing, it was important that the researcher jotted down certain notes during the interviews. These included the place and time the interviews took place, description of the surroundings and paralinguistic features pertinent to interviewees' responses, to enrich the data. Therefore, it was vital that the observations were systematically recorded and analysed.

The researcher usually keeps a field diary or record of the research process to detail events, personal reactions to events, and changes in his or her views over time. To this end, the researcher carried a journal of field notes. In addition, some notes were written soon afterwards, although there was the likelihood to miss out some details. However, the bulk of the data was obtained through audio-taping, although it took some participants a little while to speak freely in front of a tape-recorder, despite assuring participants (as part of soliciting their informed consent) that all data would be used confidentially, and purely for academic purposes.

All of the data that was audio-taped and otherwise, were transcribed later and thereby used in the analysis of the data. The empirical information produced and discussed comes from the transcripts that were used during the interview and afterwards. In the case of audio-taped interviews, these were used to produce the transcripts. In the case where no audio recordings were allowed, the interview responses were written down as the interviewees spoke. These were later transcribed.

#### *5.4.5 Focus groups*

This is a method of group interviewing that explicitly includes and uses the group interaction to generate data. As in other qualitative research, this sampling was seldom statistically based. Instead, it was purposive, whereby the researcher deliberately sampled a particular group of junior leaders. The idea of this type of sampling was not to generalise to the whole population but to indicate common links or categories shared between the setting observed and others like it.

#### *5.4.6 Triangulation*

Triangulation is implemented when a researcher uses multiple methods or perspectives to help produce and utilise a more comprehensive set of findings. The study used the method of data triangulation whereby different sources of data were used to examine the phenomenon in different contexts. Methods triangulation was used to collect different types of data (for example, interviews, company documents), as explained above, to increase insight into the phenomenon.

The triangulation helped in verifying the responses provided by the interviewees. For example, the company published reports were used to clarify information or ask more questions with the aim of clarifying what the interviewees answered. Another example of triangulation was to strengthen the responses provided by the interviewees, by providing evidences based on the oil and gas sector in Kuwait. The objective of using data triangulation was not just to verify the findings, but to provide rich and comprehensive content.

### **5.5 Population and sample selection**

The design of a qualitative study depends on the nature of the inquiry, the type of information, and the credibility of the information collected. Keeping in mind that the study had no strict criterion for sample size, and no statistical test to check for significance (Patton, 2002), the researcher investigated conceptions of leadership behaviours and capabilities within a sample of 42 people in Kuwait whose profiles are given in Appendix 2.

A theoretical or purposeful sampling technique was employed to ensure that the sampled individuals or texts predicted by the researcher (based on the theoretical frameworks) would add new perspectives to those already represented in the sample. Furthermore, it was essential to select participants who were knowledgeable about the subject under study and who could share their experience. As in any qualitative study, the ultimate goal of purposeful sampling is to obtain cases deemed information-rich for the purposes of study (Sandelowski, 2000). The researcher therefore chose participants from whom we could learn the most: the ones that were most accessible and with whom the most time could be spent.

In addition, confirming-disconfirming sampling was utilised where both individuals or texts whose perspectives were likely to confirm the researcher's developing understanding of the phenomenon under study and those whose perspectives were likely to challenge that understanding (Kuper *et al.*, 2008). This included participants whose experiences would likely either confirm or disconfirm what the researcher had already learnt. There was diversity among the participants interviewed in terms of gender, years of experience and their education background.

## 5.6 Data analysis

The reasoning implicit in qualitative work is held to be inductive (moving from observation to hypothesis) rather than hypothesis testing or deductive. In order to get behind respondents' formal public statements and behaviour to uncover their personal perceptions and actual daily actions, it was important not to impose *a priori* categories and concepts from the researcher's own professional knowledge (having worked in the Kuwait's Oil and Gas sector for several years) on to the process of data collection. Rather than starting with a hypothesis that precedes any data collection, the researcher is encouraged not to separate the stages of design, data collection, and analysis, but to go backwards and forwards between the raw data and the process of conceptualisation, thereby making sense of the data throughout the period of data collection. Data analysis was therefore largely inductive, allowing meaning to emerge from the data, rather than the more deductive, hypothesis centred approach favoured by quantitative researchers. Analysis in qualitative research is

also theory based and often iterative, moving between empirical findings and conceptual frameworks.

Qualitative data analysis was an integral process as it was gathered and qualitative content analysis was the analysis strategy of choice. Qualitative content analysis is a dynamic form of analysis of verbal and visual data that is oriented toward summarizing the informational contents of that data (Higgs *et al.*, 2009).

Use was made of audio-recording devices to ensure that the participants were not misrepresented and that the transcripts represented the true reflections of what transpired. Following the fieldwork, the interviews, which lasted for an average of about 45 minutes, were transcribed in full. Transcription is an immensely time-consuming process, as each hour's worth of interview can take six or seven hours to transcribe, depending on the quality of the recording.

The researcher then presented the data in a narrative form supported by evidence from statements and behaviour recorded in field notes, critical reflections journals and interviews. Detailed descriptions of real-life perceptions of the participants were provided in order to understand the meanings and processes behind this perception. There was also a need to provide some interpretive commentary framing the key findings in the study. Both interviews and observation notes were organized into meaningful units, which were then coded and categorised manually in order to discover patterns of behaviour and interaction.

Data analysis also included a qualitative descriptive approach (Sandelowski, 2000). This type of qualitative data can provide rich descriptions of practice that can be used to develop theory. This approach included using notes gathered from the initial interviews to classify statements into categories underlying our interview instrument. Based on our initial interviews, we added new categories and subcategories for the statements that did not fit our initial framework, and explored themes as well as concepts common to these initial interviews. This process of discussion, reflection, and scrutiny of the initial interview instrument, notes, and coding scheme helped in refining our coding scheme.

Data were analysed and were categorized into groups such as organisational structure, *Kuwaitisation*, change management skills. Data analysis was performed through an

iterative process of description, ordering and identifying recurrent and repetitive aspects, thereby determining the major themes in a process of constant comparison across the interviews and the observation transcripts. Chunks of data (quotes) were used as evidence and as the basis of coding decisions. Themes are recurrent unifying concepts or statements about a subject of enquiry (Bradley *et al.*, 2007). The themes were developed in two steps, which are briefly discussed below.

### **5.7 Theory development process**

Firstly, themes were abstracted from categories through careful analysis of patterns in the data (Gioia *et al.*, 2012). Secondly, the themes were further refined to make them specific enough to be discrete (non-repetitive), and broad enough to represent ideas contained in numerous categories (Attride-Stirling, 2001). These themes are the basis of new theoretical insights (Charmaz, 2006; Gioia *et al.*, 2012; Pratt, 2009).

The field notes gathered during observational research were very detailed, highly descriptive accounts and therefore cumbersome. As descriptions alone they cannot provide explanations. The researcher's task was to sift and decode the data to make sense of the situation, events, and interactions observed. The analytical process started during the data collection phase, a quite different model of the research process to that found in quantitative research, where data collection is completed before any analysis begins. The analytical process used a method of content analysis.

Major themes that emerged from the data analysis related to contextual issues, leadership skills, development approaches, etc. Main themes and patterns emerged from a reduction process. The process of data reduction into compelling authentic and meaningful statements constitutes an end goal of qualitative research design (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). It was important to ensure that the theoretical discussions were traceable in the data.

The focus was on the common themes that continued to surface because of their importance in the development of new theory. An essential feature of the theory development process is the comparison of the enfolding literature with the extant literature (Eisenhardt, 1989; Madzivire, 2011). The following questions served as guides during the data analysis and theory development process:

- 1) What information did the study find out?
- 2) What new information did the study establish?
- 3) Which information was not conforming?

Thus, divergent and convergent views were considered in order to increase confidence in the study findings. While similar literature served to confirm similarities in concepts, the divergent literature deepened insights into the emergent theory (Madzivire, 2011). Particular attention was on ‘nascent concepts that did not seem to have adequate theoretical referents in the existing literature’(Gioia *et al.*, 2012, p. 20).

### **5.8 External validity and reliability**

There is critical discussion regarding the reliability and validity of qualitative studies (Niemann-Struweg and Grobler, 2011). Validity is generally the extent to which a measurement truly reflects the phenomenon under scrutiny, while reliability is the extent to which a measurement yields the same answer each time it is used (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

Validity in qualitative research is about authenticity and trustworthiness (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). It has to do with description and explanation, and whether or not explanation fits the description in other words, whether the explanation is credible.

Researchers conducting such studies seek descriptive validity, or an accurate accounting of events that most people (including researchers and participants) observing the same event would agree is accurate; and interpretive validity, or an accurate accounting of the meanings participants attributed to those events that those participants would agree is accurate (Maxwell, 1992). To ensure validity, transcriptions were checked for accuracy (Bradley *et al.*, 2007) before sending them to the participants for review and validation. This process potentially enhanced construct validity (Gibbert *et al.*, 2008).

The transcripts were checked based on audio-taping and notes that were written down during the interviews. Interview transcripts that pertained to each of the participants were sent to them personally. There were no changes pointed out, and therefore, no changes were made to the transcripts.

External validity refers to the approximate ‘truth’ of propositions, inferences, or conclusions and relates to the quality of the research methodology, and the ability to generalize the findings to other organisations, places or times (Trochim, 2006) or beyond the immediate case study (Yin, 2004). Validity means in essence that a theory, model, concept or category describes (a) reality with a good fit. To ensure validity, data is gathered from several participants and the participants were requested to review their transcriptions to ensure that they reflected what transpired.

As the study is qualitative in nature, the issue of reflexivity arises, wherein researchers need to eliminate all biases by being constantly conscious about interactions with participants and keeping in mind the researchers’ role in the study (Rossman and Rallis, 2003, p. 51). In keeping with this concern, every effort has been made to remain unbiased in collecting the data and reporting the findings through use of tape-recorded transcripts.

Qualitative research is criticised for the inability to generalise the findings. However, it is assumed that the readers will be able to generalise subjectively from the cases in question to their own personal experiences (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

The rigid processes, procedures and treatment of data helped to ensure reliability and validity. However, it should be noted that the value of case study research is its uniqueness; consequently reliability in the traditional sense of replicability is pointless.

### **5.9 Values, Ethics and Reflexivity**

It was important to ensure that the participants were protected and not harmed in any way as a result of this study. Issues of confidentiality and anonymity can become quite complex when data constitute personal reports of experience or perception; the need to minimise harm may involve not only protection from external scrutiny but also mechanisms to mitigate potential distress to participants from sharing their personal stories (Kuper *et al.*, 2008). The researcher ensured that there was no risk to exposure and embarrassment, as well as no loss of standing, employment, and self-esteem. Equally, it was also important that the oil companies or participants were not put into disrepute (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). This is fundamentally important, not just for this present study, but also for other researchers who might want to carry similar studies. To that end, confidentiality was

maintained through the study and no participants' identities were revealed or other references that could be used to determine their identity.

Participants were given the right to reject the use of audio-recording if they wished, and they had the right to receive the drafts revealing how they were presented, quoted and interpreted. They could edit the transcripts and make changes accordingly. It was important for the researcher to listen for signs of concerns. The nature of the study was explained to all participants prior to recruitment, and again when administering the participant consent form.

Participants were assured that all data would be kept in a password-protected computer accessible only to the researcher and it would be held for a period of seven years at the University of Stirling for academic purposes, after which it would be discarded, subject to the UK Data Protection Act, 1998.

Reflexivity is particularly important within the qualitative paradigm. Reflexivity refers to recognition of the influence a researcher brings to the research process. It highlights potential power relationships between the researcher and research participants that might shape the data being collected. It also acknowledges how a researcher's gender, ethnic background, profession, and social status influence the choices made within the study, such as the research question itself and the methods of data collection (Seale, 1999).

The researcher has been working in the oil and gas sector and therefore know several of the third-line leaders and managers. Based on this an open relationship between the researcher and the respondents was established. This helped in the respondents speaking freely about their current work scenario and answering the questions to the best of their ability.

## **5.11 Chapter Conclusion**

The chapter discussed the research design and methodology used to gather and analyse the data in order to answer the major research questions. Increasingly, researchers in the field of leadership are using qualitative methodology to collect empirical data that is examined to support and test opinions, thoughts and feelings of the leaders themselves with regards to their leadership needs and how best to develop such needs. It is believed that the qualitative

methodology employed and the research design, primarily using interviews, was the most appropriate to capture the essence of the participants' experience. Content analysis was used as a research method to capture the views of the lower-level leaders and help gain deeper insight into understanding leadership. The approach involved codifying qualitative into categories in order to derive patterns in the presentation and reporting of information.

The next chapter presents the findings and analysis.

## CHAPTER 6: DATA FRAMING AND ANALYSIS

### 6.1 Introduction

Whilst the previous chapter justified the qualitative approach adopted in this research and detailed how the evidence was collected and analysed, this chapter presents the evidence from the interviews held with 42 participants from seven companies selected from amongst ten Kuwaiti oil companies (Appendix 2). The largest number of participants (17) was from the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), the main hub of the Oil and Gas Sector in Kuwait. Out of these 42 participants, four were women and the rest were men, reflecting the reality of the workplace (women are inhibited, by themselves and others, from working in this field, as explained previously). Most of the respondents had several years of experience working in the Oil and Gas Sector; the average years of experience was 20 years, but not necessarily as Team Leaders. This shows that they were fairly experienced people to occupy positions of Team Leaders or Junior Leaders.

The Oil and Gas Sector is unique in many ways and it requires people with the requisite leadership capabilities to run the operations, failure of which there could be catastrophic disasters (technical or economic). It is recognised that the key to identifying leadership needs and meeting the needs of first-line leaders in the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector is to involve the leaders themselves in the design and review of any development programme that is to be introduced and hence part of the reason for adopting a qualitative paradigm. To this end semi-structured interviews were used to uncover the perspectives of junior leaders about aspects of their role in which they feel confident, their immediate development needs and what they perceive would help them to meet these needs.

#### *6.1.1 Saturation of data*

The detailed transcripts consisted of over 500 pages of evidence through which the researcher sieved in order to understand the respondents' perspectives about their leadership and development needs, producing codes attached to the texts through a process of data reduction and identifying emerging themes (see Appendix 3). Descriptive codes were applied to the text and appeared as listed in appendix 3. However, it became possible to move rapidly from descriptive to analytical codes because it became clear from constant

comparison that respondents were referring to and raising similar issues. These were coded in a more abstract and analytical way and eventually it became clear no new codes were generated. Therefore saturation of data was achieved with no new codes emerging from the data after an intensive period of study coupled with critical discussion with research colleagues. An example of this can be seen in section 6.4.3 and 6.4.6 where respondents use the key term “change” and this has been aggregated into an analytical code of “change management”. This is discussed in depth on sections 7.3.6 (p. 209).

Due to the *Kuwaitisation* policy, whereby most of the top leadership positions within the oil sector are currently occupied by Kuwaitis, the participants were all Kuwaiti nationals. Indeed, it was found that the firms had a unit dedicated to *Kuwaitisation*. Many of the respondents were keen to know the outcomes of the research, and in particular its recommendations. They were keen to know a leadership style and requirements that were unique to Kuwait and customised to its nature, environment and its culture, as opposed to blindly adopting practices from elsewhere.

The thesis is investigating the current as well as the future leadership development needs of first-level line managers/leaders in Kuwait’s Oil and Gas Sector. As such, the selection of the participants was deliberately targeting this group of people, among whom few studies have been conducted (Bolden, 2004). Because of the nature of the study and its main objective, it was felt that such information ought to originate from the participants themselves and hence a qualitative paradigm was collected as justified in the previous chapter. Furthermore, the study recognised the need for these leaders in the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector to explore their own array of skills, competences and capability needs. To be effective in a specific context, these first-level line managers/leaders require a particular balance of skills, competencies and capabilities. Whilst the identification of these leadership capabilities was the primary focus of the research, the approaches of how to develop the needs of the lower-level leaders were also of interest and importance.

The main purpose of this chapter is therefore to frame the data and provide an overview of how the respondents came across during the interviews and the main themes and trends that emerged from the qualitative analysis that ensued. The key findings from this chapter form the basis of our discussion in relation to the extant literature and subsequent testing of our

conceptual framework, out of which a new framework of leadership capabilities of first-level line managers/leaders from the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector will emerge.

The next sections therefore present the evidence gathered and the analyses that ensued on each main theme/category that emerged. As this study was not about testing hypotheses, but was exploratory in nature, the interviews began with general questions about the participants' current jobs, their leadership roles and responsibilities, and scope of influence and some of the contextual factors that could possibly influence their work. The interviews then gradually moved toward semi-structured interviews focusing more on their leadership needs and in particular the capabilities (talents, abilities, attributes, skills, knowledge and styles) required for them to conduct their work competently and effectively. They were then asked broad questions pertaining to how personal and collective development and career planning was taking place, the obstacles that existed and the methods used to identify development needs, and the means of delivering development.

The participants were then given an opportunity to provide any comments that they had pertaining to the subject, which they felt could enhance the study. This helped to initially put the respondents at ease before dwelling on the more complex questions seeking data to explore the phenomenon of interest.

## **6.2 General overview and the nature of work and responsibilities of the respondents**

The interviews started off by getting the respondents to talk about themselves, their roles and responsibilities. It was also an opportunity to appreciate the nature of their work, some of the challenges that they were experiencing and also to be satisfied that we were dealing with first-level line managers/leaders within the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector, which was the main area of interest of the study. As can be seen from the profile of the respondents (see Appendix 2), the common term used in these different Oil and Gas Sector companies is to designate these first-level line managers/leaders as Team Leader. They are mainly working with technical personnel and low-level operatives, because of the nature of the work in the field. It is not surprising that some of these teams could be very large, with up to 400 people, many of whom are labourers or low-level technicians, as reiterated by Respondent3:

'I am a Team Leader in-charge of all commanding operations with a total manpower of 400 excluding the contractors. I am mainly in-charge and commanding the people and all related functions and services'.

However, other teams were relatively small, with less than ten people consisting of engineers, skilled technicians and specialists. In terms of decision-making, they are mainly making technical decisions and advising senior management; otherwise these Team Leaders are the people entrusted to execute the plans. As stated by Respondent4:

'The Team Leaders are the first level of management in this organisation, and the management level is the second level'.

Titles matter in these organisations, and many Kuwaitis would like to quickly aspire to managerial positions, even if they might not necessarily have had the requisite experiences. The responsibilities for these respondents varied and included maintenance work, operations, planning, production, contracting and procurement, exploration and information technology etc. They mainly gave advice to senior management for them to make the final decisions, as stated by Respondent14:

'My role is not to approve the budget; the management will take the decision, I help them to take proper decisions'.

Respondent8 shared similar sentiments, feeling that their work was of an operational nature, although they also contributed to operational plans of their respective departments:

'We have routine activities which are known in our department, such as daily or day-to-day work, but we sometimes require decision making on these activities, if we have something which is not normal - either in the field, during preventive maintenance or there is a breakdown in system, or if there is anything related to projects. We need to make decisions on normal activities. Also, we have to give guidelines for the future plans of the department - how to develop the work and how to adapt new techniques. In addition, I have to transfer any messages from the higher management

regarding any new issues or anything related to the company's plan to the people assigned under me'.

Similarly, Respondent10 also mentioned that he provided valuable information to senior management for them to make better informed decisions;

'Part of my work is financing projects in companies underneath the company, I provide that information to management for their final decision... and that's how I influence their decision. If I give the right information and right recommendations, hopefully they make the right decisions'.

The nature of their work thus covered the broad facets of the Oil and Gas Sector operations, and it was partly managerial (including leadership, technical and administrative roles), but mainly operational work, which is typical of third-level leaders. These Team Leaders are involved in administrative issues; they have to know how to deal with the people and motivate them, and how to solve the problems of a technical or human nature. They are expected to implement the company's policies and procedures. However, to a large extent the nature of their work is of a supervisory nature, as stated by Respondent19:

'You have to check their work and I would be the last line or the last person who is signing the papers to approve it. So we try to work, as we said, as a team work, and giving some of our responsibility to our senior people - this is called empowering people'.

An issue raised by these respondents was that they were not necessarily empowered, and had to refer matters to their senior managers, as raised by Respondent33,

'I am not empowered, I have no authority; I cannot take a decision, I have to refer. So this is by itself a hurdle. They need to relax on this; they need to trust people... trusting me as a Team Leader and doing the work they should empower me so I can actually function better, deliver better. So to me empowerment is very important and decision-making comes with it'.

Similar views were echoed by other respondents. The Team Leaders had fairly extensive working experience, varying from nine to 30 years, and I formed the view that these

respondents were sufficiently knowledgeable about Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector to be able to competently answer the research questions and enhance understanding of the leadership and development needs of these third-line leaders.

The respondents were very keen to participate in the study, and because of the centrality of the Oil and Gas Sector to the Kuwait's economy, many of these leaders appreciated the importance of their work and they valued it, thus the Sector is heavily oversubscribed in comparison to other industries. In actual fact, outside the government sector, most Kuwaitis work in the Oil and Gas Sector, which may partly explain why mobility up the hierarchy is becoming increasingly difficult, because they are simply too many Kuwaitis working for the sector, even if there might not be meaningful positions. The government has undertaken to find jobs for all Kuwaiti graduates.

- Key findings

It was important was to establish and confirm that the unit of analysis was Team Leaders or first-level line managers within the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector, as this was the level of leadership under study and of interest to this research, particularly as it relates to their leadership needs and development needs. It was also important to establish the nature of their work before we could dwell on their needs and development of such capabilities. The roles and responsibilities and the nature of their work helped to appreciate the skills, competencies and capability requirements of these Team Leaders, which in turn influenced the approaches to their development.

From the above findings, it was observed that these Team Leaders had technical, administrative as well as leadership and managerial responsibilities. They were leading teams, some of which were as large as 400 subordinates, consisting of personnel including senior engineers, engineers, specialists, technicians and labourers. It was therefore important that such leaders needed to have understanding of the subordinates' psychological and physical needs, feelings and ambitions and be able to motivate them to work as teams and influence them. The leaders were expected to have the technical knowledge and understand the job at hand. They were expected to implement the company policies and plans.

However, to a large extent their work was of a supervisory nature and giving advice to senior management as they were tasked with the different Kuwait Oil and Gas companies' operational performances. They therefore required skills, competencies and capabilities to be able to undertake their work effectively. Operational work activity requires application of particular job-related operational skills, which are linked to the demands and requirements of particular activity-related roles. These leaders were also required to apply management tools and techniques such as human resource management and project management and to a lesser extent develop leadership skills, competencies and capabilities for senior leadership positions within the Kuwait Oil and Gas companies' hierarchies, such as promoting the vision for the organisation, as part of their career progression. At this level within the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector hierarchies, these Team Leaders are not required to have leadership capabilities of a higher order to guarantee corporate-wide success.

In light of the tasks and roles explored above, the key issues to explore were therefore to know the skills, competencies and capabilities required of them, but as seen from their own perspectives and then to explore how best to develop such needs. However, because of the importance of contextual factors on the nature and effectiveness of leadership, it was important to first explore the contextual factors that were influencing these Team Leaders in their work.

### **6.3 Contextual Factors**

As noted in Chapter 2, the context in which an organisation operates and its own characteristics are key determinants of leadership needs and development orientation. A strong underlying theme of the leadership literature is that successful leaders display the capability to appreciate the nature of the challenges in their context. To that end, respondents were asked to comment on the main factors that influence leaders' capabilities and competencies, specifically within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector.

#### *6.3.1 Government intervention*

The government through the Ministry of Oil (MoO) partly owns the Oil and Gas Sector companies of Kuwait. Thus the MoO appoints top management, including board members,

but they are not necessarily required to be involved in the appointment of Team Leaders, who are the subject of our investigation. The appointment of Team Leaders is supposed to be the responsibility of local managers within the respective various companies. Nevertheless, it was important to establish if there was government intervention, which might be influencing the appointment of Team Leaders or impacting on their work activities and career development.

Parliamentarians have a right to scrutinise government activity; in executing this function they have even had major projects cancelled because they considered that they had not been thought through and planned properly. For example, the fourth refinery at Equate Dhow Chemicals was suspended due to extensive pressure and canvassing by parliamentarians, which led to the company losing opportunities to expand operations, incurring losses for the company because of political intervention. The interviewees perceived parliamentary involvement to be ill-informed bungling, as noted by Respondent29:

‘Parliamentarians are getting involved... they don’t understand the business and do not trust the people who are in the business who are making decisions’.

Respondent31 mentioned that as a result of the oil companies being government owned, appointments, procurement, tenders must comply with the government policies and procedures, which sometimes does not necessarily lead to getting the best bidders being awarded contracts or getting the right people appointed to positions, because of the emphasis on the lowest-priced bid by the Central Tender Board.

Although the MoO is not directly involved in the appointment of Team Leaders, at some of the oil companies parliamentarians are involved, which delays the whole process, as there is a need to justify every new nominee, as observed by Respondent1:

‘Unfortunately nowadays, they do; KOC used to be independent in appointing their leaders... and now the government is getting involved, which really elongates this process a bit and now we have to justify every nominee that we have, which is time-consuming, and there is no trust in the leaders’.

The Kuwaiti Parliament has been dissolved on numerous occasions by the Amir due to differences between them and appointed government ministers. However, each time the Parliament is dissolved, Respondent42 stated that:

‘We have to go through a phase of three months of no recruitment... no recruitment means I have to slow down one month of my progressive plans. Also senior management is fearful of making decisions... This fear, I started to see it now, more than before’.

Respondent20 also concurred that there was interference by the Parliamentarians in the operations of the oil companies, but due to their *Wasta* in seeking preferment for their in-groups within the firms:

‘The interference is obvious, as it’s a government company... there is parliamentarian influence in appointing higher or top management, we cannot deny that’.

The same sentiments were echoed by Respondent1.

‘The government in theory doesn’t get involved in the appointment of Team Leaders at a certain level, but if we are talking of Chairmen, Deputy Managing Directors - yes. Currently, when there is an opening, you find a lot of pressure from Merchants, Members of the National Assembly. There is a lot of nepotism based on tribal culture. I know things happen due to nepotism and there are lots of complaints... I can see some cracks in the system and people are getting through, because of ‘who they know’ and that could be a problem’.

With regards to appointments of key personnel, it was observed that the government was heavily involved in the appointment of top managers but not necessarily at the Team Leader level. Such views were shared by Respondent30, who stated that:

‘In general, I think that the government involvement has increased over the last 25 years. The freedom of the Kuwaiti oil companies to decide on a multitude of issues has become less and less over the years... but I don’t

consider it to be significant influence, especially if you are talking about Team Leaders and managerial levels. Political level influence starts with Deputy Managing Directors (DMDs), Deputy CEOs, etc.’.

- Key findings

The key findings were that the ten oil companies were partly government-owned, and as such they fell under the ambit of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) which is chaired by the Minister of Oil. They were therefore obliged to follow government rules and regulations in so far as all facets of their operations were concerned, including (indeed, particularly) in procurement and recruitment. Government involvement in the Oil and Gas Sector is based on the critical importance of the industry to Kuwait, thus the Parliament or Ministry are *de jure* defending the national interest by intervening in these firms; however, this did not always result in obtaining the least cost technically compliant bidders nor the best personnel appointed to key positions.

The participants also noted that ill-informed and incompetent parliamentarians were interfering negatively, especially in key projects, some of which had to be cancelled, such as the Dhow fourth refinery. Parliamentarians were also greatly influencing the appointments of personnel in key positions, although such influence was not necessarily at Team Leader level, but rather for more senior appointments. This meant that some of the people appointed to key positions did not always possess the requisite qualifications and skills, thereby adversely impacting on operations.

### *6.3.2 Organisational Culture*

The organisational culture of a company has far-reaching implications on its operations and performance, and in countries such as Kuwait the culture is deeply entrenched and reinforced in many respects by religion; as such it cannot easily be changed. It was therefore important to explore the cultural influences as perceived by these Team Leaders themselves.

Respondent19 emphasised the strong influence of the society on organisational culture and how work is conducted in these oil companies, making it very difficult to change the latter,

particularly as Kuwaitis predominantly work in these oil companies and they monopolize most of the key positions as sinecures:

'Yes, we have this culture where people come to work and sometimes they do not bother to come to work on time or completely abscond from work, and they are used to it... this reflects on the work performance. The societal culture influences this and it reflects at the workplace... so I don't think the people can easily get out of the whole way of doing work here as it is a reflection of the outside society'.

Similarly, Respondent38 mentioned the influence of societal culture on organisational practices.

'It's a Kuwaiti culture where everybody knows someone... if you work in a group where all the people are from the same background and culture, it is going to affect the whole operation, because it's about whom you know and not what you know... and we are brought up with this culture'.

As is expected in large organisations such as the Kuwait Oil and Gas companies, there is centralisation and decisions are taken at a central level of the main companies, manifesting Kuwait's high power distance culture. As mentioned by Respondent1:

'We get run by an individual who is miles away from where we are and doesn't take into consideration of our needs'.

The culture in these organisations favours degree holders at the expense of those that are skilled and have extensive years of experience, but who may not necessarily possess degrees. Possession of a university degree is considered to be the gateway to success, as noted by Respondent1:

'I have voiced the opinion for training on attitude, skills, but they are giving higher marks to graduates... I have people who are working for 20 years and non-university graduates, and they perform very well'.

Similar remarks were made Respondent21:

'They are hiring people with degree certificates but with poor attitude towards work, and then we are having problems... The new batch of recruits that we have received are not very good; their attitude towards work culture, and their idea of performance does not meet our requirements. Because of this mistake in hiring for qualifications and not for the right attitude towards work, the organisation is suffering'.

Public education in Kuwait is free all the way to the university level unless one decides to attend private education. As a result, many students are attaining degrees and then the government is obliged to find jobs for these graduates, which is most likely to be in the government ministries or government institutions such as the oil companies. In an effort to accommodate these graduates, preference is being given to people in possession of degrees at the expense of more experienced people who in some cases are then forced to take early retirement.

Due to the high power distance culture, usually the leaders are immune when they do something wrong and lower level employees, and in this case Team Leaders, get blamed when something goes wrong; as a result, Team Leaders tend to be very cautious and are reluctant to take initiatives and bold decisions, for fear of being blamed (or usurped by their superiors if successful), as remarked by Respondent6:

'If something goes wrong, the responsible person is the leader who should take the blame and take the heat but in our culture as a leader they don't want him to be punished in front of their employees... they do not take responsibility and that actually reflects negatively on the motivation of employees... either the supervisors or workers are the ones who get evaluated badly and punished'.

- Key findings

It was noted that in these companies, the key leadership positions were now largely occupied by Kuwaitis, drawn from a largely homogenous society, and the influence of societal culture was beginning to adversely influence organisational work practices. It is difficult to change the work practices as the Kuwaiti people are used to a very relaxed way

of working and are not willing to change. This possibly calls for more diversity in the workplace. It is a high power distance society where lower-level employees do not have much say in the running of the company, and instead are told what to do; they are periodically blamed when things go wrong, as top management does not take responsibility. This tends to stifle creativity and Team Leaders are not necessarily willing to take initiatives as a result. The major aspect that emerged was that it was very difficult to change the work practices in these oil companies because of the strong organisational culture that was strongly influenced by societal culture.

### *6.3.3 Relationships and families (*Wasta*)*

Another area that has tended to affect the whole employment system in Kuwait is favouritism or nepotism, commonly known as *Wasta* in the Arab world, where people get employed or promoted because of ‘who they know’ and not necessarily based on merit. The implication of such a rampant practice is that sometimes people are appointed to positions such as Team Leaders only to find that they cannot perform, because all they may have is an academic qualification but lack the skills and competencies to be able to perform their work. This has tended to have demoralising effects to those people who are by-passed by the practice simply because they are not well connected in society. As observed by Respondent 12:

‘So it’s normal that people with competences and those who deserve to be promoted to technical positions will remain stagnant and most likely will be disappointed, and they will be looking for whatever opportunities they can get to leave... No importance is placed on having competences. Personally, I am looking for opportunities outside’.

Kuwait’s society is a collectivist society where people live in families or tribes and care for each other, including providing employment opportunities to each other, by virtue of being family members. It is therefore not surprising to see people from the same tribe or religious sect working together at the exclusion of the other people. As highlighted by Respondent4:

‘Whilst there is nothing wrong with people from the same affiliation working together, it must be noted that the Oil Companies are public companies and

not private family companies, therefore more consideration should be given to skills and competencies and less on family affiliations'.

Respondent31 had misgivings about *Wasta* as it was adversely impacting productivity, because in many cases the people concerned were inexperienced:

'If you want to succeed, then there is a need to select the team or key players in the team. Some people are forced upon you... people are promoted to key positions in your team because of illogical policies... these people are expected to work and produce excellent results. It doesn't work like that; the skills are not up to the expectations and yet expectations are very high'.

- Key findings

Similar to earlier observations about societal culture heavily influencing organisational practices, it was noted that the collectivist aspect of the societal culture was spilling into these oil companies. It was therefore not surprising to see people from the same family, tribe or religious sect working together in the same teams. Whilst this might assist in having cohesive teams, in some cases it was at the expense of work output as the most competent people are not always appointed to senior positions of leadership. Instead priority is given to family or tribal links.

*Wasta* or nepotism seems to be widely accepted in most Arab countries, including in these Kuwaiti companies, with the implication that the appointed Team Leaders are not necessarily the most suitable candidates to hold such positions. In some cases, Team Leaders are appointed to certain positions and they do not have the knowhow or knowledge required for that position, leaving them at the mercy of their subordinates, who may be more experienced but unwilling to cooperate. Furthermore, such work practices have demoralising effects on the more competent people who might not necessarily be well connected in society.

#### *6.3.4 Kuwaitisation policy*

The government of Kuwait introduced a localisation policy after the Iraqi invasion in 1990, which resulted in the desertion of (or expulsion from) the country by expatriates,

particularly the Palestinian managerial class, forcing the government to engage Kuwaitis by virtue of being Kuwaiti due to expediency rather than experience and requisite qualifications. The policy is quite an emotive one in Kuwait, with many respondents in favour of it but with reservations about the manner in which it has been implemented. For instance, Respondent1 supported the policy when he stated that:

'The government introduced Kuwaitisation, with which I agree... we should give Kuwaitis a chance. A Kuwaiti is capable of doing any particular job just like a non-Kuwaiti, and then he should be given an opportunity... Localization was good in theory, but how they implemented it has been problematic'.

Conversely, Respondent29 was generally opposed to the policy, particularly to the way it was being implemented and the manner in which companies were circumventing it:

'I am against it because they are looking at the target number of Kuwaitis and they want to increase it. Kuwaitisation is not to our benefit... I am not saying keep the whole company foreign, you have to have a balanced workforce... The problem with us Kuwaitis is that we are working only in one company for life, whereas they work in several companies. So they are exposed to the latest technology and they have the knowhow. These are people you can learn from, unless you are willing to send your Kuwaitis outside for several years and learn from different companies such as Shell, Chevron, Total, BP etc., which I don't see happening... I personally have benefited from several expats and have learnt from them. So this concentration on Kuwaitisation only and appointing people is not benefitting us'.

Other respondents opposed the policy because it was adversely affecting performance, with experienced expatriate staff being replaced by inexperienced personnel, as remarked by Respondent30:

'I think that we have to look at the policy closely as there are problems with the implementation... we are losing a lot of valuable expatriate experience without simultaneously having a real good programme to ensure that our Kuwaiti manpower is up to that level - so there is a gap'.

The policy is being implemented amongst private contractors who tender for the government jobs and contracts within the oil sector. The contractors have to abide by the policy if they want to be shortlisted. The same Respondent<sup>29</sup> went on to say that:

'To circumvent the problem, the contractors hire Kuwaitis on paper, but they know that these Kuwaitis don't want to work, or don't want certain jobs and instead all want to be managers. No one wants to be an ordinary worker. So what happens is the contracting companies hire these people to sit at home, just to get the quota and the certificate so that they can bid for these tenders, which is creating a negative impact on the community, because when you have somebody who is being paid to sit at home, it is basically tantamount to corruption'.

Similarly, Respondent<sup>25</sup> confirmed that many of the workforce that actually do the work are non-Kuwaitis hired as contractors, because the Kuwaitis themselves shun low-level work.

'I will be frank on this issue, it is numbers that are being presented to other external agencies that we are fulfilling the Kuwaitization requirements, but in reality we are not because most of the workforce in the KNPC is by contractors. The supporting staff who are hired are non-Kuwaitis, so I don't see that there is really an encouragement of fulfilling the requirement of Kuwaitization because we are focusing on numbers only'.

However, the problem of recruiting Kuwaitis is that they are perceived not to be hard working and at the same time to be very expensive and only interested in managerial positions, and as such as the private sector were not particularly keen on engaging them, as mentioned by Respondent<sup>40</sup>:

'We started implementing the localisation (Kuwaitisation) program focusing on the percentage of Kuwaitis... so we were like counting heads on recruitment, nationals and reporting the head counts. To me - I believe this is not the success of the program... I have been participating in some conferences locally and regionally about localisation (Kuwaitisation) and its

management. Once you succeed in planting the idea in the leaders of private sector companies, that's the moment you can say that I have achieved the goal... we have very good policies, we are implementing those, yet the private sector still is not buying the idea... still they are not depending on the nationals. They don't want to be dependent on nationals and that's where we are failing right now, not only at the organization level, but at the country level'.

The localization policy seems to have had the objective of ensuring that key government positions were occupied by Kuwaitis, and as more Kuwaitis graduated from universities and institutions of higher learning, the policy had to be extended to the private sector so as to provide job opportunities for nationals. However, the problem seems to be that most Kuwaitis do not want to occupy ordinary jobs and instead prefer managerial and technical jobs where they may lack the skills to perform the sophisticated tasks, especially in inherently complex work such as that of the Oil and Gas Sector. In Kuwaiti culture (and among the indigenous inhabitants of the GCC) it is considered shameful to undertake low-level jobs such as secretarial or technical work.

There may therefore be a need to invest in training them, a need to motivate the Kuwaitis and raise awareness campaign for them to occupy ordinary positions and not necessarily managerial or leadership positions. As also pointed out by Respondent4:

'The localization policy was introduced into the country so as to be self-dependent and not to be too dependent on expatriates'.

In some of the oil companies such as Equate, the localisation policy has resulted in more than 50% of the work force being indigenous Kuwaitis, with big budget allocations to their training and development. A positive impact has been that the Kuwaitis have gained experiential knowledge from working alongside their competent expatriate counterparts.

- Key findings

It was noticed that the *Kuwaitisation* policy was generally perceived to be well-intentioned in terms of developing the country and having indigenous people gaining skills and

developing themselves, particularly in the Oil and Gas Sector. There was general agreement amongst the participants that it was a policy also meant to develop local labour and strengthen the economy. It was important that the Team Leaders were given a fair chance and opportunities to grow assume greater responsibilities. It is a policy targeted to reduce the unemployment rate of Kuwaitis, although it has resulted in over-staffing in governmental and quasi-governmental organisations such as the Oil and Gas Sector companies.

The drawback however was that many of these Team Leaders lacked the skills and competences largely because of the technical nature of the work. Furthermore, appointing people to leadership positions without selecting the qualified people or the best people may reduce the potential of having good leaders in the long run. The major criticism of the policy was that bringing in Kuwaitis for the sake of meeting government employment quotas resulted in them loitering around without doing anything (or indeed receiving a salary while relaxing at home), with a foreigner working as their proxy.

#### *6.3.5 Organisational structure*

The leaders were asked how their organisation was structured and whether such a structure allowed mobility for junior leaders to quickly aspire to leadership positions (the underlying assumption being that it was from a pool of these Team Leaders that future senior leaders will be appointed). As mentioned earlier, the government has undertaken the responsibility to find suitable employment for Kuwaitis after graduation, be it in the government ministries or in companies such as those of the Oil and Gas Sector. The government therefore has to create opportunities to accommodate the huge number of Kuwaitis graduating from universities. Although the structures were hierarchical, again reflecting the high-power distance nature of the society, it allows these Team Leaders to progress upwards as part of their career progression.

This was reflected in the answer given by Respondent22:

‘It has been enhanced and more positions are available. They have opened up the positions... before it was really hard, rigid, to get somewhere or get appointed to a higher position. Now people can move up and are promoted,

and it's much better than before. The structure enables mobility and enables other people to attain higher positions'.

Respondent29 was critical that if anything the structure was meant to create jobs and get people promoted. His argument was that:

'A structure should be to optimize the work, to get the work done, that's how the structure should be. Yes, I think the structure will allow people come up the ladder... it's a pyramid structure. Actually, right now there are more chances than before because a lot of people are retiring and leaving. So people are moving up although they don't have enough experiences... Opportunities are available'.

Respondent25 was also of the view that the structure was meant to accommodate people:

'I think it is like military style ... there are positions to be filled and it should not be like this... but this is because it is a government owned company'.

Respondent30 noted that:

'People were quickly getting promoted from an engineer to become a Team Leader and the average number of people being promoted to managerial levels had also been increased. Now we have a large number of people in leadership positions but who are less competent'.

Respondent41 also acknowledged that the structure was very hierachal:

'The structure is very hierachal, and simple with the managers on top and we have almost 9 or 10 divisions headed by Team Leaders and under those Team Leaders come senior engineers, engineers and rest of employees. I don't think this structure enables us to develop good leaders... in order to develop good leaders you have to have good leaders at the beginning'.

- Key findings

The Team Leaders viewed the structure as hierarchical, and they felt that it was designed to accommodate as many Kuwaitis as possible. This was also in-line with the high-power distance culture of Kuwait, as pointed out earlier. Team Leaders had the potential to lead, and develop to become potential future senior leaders. There was therefore a large pool of people to be developed to become future senior leaders. However, it was important to ensure that the people appointed to these positions possessed the requisite qualifications and skills required to do the work.

The aforementioned issues helped to better understand the needs and skill requirements of these Team Leaders and some of the underlying issues that may have influenced them. This enabled the investigation to dwell deeper into the main objective of the study, which was to understand the needs of these lower-level leaders.

#### **6.4 Leadership Needs**

This section therefore explores the skills and competencies required to perform the duties as seen by the Team Leaders themselves, which was the main objective of the study. Several questions were posed from different perspectives, but all with the view to gather as much information as possible so as to understand the needs of these Team Leaders, if they were to perform their work accordingly. It was equally important to establish the capabilities that the Team Leaders required, both in the short and long term, and whether such capabilities would make the companies more successful. It was therefore important to know, from the perspectives of these Team Leaders, whether top management were aware of their needs.

Varying responses were obtained from the respondents, with some respondents with the view that top management were aware of their needs, and the majority of the respondents (35 out of 42) highlighting that their current needs were not known since the exercise to establish job needs was done several years ago.

Respondent24 mentioned that the HRD brought in a consulting company four years' previously to assess the leadership skills of the Team Leaders and managers:

'The consulting company actually rated certain skills sets and they focused on weaknesses and strengths. They basically held several meetings, did some simulations, performed IQ tests and many different tests for evaluating people. They had meetings with people where they listened and saw how people reacted or how they conducted meetings, how they chaired the meetings, how they corresponded. They did many different tests and out of that, they rated people in terms of their weaknesses and strengths. After that, they created leadership development programs where you focus on your weaknesses and try to develop them. Weaknesses were based on the leadership assessment that was made and conducted three or four years ago; basically we are focusing on these mostly'.

Respondent36 explained the process that takes place in these companies in trying to identify the job requirements:

'I think we are good in our personal development plan (PDP) for employees... The good thing about it is that everyone is asked his title and not the person, the job itself. The job needs and not the person's need are identified... each job to be performed needs these competencies. We have a PDP, but it is not linked to the person. The problem is knowing what the person lacks... We go about the job title, to perform this job, you need competencies. The next phase is knowing whether the person occupying the position possess these needs or competencies or not'.

Respondent38 also confirmed the existence of a personal development plan:

'We sit down with our leaders and discuss each person, through a personal development program where we come to each issue and we discuss it, and in the end, it will give you an assessment of where is your shortfall and where is your strength and where do you think you need to be developed. So you go for this kind of development that we call PDP'.

Respondent34 thought that top management does not know the needs of junior managers:

‘I think they don’t know the needs of the people’.

Other respondents (7 out of 42) felt that many of the leadership skills already existed in the companies, as noted by Respondent25:

‘I think the leadership skills to some extent are available in the organisation; like decision making, empowerment, communication... all of them are required and available’.

Some of the respondents were not happy with the personnel development programme as it was sometimes used against the incumbents. For example, Respondent12 mentioned that:

‘I am not happy how they measure competency of people, as you will get a form with different competencies... Most of the competencies that I see of value are not on the list. You will have a list of competencies and they will tell you to rank yourself from 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. It is a self-assessment and HR will send it to your boss. One big issue with this assessment is that it will be used against you. Based on such self-assessment, Team Leaders may be denied training opportunities or denied promotion opportunities when they arise’

- Key findings

The sampled companies are the most major firms in Kuwait (in view of the country’s dependence on oil); to that end, top management has been trying to develop the needs of their employees through various initiatives, one of which was the initiation of the personal development program four years ago. Whilst some of the respondents felt that they possessed the requisite leadership and managerial skills required for their jobs, others felt otherwise, and even thought that top management were not aware of their needs. They felt that although the personal development program existed, it was out-dated and that there was a need to determine the specific needs of junior leaders in view of the fast-changing technology within the Oil and Gas Sector. It was therefore important to investigate the skills and capabilities that these junior leaders or Team Leaders required to perform their duties.

#### *6.4.1 Business knowledge*

It was important to establish from these Team Leaders how much knowledge of the business they had and why possession of such knowledge of the business was important when running the companies. Respondent31 agreed that it was important to know the business strategies and objectives of the company in order to appreciate where the company was heading:

‘Based on this knowledge you develop your requirement needs to meet these business goals... secondly you let your people, subordinates know that the company is going in this direction. So you have to know where you are going to, what is your direction’.

Respondent37 also concurred on the importance of general knowledge of the business. He was fairly familiar with the organisation and business having been working in the sector since 1996:

‘I am a mechanical engineer and very familiar with knowledge of refining. It’s important to know how the organisation is run because you need to know where the feedback comes from and in what form; how does it get processed what kind of products we need, what’s the market appetite for those products, how flexible your operation is, and how to meet the market demands’.

- Key findings

As generally revealed in the profile of these respondents, they had an average work experience of 20 years. The majority of these respondents therefore had general knowledge of the Oil and Gas Sector. They generally agreed that both leadership and managerial experience was important when occupying the position of a Team Leader. They mentioned that possession of both technical and administrative knowledge was important to be able to make effective decisions. Therefore, the immediate need required was possession of technical and administrative knowledge for these Team Leaders.

#### *6.4.2 Technical skills*

The roles and responsibilities of Team Leaders require that they possess strong technical skills, as in the majority of cases they were heading technical units. Literally all the respondents highlighted the need for them to have technical skills, although in some cases such technical skills were lacking. The *Kuwaitisation* policy would appear to instigate appointment and promotion based on academic qualifications rather than experience, reflecting a shallow and limited concept of education and training on the part of the government (e.g. no notion of internships, apprenticeships, etc.)

The Oil and Gas Sector is a very complex and highly technical field that it is essential to have technical competencies. Furthermore, there could be catastrophic failures if technical errors are made. Respondent25 mentioned that when some of the people are appointed to the position of Team Leader, they lack the technical knowhow:

‘Technical knowhow is one area of knowledge that they should have when they are leaders. I think the engineering design capabilities in our organisation is lacking’.

This is partly because within KNPC technical design is being outsourced, and as a result such skills are no longer cultivated or retained in-house. Respondent35 echoed that:

‘Once you reach a leadership or management level you don’t need those technical skills, you start to need leadership and management skills, coaching skills, even mentoring skills because people are around you all the time’.

Respondent31 also confirmed that technical capabilities were lacking in many areas, partly because there has not been adequate knowledge transfer from the old generation to the new generation.

‘We have the old generation who have been working for 30 to 35 years and are retiring, and some are on the verge of retirement. We have supervisors, senior foremen who are not necessarily managers or leaders and those people are working and they have learnt the hard way by doing and fixing technical problems. We don’t have a second generation to replace them because the

next generation who came after them did not learn it the hard way because they easily got promoted. So we lack this transfer of knowledge from experienced people'.

Respondent35 mentioned that the position of Team Leader gives them the opportunity to learn and acquire the technical knowledge before gaining the business knowledge, policies and procedures.

- Key findings

Technical skills were identified as a requisite primarily because of the complex nature of the work in the Oil and Gas Sector. However, it was also highlighted that such technical skills were lacking in the majority of cases, partly because the function had been outsourced, and partly because many of the Team Leaders had been quickly been promoted to these positions because of the *Kuwaitisation* policy, and not enough transfer of knowledge had taken place between the more experienced personnel and the recently promoted Team Leaders.

#### *6.4.3 Leadership and managerial skills*

Leadership and managerial skills were considered to be very important, as this was a junior leadership position. Respondent37 mentioned that whilst it was important to have the technical skills for the area that one will be managing, it was equally important to have the leadership and managerial skills to be able to lead your group effectively. Respondent1 also noted the importance of managerial and leadership skills:

'Besides the technical know-how, its managerial skills... they have to learn how to deal with people... increasing the morale of people, motivating people. That requires skills and requires you to be very close to people. So leadership skills in general are very important to develop further'.

The same sentiments for managerial and leadership needs were made by Respondent37, who highlighted the need for such managerial skills to be developed in view of the fact that some of the junior leaders might be coming from a purely technical background and might not have been exposed to management.

'They need more managerial training, a lot of them come from technical backgrounds; they are very good with the technical skills that they have, but they need managerial training and leadership training. They need to be more exposed in those areas and they need to be tested'.

Similarly, Respondent24 emphasised the need for leadership skills for these Team Leaders.

'We need leadership skills, which includes communication, negotiation, conflict management, change management, project management, decision-making, empowerment, delegation, and motivation... I think they need leadership skills mostly'.

- Key findings

Managerial and leadership skills were considered to be very important and needed to be developed. This was considered essential in view of the fact that a Team Leader position was a junior leadership position and it required that the incumbent possess such skills. This was a view generally supported by most of the respondents.

#### *6.4.4 Communication skills*

Communication skills were identified as another important theme and this was more so the case in a society where communication tends to be top-down. It was highlighted that leaders ought to listen to the views of lower level employees and generally improve the communication within and across the organisations. As noted by Respondent28:

'Although we are trying, but I feel that we still lack the communication skills. You should have many soft skills, communication skills, persuasion skills; you have to appreciate the work of other people, be a good listener, which is part of communication'.

It was important that the Team Leaders attentively listen to the needs of their subordinates and such skills were considered to be lacking. Respondent32 highlighted the importance of communication, especially when it comes to cascading the organisation's strategy

downwards. This is important because in such organisations the Team Leaders and the lower-level employees might not be involved in the strategy formulation process:

‘As a corporate we have a strategy and if we fail to communicate this strategy to lower-level employees then we cannot run the business... when you wake up in the morning you should know why you go to work, what is your objective, why we are in this organisation and what we want to achieve. The strategy ought to be communicated and cascaded to lower-level employees and for that matter communication is very important’.

Respondent6 also mentioned the need for leaders to listen and pay attention to the needs of their subordinates:

‘I think leaders should listen very carefully to the needs of their subordinates, which is key to the communication process. Most of the leaders are either always busy or not in their offices and employees have issues and the leaders are not there listen to them. It’s not just about listening, you have to pay good attention to what they need and you have to be a very good listener’.

- Key findings

Communication skills were considered to be very important for Team Leaders and leaders in general. There was a need to communicate not just top-down, as is the current practice, but to also bottom-up and laterally. It was important that communication skills be generally improved within all the companies, especially if the strategies were to be well understood and implemented properly.

#### *6.4.5 Decision-making skills*

Another skill identified was the need for these Team Leaders to make informed decisions based ideally on proper analysis and justification. Respondent29 felt that sometimes it is better to make a wrong decision than not to make any decision in the first place:

‘I think the majority is quick decision making, that’s the skill we are missing. A lot of people are too afraid to take decisions... sometimes a delay in the

decision by itself is wrong, even if you have a wrong decision - you probably could have saved versus not taking any decision whatsoever... that is a problem I see as a skill that is required'.

Respondent31 highlighted the need to have decisions based on analysis and proper justification:

'Basically, decision-making that is based on analysis and logical framework, I think is in some cases missing. For example, we are sometimes required to provide manpower requirements... you see people submitting numbers without proper justification or without proper study and there is no basis for these numbers... all decision should be based on studies and this is missing in many areas in KOC'.

- Key findings

It was noted that Team Leaders required decision-making skills more so that their roles and responsibilities entailed making key decisions pertaining to their work and that of their subordinates.

#### *6.4.6 Change management*

The last need identified by the respondents was change management. The Oil and Gas Sector companies are quasi-governmental entities and as such tend to operate very rigidly. Respondent29 mentioned the need to be flexible in view of the changing and dynamic environment:

'I think flexibility... you should not be rigid in what you do because in the future, the way we do business is going to change, and it's going to change fast. I can see that now... where we are too stuck in the way we do things and the business is changing and we are not changing with it. Leaders have to be flexible and manage change while it's happening and not after it has happened. In addition, leaders have to be creative and flexible'.

He went on to say that:

'We have good leaders, good people who can take the company to the required levels, the capabilities are there, what is stopping them is that we get into routine of bureaucratic process. So I think the only thing that really stops us is that we don't re-evaluate our system, to make sure that it is the right way of doing things, or re-evaluate the way of doing things, and do it in a different way, this thinking does not exist. We need to change the business processes'.

- Key findings

Change management skill was the last need identified as lacking by the respondents. This is partly because of the rigid structures within the Oil and Gas companies retard creativity and the need to bring about changes in view of the changing trends and technology.

## 6.5 Leadership development

### 6.5.1 Introduction

Having identified the needs of these Team Leaders, it was important to also establish how best to develop these needs. Therefore, the development needs of these Team Leaders is something that we explored. It is very difficult to link a leadership development strategy to the needs of the leaders unless such needs have been identified in the first place. It was noted that in view of the complex nature of the Oil and Gas Sector, there was a need to acquire the latest skills considered to be lacking, and that such skills needed to be developed, as stated by Respondent29:

'I believe that you can't get somebody and take him out of a role where he is a *doer*, and into a managerial role as a leader, without some kind of orientation or training in the beginning... anybody who is eligible to become a Team Leader or manager should go through certain training to at-least have the bare minimum skills'.

It was noted that many of the Team Leaders were either engineers, because of the technical nature of the Oil and Gas Sector work, or had technical backgrounds, and as such they needed leadership training if they were to become effective in their leadership roles. To that end, the various Oil and Gas Sector companies in Kuwait embarked on various training and

leadership development initiatives. For instance, Respondent20 detailed the various development skills offered by the KNPC, one of the biggest oil companies in Kuwait responsible for four refineries:

‘KNPC is an excellent company in developing people -they give us leadership skills, from communication skills, writing skills, time management, decision-making - we were taught all these processes’.

However, it would appear that the human resources development functions of the companies did not appear to have been keeping pace with the needs of its first-level line managers and how best to develop their needs, which is a contribution this research intends to make. Arising from the sections that identified the needs of junior leaders in order for them to efficiently and effectively execute their work, the respondents were asked how best to develop such needs, which is what is framed in the remaining sections of this chapter.

#### *6.5.2 Interactions and socialisation*

Intervention measures that can be instituted to enhance communication flows were through fostering closer interaction between top management and lower level employees. In Chapter 2, it was noted that Kuwait is a high power distance society where there is a large distance between top management and lower-level employees, and generally communication tends to be top-down, as opposed to encouraging bottom-up and lateral communication. Communication skills were mentioned by the Team Leaders as an area of great need, and one way to develop good communication skills was through interactions and socialization. Respondent22 highlighted the need to foster closer integration between top management and lower level employees as a way to improve communication within the organisation:

‘Improvement in communication skills can be enhanced by having more top leadership meeting with the lower level people... currently it’s not easy to reach the CEO and talk to him... Maybe we should talk more about how to foster closer integration which is part of improving communication’.

Kuwaitis in general enjoy socializing with each other using such forums as the *Diwaniyas* (divans, i.e. social gatherings). These are platforms for learning how business is conducted in Kuwait, and also for learning the Kuwaiti culture in general. The concept of *Diwaniyas* has also been brought into the workplace as mentioned by Respondent30:

'I think I definitely try to avoid repeated social events. I noticed that the higher we are in the organisation, the more the publicity and social events are required... We are already stressed by our daily operations and usually all these social activities consume our time... I end up missing them or avoiding them, but at the same time I feel I am losing opportunities to meet people to interact with and learn from them. I don't know if there is a way I can improve this and like it'.

The same respondent commented that when you meet successful people or other leaders and interact with them, you may learn from their skills by interaction with them, and according to him it was the best source of learning. In support of the same concept, Respondent 19 reiterated that:

'We sometimes cannot connect personal life with work because sometimes, there are lots of problems, lot of things in your life but this gets reflected in our work as well... I always like to visit *Diwaniyas* and socialize. You have to socialize with people and this is why sometimes you come here to my office and find a lot of people here. Even if my manager saw these people in my office and asked me to reduce my social network, I cannot easily stop it because this is my life. This is our life style in Kuwait. So sometimes, I think you have to recognize that it's not just a way of life, but also a way of work and a way to develop ourselves as leaders'.

Respondent13 solidified this important behaviour of socialisation when he said that:

'There are so many things and experiences to be learnt from socializing and interacting with others; for instance, understanding people, how they handle people, listen to their problems and try to solve their problems and how they share ideas with others'.

- Key findings

An intriguing aspect identified from the interviews was that the social nature of Kuwaiti society, arising from its collectivist nature that promotes socialising and interactions (and indeed the problematic *Wasta*) can be positively harnessed to foster closer socialisation and interactions between the more experienced or top management and junior leaders, as a means of promoting learning and development, particularly certain work behaviours and unique etiquettes of work that are unique to Kuwait. Such learning approaches may break down the barriers that seem to exist between top management and these junior leaders.

#### *6.5.3 On-the job training*

On-the-job training or experience-based learning focuses on understanding and exploring the natural sources of learning and development that occur on the job. Such training might entail for instance the placement or assignment of a Team Leader to a specific task. Of all the leadership development programmes, on-the-job training was the most cited approach to developing these junior leaders. Respondent33 said that on-the-job training in terms of actually *doing* the work was by far the most effective way of developing Team Leaders:

‘You reach a stage, where it’s not a matter of attending additional seminars, but rather than practicing those. I focus on how to communicate by actually listening to the points of view of my subordinates... I tend to listen and pay more attention to people’s opinions rather than telling them what to do and how to do their work... no more taking seminars but practice leadership at the workplace’.

Respondent9 also concurred that the best way of developing the needs of Team Leaders was through on-the-job training and leading by example. Respondent16 developed his Team Leadership skills by being and working in the field. It was through working in the workshops that he would come across different problems and find the appropriate solutions to them:

‘I developed my competencies by working in the field, dealing with different shutdown or workshops because I was fortunate in that my Team Leader was

from the old generation and for him in order to understand the concepts, you have to work with your hands... I spent like two or three years of my career working at workshops, then in the field... I found that in order to be good, you have to have a problem and provide a practical solution to it'.

Equally, Respondent34 gained his competencies and skills through working with practical projects and went through several facets of work that helped him develop his career:

'What helped me was working with projects. It helped me a lot; dealing with projects because you deal with equipment, how to choose equipment, what is the effect of each project, the steps of the project, dealing with contractors, knowing the people, dealing with all the group members of KOC. So I had a good relationship with so many people that helped me. Now you tell me anybody who is a manager or Team Leader in this company, I have had contacts with them and this helped me a lot in my management and leadership development. I had a good chance to work with maintenance and support equipment and so I covered so many areas that helped in my career'.

- Key findings

It was noted that on-the-job training was by far the most commonly identified means of developing the needs of these Team Leaders. On-the-job training can actually be viewed as the primary source of learning for these leaders and therefore the leaders ought to be supported in their effort to gain learning from experience. One of the advantages of this approach to development, apart from it being relevant and more practical, is that it focuses on the current business needs of these leaders. This is in sharp contrast to some of the external and very elaborate and rigid training programmes hired from external consultancies that may not necessarily be applicable within Kuwaiti work places. However, the use of on-the-job training ought to be properly managed so that learners' work output aids the strategic needs of the organisation.

#### *6.5.4 Classroom-based courses*

Classroom-based approaches to learning and development have been extensively used as refresher courses, although they are not particularly favoured by senior leaders. The approach is criticised as being too theoretical and thus not easily applied in a highly technical industry such as the Oil and Gas Sector. Nevertheless, simulations can be made under classroom conditions, which gives students an opportunity to relate to real-life situations.

Respondent21 alluded to resistance to change and organisational culture that precludes Team Leaders from applying new concepts learned and thus rendering this approach to learning not very useful:

‘I have been through various courses... and when you come back and apply some you can and others you cannot due to the culture of KOC and the Kuwaiti culture. Even if you have learned new ideas and you want apply them, you don’t have time to apply them... When you are back, you cannot apply them because of the workload and pressure. Although they are sometimes excellent new ideas, the resistant to change gets in the way’.

Respondent22 stated that it was nice to have customised courses as opposed to attending generic courses outside the country, which had been the norm within for instance KOC. Respondent20 felt that some of these courses were very effective provided that you really had an interest in them:

‘If you go just for the sake of attending then it will not be beneficial. So it falls down to the person himself, if he feels that he needs to attain these courses or not but otherwise KNPC has good courses. The courses address behavioural issues, analytical issues, but it requires the most serious participation by the trainee and also adapting them in the future and applying them to their work environment’.

- Key findings

The use of classroom-based courses was identified as an approach to develop Team Leaders, although there was some criticism as to their usefulness as they were considered to be overly theoretical. Classroom-based courses should ideally be used as a vehicle for helping these Team Leaders articulate lessons learned on the job, using the classroom to share the lessons with other leaders, and thereafter integrating the lessons into existing knowledge and skills bases of both themselves and the companies. It would appear therefore that the lessons learned on the job are fundamentally important to the overall development of these leaders.

#### *6.5.5 International conferences*

International conferences give people an opportunity to either present as speakers or to just attend and possibly participate in the deliberations, exchange views and meet people from different countries. It gives participants exposure to developments taking place elsewhere, and many leaders want to attend such conferences, particularly if they are taking place in countries of their choices. Many top leaders want to attend these conferences, although there have been criticisms on the value of attending on a cost-benefit basis. Nevertheless, international conferences give leaders an opportunity to acquaint themselves with international and best practices taking place elsewhere.

Respondent33 liked attending these international conferences as they gave him an opportunity to meet with other leaders from other companies in the wider conference context, although he did not derive much benefit from attending the conferences themselves.

‘I think the international conferences are events where people can interact... I have to attend these conferences and one of the good things is to get in touch with other foreign companies, open dialogue and have open discussions. However, I don’t believe that these courses will add so much to you’.

A similar view was reported by Respondent28:

'The company sends us once a year to external seminars and this is where we officially have the chance to gain skills but mainly those are generic... they are not specific. So you don't gain much knowledge'

The biggest drawback for Respondent12 was not being afforded the opportunity to implement what they bring from these conferences. Respondent8 felt that it was important to attend and participate in these conferences because it gave him the opportunity to meet with several companies all at the same time:

'I not only attend conferences, but I participate and I present papers... the conferences I have attended are huge ones, normally 6000 participants, more than 400 technical papers, every year, and 800 companies exhibiting. It's a huge conference from companies from all over the world. This is good experience'.

- Key findings

International conferences were generally considered as good to attend because it gave leaders exposure to what developments were taking place elsewhere. A major drawback of the international conferences mentioned by many respondents was that after learning something new from such forums, often they could not implement the ideas upon returning to their workplaces. This gives the impression that some of these conferences were not really relevant for them or the work environment within the Oil and Gas companies, or that the latter are too rigid to be able to readily adjust to new ideas and suggestions.

#### *6.5.6 Coaching*

As can be seen from the profile of the participants, see Appendix 2, some of them had extensive knowledge having been in the Oil and Gas Sector for many years and such leaders could possibly be used to coach the up-coming generation of leaders, if such approaches could be nurtured properly as opposed to retiring them early just for the sake of creating employment for the young and inexperienced Team Leaders.

Respondent13 mentioned that he coaches some Team Leaders and gradually delegates work to them so that they learn from him. Some respondents were critical that the senior leaders who were supposed to be their coaches had little knowledge to impart to them because they had been promoted to such positions because of favouritism or because of seniority. Nevertheless, coaching was considered by others as a way to speed up the process of development.

- Key findings

Coaching requires people who are fairly experienced and yet the Oil and Gas companies have been retiring people who have been in the organisation for several years with the view to pave way for the young people. This might be a counterproductive policy and instead it might be prudent to extend their contracts so that they can part their knowledge with the new recruits through coaching and mentoring programmes.

#### *6.5.7 Self-learning*

It was also noticed that some of the leaders had built their leadership capabilities through self-learning initiatives. In this case, the part-time MBA degrees that had been recently introduced to Kuwait by several private universities and business schools had given these Kuwaiti leaders opportunities to develop themselves. Although they were expected to pay for their own fees, on successful completion of the degree programme they would be reimbursed. Some of the Team Leaders had become self-directed learners and were registering on courses that they felt develop their own skills as part of their own initiatives. This point was emphasized by Respondent31:

‘I try to read from time to time, I try to register in courses that I think will develop my skills, e.g., I am now registered in a course outside working hours... nobody asked me to go, I did it on my own it’s a night time course’.

For example, Respondent37 was one of those respondents undertaking an MBA degree and other self-initiated courses that were exposing him to principles of leadership and improving his leadership knowledge.

- Key findings

The main advantage of self-learning is that the Team Leaders themselves chose what programmes they feel are appropriate to their needs and their career aspirations and embark on such programmes through their own initiatives. Their perceptions reflected their self-perceived need to develop themselves along those dimensions. In other words, they empower themselves and steer their own learning and development, possibly based on their self-evaluation and engaging in self-reflection. In this case, such training and development is likely to be successful and not resisted, as it is their own initiative.

#### *6.5.8 Attachments and external training*

The last approach to staff development mentioned was attachments and external training. It is an approach commonly used with fresh engineers but it has also been used to develop Team Leaders. As mentioned by Respondent31, the Oil and Gas companies are attaching people to various companies as part of staff development, but unfortunately the benefits of the effectiveness of such training was not being measured:

‘The company is spending a lot of money on training its employees, whether they are leaders or fresh engineers, or foremen, or managers. I think the company is spending a lot of money; however, the effectiveness of this training is not measured. The company lacks the tools to measure the effectiveness of such training. We send people out to the UK, Dubai, Cairo or in Kuwait, most of them are vacation training - we should assess the effectiveness of this training’.

Respondent10 also supported the need to attach Team Leaders to international companies where parting of knowledge and technology could meaningfully take place:

‘Attachments are with other companies abroad, like technological companies e.g. BP. I did my attachment with an international company. I was working with the Japanese for year and half at a joint venture company in Vietnam and I learnt a lot’.

An important point raised by Respondent12 was the need to be attached for durations long enough to enable real learning and transformation to take place:

‘You need to get people out of the corrupt culture in the oil sector and take them to one of the international oil companies and let them stay for a year. During that year, they will learn new skills and they will learn the proper work culture. So its attachment to other companies, not only courses’.

- Key findings

The durations of these attachments must be long enough so as to learn and adopt new organisational changes, which can be implemented on resumption of work in Kuwait. Attachment to other companies gives the Team Leaders to develop themselves by actually working in these different environments and acquaint themselves to best practices elsewhere. An important point raised was the need to evaluate the effectiveness of such different training and development initiatives.

## **6.6 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter framed the data and helped to gain insight into the needs of the lower-level leaders working in the various Kuwait’s Oil and Gas Sector. The chapter elicited the views, thoughts and feelings of lower-level Team Leaders. These insights suggest useful starting points for management/leadership development specialists and senior managers in reviewing and improving leadership development and practices in the various Kuwait’s Oil and Gas companies. Given the complexity and importance of the Oil and Gas Sector to Kuwait and also given the need for this sector to develop its new generation of leaders, in order to remain very competitive, identification of the needs of these Team Leaders and subsequent development of such needs is what may give the Oil and Gas companies a sustainable competitive advantage and this is what the research sought to accomplish.

Several contextual issues were identified, such as influencing leadership within the Kuwait’s Oil and Gas companies, and these included the *Kuwaitisation* policy, organisational culture and structure, and intervention by parliamentarians in the

appointment of Team Leaders. Six main leadership needs were identified: business knowledge, technical skills, leadership and managerial skills, communication skills, decision-making skills and change management skills. These were leadership capabilities considered to be acceptable, essential and possibly lacking within the Oil and Gas Sector in order for these Team Leaders to effectively undertake their work and perform their roles competently. These leadership capabilities reflected what the lower-level leaders understood and personally believed in as essential leadership dimensions for them to be effective and competently undertake their work. These leadership needs constituted the foundation for their present and future leadership development.

The chapter thus bears direct relevance to the leadership development strategies required by the lower-level leaders within the Oil and Gas Sector companies. On further inquiry to ascertain how best to develop these needs, no single way was identified as a ‘one size fits all’ solution to meeting the development needs of the Team Leaders. Rather, several leadership development approaches were highlighted including interaction and socialisation, classroom-based training, attending international conferences, coaching, self-learning and attachments. However, on-the-job training was considered to be the most effective approach to develop these skills.

The next chapter builds upon these key findings and critically discusses these key findings with respect to the extant literature to see if there is conformity or need. In the process, relationships between these key findings or categories will be established that lead to modifying our conceptual framework and theory development.

## **CHAPTER 7: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

Leadership has tended to be discussed at a collective level, especially at the level of the top management of an organisation, which Senge (1996) categorised as executive leaders. However, there is a paucity of literature examining frontline leaders (Townsend et al., 2016). This study makes a departure and studies leadership capabilities at the collective lower-levels of leadership, commonly referred to as Team Level within the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector, the aim being to understand leadership and how best to develop future leaders of this sector.

This study identifies the participants' reflections, feelings and views with regards to what they considered their most important leadership needs in order for them to execute their duties efficiently and effectively. The research also investigated how best to develop such needs. It is the frontline leaders' reflections of their experiences, and feelings about leadership needs and the development thereof, which is central to this study. The identification of needs or reflections provides leaders with an understanding of where they are now and what they need to do to improve their performance. These key findings are the major outcomes of Chapter 6 and these form the basis of analysis and discussion of this chapter to see if there is conformity with the extant literature, and in the process to inductively develop a substantive theory of leadership. The purpose of this chapter is to consider the findings in relation to the earlier literature review/conceptual framework

Such analysis and discussion results in the development of substantive theory emanating from the data and the emergence of a comprehensive leadership needs and development framework and its elements, which is partly informed by the literature and partly informed by the insights from the qualitative evidence provided by the Team Leaders themselves. Thus, the analysis and discussion of the key findings helps in building leadership theory. It is in building an integrated framework and an understanding of the leadership needs of these frontline leaders, the subsequent development of these needs, the interrelatedness of the elements, and the ways in which the resultant management and leadership capabilities might affect organisational performance that this research offers something new for the

understanding of leadership at the frontline level, particularly as it relates to the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector.

Whilst the Team Leaders expressed various needs for them to competently undertake their work, on-the-job training was by far the most cited methodology for developing such needs. Development is accomplished through training that focuses on these individual skills and behaviours. However, a mixture of development methodologies would be appropriate depending with the situation in order to equip the Team Leaders with essential skills and mind-sets. The discussion here begins with contextual factors then moves on to leadership.

## **7.2 Contextual factors**

The Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector is part-owned and operated by the government. This was raised as a problem by several of the Team Leaders. They stated that the involvement of the government is problematic because most of the people in the political arena do not understand and know the workings of the sector, hence their decisions can create problems in the working of the organisation. The problems due to government involvement are in appointments, procurement, implementing government policies and procedures, awarding tender and selection of best bidders etc.

Another factor that was discussed under the contextual factors was about the culture. It was understood that the culture in Kuwait is strongly linked and influenced by religion. The majority of inhabitants are Muslims, therefore their culture is also closely knit by religion. This is the culture that pervades the community and society and drives its members, including in the business environment.

Another aspect of the Kuwaiti culture that was explained by another Team Leader was about knowing people and how this also played an advantage to the individual. It was narrated that the more influential people one knew, the greater the likelihood one could get things done. Another negative aspect of the culture was about how people who were situated away from the actual workplace took key decisions. As stated earlier, the oil sector is subservient to the government (ministers and parliamentarians) and is operated or vulnerable to the interference of people who are incompetent to undertake decisions, which

adversely affects how the organizations work. Some of the decisions that were taken had negative effects on employees, thereby adversely affecting their motivation.

The negative impact of culture also extended to recruitment and promotion. Knowing the right people played a major role in getting things done in Kuwait and this was part of the culture as well. According to some of the Team Leaders, this meant that people with lesser knowledge and experience were often promoted as managers, and Team Leaders with better knowledge and abilities had to report to these people. This confirms previous findings on the predominance of *Wasta* in such settings (Al-Rayis and Al-Fadli, 2004; Weir and Hutchings, 2005). As indicated by Maneli (2013), *Wasta* is advantageous to people who have connections and want to get their work done, but at the same time this creates barriers and problems for others. Within an organisation, the use of *Wasta* can have several problems. People in authority will use their power and influence to promote people that are close to them. This may mean that people who are qualified and experienced are left behind. Such practices can therefore create problems for these employees and make them demotivated.

However, *Wasta* is an apparently unavoidable aspect of culture throughout the MENA countries. Kuwaiti society is tribes and family affiliations (Hofstede, 1980; House et al., 2004). These people make it regular habit to consult and work together on issues in divans, traditional meeting places wherein every topic including personal, business, political and economic issues are discussed, and very often decisions are made in such meeting places. Therefore, the same practice is there in the business and within the organisation as well. In addition, an understanding of *Wasta* is important because of the considerable role it exerts in societal, economic, public, and political spheres in the Arab World. The empirical findings here are in-line with the literature findings culture defines the community and the people, including within organizations, but people need to use culture to their advantage and to the benefit of the organization. The study identified that divans could play a positive role in enhancing communication and collaboration across different levels of the organisations.

Team Leaders had disagreements on how they and their team members were perceived. As per the organization culture and practice, higher preference is given to those who had

academic degrees over people who have work experience. According to the Team Leaders, this was unfair. People who have been working in a company for several years or even decades know their job better than people who have merely gained academic degrees. Participants valued practical experience much more highly than theoretical knowledge, but a combination of both would form the ideal employee. However, the government strategies induce a situation where new recruits with higher academic degrees are given recognition and rewards over people with higher experience, and the government has no concept or criteria of rewarding experience and service. Such practices were seen linked to cultural aspects with which many of the participants disagreed. This finding confirms that Kuwaitis value status and positions, and obtaining a degree is considered as a status issue in society that is enforced by government policies. Looking for candidates with good academic skills is highly essential, but this should not be at the cost of experience.

However, the main problem in appointments was the use of *Wasta*, including government personnel appointing their own in-group members to senior positions at the expense of in-house employees. The leadership aspects in the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector are permeated by *Wasta* (Salaman, 2004). The findings of this research also show that *Wasta* is not a welcome practice in the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector, but unfortunately it is ubiquitous and has become deeply rooted in these organizations, creating various problems.

Another factor that emerged from interviewees concerned the Kuwaitisation or localisation policy (which is essentially a national *Wasta*). The government of Kuwait has taken the initiative of ensuring that jobs are provided to its nationals. Each sector has a certain percentage and positions that are reserved for Kuwaitis. The initiative of providing jobs to nationals is an essential mechanism to disburse oil revenues, and to try and promote a diverse economy and skilled populace, but there are mixed observations and feelings on this. Team Leaders expressed that this process is essentially good, but its implementation has been bungled, resulting in hiring less qualified and experienced candidates over experienced non-Kuwaitis. For the company to perform well, hiring a lot of local nationals with no knowledge or work ethic is not going to help. They need qualified and experienced people, irrespective of any other particular criteria, therefore the issue of diversity ought to be considered seriously. Some participants expressed that exposure to expatriate counterparts could form a channel for experiential learning for Kuwaiti employees, but in

the existing situation it was more likely that a Kuwaiti would be engaged to make up numbers (to fill the quota required for government certifications, licenses and lucrative tenders), with his or her actual tasks being performed by an expatriate proxy while the Kuwaiti relaxed at home.

The root problem is the lack of adequate Kuwaiti manpower with the required skills and experience. This is also backed by Salih (2010), who found (based on data over a decade) that poor quality services are offered by the government due to workers' lack of qualifications and improper planning for replacement. In other words, the emphasis of the government on generating jobs for the nationals is good, but this is not appreciated by the organizations as they have to choose inexperienced or less experienced Kuwaitis over adequate, available expatriates with experience of working in various fields who could bring in a wealth of knowledge to the benefit of Kuwaitis themselves.

### **7.3 Leadership needs**

Drawing upon insights from 42 participants from the Oil and Gas Sector of Kuwait, and the deconstruction of the interview data, several leadership needs were identified as essential elements of the framework, as reflected in figure 7.1. The most important and relevant needs identified and consolidated leadership needs were business knowledge, technical skills, leadership and managerial skills, communication skills, decision-making skills and change management skills. These leadership needs reflected what the participants' generally wanted (or what they personally believed in) as essential leadership needs. Each of the six needs identified will be briefly discussed below, after which the subsequent development of such needs will be discussed.

#### *7.3.1 Business knowledge*

The findings illustrated that Team Leaders' needs extended beyond technical sophistication to include business acumen within the leadership team. This included broad understanding of financial, human resources and operational issues. The Oil and Gas Sector is generally a business that entails exploration, drilling and extraction, refinery, piping and shipping, and marketing and sales. The Team Leaders that participated in the study were working in these different facets of the energy value chain. Some of the Team Leaders have had the

opportunity to be rotated in these different facets, thereby giving them a broader understanding of the scope of the business. It is however unlikely that the Team Leaders will be required to have business knowledge of all the business facets, although it is expected that they should have a broad understanding of the business knowledge of the Oil and Gas Sector.

### *7.3.2 Technical skills*

Operational and technical issues represent the myriad day-to-day problems and issues that confront any organisation, including the Oil and Gas Sector companies. For a Team Leader, the key is to address the significant operational and technical issues and problems associated with achieving their objectives. The technical skills varied immensely from procurement, planning, legal, and marketing, finance, performance management, IT, quality management and projects management (see Appendix 2 for the profile of the participants and their areas of discipline).

### *7.3.3 Leadership and managerial skills*

Leadership in this case can be understood to imply the collective action, orchestrated in such a way as to bring about significant change while raising the competencies and motivation of all those involved. These leadership skills encompass the capacity to be a catalyst for strategic and cultural change, to achieve results; to empower others; leading planning teams and carrying out and improving value added work; supporting function and system and to exhibit a capacity to take initiation and influence others. Many of these Team Leaders are expected to fill the roles of leading processes, e.g. coordinating with upper management, leading the team in goal setting processes, providing overall leadership for the team, supporting team members in operations, planning and site processes.

Research shows that the management and leadership of people has a greater effect on productivity and profitability than the combined effects of strategy, quality, technology, and research and development (Zeus and Skiffington, 2001). Effective performance is derived from coordinated and synchronised actions of multiple individuals who share responsibility for team outcomes especially in such large organisations such as those in the Oil and Gas Sector.

#### *7.3.4 Communication skills*

Communication is the ability to present ideas through written and oral means and thereby maximizing understanding of the message by the audience. Communication skills within this context entailed active listening and appropriate and skilful use of language and use of body language. Kuwaitis by their very nature talk a lot amongst themselves as part of their socialisation. Whilst such communication may be considered as lateral, at the workplaces it was noted that possibly because Kuwait may be considered as a class society with people classified in different social strata, communication between top management and lower level employees and in particular with Team Leaders tended to be top-down. Such communication mechanisms did not lead to free flow of information amongst organisational members.

Leaders use formal and informal information flows to get the message out, to stay current, to learn about problems, and to shape the conduct of work and the way decisions are made. Informal information flows represent critical and often misunderstood processes whereby knowledge circumvents the formal processes because of sensitivity issues. The method of providing feedback (over time, indirectly versus in one long session) and the style of communicating constructive criticism (indirect and polite versus direct and frank) was an important consideration. To avoid maintaining the status quo and paint a picture of the desired new state for followers, leaders must communicate the need for change. Other organisational members need to understand why behaviours and routines need to change (Fiol *et al.*, 1999; Kotter, 1995).

#### *7.3.5 Decision-making skills*

Decision flows represent both the formal and informal sequence an organisation follows in making decisions. These include both vertical and horizontal sequences, specifically between management and operational levels and between and within departments. Knowing how decision flows work helps leaders leverage the flows to achieve their goals and to make changes to the decision flows that can help in achieving these goals. Information flows are critical in support of the decision-making flows and work flows because information provides the critical knowledge about internal and external factors that affect the organisation's management flows and how these flows respond to these factors.

### *7.3.6 Change management skills*

Change is a driving force of leadership and management development. Change management skills within the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector meant developing an organisational culture that embraces continuous learning and building support mechanisms to create and sustain change efforts, managing the change process, and encouraging individual as well as structural change in the organisation and dealing with complexities. Therefore, improving the adaptation skills of these Team Leaders is critical in helping them respond to new circumstances imposed from external factors outside of the direct control of the organisation.

Change management was considered to be an important leadership skill that was missing amongst the Team Leaders. Leaders must be adaptable to changing and challenging circumstances. A rigid one-way only approach leads to failure for the individual and the organisation. The personality of the leader is critical.

Most authorities agree that the main task of leaders is to bring about change and the importance of leadership is to bring about change (Burnes, 2004). However, it is important to note that much is said about how best to bring about such critical leadership skills. This is one of the reasons why Kotter's (1996) philosophy draws out the pressing need for change projects to be led by managers who have the necessary attributes to be able to implement them. Kotter (1996) recognises that leadership and change management are inextricably linked.

As noted by Burnes (2004), there is a need to pay attention to the potentially beneficial linkage between leadership development and organisational change. This is more so in the case of the Kuwait's Gas and Oil Sector, where change management projects have not been implemented successfully, possibly because these leaders lacked the requisite leadership skills and competencies. It is also important to note that one of the practical rationales for undertaking this study is Kuwait's inability to implement Oil and Gas Sector projects. It was for such reasons that it was important for these Team Leaders to identify their needs and map these against leadership development needs.

The Oil and Gas Sector, like most industries in the GCC, is undergoing a profound transition brought about by numerous factors, including technology, government policies, economic diversification and the globalization of the economy. The changing business landscapes require a different set of leadership skills at this leadership level in order for them to be effective. It was noted in Chapter 1 that many of the change projects initiated within the Oil and Gas Sector had not been undertaken. This points to the need to have managers/leaders who have the necessary attributes to be able to implement them. However, preliminary results suggest that these emerging organisational leaders are significantly under-prepared for the challenges that lie ahead, partly because they have been fast accelerated and assumed positions of responsibility without necessarily having been well cultivated with the necessary leadership competencies.

This is partly because of the Kuwaitisation policy, which has seen most of the leadership positions being occupied by Kuwaitis. There is therefore a need to cultivating a new set of leadership competencies to deal with change. In response to such changes that are sweeping throughout the sector, it is fundamentally important that the Team Leaders be very agile. Leadership agility is the ability to be flexible, responsive and adaptable, showing initiative during times of uncertainty and change (Joiner and Josephs, 2006). Agile leaders manage dynamism by reading the new realities of a situation and quickly shifting their attention, perspective and behaviour to fit the changing environment (Joiner and Josephs, 2006). Furthermore, management development must not be divorced from change management projects and should not be seen as separate activities and carried out by separate people.

An important finding from this study is that although there are cultural differences between Kuwait and Western countries, as indicated in Chapter 2, major differences did not seem to emerge between the needs of these Team Leaders. This finding is particularly important given the widely accepted cultural differences in traditional leadership skills (House *et al.*, 2004). This may lead us to conclude that perhaps, in the near future, all leadership competencies associated with success will be equally prevalent amongst leaders, regardless of their cultural background. As these competencies are strengthened within a leader, they will be more likely to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their organisation as well.

### *7.3.7 Summary of leadership needs*

The above sections discussed the applicable leadership skills of the Team Leaders working in Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector as seen by the leaders themselves, taking into account cultural congruence that can yield increased usefulness. These leadership needs are grounded in empirical research. It is important to gain Kuwaiti leaders' understanding of the leadership topic, as Western models have been highlighted in the past to be inadequate when being applied to non-Western countries (Smith *et al.*, 2006). The Team Leaders themselves identified skills that might be lacking and thus impeding leader's ability to perform at an optimal level in their current roles. The identification of these leadership needs is the starting point to leadership development, which is discussed in the following section.

## **7.4 Leadership development**

Whilst interest in the development of leaders, and the practice of leadership, has grown in the MENA countries over the last two decades, including Kuwait, it was noted that indigenous empirical studies of the topic are few and far between (Abdallah and Al-Homoud, 2001; Al-Dabbagh and Assaad, 2010; Common, 2011). It is still not clear which methodologies of leadership development for the Kuwait's Team Leaders working in the Oil and Gas Sector are the most appropriate, therefore lasting positive change has been elusive.

Leadership development, as a type of human development, takes place over time and tends to be incremental in nature. It is the result of complex reciprocal interactions between the leader, others, and the social environment. Thus, the study took the view that leadership development is a social phenomenon, and that learning takes places within a social context. Thus, learning is responsive to interaction with others, hence the social constructivist approach was adopted. According to Avolio (1991), the elements of a full range leadership development are self-awareness and development (intrapersonal skills), social or human-relational development (interpersonal skills), and the ability to affect the context in which development is occurring (change agency). We propose the essence of leadership development experiences lies in the interaction of the intrapersonal and the interpersonal components. Whilst the identification of key leadership needs and capabilities of junior

leaders within the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector was the primary focus of the research, the specifics of how to develop such skills and capabilities was also of interest.

It makes little sense to start leadership development programmes without having identified the needs of the leaders to be developed, which is what was accomplished in the previous sections. The leaders' perceptions reflected their felt need to develop themselves and therefore should constitute the foundation for their present and future leadership development.

Having identified these leadership needs, the next phase was to ascertain how best to develop such skills so that these leaders can perform their work better and become more competent. It was also fundamentally important to know the most effective processes for developing these skills and capabilities. Nevertheless, we should keep in mind Mintzberg's (2004) sage advice that '*learning a set of competencies does not per se make a manager competent*' (p. 140). It is important to close the gap in skill and competency between these Team Leaders and senior level leadership within the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector.

#### *7.4.1 Action learning*

Action learning is a set of organisational development practices in which important real-time organisational problems are tackled (Johnson and Cacioppe, 2012). It represents a comprehensive way that knits together on-the-job experience, life experience, and specific skill development. It was viewed by the Team Leaders as learning from experiences that happen during day-to-day work. The Team Leaders undergo personal change, and acquire leadership capacity as a result of the roles, responsibilities and tasks encountered in their jobs (Day, 2000). It was observed that the quickest and most enduring learning occurs when people are engaged in finding solutions to real problems through action learning (Giber *et al.*, 2000). Action learning can range from un-facilitated learning on the job to high-impact learning projects. Sometimes, these experiences are sought by special assignments, job rotation, or attendance at meetings or special events, in addition to daily responsibilities.

One method that may effectively manage action learning and accelerate learning is through the provision of challenging job assignments (Zenger and Folkman, 2003). This can mean

ensuring access to the right types of projects within the individual's current role or through defined job rotations throughout specified business areas. Rotational assignments are carefully selected to ensure exposure and appreciation for different perspectives such as staff and management, and domestic and international approaches (Leskiw and Singh, 2007).

Most leaders who progressed to the senior level do so by building on their hands-on experience. Combined with prescriptions to develop home-grown talent through action-learning, and a view that in-company programmes provide a better fit with the development of strategic leaders (Bailey and Clarke, 2008), and that public programmes tend to have little impact on a leader's ability to produce better results (Zenger *et al.*, 2000), it is not surprising that internal programmes are popular.

Job assignments were being used to provide necessary experience and opportunity to learn whilst working on the job. The participants in the study gave numerous examples of on-the-job challenges as their most significant leadership development experiences. Providing Team Leaders with stretch assignments (those where the Team Leader can practice needed skills) is a managerial responsibility. It requires recognition of the specific skills being learned and some monitoring of how well the learner is doing. Tools such as special projects, task force assignments, or new job responsibilities are all ways to accomplish the goal. A supportive senior leader actively provides challenging opportunities that allow the Team Leader to practice new skills and behaviours. These could be in-department or elsewhere in the organisation. The important thing is that the senior leader/manager matches existing skills to those development activities that will create improvement and that he/she leverages the talent management system or personal relationships to arrange job assignments, special projects, or the like that provide the opportunity to practice new skills. This finding clearly supported prior research on experience-based development (Leskiw and Singh, 2007), and the utilization of such action learning is grounded in both leadership development and leader development theories. However, such learning methods should be focused on changing behaviour and be practical, providing immediate application, concrete results and built-in accountability for successful implementation (Zenger and Folkman, 2003).

#### *7.4.2 Interaction and socialisation*

Supportive leaders engage in relationship-building at the individual and group levels. Seeking personal knowledge of each developing Team Leader and interacting with them on a regular basis creates opportunities for feedback and coaching and a better understanding of individual growth needs. The supportive Team Leader also has relationships in the organisation with peers, superiors, and others that facilitate opportunities for developmental encounters or new job assignments for team members. There is greater cultural emphasis on group collaboration in Kuwait. The concept of the in-group was observed in Chapter 2 in relation to Arab cultural characteristics; it consists of the extended family and friends, further embedded by a shared place of origin, such as a village. According to Tayeb (2005), the importance of the in-group is emphasised by reinforcing ‘consultation, obedience to seniors, loyalty, face-to-face interaction and networks of personal connections’ (p. 76). An out-group consists of any group outside this extended social group. Thus modification of leadership behaviour is dependent on the status of the group.

The support of the senior manager in understanding development needs and helping arrange for stretch assignments for top talent is key to the social construction of an effective leadership development system. This finding is supported by Day (2000), who mentioned that there is a need ‘to develop leaders beyond merely knowing what and knowing how, to knowing who in terms of problem-solving resources... It is also a means of encouraging organisational members to form commitments with others outside of their immediate work group’ (p. 596). However, networking abilities external to the organisations are often limited to contacts with actors from the same tribe or sectarian affiliation.

#### *7.4.3 Classroom-based training*

Classroom-based training was an important leadership development technique recognized by the study participants. Such training is a formal instruction that is presented or developed by experts. Classroom-based training gave an opportunity for these junior leaders to critical events and challenges which, in and of themselves, become the means of professional growth. Training materials can be presented live in a classroom, on-line, by video, or by books. Training topics run the gamut from general management and leadership

skills, to specific functional training or special technique training such as Six Sigma. The advantage was that such development can be tailored to specific needs of the Oil and Gas Sector and address their on-going business problems. Furthermore, such training programmes are seen as the most visible manifestation of an organisation's future at the middle and junior levels (Yeung and Ready, 1995). Gosling and Mintzberg (2004) argue that 'there is a certain quality of conversation that takes place in well managed class-room that is almost unique, where the fruits of experience, theory and reflection are brought together into new understanding and commitment' (p. 22).

However, traditional theory-based course lectures and workshops are now being replaced with a learning journey of customized interactive learning sessions with on-going support focused on real business issues (Marcus, 2004). The learning system therefore provides developmental opportunities, developmental relationships and developmental feedback systems. Furthermore, traditional classroom training should be heavily complemented by an opportunity to practice within a real environment, solving real business issues.

#### *7.4.4 Attending international conferences*

Whilst this methodology is favoured by many Team Leaders, partly because it gives them an opportunity to travel to other countries, it is generally not considered a very effective way of developing skills due to the time required for development. Leadership, like wisdom, cannot be taught as if it was a single skill, but it requires the gaining of experience, developing the intellect, allowing reflection and increasing knowledge (Bass, 1990; Goussak *et al.*, 2011). Leadership development, as a type of human development, takes place over time; it is incremental in nature, accretive, and the result of complex reciprocal interactions between the leader, others and the social environment. Hence, effective leadership development realizes that leaders develop and function within a social context (Olivares *et al.*, 2007). Short development programmes are therefore inappropriate.

#### *7.4.5 Coaching*

Coaching was viewed as a more specific guidance about job performance or specific activities associated with an assignment. In this definition, a direct manager often acts as a coach to help an employee in the accomplishment of a task or assignment. Coaching

involves practical, goal-focused forms of one-on-one learning and, ideally, behaviour change. A coaching style of leadership entailed having individual conversations with each direct report, understanding their personal career goals and needs, and offering guidance.

The point of coaching is to provide some counsel and advice before potential leaders get into trouble (Zenger and Folkman, 2003). The role of the coach is to facilitate self-discovery of actions for improvement and development; to hold up the ‘mirror’ to provide clarity and self-reflection and to focus on what needs to be done; addressing real issues taking place in the work environment and to identify strategies to accelerate progress. In coaching, managers pass along advice and information or set standards to help subordinates improve their work skills.

In the last decade, professional coaching has grown popular (particularly leadership or executive coaching) and has become a distinct profession involved in helping individuals or teams to reach their full potential (Cheryl and Adrian, 2011; Rosinski, 2003). It was noted that coaching can be formal or informal, and coaches can be internal or external experts. Another dimension of coaching is whether it is functionally specific or general.

#### *7.4.6 Self-learning*

With the introduction of business schools in Kuwait, quite a number of people including participants from the Oil and Gas Sector had acquired MBA degrees or similar university executive education; many expressed that this was a good thing to have, but such programmes did not meet the specific needs of the Oil and Gas Sector as they tended to be broad managerial development programmes. However, there seems to be general consensus that each leader should be responsible for his or her own leadership development, a finding which supports Yeung and Ready (1995). Furthermore, individual development is an important part of serving the needs of the group, family, or organisation and achieving one’s personal best requires investment in individual skills development. For those that manage to complete some recognised programmes, such as an MBA qualification, they are refunded the full cost of the programme on successful completion of the programme, which gives them some motivation to complete it.

#### *7.4.7 Attachments*

Elsewhere, on-the-job training, feedback, and mentoring are viewed as the most important leadership development methodologies across several regions (Asia, Europe, Latin America, and North America). With the array of development initiatives on offer, the differing theoretical perspectives that inform them, and the wide range of providers in the marketplace, the practical issue of deciding which to select can be overwhelming.

#### *7.4.8 Summary of leadership development*

Leadership development is one of the most important people-related organisational interventions, and from the foregoing discussion it can be said that it is imperative that it is strategically oriented. As noted by Day (2001), leader development focuses on the development of individual knowledge, skills and abilities. Furthermore, we advance a theory of leadership development that recognizes that information processing and knowledge structures evolve with the required levels of leadership skills (from novice to intermediate to expert). For instance, in terms of knowledge use at the novice level, Team Leaders rely heavily on their working memory, which combines their generic knowledge with the situation to compose a response. However, at the expert level, there is a greater dependence on a principled understanding of the situation. Information processing is qualitatively different at each stage (Lord and Hall, 2005), thus there is a need for utilizing different modes of learning in leadership development, including action-based learning, simulations, coaching and so on.

These methodologies were identified as the best way to provide a simple yet meaningful approach for developing leadership capability within Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector companies. Any particular learning experience has a larger impact if it is linked to other experiences, and when these experiences are part of a supportive, thoroughly designed system (Mulum, 2002).

The choice of development approach is not a simple one, but it depends on the skills to be developed, and how the learning can be transferred and sustained within the workplace. The development initiatives which appear best able to develop the Team Leaders of Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector and to transfer their learning are those which:

1. Have a strong action learning approach to development;
2. Use direct personal and business issues as the focus of activity and learning;
3. Encourage and expect participants to implement changes in their work environments during their participation in the initiative; and
4. Have strong support of senior management.

Much of leadership development involves change in knowledge, skills, and abilities (Hannum et al., 2007). Campbell et al. (2003) argue that the field of leadership development is dominated by individualistic approaches that seek to enhance the intrapersonal attributes, interpersonal qualities, cognitive abilities, communication skills and task-specific skills of individual participants.

Several evidences and arguments have been presented in the literature about leadership development. According to Hannum et al., (2007) leadership development involves change in knowledge, skills and abilities. Campbell et al. (2003) argue that the field of leadership development is dominated by individualistic approaches that seek to enhance the intrapersonal attributes, interpersonal qualities, cognitive abilities, communication skills and task-specific skills of individual participants. The argument here is about the qualities that the leaders require based on individual approaches. In other words, the leadership development needs to be based on their individual needs and organizational needs.

Researchers such as Kouzes and Posner (1995, 2010) state that the profound changes shaping the competitive business environment are affecting how organisations prepare leaders for present and future challenges. The focus of leadership has recently shifted due to increasing global competitiveness, continuous restructuring activities, demographic changes in the workforce, customer demands and rapid technological changes. Accordingly, leaders should have the capabilities and competencies to be able to deal with these challenges. For organisations to survive and succeed through such demanding conditions, exceptional leadership is needed at all levels. Furthermore, subordinates today expect their leaders to be more interpersonally competent in order to succeed in being truly influential as organisational leaders.

According to Bolden (2010) leadership development is dominated by individualistic approaches that seek to enhance the intrapersonal attributes, interpersonal

qualities, cognitive abilities, communication skills and task-specific skills of individual participants. Clarke (2012) states that the core components of leadership development includes skill-building, personal growth and feedback approaches as the core mainstream components. Further, the author states that successful leadership development consists of refining teachable goals, improving the abilities of the leaders, tapping individuals' personal needs, interests, and self-esteem, and, helping managers see and move beyond their interpersonal blocks. Therefore, leadership development should be concentrated on their individual needs and organizational processes.

Based on these arguments, there is need for leaders to be developed based on individual needs and organizational needs. Some of the different types of training that have been discussed in leadership development are experience, coaching, mentoring, self-development, job assignment, classroom programs and others. It is based on these essential types of leadership training and development that, the meet organizational goals. In addition to general leadership training that the leaders received on regular intervals, it is important for them to receive training that are focused on organizational needs and procedures.

To be able to provide training for junior leaders in global leadership competencies for the future, the organisation must ensure there are people within the organisation that are willing to learn and acquire the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities (Prewitt et al., 2011). This has not always been the case for the oil sector in Kuwait because of the work culture amongst Kuwaitis, as explained in the earlier literature chapters. Therefore, the above steps are recommended for leadership training and development.

## **7.5 Emerging Leadership Needs and Development Framework**

The aim of this research has been to provide a framework for the Kuwait oil and gas sector that links leadership needs, skills and capabilities specific to the sector. The focus was on the third line leaders (junior leaders) who are the connection between the decision makers and the employees who have to carry out the actions. The role of these third line leaders are crucial to the success projects. The projects in the oil sector are usually large and costs are high. It is very important to follows as per schedule and adhere to project time lines. The findings will provide guidelines to the policy makers and decision makers of the Kuwait oil

and gas sector to provide the best leadership development environment. The research questions that provided in the initial chapter and answered in the final chapter, revolve around these aims. In this section the framework that is designed, is based on both the literature and empirical data.

The research began by developing a conceptual framework based on studies by Bolden (2004) and Burgoyne et al. (2004). The conceptual model focused on leadership development (which has factors such as action learning, interaction and socialization, classroom based training, attending international conferences, coaching, self-learning, and attachments), and leadership behaviours and capabilities (which has factors such as task behaviour, relations behaviours, and change behaviour). These lead to the leadership effectiveness (which is made of achievement of goals, and ability to influence subordinates). From the empirical data, factors particular to the Kuwait oil and gas sector are discussed. These are contextual factors and leadership needs. The contextual factors are made up of factors specific to hierarchical structures, disjointed 'K' companies, government intervention, 'Wasta', overstaffing, and labour laws. The leadership needs are also specific to the Kuwait oil and gas sector, but these factors have also been studied by other researchers and recommended as important for leadership development. These are the business knowledge, technical skills, leadership and management skills, communication skills, decision-making skills, and change management skills. This section will discuss these and present the model for the Kuwait oil and gas sector.

The discovery of important categories and their properties, their conditions and consequences and the subsequent discussion in this chapter begins to reveal the elements of the emerging theory and framework of frontline leadership needs and development. The analysis and discussion was done at a conceptual level that was abstract enough to make the theory a general guide to multi-conditional, ever changing daily situations (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). It was couched in a form possible for others to use in studying a similar area. The framework explains the interrelatedness of the data categories and their properties (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) that have been developed in qualitative analysis. For example, what is the relationship between leadership needs and development and management and leadership capabilities? What conditions precede management and leadership capabilities? What are the consequences of management and leadership capabilities? Which elements

are process elements and which are structure elements? Ultimately we want to model the dimensions and understand the conditions, actions, and consequences that make up the central category of leadership needs and development for frontline leaders of the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector.

Thus, the works of Day (2001), Bolden (2004) and Young and Dulewicz (2005), and the present study, together provide a framework for a leadership development model that links the leadership needs and elements of leadership development experiences to competency development and ultimate leadership effectiveness. A more systematic appraisal of leadership needs and development outcomes requires a framework which:

1. Recognises that several different types of leadership development activity can be concurrent within the same organisation;
2. Takes into account the emergent needs of leaders;
3. Links between the learner, HR/business and organisational outcomes; and
4. Is sensitive to context.

Thus this section presents a framework of frontline leadership needs and development and it explores its elements. In deconstructing the interview data, we identified the following phenomena as key elements of the framework, reflected in figure 7.1.

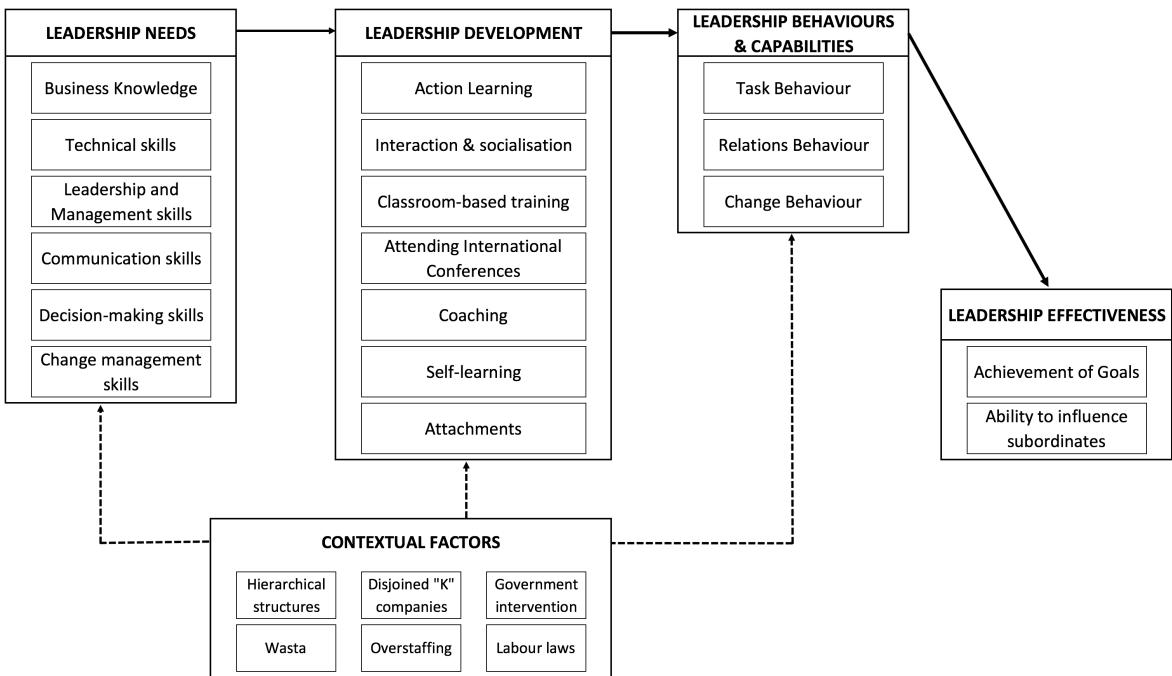


Figure 7.1: A Framework of Frontline Leadership Needs and Development

(Source: Bolden, 2004, 2010; Burgoyne et al, 2004)

The leadership framework was developed from Bolden (2010, 2004) and Burgoyne et al. (2004) (refer to section 3.12). In the research framework (figure 3.3) they study the influence of management & leadership development (MLD) on management & leadership capability (MLC) to understand the performance. This model was used to study the leadership needs among third line leaders in the Kuwait Oil and Gas sector. The empirical results provided further evidence of various factors that needs to be considered in the research framework, for it to be adopted in the Kuwait oil and gas sector. These are the leadership needs and contextual factors.

Distributed leadership offered the promise of a new ‘unit of analysis’ through which leadership could be understood in a holistic sense rather than simply as the aggregation of individual contributions. Bolden (2011) refers to this dimension of leadership as ‘concertive action’ (this means, additional dynamic which is the product of conjoint activity) and illustrated his argument with three alternative forms of engagement (‘spontaneous collaboration’, ‘intuitive working relationships’ and ‘institutionalized practices’) each of which could be considered as a manifestation of ‘conjoint agency’. In

setting out his argument, Bolden (2011) states that Gronn (2000) called for a fundamental reframing of leadership, suggesting that it ‘is more appropriately understood as a fluid and emergent, rather than as a fixed, phenomenon’ (Bolden, 2011; p. 252). Bolden (2011) further argues that this is a call that has been enthusiastically received by scholars and practitioners alike.

This points towards seeing distributed leadership within the oil and gas industry of Kuwait – as well as other similar contexts internationally - as being explainable by revealing the interpretations of the actors from whose conjoint relationships emerges the distribution of leadership. Distributed leadership is considered as a social phenomenon with a context integral to its understanding and, indeed, constitutive of the practice of leadership, concerned with thinking and actions *in situ* (in its original place). The focus therefore is on conjoint actions rather than role or position. It is the way in which leading is enacted in the performance of tasks that is important (Thrope et al., 2011).

From a distributed leadership perspective it is necessary to study the impact of contextual factors particularly applicable to the Kuwait oil and gas sector, from a third line leader viewpoint, on the leadership needs, leadership development, leadership behaviours and capabilities identified in the framework of figure 7.1. These contextual factors include the hierarchical structures (see section 3.12), disjoined "K" companies (see section 3.12), government intervention (see section 6.3.1), "Wasta" (see section 2.7), Overstaffing (see section 3.12), and labour laws (see section 7.5) all of which have emerged from the empirical data analysis and findings, collected through interviews with the third line managers.

As discussed previously (section 5.3.1) the Kuwait oil and gas sector is completely owned and operated by the government. The Kuwait oil and gas sector has several entities and all of them come under the umbrella of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation. The sector has a Supreme Petroleum Council (SPC) that oversees all activities related to this sector. The name of the various entities which are referred to as the "K" companies are provided in section 5.3.1. Although the "K" companies all come under the government, there are several differences in their business operations that the leadership needs differ. Therefore, it is important to understand the leadership needs in each of the "K" companies with the aim

of developing the leader. The model that is presented here can be adopted to provide the right development to the leaders in the Kuwait oil and gas sector. There are also some issues that were found based on the empirical data. One of these was "Wasta". This has been discussed earlier in the literature and there are also studies where nepotism and favouritism in business environment can cause issues. There are instances where people with good knowledge and experience have been denied promotions, because the higher management preferred some that was close to them. Therefore, it is important to study the impact of "Wasta" on leadership development. The influence and intervention of the government is another factor that can hinder leadership development. Other issues that have been observed are related to overstaffing and the changing labour laws of the country. Based on the findings, it is important to study these contextual factors and its impact on the leadership development.

The leadership development factors that are shown in the model have been studied by several researchers as the essential skills that a leader requires. These have been added to the research framework to suit the model to the leadership development of third line managers in the "K" companies – the Kuwait oil and gas sector.

### *7.5.1 Leadership Needs in the United Kingdom*

A view of the CIPD Annual Survey Report (2012) reveals that nearly three-quarters (72 per cent) of organizations in England faced a shortage of management and leadership skills. This deficiency may not be seen in smaller organizations, with the strength lesser than 50 people, are less likely to report a deficit (30 per cent); yet, deficit in management and leadership skills is evident in all sectors and sizes of organization. Amongst those who participated in the survey, about two-thirds (65 per cent) of organizations stated that senior managers lacked management and leadership skills, whereas, the greater majority (85 per cent) considered the line managers and supervisors lacking of these skills. This lack of management and leadership skills in line managers and supervisors is more commonly seen pertaining to the manufacturing and production sector (86 per cent) whereas, less visible in the public sector (76 per cent). The CIPD report calls out for the need for better management and leadership skills. Almost a quarter of the workforce, in the sample, have line management responsibilities. While about three-fifths (60 per cent) of organizations

across all sectors agree that management and leadership skills are very important for pushing individuals into positions that have people management responsibilities, there still is a 2 per cent who report that they are not so important.

With the help of an interview-based evaluation tool, Bloom et al. (2011) measured international management practices, thus concluding that:

- Seeing the deficiency of UK in management quality in relation to the US, Germany, Japan and Sweden, the productivity gap with countries like the US, Germany, and Japan, was attributed to this particular reason. In order to increase the competitiveness, the management practices in UK need to be improved.
- Differences exist in management quality across firms in all countries and this cross country differences is mostly due to the absence (e.g. US) or strong presence (e.g. UK, India) of a number of badly managed firms. There would be a great improvement if the quality of the poorly managed firms could be raised just a little above up to the median.

Adoption and utilization of new management practices is closely linked to productivity and the broad view is that efforts taken up by UK managers to convert new management practices into better performance have, however, been slower and less successful as compared to their counterparts in France, Germany and the US. Considering the great demand for good managers and the challenging economic context, it has become important to make some drastic improvements (Bloom et al., 2011).

In the report by Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS), Leadership and Management Network Group (LMNG) analyses the various reasons why UK leaders are underperforming and have stated some reasons as follows: (BIS, 2012).

UK managers are less qualified: It was viewed that when compared to peers of other advanced economies, UK managers are not well qualified. They are significantly under-qualified with 38.5 per cent qualified at level 4 and above as compared to 80.9 per cent in other professional occupations.

UK managers are under-trained: Not only are they less qualified, but UK managers also lack proper training and development. As per the UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey, only 34 per cent of all employers offered management training; amidst a scene of 2.4 million managers undergoing training in the UK in the past 12 months.

UK Managers lack key skills: The 2009 National Employer Skills Survey, claimed that 40 per cent of employers in England realized the necessity to up-skill its managerial staff. This was the top skills need, which was four times greater than sales, which is second. Clearly displaying the relation between skills and performance, CMI research highlights the fact that the 'shortages of key skills' is the key issue that the managers face when it comes to achieving their business objectives in 2012, together with factors like 'poor morale' and 'poor leadership playing their roles.'

Proper strategic use has not been made of leadership and management skills. While developing the right leadership along with management skills is just primary; the most important is to organize these skills in the workplace effectively. It was seen that leadership and management training in the UK sector was quite informal and impromptu rather than strategic.

Somehow, UK employers are under the notion that training provision does not actually cater to their requirements. They view the leadership and management training as too inflexible, in terms of content as well as delivery. As for smaller organizations, they tend to have hardly any and since it is not easy for them to have specifically commissioned training, they find it difficult to release staff for training.

The framework explains and stresses the essential needs of Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector frontline leaders, and how best to develop these skills and capabilities. The framework relates these skills and capabilities on leadership effectiveness and ultimately organisational performance. It is important to consider the interrelatedness of the constructs and review the framework and of importance is that this theoretical framework and relationships were supported by data from the participants. The following section discusses leadership development in Kuwait oil and gas sector.

### *7.5.2 Condition: leadership needs*

Conditions are defined as:

‘... sets of events or happenings that create the situations, issues, and problems pertaining to a phenomenon and, to a certain extent, explain why and how persons or groups respond in certain ways. Conditions might arise out of time, place, culture, rules, regulations, beliefs, economics, power, or gender factors as well as the social worlds, organizations, and institutions in which we find ourselves along with our personal motivations and biographies’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 35).

Identification of leadership needs as perceived by the Team Leaders themselves was considered to be the starting point of leadership capabilities. The leaders identified various needs that they considered essential if they were to execute their work efficiently and effectively. It emerged that the key leadership needs were: business acumen, technical skills, leadership and management skills, decision-making, and change management skills.

These are the skills that require attention and development if the Kuwait’s Oil and Gas leaders are to be able to perform their tasks and for the Oil and Gas companies to be competitive.

### *7.5.3 Action: leadership development*

Leadership development forms the action/interaction portion of the paradigm, consisting of the various initiatives/methodologies for developing the skills identified earlier on. Both leadership needs and development constitute the central categories of the coded data. It emerged that although there was no one single methodology of developing the skill needs identified, action learning emerged to be the most effective approach. Other leadership development initiatives included interaction and socialisation, class-room based training, attending international conferences, coaching, self-learning and attachments to other similar organisations. These activities need to be well coordinated.

Commencing training early in a Team Leader’s career is important because training provides a frame of reference that keeps these frontline leaders focused and attuned to the

importance of learning essential lessons important to the success of the organisation and to the development of the individual. Solving strategic operational issues helps to move the organisation forward in achieving the strategic goals.

#### *7.5.4 Outcome: leadership capability*

The outcome of leadership development is that these Team Leaders acquire the leadership capabilities required to perform their tasks. These capabilities are complex bundles of individual talents, attitudes, skills, and accumulated knowledge exercised through organisational processes, and unique styles that enable the organisation to co-ordinate activities and make use of their resources. The leaders will be in a position to undertake their tasks, manage relations with their subordinates and peers as well as bring about change. One of the defining challenges for leaders is to take their organisations into the future by implementing planned organisational changes that correspond to premeditated interventions intended to modify organisational functioning towards more favourable outcomes.

#### *7.5.5 Consequences: leadership effectiveness and organisational performance*

Front-line leaders who have been subjected to continuous leadership development programmes, in theory, will have learned to be better leaders and better able to contribute positively to their work environment. The end result is that leadership development should lead to leadership effectiveness and improved organisational performance and competitiveness. Effectiveness here relates to achieving of objectives and ability to influence their subordinates, which are considered the hallmark of leaders.

### **7.6 Findings in light of existing research and theory**

At this point, let us return to leadership and leadership development theory as well as theory related to capabilities (Mumford *et al.*, 2000; Yukl, 2006) to understand the relevance of the current findings. Notwithstanding a multitude of concepts advanced by leadership researchers (House and Aditya, 1997), the findings closely considered task-oriented and person-oriented behaviours similar to those advanced by (Fleishman, 1953; House and Aditya, 1997; Judge *et al.*, 2004; Stodgill, 1948), also referred to as the initiating

structure and showing consideration model (House and Aditya, 1997). As noted earlier, task-oriented capabilities are those related to organisational structure, design, and control, and to establishing routines to attain organizational goals and objectives (Goussak *et al.*, 2011). On the other hand person-oriented capabilities include behaviours that promote collaborative interaction among organisation members, establish a supportive social climate, and promote management practices that ensure equitable treatment of organization members (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 2006).

The study of leadership needs to be studied within the context within which it is being practiced (Ogawa and Bossert, 2000; Seiler and Pfister, 2009). The Kuwait context is characterised by hierarchical structures, in-line with its high power distance culture (House *et al.*, 2004), and by over-staffing and labour laws that protect Kuwaitis, along with favouritism (*Wasta*). The Gas and Oil Sector companies are large corporations with extensive state ownership and involvement, but their structures are somewhat disjointed. These large organisations tend to have standard operating procedures, which then suit certain leadership development initiatives and not others, and the organisations tend to have more resources to devote to leadership development. These contextual factors influence how leadership is exhibited and developed and ultimately on the overall organisational performance.

## **7.7 Chapter conclusion**

The present study provides a starting-point for further research exploring and identifying leadership needs and leadership capabilities needed for success in the Gas and Oil sector of Kuwait and how best to develop such skills and capabilities. Leadership skills identification and development is necessary and desirable for these Team Leaders if they are to assume future top leadership positions and perform better. It was noted that leadership development should be aligned to leadership needs as development should be targeted to the needs of the leaders and individually tailored as opposed to just generic development to all corporate leaders. The mismatch of human competencies to organisational needs can defeat efforts to improve performance, even when they are being made (Al-Yahya, 2008). Team Leaders are the first-level frontline leaders and the entry point for leadership development, therefore

more attention and effort should be given to their development needs to secure the future of the Oil and Gas Sector in Kuwait and indeed that of the nation as a whole.

## CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 8.1 Introduction

Whilst the previous chapter analysed and discussed the findings, culminating with a framework of frontline leadership needs and development (figure 7.1), this chapter concludes the study. This chapter begins by restating the research questions and evaluating the extent to which they have been addressed. The chapter presents the study implications and recommendations for the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector with the view that the sector can be successful in leadership development for its frontline leaders, having identified their skills needs and how best to develop such skills and capabilities. Due to increasing challenges in a complex business environment, effective leadership is a critical prerequisite for the conduct of global business and therefore Team Leaders ought to be developed to eventually assume greater responsibilities as the current crop of senior leaders retire. This is particularly the case with Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector, where the *Kuwaitisation* policy and *Wasta* have already ensured that key positions are commonly populated by unqualified personnel.

The primary goal in this study was to understand and gain knowledge in the field of leadership through a grounded approach, particularly at the lower-levels of leadership, where not enough research has been conducted (Townsend et al., 2016), especially as it relates to the leadership needs of frontline leaders within Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector. It was noted that whilst so much research has been conducted on leadership in Western countries, comparatively little is known about their equivalent in developing countries such as Kuwait, and most studies conducted in Arab countries suffer from major conceptual and methodological weaknesses (Elbanna, 2008), which exposes their findings to doubts about their validity. There is a need to look at the social and cultural context into which we assume theories are inserted. As Alvesson (2002) noted, a cultural understanding of leadership requires an understanding of local meaning. He argues that leadership can be defined as being 'about influencing the construction of reality - the ideas, beliefs and interpretations of what and how things can and should be done' (Alvesson, 2002, p. 114). A social and contextually specific understanding of leadership allows us to be receptive to the

meanings ascribed to leadership by the community employed within the organisation under study (Ford, 2005).

Furthermore, ‘leadership studies in the Middle East are almost non-existent due to the inherent difficulty of conducting organizational research there’ (Dorfman and House, 2004, p. 64). It is believed this study builds on current literature in several ways, which are explained further below.

## **8.2 Conclusion**

To conclude the study, Kuwait’s Oil and Gas Sector’s frontline leaders, commonly referred to as Team Leaders, appear to be lacking in current and future leadership skills and capabilities in areas such as business knowledge, leadership and managerial skills, technical skills to perform their duties, communication, decision-making and change management skills. These themes, which emerged from the qualitative evidence, do not provide the complete answer, but do surface a number of helpful themes for human resources/development professionals to consider. Thus the study managed to shed greater clarity on the needs of these frontline leaders.

For Team Leaders to be effective in this dynamic, market-driven environment they need to clearly identify their needs and have their skills and capabilities developed and become transformational leaders, whereby they can unleash energy and lead their teams to plan and carry out their work. Such skills and competencies need to be developed and various ways of skills development were suggested, chief amongst which was on-the-job training. Other methods suggested for skills development were classroom-based training, attending international conferences, coaching, self-learning and attachments. It would therefore appear that organisations in Kuwait’s Oil and Gas Sector are successfully using both internal and external methods of skills development as opposed to being reliant on one particular method.

In the present day, a lot of initiatives are provided for leadership development through methods like training programs, coaching and mentoring techniques, action based learning, and developmental assignments. An actual business setting together with proper instructions helps people achieve key skills thereby helping the organizations to tackle

appropriate issues. According to Johnson and Cacioppe (2012), the ultimate goal of leadership development is action. So, now it is understood that development intends on providing opportunities for people to learn from their work instead of taking them away from their work to learn, because experiences combined with each deliver best results. The Kuwait oil and gas industry requires this kind of situation since there has hardly been any development here.

Being a part of need assessment, the first step to providing the right training is analysis. The term Need Assessment, or needs analysis is the technique of analyzing how employees' skill deficiency can be handled via various training and professional development programs, along with viewing the types of training/development programs needed with measures to highlight training/development. The gap(s) between optimal performance and actual performance can also be determined through needs assessment (Nischithaa and Rao, 2014). According to the referred authors, training need analysis is vital for creating a future of training programs in all businesses. A vital element of learning for establishing both the needs of the learners and the organization, it provides a key link with most apt and effective teaching and learning process. It views the difference between the actual requirement of a person to perform their duties strongly and what they really consider the basis for using remedial measures and or curative education.

The study presented a framework (figure 7.1) that shows the relationships between frontline leaders' needs and development, which if implemented can allow Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector leaders to plan and implement short- and long-term HRM strategies, particularly at the Team Leader level. In spite of the cultural differences between Kuwait and other countries, it would appear that the frontline leaders require similar skills as those from other cultures to be able to competently lead their teams and subordinates. This finding is particularly important given the widely accepted cultural differences in traditional leadership skills (House, 1998). Perhaps, in the near future, all leadership competencies associated with success will be equally prevalent amongst leaders, regardless of their cultural background. It could be that economic globalisation is standardising cultural attributes (and certainly business cultures) worldwide; at any rate, this study suggests that the preoccupation of the academic literature on leadership with national culture is over-emphasised with regard to Kuwait.

In conclusion, this research lays a foundation for extending inquiry into other areas of leadership competency. Additionally, training and development creates a steady flow of well-qualified and successful leaders.

### **8.3 Answers to research questions**

In this section the research questions that has been presented earlier will be answered based on the empirical findings.

#### **How do third-line (junior) leaders within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector characterise the needs, skills and capabilities required to effectively undertake their leadership roles and improve organisational performance?**

The data for this research has been collected through in-depth interviews from junior leaders. These leaders are the ones who are between the decision makers and employees who are required to carry out the tasks. The role of these junior leaders (referred here as line managers and team leaders) are crucial, as they are the ones who are required to carry out the tasks that are determined by higher management. These leaders have the responsibility not only to carry out the tasks but also to ensure that their team is knowledgeable of the job requirements and if they are not the line managers need to make sure that they are trained and developed (refer to section 7.3.1).

For the employees the line managers are the ones they look up to for directions in carrying out their tasks efficiently. Their problems at job and even personal problems have to be shared with the line managers and therefore, they look up to these line manager for all their advice. The line managers should have the ability to handle employee problems and provide solutions.

Based on the responses that were collected from the in-depth interviews, it was understood that as leaders, they have the responsibility to take control and provide the right directions to the team and each of the employees. Be it any situation, the team looks up to them for solutions. Even of the line managers have to wait for higher management intervention and response, the employees look up to their line manager for directions (refer to section 7.3.3). Therefore, as line manager and team leaders, these junior managers have the responsibility

of taking the right decisions under any circumstances and providing the right guidance to the employees in every of their tasks. During times of disputes and conflicts within the team, the line managers will have to ensure that they are bias or rather they do not take sides and show favouritism and take decisions to ensure that conflicts are resolved in a healthy manner (refer to section 6.4.3). To ensure that all of this is properly handled, the line managers stated that they have to ensure that they have proper communication with their team and this should be clearly understood by everyone in their team (refer to sections 6.4.4 and 7.3.4).

In addition to all this, the team works with targets. Most of these targets are set by higher managers and they expect the teams to meet the tasks requirements within the stated date and efficiently. It was understood from the response received from the line managers, that sometimes these targets are high and if the team finds it difficult, it is their responsibility to sit with the team and find out the best way to achieve these targets. In other words, the targets that are set to them are discussed with the team and a plan is drawn to find out the best way to achieve the targets and provide the best results. As per the line managers and team leaders this is the best way to make the team understand the task requirements and assure them that these targets are achievable. This approach and participation by the line managers and team leaders reassures that their manager is part of their team and creates a sense of confidence and trust which results in motivation in the team to achieve their tasks (refer to sections 6.4.1, 7.3.3 and 7.3.5). Therefore, the role of the line manager and team leaders as junior managers is also one of creating confidence, trust and motivation.

These are some of the positive qualities of the line managers and team leaders of the Kuwait oil sector. There were a negative factor that was also revealed from the interviews. The negative factor related to the absence of the junior managers or related to them coming late for work. This is not frequent but there is tendency for the junior managers and also some of the higher management people to be absent from work. The problem or the reason, was the Kuwaiti culture. Culture defines an individual and also a society and culture is strongly prevalent in the organization. It seems to be a practice in the Kuwait oil sector that managers are either late to arrive at their workplace or they may take leave from work for various reasons. This could be an extended weekend to taking more holidays.

But such practices hinder work. As everyone depends on each other for support, absence of one individual can slow down the work.

Another negative aspect of culture that was highlighted and discussed by several interviewees was about doing job based on knowing each other. The term that has been used in Kuwait for getting things done in ones favor by knowing others, is *wasta*. *Wasta* is a powerful term due to its usage and prevalence in Kuwait. Be it for getting things done or for hiring someone, *wasta* plays an important role. The impact of *wasta* has been embedded into the culture of Kuwait that for anything that a person needs, it has become a necessity to use someone's help. In certain circumstances, recognition, rewards, promotions and such factors are also based on *wasta*. In other words, people who know those in higher positions and who are in favouritism with managers would get better benefits in the workplace. This could have adverse effects on others. This is because, those who have performed better are not being acknowledged and those who know people are getting the better advantage in the workplace (refer to sections 6.3.3, 6.5.2, and 7.2). Therefore, *wasta* in workplace is bad but due to the cultural impacts, this is prevailing and sometimes hinders the work of the line managers.

The junior leaders in the Kuwait oil sector also stated a few other hurdles that they faced. The way the employees were treated and provided preferences were not satisfactory. For example, employees with higher academic degrees were given preference over employees with experience and work knowledge. In other words, the people who knew how to carry out their jobs efficiently were being neglected and this led to employee dissatisfactions and effected the employee productivity negatively. As per the line managers and team leaders, such practices had to be removed and greater emphasis has to be provided to those who had greater work experience and know-how in doing the work efficiently (refer to sections 6.3.3, 6.4.2, 7.2). These employees could also be considered for higher education and the Kuwait oil sector should take this into consideration. The Kuwait oil sector provides such opportunities for managers who are sent for higher education, and as per the line managers and team leaders, the same facility should be provided to the employees as well and the talented employees should be retained in the organization.

From the feedback that was gathered and discussed here, we can say that the junior managers in the Kuwait oil sector play a vital role. They have good knowledge on the positive and negative aspects of maintaining a healthy work environment that is suitable for employees and managers alike. They emphasize that the negative aspects that has been labelled with culture should be removed and the managers should be a role model for the employees who will be inspired to work better and provide better results.

### **How do the third-line (junior) leaders within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector experience the development of their needs, skills and capabilities?**

The literature discusses extensively on the importance of leadership and its impact on the organizational performance (refer to section 4.7). Leadership is one of the key drivers of performance in an organization. Leaders make all the major decisions in terms of what the company's purpose is, how employees are compensated and interpersonally treated, what services and/or products are produced, how they are produced, who the targeted consumer is, how the product and/or service is delivered, and so forth. Leadership is a crucial variable contributing to the culture and climate of the organization and perception of support for creativity and innovation (refer to sections 6.4.6 and 7.2). Therefore, there must be a dynamic interaction between leadership and creativity in a way of supporting, encouraging and energizing the perceptions and behaviours of employees that influence the creative work environment (refer to sections 6.5.2 and 7.4.2). The literatures speak of leadership as crucial to organizational performance and effective decision-making. The empirical findings in this research also points to the same.

The junior managers (line manager and team leaders) that were interviewed, showed the importance of their roles in maintaining a strong team (refer to section 7.3.3). It was also understood that leadership needs to be developed and leaders need to know how to work in any situation and provide satisfactory solutions to their followers (refer to sections 6.4.3 and 7.3). The focus of this research has been on leadership and leadership skills. The Kuwait oil sector invests large amounts of money and resources into developing its leaders. They have specialized training and development departments that caters to the oil sector. This department is responsible for providing periodical training and development to the employees in the oil sector. There are several kinds of training that are provided. Some are

in-house trainings that are provided in specific training rooms or on-the-job training (refer to section 6.5.3). These are conducted by in-house training personnel's. In other cases, training professionals are invited to the company to provide training to the employees (refer to section 6.5.4). In the case of managers, the company sends them to professionals which could be even outside the country to get trained (refer to section 6.5.5). In brief, the training process in the Kuwait oil sector is focused extensively, especially in the case of managers. The Kuwait oil sector understands the importance of training and developing leaders and therefore, the focus on training and development is extensive.

The Kuwait oil sector has personal development plans (PDP) which is linked to the job that the person performs and not to the person (refer to section 6.4). By putting emphasis on the job, the trainings that are being provided are job related and not individual related. Here individuals need to be trained and developed based on the skills that they lack (refer to sections 6.4.2, 6.5.1, 7.3.7). The results identified that most of the participants had good experience in the oil sector and especially in the Kuwait oil sector. Based on this and their leadership capabilities they were able to provide good results in handling their team and making effective decisions.

### **What are the specific capabilities required by the junior leaders working in Kuwait's oil and gas sector?**

To answer this research question, following are the specific capabilities that have been identified from the research.

- (1) *Business Knowledge*: It is important for junior leaders to have a good knowledge of the business. They need to know the mission and vision of Kuwait Oil Sector and what the business objectives are. They have to understand that it is not adequate to complete a task but to ensure that the task meets business objectives. The junior leaders are the ones to make sure that everyone in their team also has a good knowledge of the business. Therefore, one of the specific qualities that is required of the junior leader is knowledge of the business (refer to sections 6.4.1 and 7.3.1).
- (2) *Technical Skills*: In addition to the business knowledge, the junior leaders need to have a good technical knowledge and expertise. Their team would be the ones who are carrying out the actual task, but only if the leader has a good technical

knowledge will he/she be able to supervise and guide the team in their work. Each of the tasks that they have are discussed from the time it is handed over to them till it finishes at various intervals. Therefore, to discuss the possibilities of carrying out the tasks efficiently and to provide innovative ideas, it is imperative for the junior leaders to have very strong technical skills. In addition to this, the junior leader is the one who has to update the higher management on constant basis and answer their questions. This is also another crucial reason for the junior leaders to have strong technical skills (refer to sections 6.4.2 and 7.3.2).

- (3) *Leadership and managerial skills:* Being a leader mean having good leadership and managerial skills. As a leader the team members look to the leaders for advice and solutions to problems. A good leader has inborn talents but these have to be developed based on the business knowledge and technical skills and the team. The employees of the Kuwait Oil sector comprises of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, in addition to providing good advice on business knowledge and technical skills, the leaders need to have good knowledge of handling the employees and keeping good harmony and team environment. This is another specific skill that is required from the junior leaders of Kuwait oil sector (refer to sections 6.4.3 and 7.3.3).
- (4) *Communication skills:* This is a skill that is required by everyone and in particular for leaders. The junior leaders of the Kuwait oil sector are the ones who are between the employees and the managers. The higher management provides instructions to the junior leaders and it is the responsibility of the junior leaders to convey the instructions to their team and get the task done efficiently. In addition to this the junior leaders need to create a good communication within the team so that there is harmony and good team spirit. Therefore, as a junior leader in the Kuwait Oil sector, they need good communication skills (refer to sections 6.4.4 and 7.3.4).
- (5) *Decision making skills:* This can be seen a common skill that is required by a leader. Leaders should be able to make good decision under any circumstances. Followers look at the leaders for such skills and they accept leaders who can make the right decisions. In the case of junior leaders in the Kuwait Oil sector, the need to make decision is important. This is because, as a junior leader, he/she is responsible in ensuring that the task is completed efficiently. And the decisions that they make is

accountable to the higher management. Therefore, the junior leaders should have efficient decision making capabilities that is acceptable and understood by the team members and higher management (refer to sections 6.4.5 and 7.3.5).

- (6) *Change management skills:* The Kuwait Oil sector is faced with various changes that is driven by internal and external factors. The organization has operations in many parts of the world and the oil and its products are used by nearly all the countries in the world. The price change and demands (market fluctuations) in oil itself calls for changes in the sector and their productions should change accordingly. These are some of the strong factors that impact this sector frequently. In addition to this, the Kuwait Oil sector is part of the OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) and therefore changes requested by OPEC has to be followed by the Kuwait Oil sector. These are some of the major external factors that calls for change. The Kuwait Oil sector is totally owned and operated by the Kuwait government. Therefore, political unrest and changes to policies and such factors can bring about several changes. In brief, there are several factors that can bring about changes in this sector and how the changes are managed efficiently totally depends on the leaders. When it comes to the junior leaders, handling of changes is even more tedious as they have to convey this to the employees and ensure that everyone follows the change. Efficient change management skills is therefore a strong factor that is required from the junior leaders in the Kuwait Oil sector (refer to sections 6.4.6 and 7.3.6).

The above six factors have been identified as the most important leadership capabilities that have been identified for junior leaders in the Kuwait Oil sector.

**What are the policy measures and managerial recommendations that can be made to enhance leadership effectiveness and organisational performance?**

Leadership is a quality and to make it effective, leaders also need to be trained. They need to understand how they can make effective decision even during difficult situations. Leaders need to understand how they can motivate and encourage their employees so that employees can trust them and provide their best (refer to section 6.2). For this one of the most important factor is to have effective communications skills. The findings in this study

showed the importance of communication skills for leaders (refer to sections 6.4.4 and 7.3.4).

The emphasis here is on both training and communication skills of the leaders. As discussed earlier, the leaders are being provided training that are specific to their skills (refer to section 7.4). But there is lack of leader specific training. Leaders need to be trained on specific skills on how to handle the team and provide appropriate decisions. The emphasis of training has been provided in the earlier chapter based on which a proposed model for front line leadership needs and development has been shown (see figure 7.1, in section 7.5). The types of training that has been emphasized pertain to, (1) action learning (section 7.4.1), (2) interaction and socialization (section 7.4.2), (3) classroom based training (section 7.4.3), (4) international conferences (section 7.4.4), (5) coaching (section 7.4.5), (6) self-learning and self-development (section 7.4.6), and (7) on-the-job training (section 6.5.3).

Following are the recommendations towards enhancing leadership effectiveness and organisational performance

*Opportunities to develop academic qualifications:* As per the junior managers, they have employees who are well experienced but due to lack of adequate academic qualifications, these employees are not being promoted. These employees carry out the routine tasks since years and this can be demotivating. The Kuwait oil sector provides adequate training that is related to the work and the organization. This is effective for employees to carry out their work efficiently. But employees are also looking for advancing in their career (refer to sections 6.4, 7.2, and 7.5). Therefore, as part of the development policies of the Kuwait oil sector, we recommend that the employees be provided with opportunities to develop academically.

*Recognize and Retain Talented Employees:* It was understood from the managerial interviews that they have several employees who are knowledgeable in their work. These are employees who are not only aware of their work in the oil sector but they specifically have knowledge and experience in how the Kuwait oil sector requires the work to be carried out (refer to sections 6.2, 6.4.1, and 7.3.1). It is not easy to find such talented employees from outside. The Kuwait oil sector should ensure that employees with such

knowledge should be retained and developed. These employees can be part of the talent management program and they can also be part of the succession-planning program. These employees can provide the right advice and be ready to fill in any of the managerial posts in the event that a manager leaves. The practice of identifying and retaining talented employees has benefits for both the employees and the organization. Employees will benefit as they are being trained and developed and they know that their jobs are secure and therefore they are motivated and confident to provide their best to the organization. The organization benefits, as they have talented employees who know their jobs and can carry out each tasks efficiently. These employees are also groomed to be the next managers and therefore, in the even should a manager leaves, the Kuwait oil sector does not have to recruit people from outside, but instead promote these talented employees.

*Leadership Development:* The importance of training and development has been emphasized in this research and based on this, different types of training has been discussed (refer to sections 6.5 and 7.3). The emphasis has been placed on leadership development and we recommend here some of the types of training that needs to be followed by the top management in the Kuwait Oil sector.

- Action Learning: As we had mentioned earlier junior leaders (line managers and team leaders) are the ones who are in-between the higher management (decision makers) and the employees (refer to section 7.4.1). They are confronted with various problems and situations on daily basis, which is a learning process. The leaders should be able to use these situations as learning experience and these should also be shared with others as part of knowledge sharing. Therefore, top management should encourage action learning as part of the development process in the Kuwait Oil sector.
- Interaction and Socialization: As stated above, the junior leaders are confronted with various situations on daily basis (refer to section 6.5.2 and 7.4.2). Each of these situations is an experience and therefore it should be counted as a learning experience and shared with others so that everyone can learn and improve their leadership skills.
- Self-Development: Every individual needs to be motivated for self-development. This can be viewed as an important factor towards development (refer to sections

6.5.7 and 7.4.6). The higher motivated an individual is toward developing themselves, the stronger will be the results of training and development that is provided. Therefore, the management of Kuwait Oil sector first needs to understand the self-development motivation of the junior leaders and find ways to improve the self-development in these junior leaders.

Further, we recommend the following development initiatives which appear best able to develop the Team Leaders of Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector and to transfer their learning are those which:

- a) Have a strong action learning approach to development;
- b) Use direct personal and business issues as the focus of activity and learning;
- c) Encourage and expect participants to implement changes in their work environments during their participation in the initiative; and
- d) Have the strong support and facilitation of senior management.

These are some of the prime areas of leadership development that are recommended to the management of Kuwait Oil sector to encourage and practice.

#### **8.4 Theoretical contribution**

The study culminated with a framework for leadership needs and development (figure 7.1), which clearly identified the needs of frontline leaders within Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector. The conceptual framework provided, which was informed by extant literature (Bolden, 2004, 2005; Burgoyne *et al.*, 2004) synthesises literature on leadership needs and skills and capabilities development. The framework builds on this literature by synthesising and presenting it in a way that is intended to help inform leadership practice. The empirical inquiry finds that the framework is consistent and useful in providing a practical way to identify the leadership development needs of third line managers. The framework remains tentative. Further research and development is discussed in section 8.10.

The findings of this study have theoretical and empirical implications. Whilst there have been different definitions and conceptions of leadership as debated by several theorists,

with no consensus on the meaning of leadership, what is clear and important is that organisations require effective leaders. With a country such as Kuwait, which is heavily dependent on the Oil and Gas Sector, the demands on the companies in the sector to improve performance increases, and the need for effective leadership grows. The point that is emphasised here is that, in-line with other developing countries, the public sector remains the prime driver of the economy. Thus, an increasingly complex society and a more dynamic world requires a greater number of effective leaders, particularly frontline leaders, as it is at that level where the work is executed.

This study adopted Bolden's (2004, 2005) view of leadership as a set of skills, qualities and behaviours exhibited by the leader that encourages the participation, development and commitment of others within the organisation. This definition frames leadership not just in terms of specific roles but as a process defined by capabilities, knowledge, and skills that make effective leadership possible (Mumford *et al.*, 2000). Theoretically, this study expands the knowledge base of leadership and in particular the skills required by frontline leaders within Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector. The awareness of the inherent nature of leadership competencies at this level can help the Kuwait Oil and Gas Sector to design action plans and focus resources to areas of greatest need by these frontline leaders. Key competencies resulting from the various courses could then be used to develop a comprehensive leadership curriculum for new managers/leaders, or for a leadership reinforcement and/or advancement program for existing staff. It is fundamentally important that Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector produces the next generation of national leaders, able to navigate new global realities and compete in an increasingly complex environment as opposed to just having a quick fix for 'capacity building' purposes.

The theoretical contribution is based on the framework that is provided in figure 7.1, which builds on and extends Bolden (2010, 2004) and Burgoyne *et al.* (2004). The framework can therefore be viewed as a tool to help ensure that the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector is concerned with ensuring that the needs of its frontline leaders are clearly identified, while simultaneously seeking to build capabilities that can be applied toward both discovering and implementing a variety of diverse strategic initiatives. The development of such skills and capabilities should be translated into behaviours that suit the changing needs of the Oil

and Gas Sector. From an HRD perspective, this framework may provide the basis for planning development activities in critical areas.

A question that emerged was whether the needs of frontline leaders and effective approaches to development differ in a different cultural context. The study findings would seem to suggest that despite the cultural differences, the needs of these frontline leaders are the same. The extent to which cultural diversity in Kuwait is important in relation to leadership development in the face of universal Arab cultural values and Islam is debatable and inconclusive. This is supported by Neal *et al.* (2005), who argued that the similarities were more important than the differences for explaining attitudes to leadership in the GCC countries. However, mere adoption of Western development packages will lack the cultural sensitivity to make any difference, although it is clear that Arab leaders are keen to learn from expatriate managers.

With time, organizational structures have grown into structures that can cope with the vagueness and tensions that come along with sudden changes (Thorpe *et al.*, 2011). The ingredients of such organizational forms are flatter structures, matrix structures and more widely connected network structures, all of which reflect, in their varying ways, the limitations of both top-down models and those of leadership when only a single individual is the unit of analysis. In the scenario where organizations have become project- or knowledge-based, including professional work with innovations happening with awareness of intensive exchange processes within networks, leadership has become a feature which can cope with collective endeavour, with individuals contributing to the outcome of a common purpose (a common vision) (Thorpe *et al.*, 2011).

With the perspective of a distributed leadership perspective, focus shifts from basic accounts of the attributes and actions of individual leaders towards fixed leadership practice. Spillane and Diamond (2007; cited in Bolden, 2011) noted that the distributed perspective on leadership consists basically two aspects – the leader plus aspect and the practice aspect. The ‘leader-plus’ aspect ‘acknowledges and takes account of the work of all the individuals who have a hand in leadership and management practice’ than just considering those fixed into ‘leadership’ roles. The ‘practice’ aspect looks at the practice of leading and managing [and] displays it as a culmination of the dealings of school leaders,

followers, and features of their situation. The authors believe that these aspects of leadership provide an analytical framework which help in ‘examining the day-to-day practice of leadership and management’ instead of ‘leaders and leadership structures, functions and roles’ (cited in Bolden, 2011).

The practical evidence exhibits the leadership needs based the relative factors – the Kuwait oil and gas sector. As can be seen in the framework, the relative factors (hierarchical structures; disjoined ‘K’ companies; government intervention; Wasta; overstaffing; labour laws), have an impact on leadership needs, leadership development, and leadership behaviors and also capabilities. Hence it is agreed to take up this framework to suit other industries and outside Kuwait, by suitably using the contextual factors relating to the industry or case in study.

## **8.5 Methodological contribution**

The study contributed to the literature by overcoming some of the methodological weaknesses of quantitative research by the adoption of a social constructivist approach. Social constructionism enabled us to view leadership participants as subjects. Surveys repeatedly report the inadequate assessment of development activities (CEML, 2002). The evidence provided by the 42 participants represents the views and experiences of frontline leaders working in the Kuwait’s Oil and Gas Sector. Qualitative research is known for its rich data, and in this particular study 500 pages of transcript were compiled.

A significant opportunity exists for other researchers to combine the findings of this study with past and future surveys to deepen their understanding of the leadership needs of frontline leaders, particularly those working in the Kuwait’s Oil and Gas Sector, with the view to develop their skills and capabilities and prepare them for the changing needs of the organisations and also preparing them to assume senior leadership positions in the future.

An implication from the findings is that people participate in a study more willingly if they know that the process matters (i.e. is valued by themselves and by the organisation).

Participants in this study were more than willing to contribute to the study and many expressed an interest in learning of its results.

### **8.6 Empirical contribution**

From an empirical perspective, because of the richness of data obtained from in-depth interviews with participants who were purposively selected, the study makes an empirical contribution by identifying the needs, skills and competencies of Team Leaders and explores further how best to develop them. The experiences of the participating Team Leaders present rich empirical data that others can learn from, especially in future studies. This is particularly the case in environments that are not easily amenable to research by outsiders.

### **8.7 Policy implications**

Researching the most effective programs and determining why they were successful would provide important insight into future course planning and development. Key learning or competencies resulting from the various courses could then be used to develop a comprehensive leadership curriculum for new managers, or for a leadership reinforcement and/or advancement program for existing personnel. However, the classical management preoccupation with efficiency is derailed in the Kuwaiti context by traditional collectivist attitudes that place kin and tribal allegiances above all else. Initiative, organisational transformation and teamwork are stifled by the richness and the enduring nature of these attitudes. Leadership development continues to be constrained by high power distance, leading to a lack of genuine team management and intuitive decision-making.

### **8.8 Implications for current practice**

Given the turbulent changes and technological developments taking place and the looming challenges facing the Oil and Gas Sector, there is no doubt that success will only be realised if the Oil and Gas Sector companies adapt and align to the changing environment. The sector needs to respond to this looming challenge by continuously identifying and cultivating leadership skills and capabilities for these frontline leaders, as they are requisites for success in the changing environment. However, the magnitude and

unprecedented pace of change in the business landscape, particularly in countries with crippling dependence on fossil fuel exports and a lack of economic diversification, no longer allows the luxury of time. If the countries of the GCC, including Kuwait, are to be successful in their desperate bid for diversification and survival in a post-oil world, then the findings of this study must be understood in terms of the Oil and Gas Sector being the test case for a trickle-down of management practices for the national economy as a whole in addition to improving management within that particular Sector. At the same time, the cultivation and integration of leadership skills will take significant dedication, practice and time. Time is needed for development, and leadership, like wisdom, cannot be taught as if it were a single skill, but it requires time to gain experience, develop intellect, allow reflection and increase knowledge and understanding.

It is therefore critical that the various companies in the Oil and Gas Sector take action now, to ensure the success of both their long-term and short-term business strategies. Failure to heed the signs of change may result with a capability gap almost too wide to overcome. The study suggested insights that are useful starting points for management development specialists and senior managers in reviewing and improving skills and capabilities of frontline leaders.

The management of the various Oil and Gas Sector companies must prepare for the future, by acknowledging the skills deficits and recognise the strategic importance of cultivating a new set of leadership skills and capabilities for these frontline leaders who will be the senior leaders in the future as the current breed of senior leaders retires. It is further recommended that the sector introduces and integrate a model of leadership such as the one recommended in this study.

Of importance is to understand the most effective development methodologies in order to improve particular skills and capabilities. It is thus recommended that management should focus on developing skills and competencies considered to be lacking and the most important by these frontline leaders, rather than offering a raft of seemingly unconnected development activities.

To be effective, leadership development interventions should be preceded by an assessment of the needs of the people in question, and in this particular case, frontline leaders. Needs

analysis helps ensure that resources are directed where they can have the greatest impact on the program and on the participants. It helps to develop training objectives that are tailored directly to address the obstacles and dilemmas impacting the implementation of the organisation's strategic goals and therefore the link between development and needs of leaders is important.

## **8.9 Generalisation and study limitations**

Case studies are criticised for lacking rigour, generating soft data, non-generalisable findings and bias (Yin, 2009). However, a case does not represent a sample, and hence case study results are generalizable from the case to theory rather than the population (Yin, 2009). Case study designs lead to analytical generalisation instead of statistical generalisation (Yin, 2009). Therefore, generalisation is not the main aim of constructionist studies, and a purposeful sampling strategy with its specific approach eliminates the generalizability of the results of the research. By definition, case studies provide a limited sample and our intention here was to explore and stimulate debate about the needs of frontline leaders working in Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector and effective processes of developing such skills rather than provide highly generalizable insights.

It is averred that the dynamics apparent in one social setting may not be presumed to have relevance for an understanding of other settings (Bryman, 1989). This supports Day's (2000) assertion that leadership development is a relational concept that prioritizes the context in which individuals function, both those in formal positions of leadership and others. The approach adopted was therefore not aimed at generalising findings but at formulate theory.

During data analysis, emerging trends and findings were subjected to critical analysis and cross-comparison by reviewing the literature and comparing them with peer-reviewed findings. However, the constructivist view adopted in this research provides readers with good raw material for their own generalisation (Stake, 1995), and there are often more generalisations that can be made at a more abstract level. Although generalisation is not the main aim of qualitative work, lessons from Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector can nevertheless be useful to other oil and gas companies, especially within the GCC, where similar culture and leadership practices prevail.

However, several voices of other frontline leaders from the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector as well as other similar organisations need to be taken into consideration before generalising the study's findings, and this may be considered a limitation of the study in that the findings are based on the views and experiences of the 42 participants.

### **8.10 Implications for future research**

The framework in figure 7.1 has proven practically useful and appears theoretically consistent but nevertheless remains tentative. While much work can be done and in fact is in progress on the topic of leadership, particularly in understanding the skills needs of third line leaders and how best to develop their skills and capabilities, the current research points to two major directions that future research can take to further substantiate the findings of this study. As this study was a grounded approach confined to the Kuwait's Oil and Gas Sector, further research needs to build upon the findings of this study and include other countries, especially those within the GCC region, through deductive research to further verify the model of frontline leadership needs and skills development. The study conclusions and recommendations are based primarily on the views and experiences of the frontline leaders who participated in the study. Quantitative, deductive research to test and verify the model and its elements is needed to establish the model as theory.

As observed by Al-Dabbagh and Assaad (2010), one of the biggest challenges facing leadership development practitioners and funders in the GCC is how to gauge their impact. One important lesson from the experience of the economic crisis in the region is that organisations with institutionalized and strong systems were able to weather the storm better than others. Future research should therefore consider focusing on the impact of leadership development of these frontline leaders on organisational performance.

Another area of future research should be aimed at leadership programs that include both men and women, and should incorporate gender perspectives in order to create new environments that are empowering for women. This is important in an environment where more women are acquiring academic knowledge from institutions of higher learning but few of them find their way in the Oil and Gas Sector, which is currently perceived to be a masculine industry.

Future research should consider analysing the effectiveness of competency-based frontline leadership development when it is fully implemented in the various Oil and Gas Sector companies within Kuwait and elsewhere in the GCC, and in other economic sectors, particularly wholly privatised and international firms.

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## **APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE: - KUWAITI OIL AND GAS SECTOR JUNIOR LEADERS' DEVELOPMENT AND CAPABILITIES**

### *A. General questions about current job, leadership role, and scope of influence.*

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and explain how long you have been working for this organisation?
2. Can you briefly describe the purpose of your department, the nature of your duties and your responsibilities in this organisation?
3. What kind of leadership role do you play in your present job?
  - What are some of your main leadership duties?
  - Can you say more about that?
4. Different people want different things out of their leadership roles. What are the most important things to you?
  - Can you say more about that?
5. What kinds of organisational decisions do you influence in your current leadership role?
  - Can you say more about that?
  - How do you influence those decisions?
6. What kinds of people do you influence in your current leadership role?
  - Can you say more about that?
  - How do you influence those people?

*B. Contextual factors*

7. What do you consider to be the main factors that influence leaders' capabilities and competencies, specifically within the Kuwaiti Oil and Gas Sector?
8. How does the context in which leaders operate affect their performance? Can you give me some examples?
9. The government introduced the Kuwaitisation (localisation) policy; how well do you think this is being implemented in this organisation and do you see any impact that it has for this organisation? Please give some examples.
10. Are there any particular issues that affect your effectiveness as a leader in this company? If so, what are they?
11. How is your organisation structured, and does this structure enable mobility for junior leaders to quickly aspire leadership positions? Give examples.
12. What is the role of the government in the way the organisation is run, and does it get involved in the appointment of leaders?
13. Are leaders appointed based on merit (i.e. based on their experience, knowledge and capabilities) or on who you know (*Wasta*)?
14. What is the role of organisational culture in affecting the relative importance of these leadership capabilities?

*C. Leadership development*

15. What can you tell me about your experience of formal leadership development activities (e.g., educational programs, seminars etc.)?
16. Various training programs are offered by this organisation (including but not limited to coaching, mentoring, classroom programs, industrial attachment, job assignment, 360 degree feedback, e-learning); which of these training programs best suits your needs and why?
17. How much did specific relationships (e.g., mentoring, coaching) influence your leadership development?
  - Can you say more about that?
  - Please describe what kind of activities you participated in.
  - What factors made it a good/poor leadership development experience?
  - What was it about you (your perspectives, attitude, etc.) that contributed to this leadership development experience?
18. What kinds of personal development activities have influenced your leadership development?
19. How do you think leadership capabilities for junior leaders can best be developed?
20. What other interventions measures can the organisation adopt?
21. What do you see as your future leadership development needs?
22. What would you say have been the most important professional experiences for developing your leadership skills?
  - Can you say more about that?
23. What would you say have been the most important personal experiences for developing your leadership skills?
  - Can you say more about that?

*D. Leadership behaviours and capabilities*

24. What capabilities do you believe you possess that makes you a good leader and how do you use these capabilities in order to persuade subordinates?
25. How much knowledge of the business do you have and why do you think knowledge of the business is important in running an organisation such as this one?
26. What do you consider to be the unique personal characteristics and behaviours of outstanding leaders?
27. What do you think are the specific capabilities required by the junior leaders working in the oil sector?
28. Of the qualities and capabilities that you identify, are there any that are more likely to make this organisation more successful if leaders embody them? If this is the case, please explain why.
29. How would you describe your particular style of leadership? To what extent would you say it has been effective? Can you offer examples of when your style had been effective and why? Please give examples.

*E. Leadership effectiveness*

30. To what extent do you think leaders in Kuwait performing effectively?
31. Does management and leadership development increase organisational performance?
32. Does management and leadership development increase individual management and leadership capability and individual performance?
33. Does management and leadership capability make a difference to organisational performance? Give examples.
34. While much has been written about the broad benefits of investing in management development, what evidence is there concerning the specific impact on organisational performance of training and development of managers?
35. Do those who have undertaken management education and leadership training actually perform better as managers/leaders?
36. To what extent do you believe those in leadership positions are performing effectively, and to what extent do you consider they spend their time developing their organisations in Kuwait in order to persuade others?
37. To what extent do you think leaders understand the needs of those they are leading and pay attention to this in the way they engage? Could you give an example?

*F. Other comments*

38. Do you have any other comments that you would like to make that might contribute to my study?

## APPENDIX 2: PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

<i>Nº</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Years of experience</i>	<i>Interview date</i>
1	Manager of Operations Support Group	30	18.08.2013
2	Team Leader Security	16	20.08.2013
3	Team Leader Fire	33	27.08.2013
4	Manager - Strategic Planning	24	28.08.2013
5	Team Leader - Risk Management Insurance	16	04.09.2013
6	Sales and Distribution Leader and Consultant as SAP	10	17.09.2013
7	Team Leader Financial Management	29	23.09.2013
8	Team Leader Inspection and Corrosion at KOC.	17	19.09.2013
9	Manager Purchasing and Materials in KOC	20	23.09.2013
10	Financial Coordinator at Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI)	15	17.09.2013
11	Coordinator Kuwait Insurance at KNPC	20	15.09.2013
12	Head of Best Practices of Joint Program	9	19.09.2013
13	Team Leader Gas Operation North at KOC	20	09.09.2013
14	Team Leader Budget &Cost at KGOC	27	04.09.2013
15	Team Leader Performance Management in KPI	18	14.09.2013
16	Specialist with Liability Management for Mina Abdullah Refinery	15	18.09.2013
17	IT - Development & Programming	15	24.09.2013
18	Team Leader Corporate Applications at KNPC	15	22.09.2013
19	Team Leader Finance Admin in Legal Dept	22	03.09.2013

<i>N°</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Years of experience</i>	<i>Interview date</i>
20	Manager Quality Assurance	27	23.09.2013
21	Team Leader great Burgan Studies at KOC	18	08.09.2013
22	Acting Team Leader Project Co-Ordination Package 2 at KNPC New Refinery Project.	18	03.09.2013
23	Team Leader Compensation	18	05.09.2013
24	Team Leader Telecommunication Information Technology	22	22.09.2013
25	Team Leader Project Department	27	23.09.2013
26	Senior Engineer Network Administration	12	24.09.2013
27	Team Leader at Business and Process Support	27	24.09.2013
28	Team Leader for Admin Projects Control	30	23.09.2013
29	Senior Specialist	20	05.09.2013
30	Team Leader of Corporate Projects One at KOC under Ahmadi Projects Group	16	31.08.2013
31	Team Leader Maintenance Support and reliability at KOC	15	22.09.2013
32	Team Leader of Strategic Planning in KPC	16	16.09.2013
33	Team Leader of Project Coordination Group 4 New Refinery Projects at KNPC	23	09.09.2013
34	Manager in Operation Group West Kuwait	22	15.09.2013
35	Senior Project Implementation Project Leader	15	21.09.2013
36	Team Leader Monitoring and Planning	13	15.09.2013
37	Senior Engineer Projects Management	17	13.09.2013
38	Team Leader Maintenance South Kuwait	22	11.09.2013
39	Team Leader at Mina Ahmadi Refinery	21	02.03.2013

<i>Nº</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Years of experience</i>	<i>Interview date</i>
40	Team Leader for the Contracts on Kuwaitisation	22	20.08.2013
41	Team Leader for Commercial Support - Project Dept	24	27.08.2013
42	Team Leader for Operational Planning	18	21.08.2013

### APPENDIX 3: CODES

	<b>RESPONDENT 1</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 2</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 3</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 4</b>
QUESTION 1	Educational qualifications Work experience	Educational qualifications Work experience	Work experience	Educational qualifications Work experience
QUESTION 2	Operations Support Duties	Mechanical Engineer Duties	Manager of Strategic Planning Roles	Commercial Department; Duties
QUESTION 3	Directorate	Security	Planning	Support service
QUESTION 4	People	Motivation; change	Human behaviour; values	People
QUESTION 5	Staff development	Manpower management; Planning	Mission	n/a
QUESTION 6	Team leaders; Planning, Senior Engineer; Business Planner; Senior business	Employees	Team leaders	Policy changing; Staff , development; Decision making
QUESTION 7	Technical know-how; managerial skills	Good listener; decisive Leader	Portray a good corporate image; communication	Culture
QUESTION 8	System	Environment	Environment	Management support
QUESTION 9	It is vital	It is a good intention The Kuwaitisation needs amendments though	It is a good intention	It is good in theory Not satisfied with the implementation
QUESTION 10	Staff issues: recruitment is slow; training and career development	Social bond and Relationships	Flexibility and Stubbornness	Meddling of other departments

QUESTION 11	Staff training and development programmes	Pyramid structure, It does enable mobility that is if you perform well	It is more flexible	The chart is fairly good
QUESTION 12	Appointing leaders	Appointing leaders	Appointing leaders	Influencing appointment of leaders
QUESTION 13	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta
QUESTION 14	Vast knowledge- Experience, In order to make right Decisions	Technical knowledge making right Decisions	Extensive knowledge, To support in decision making	Purchasing knowledge, Success depends on knowledge and administration skills
QUESTION 15	Investigation; decision making; negotiation and financial skills	Communication skills; Decision making skills	Leadership skills	Communication; Planning; listening skills
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
QUESTION 16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
QUESTION 17	Team work; dealing with difficult people	Strategic planning; Empowerment	Listening Skills	Change management; Planning management; Strategy management; Communication
	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
QUESTION 18	Technical know-how; managerial skills; motivating people; communication	Technical knowledge	Knowledge of specific function; strategic planning; listening	Attitude
QUESTION 19	Assertiveness; confidence; motivating people; technical know-how	Negotiation skills; strategic planning	Values; understanding relationships,	Communication
QUESTION 20	Negotiations	medium gap, because you will be policies and Procedures	Relationship vs. Shortfall of knowledge	Attitude
QUESTION 21	Training programs	Decision making; team building	Knowledge	Transparency

QUESTION 22	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent
QUESTION 23	International papers; Conferences	Assessment programmes; Personal development Programme	Leadership development programme	Masters' degree
QUESTION 24	Development Programmes	Dealing with others and decision making	Regular courses; IMD	IDAP Test
QUESTION 25	A learning process	Mentoring; Coaching	Courses and programmes are good	Coaching
QUESTION 26	External experience Exchange	Exposure to other Companies	Courses, tools and programmes	n/a
QUESTION 27	Executive management	Modification in decision making; team work; communication and Motivation	Availability of programmes and courses; leading by example of the skills learnt	n/a
QUESTION 28	Learning by myself; getting involved; listening, to people; motivation Coaching	Planning	Listening, trust, respect	Masters' degree

	<b>RESPONDENT 5</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 6</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 7</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 8</b>
QUESTION1	Work experience	Educational qualifications Work experience	Work Experience	Work Experience
QUESTION2	Responsibilities	ction forecasting and	Team leader Responsibilities	Fire fighting services Duties
QUESTION3	Implementation of strategies	Communication	Budgeting and costing	Team leader in all commanding operations
QUESTION4	People	Communication; after support; recognition and Motivation	Problem solving	Communication and teamwork
QUESTION5	Database; Information	Recommendation of Changes	Support in budgeting	Delegation authority
QUESTION6	Subordinates; Peers	Entire organization	n/a	Senior office, senior engineers. specialists
QUESTION7	Willingness to develop; listening; communication	Profitability	Goals	Social; Political; Culture
QUESTION8	Communication	Culture; environment	Culture	Influencing of community
QUESTION9	It is a good idea, implementation is good though unaccepted	good and bad	very important	no positive result

QUESTION10	Change; communication	Implementation of rules	Change of management Hierarchy structure	Tendering to the system related to the Company
QUESTION11	Chart allows for training and developing People	Growth is there	Not that flexible	It gives mobility
QUESTION12	Influencing appointment of Leaders	Appointing leaders	None	They get involved
QUESTION13	Merit and Wasta	Merit	Merit and Wasta	Merit
QUESTION14	Knowledge is Essential To improve performance of the company	Financial knowledge In order to make right Decisions	Enough knowledge To cope with advancement across the work	Detailed knowledge In order to be a good Leader
QUESTION15	Management; Communication; Presentation skills	Leadership; Basic supervision; time management; interpersonal, communication skills	Coaching	Planning skills
	Yes	Yes though I lack some	No	Yes
QUESTION16	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
QUESTION17	Staff Development	Business knowledge;	Communication;	Language;
		Economical parameters;	Negotiating; Knowledge	Information
		Project management skills;	skills	Management
		Report writing;		
		Communication;		
		Interpersonal skills		
	Yes	Partly	Yes	Yes
QUESTION18	Succession Planning	Self esteem and self confidence	Training	Commitment

QUESTION19	Training Programs	Self esteem and self confidence	Knowledge and Communication	Knowledge
QUESTION20	Communication	Commitment; Loyalty; Discipline	Yes	There is a gap between superiors and team leaders
QUESTION21	Change management; Communication; decision making	Motivation; Commitment; Clear career path	Knowledge; Communication; Negotiation; Decision, making; Motivation	Knowledge
QUESTION22	To a greater Extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent
QUESTION23	MBA programme	Leadership programmes	Courses; Seminars and Conferences	Business trips; Conferences; Executive training
QUESTION24	Leadership Programmes	n/a	Courses	Conferences; Appreciation skills; Self-education
QUESTION25	People Development	Willingness to develop Skills	Grasping knowledge and responsibility	Time
QUESTION26	Rotation within the same groups but within the group	360 evaluation tool	Communication	Discipline and control
QUESTION27	Getting exposed to other functions of the Organization	A better understanding of time management and human aspects	Negotiation skills, Communication; Knowledge	None
QUESTION28	Knowledge	Assignment of power Generation	Training	Listening and Communication

	<b>RESPONDENT 9</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 10</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 11</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 12</b>
QUESTION1	Work experience	Educational qualification; work	Educational qualification; work	Work experience
QUESTION2	Legal department Duties	Mega project department, Duties and Responsibilities	Civil Engineering Duties	Tenders Duties
QUESTION3	Team leaders	Acting team leader	n/a	Mentoring and Coaching
QUESTION4	Communication and motivation	Communication	Motivation and knowledge	Development and motivation
QUESTION5	Implementation of rules	Tendering, implementation of rules and regulations	All decisions	Purchasing and service orders
QUESTION6	Seniors; Consultants	Subordinates	Employees	Manager; Colleagues
QUESTION7	Knowledge; Communication	Knowledge and Communication	Social behaviour; Understanding people; Respecting people	Political system
QUESTION8	Culture of the Business	External influential forces	Work environment	Family
QUESTION9	It is average	It is not being implemented Well	It is not good	implemented widely
QUESTION10	Administration things; controlling people; payrolls	None	Eliminating experienced gap	Higher management Practice Hierarchy
QUESTION11	It is fair	There is mobility	It partially enables mobility	It partially enables Mobility
QUESTION12	Supervising the company; Influence in appointing leaders	Controls the company	It does get involved	They get involved
QUESTION13	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta

QUESTION14	Technical knowledge Enough knowledge, Dealing with the company's issues	To know what is going on in the company	Total knowledge	Quite a lot of Knowledge, For the success of the Business
QUESTION15		Training	Communication; Listening skills Yes	Communication; Emotional Intelligence
QUESTION16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partially Confident
	Communication	Motivation; Training; Negotiation	Communication	approachable; Expertise; Patience; Listening
QUESTION17	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Yes
QUESTION18	Enthusiasm	Intensive training	Respecting others; being positive and co-operative	More patient; adaptable and Intelligent
QUESTION19	Good communication, Training	Communication, Decision making	Communication skills; Listening skills	Knowledge
QUESTION20	Weaknesses, affecting progress	CEO who is well versed in technical issues yet weak in the admin issues	It is hard to measure	Reference to a scale
QUESTION21	Decision making	Yes	Integrity; Respect; Emotional Psychology	Implementation of Competency
QUESTION23	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent
QUESTION24	Leadership training, Seminars	Seminars	Leadership training	Programmes
QUESTION24	Leadership Courses	Sharing experience and knowledge	Reading and changing jobs	Courses
QUESTION25	Looking at the bigger picture and	Communication	Hands on exercises	Listening skills

QUESTION26		More communication; more enhancing knowledge	Detailed personality profile for team leaders	Practice and implementation of Policies
QUESTION27	Decision making	Communication skills; Knowledge of leadership programmes	Social events	Communication
QUESTION28	Learning leadership Processes	Promotion to a job that needed more experience and mental development	Working in building maintenance	Presentations

	<b>RESPONDENT 13</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 14</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 15</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 16</b>
QUESTION1	Work experience	Work experience	Work experience	Work experience
QUESTION2	Human Resources Duties	Projects Roles	Performing strategies studies Responsibilities	Operations Duties
QUESTION3	Team leader	Project coordination	Team leader	Team leader
QUESTION4	Communication, Accuracy and knowledge	Empowerment	Communication; Good network; Transparency	Innovation; Implementation of technology; Supporting Subordinates
QUESTION5	Policies and procedures	Running the day to day business	Providing strategic targets and profiles	Supporting and motivating Subordinates
QUESTION6	Seniors; chiefs; analysts	All employees	Colleagues; employees and upper management	Seniors
QUESTION7	Good rapport	Trust and respect	Coaching	Support from superiors and Strong decision maker
QUESTION8	Political environment	Communication	Systems and work environment	Trust
QUESTION9	It is important	It is good though the implementation is wrong	It is good	It is good
QUESTION10	None	Transparency	Knowledge sharing and decision making process	None
QUESTION11	It enables mobility	It enables mobility	n/a	It enables mobility
QUESTION12	They don't have any Influence	They get involved	They are not involved	They somehow get Involved
QUESTION13	Merit	Merit and Wasta	Merit	Wasta

QUESTION14	Financial knowledge; Customer knowledge, For the success of the Business	A lot of knowledge Well functioning of the organization	Business knowledge Important tool for decision making	For the great performance of the organization's business
QUESTION15	Communication; Team work; Decision making	Communication; Motivation	Confidence; Decision making	Technical
	Yes	n/a	n/a	Yes
QUESTION16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
QUESTION17	Training	Empowerment	Decision making;	Communication
		Transparency	Communication;	
			Negotiation	
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
QUESTION18	Training	Communication and listening	Listening; Communication and networking; negotiation; knowledge	Knowledge and delegation
QUESTION19	Knowledge in communications; Skills of presentations; Writing Reports	Communication	Dealing with people and conflicts	Communication; delegation; empowerment; Trust
QUESTION20	Lack of knowledge of policy as well as communication	Communication	Decision making	Decision making
QUESTION21	Negotiation skills	Trust	Knowledge	Decision making
QUESTION22	n/a	To a lesser extent	To a greater extent	To a greater extent
QUESTION23	Courses	Programmes	Courses	Seminars; conferences; open discussions
QUESTION24	Courses	Leadership programs	Management style	Learning from others

QUESTION25	Courses, workshops and Visiting and interacting with other	Practising and developing oneself	Customizing situations	Empowerment
QUESTION26	International conferences	Revisiting and auditing, Leadership programs	Synergy; knowledge sharing	Performance schedule
QUESTION27	Communication skills and negotiation skills	Empowerment	Communication; Decision, making; Negotiations; Empowerment	Patience
QUESTION28	Negotiation skills	Boot camps	Communication	Working as a shift; meeting people; making decisions

	<b>RESPONDENT 17</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 18</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 19</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 20</b>
QUESTION1	Educational qualifications and work experience	Work experience	Work experience	Work experience and educational qualifications
QUESTION2	Enterprises Management Responsibilities	Maintenance engineering	Operations Manager	Finance
QUESTION3	Team leader	Team member	Training team leaders	Coaching newly graduates
QUESTION4	Developing oneself	Trust; transparency	Being exemplary	Focus on people; developing, mentoring and coaching them Communication and negotiation
QUESTION5	Engaging staff members on a fast track system	Updating old recommendation; planning and part of the		Incentives
QUESTION6	Senior management	Subordinates	New engineers	Seniors
QUESTION7	Decision making	Knowledge	Working from the heart and being true to oneself	Communication; leading the business; innovation and creativeness; decision making and empowerment
QUESTION8	Procedures	Environment	Environment	Procedures
QUESTION9	It is not good	It is good but the implementation is not good	It is good but is of less impact	Not asked
QUESTION10	Changes of management	Transparency and an undefined career path	New things that are not in line with one's job	Wasta
QUESTION11	It does not enable Mobility	It does not enable mobility	It enables mobility	It does not enable mobility
QUESTION12	They are involved	They are involved	They are not involved	They are involved
QUESTION13	Wasta	Wasta	Merit	Wasta

QUESTION14	Essential business knowledge It brings business people together	good in running the company	It is essential for the success of the business	It is important for the smooth running of the company
QUESTION15	Need for more team leaders and Managers	Leadership	Knowledge, Communication, Coordination ;good negotiator	Decision making, focus on Production
QUESTION16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
QUESTION17	Communication; negotiation and Planning	Leadership	Technical skills	Delegation, decision making
QUESTION18	Technical skills	Knowledge; Experience; Communication	Attachments; Disciplinary	Leadership skills
QUESTION	Technical background and management courses	Trust; Empowerment Communication; Knowledge	Attachment	Developing knowledge, understanding business processes, communication, negotiation skills
QUESTION20	Knowledge	Improving quality of leaders		Old fashioned- new fashioned; open minded close minded
QUESTION21	Strategic directives	Trust; values; respect, ethics; behaviour	Decision making	Delegation
QUESTION22	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent	To a greater extent
QUESTION23	Training Programmes	Courses	Working with projects	Yes
QUESTION24	Learning from Others	Courses in authentic leadership	Planning	Human capital
QUESTION25	Coaching	Real practises	Courses and real time cases	Practice, Attending advance,

QUESTION26	Coaching	Independent third party to support the HR	Adapt to new technology and systems	Honesty, fairness
QUESTION27	n/a	None	Dealing with other Groups not operations	Confidence
QUESTION28	Being in charge of the engineering department	Working in a defined process and as per job description; Communication	Projects; planning and construction	Interview for finance manager Position Controlling my family

	<b>RESPONDENT 21</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 22</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 23</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 24</b>
QUESTION1	Work experience	Work experience	Work experience	Work experience
QUESTION2	Projects	n/a	Quality Assurance Duties	IT Responsibilities
QUESTION3	Team leader		Stream line decision making	Setting goals and Objectives
QUESTION4	To be task oriented	To get the job done; achieving strategies, developing our people	Not asked	Motivation
QUESTION5	Policy making	Organizational effectiveness	none	None
QUESTION6	Engineers and supervisors	Seniors	Subordinates	Managers, engineers
QUESTION7	Self satisfaction and recognition by others	Training and development	none	Good communication skills, teamwork, decision making
QUESTION8	Environment	Appraisals	Politics	None
QUESTION9	It is not good	It is a mixed bag	It is good but the implementation is very bad	It is good
QUESTION	Wasta	Training people	none	Personnel issues
QUESTION11	Military style It does not enable mobility	It is sometimes flexible	It does enable mobility	It does enable mobility
QUESTION12	Its indirectly involved	Their role is minimal	They are involved	None
QUESTION13	Merit and Wasta	Merit, Vast knowledge	Merit, Enough to run the business	Merit, Good knowledge

QUESTION14	It is important for the running of operations of a company	It causes good performance and brings best results in the business		
QUESTION15	Decision making, communication, empowerment, change management	Problem solving skills	Leadership skills	Yes
	Yes			
QUESTION16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
QUESTION17	Project management skills	Financial model building	To be focused and Analytical	Leading by example
QUESTION18	Technical know-how	To understand the interfaces between the K companies	Communication, Teamwork, job Knowledge	Communication, team work, Knowledge
QUESTION19	Engineering design	Marketing intelligence	Team work, communication, Empowerment	Decision making
QUESTION20	Technical skills-leadership skills	Team leaders-managers	To have full communication skills and full leadership skills	not answered
QUESTION21	Ownership skills	Competencies	Trust	Delegation
QUESTION22	To a lesser extent	To a greater extent	To a greater extent	To a greater extent
QUESTION23	Seminars, leadership	Training and development	Courses	External and internal programs
	development programmes	programme		
QUESTION24	Communication	Strategic plans	Tracing gaps and trying to overcome them	Programs
QUESTION25	Formal training, communication, listening	Experience	Practice, coaching, mentoring	Training courses, coaching, Mentoring

QUESTION26	none	None	Probing staff capabilities and try enhancing by bridging gaps	Motivation
QUESTION27	none	To understand the sister companies, job enlargement	Attending seminars	none
QUESTION28	Project management	Attachment	Interaction with others	Coaching and mentoring
QUESTION29	Raising my children	Working at Betchel	Listening to the needs of others	Raising my children

	<b>RESPONDENT 25</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 26</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 27</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 28</b>
QUESTION1	Work experience		Work experience	Work experience and educational
QUESTION2	To cater all KPC departments	Corrosion and inspection Responsibilities	Finance Responsibilities	Strategic Planning Duties
QUESTION3	Leader	Decision making	Middle management, leading group and team	Delegator
QUESTION4	Team work	Decision making, communication skills, motivation	Knowledge	Empower people and coaching them
QUESTION5	None	none	Setting objectives and targets	
QUESTION6	Seniors, Juniors, Managers	Junior engineers	None	Seniors, planners
QUESTION7	None	Knowledge, communication, decision making	Experience, knowledge, Communication	Training
QUESTION8	Culture	none	Internal and external factors	External environment
QUESTION9	It is good	It is good	It is good	It is good
QUESTION10	Culture	Empowerment issues	Grouping model	Empowerment
QUESTION11	Rigid	Rigid		Very long chain
	It does not enable mobility	It does not enable mobility	It does not enable Mobility	It does not enable mobility
QUESTION12	no idea	They are not involved	They are involved	They are involved
QUESTION13	Merit + Wasta	Wasta, Knowledge of the department and the company itself	Wasta	Merit and Wasta, 3 years of knowledge

QUESTION14	Knowledge of the business is important		Knowledge is important	Knowledge is good for developing strategic plans
QUESTION15	Power and knowledge	Decision making	Empowerment, decision making, motivation	Decision making, empowerment, Communication
QUESTION16	Yes	Yes	No	Not always
QUESTION17	Coaching	Training	Proper time Management	To be aware of the outside environment, how other companies operate and look into the future
QUESTION18	Technical know-how, Knowledge		Communication, training	Day to day technologies, knowledge, training and participation in international events
QUESTION19	Management skills, adapting latest technology	Leadership skills	Decision making, change management, empowerment	Everyone to be a strategic thinker, enhance communication, knowledge transfer
QUESTION20	Not big	not asked	Not big	There is a gap between sector to Sector
QUESTION21	Empowerment	Empowerment	Good system	Everyone to be a strategic thinker, enhance communication, knowledge transfer
QUESTION22	To a greater extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent
QUESTION23	Never attended	Internal and external courses	Programs, workshops, seminars	None

QUESTION24	Affiliating with others, training Courses ,daily work	Dealing with others, communication	Knowledge and leading by example	Time management
QUESTION25	Practice, training	Exchange of information, learning, listening	Time management	Training
QUESTION26	Develop programs for senior staff	Specialized workshops in leadership, understanding competencies	Take care of people, look at their career	Leadership programs, courses, coaching programs
QUESTION27	Communication, dealing with others	Management skills	Empowerment, decentralize, delegate	Gaining the technical part from the attachment in leadership style, learning from management style
QUESTION28	Experience	Conferences	Change management, moving from division to division	Working with the team
QUESTION29	Raising myself, educating myself	Trust from the GS	Raising my children	Being a social person

	<b>RESPONDENT 29</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 30</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 31</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 32</b>
QUESTION1	Work experience and educational qualifications	Work experience	Work experience and educational Qualifications	Work experience
QUESTION2	IT Responsibilities	Maintenance Duties	Treasury Responsibilities	Duties
QUESTION3	Manager	not mentioned	Leading the front office for treasury	Second line manager
QUESTION4	Not asked	To be a leader and be part of the team	Honesty	Power
QUESTION5	Technology		Financing projects	
QUESTION6	Seniors, subordinates, engineers	Technical people	Subordinates	Senior analysts, engineers, advisors
QUESTION7	Knowledge and communication	Technical background, leadership personality, communication and decision making	Training	Knowledge, communication, decision making
QUESTION8		Culture		Environment
QUESTION9	It is good	It is implemented so well	It is not good	
QUESTION10	none	Decision making	Decision making and communication	Management support
QUESTION11	Rigid It does not enable mobility	It enables mobility	No	It does not enable mobility
QUESTION12	They are partially involved	They are not involved	Involvement	It is involved; it appoints top management
QUESTION13	Merit and Wasta	Merit	Wasta	Merit and Wasta

QUESTION14	I have the knowledge It is essential for understanding the decision making process	For the success of the business	15 years of knowledge Important in running of the business	18 years of experience
QUESTION15	Communication, Conflict management, change management	Communication, negotiation, Knowledge	Long term planning, decentralization Empowerment	Technical knowledge
QUESTION16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
QUESTION17	Change management	Change management, negotiation	Flexibility, knowledge, Empowerment	Patience and tolerance
QUESTION18	Not asked	Communication	Knowledge, communication	Will to learn
QUESTION19	Communication	Patience	Empowerment	Patience and motivation
QUESTION20	There is a gap, too much of something and too little of something	There are gaps, all people are not on the same levels	There is a big gap, they lack a lot of other leadership skills	Empowerment
QUESTION21	Trust, faith, motivation factors	Addressing the vision to lower levels	There are more capabilities related to the core of business	Need to make a difference and thinking outside the box
QUESTION22	Not answered	To a greater extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent
QUESTION23	Training, courses	Courses	Courses, Seminars, Conferences	Courses; 6 of them
QUESTION24	Change management	none	MBA courses	Being a member of a non profit organization; listening skills
QUESTION25	Practice	Practice	Practice	Taking courses, attending seminars
QUESTION26	Training	On the job training, Coaching	Coaching, mentoring	none
QUESTION27	Training	Managing people, knowledge, Negotiation	Developing planning skills, strategic thinking, communication	Advanced communication skills

QUESTION28	Training	Learning from leaders, leading by Example	Attachment with an international company	First career as under developing UDI
QUESTION29	Having influential people in my life	On the job training	Seeing my father	Business family

	<b>RESPONDENT 33</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 34</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 35</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 36</b>
QUESTION1	Work experience	Work experience and Educational Qualifications	Work experience and educational qualifications	Work experience
QUESTION2	Duties	Duties	Responsibilities	Responsibilities
QUESTION3	Team leader	Role model; leading by example	Manager	Team work
QUESTION4	Communication	Respect	Development	Communication
QUESTION5	Strategy implementation	None	Communication skills	none
QUESTION6	employees	Employees	Subordinates and superiors	Employees
QUESTION7	Planning	Motivation	Communication skills	Motivation, Empowerment
QUESTION8	Environment	Environment	Leadership style	Environment
QUESTION9	It is good	It is not good	It is well and the implementation is good	It is effective
QUESTION10	Unforeseen restrictions	Outside influence	Too many meetings and new requirements	Rules and regulations
QUESTION11	It does enable mobility	It is rigid, It does not enable mobility	Functional matrix, It enables mobility	It is rigid, It does not enable mobility
QUESTION12	There is minimal involvement	It is not involved	It is involved	It is not involved
QUESTION13	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta
QUESTION14	Knowledge is essential for the smooth running of the company	Technical knowledge	Enough knowledge to sustain the business	15 years of knowledge
QUESTION15	Communication and technical	Communication and time Management	Communication; persuasion	Decision making, negotiation, communication

QUESTION16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
QUESTION17	Leadership skills and communication	Change management, communication	Time management, stress management	Empowerment, change management
QUESTION18	Delegation, authority, seminars, Courses	Adaptation to the work Environment	Strong technical background, communication skills	Technical knowledge
QUESTION19	Flexibility in decision making	not asked	Technical capabilities	Empowerment, communication, Motivation
QUESTION20	Lack of time to develop skills	Communication, change Management	Analytical part decision	Communication
QUESTION21	On the job training and exchange of knowledge	Communication	Analytical tools	Flexibility
QUESTION22	To a greater extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent	To a lesser extent
QUESTION23	External seminars and courses	Professional programmes, seminars, conferences	Courses	Courses
QUESTION24	On the job training; talent skills	Courses and seminars	Reading articles	Leadership courses
QUESTION25	Involvement in different types of activities and businesses	On the job training	Coaching, formal training	Workshops
QUESTION26	none	Implementation of knowledge Gained	Adopting new systems in evaluating project needs	Coaching and mentoring
QUESTION27	Coaching skills	Negotiation skills	Coaching	Knowledge
QUESTION28	The daily works	Team work	Working in different areas and doing the Master's programme	Working on projects
QUESTION29	Having more external workshops	The Gas-Leak	Not having Wasta	Life lessons on dependency

	<b>RESPONDENT 37</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 38</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 39</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 40</b>
QUESTION1	Work experience	Work experience	Work experience and educational qualifications	Work experience
QUESTION2	Duties	Duties and responsibilities	Responsibilities	Duties
QUESTION3	Supervisor	Team leader	Delegation	Project leader
QUESTION4	Motivation	Mega project experience	Communication	Developing project leader
QUESTION5	Communication	Providing solutions	Motivation	Data
QUESTION6	Seniors, engineers, team leaders	Subordinates	Not directly answered	Consultants and trainees
QUESTION7	Experience and exposure	Educational background, culture, experience	Knowledge sharing, training, communication	Change management, decision making Culture
QUESTION8	Culture	Culture	Environment	
QUESTION9	It is good, the implementation is not good	It is good but the implementation is not good	The implementation is good	
QUESTION10	Political influence	Hurdles in implementing IT solutions It is rigid	none	Motivation
QUESTION11	It is not that good	It does not enable mobility	none	It enables mobility
QUESTION12	It is involved	It is involved	It is involved	It is not involved
QUESTION13	Merit and Wasta	Merit and Wasta	Wasta	Merit and Wasta
QUESTION14	Enough knowledge to make the right decisions	17 years of knowledge	Enough knowledge to run the business	Vast knowledge
QUESTION15	Technical, decision making, communication	Technical, communication, Empowerment	Communication, empowerment, negotiation	Empowerment, decision making, change management

<b>QUESTION16</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>QUESTION17</b>	Change management, coaching, Mentoring	Negotiation skills, change management communication	Communication	Communication
<b>QUESTION18</b>	Training	Managerial training	Commitment	Presentation skills, communication Skills
<b>QUESTION19</b>	Communication, problem solving, conflict solving	Empowerment	Empowerment, decision making	Communication
<b>QUESTION20</b>	Political influence	Managerial level is weak	Culture	not asked
<b>QUESTION21</b>	Communication, change management, transparency	Training	Leadership programs, communication	Decision making
<b>QUESTION22</b>	To a lesser extent	They do not understand	To a lesser extent	It depends
<b>QUESTION23</b>	Workshops	Courses	Seminars	Conferences
<b>QUESTION24</b>	Working with professional committees	Leadership courses	Sharing knowledge	Leadership in sigma
<b>QUESTION25</b>	Training, coaching, mentoring	Coaching	Coaching, mentoring	Training
<b>QUESTION26</b>	On the job training	Coaching and mentoring	Knowledge management	none
<b>QUESTION27</b>	Controlling temper and improving communication	Empowerment	Creativity and knowledge	Communication
<b>QUESTION28</b>	Working on big projects	Volunteering	Certifications	Building up career from a lower level
<b>QUESTION29</b>	Encouragement from the family	Joining the MI team in Kuwait	Dealing with people	Motivation from leaders

	<b>RESPONDENT 41</b>	<b>RESPONDENT 42</b>
QUESTION1	Work experience	Work experience
QUESTION2	Duties	Duties
QUESTION3	Communication and change management	Team leader
QUESTION4	Achievements and change	Helping other leaders
QUESTION5	Change management	none
QUESTION6	Not answered directly	Lower levels, future leaders
QUESTION7	Trust	Knowledge
QUESTION8		Environment
QUESTION9	It is not good	It is not good
QUESTION10	Image of leaders	Listening, Pyramid structure
QUESTION11	It does not enable mobility	It does enable mobility
QUESTION12	Not sure	Not sure
QUESTION13	Wasta	Merit and Wasta
QUESTION14	Enough to run the business	Enough knowledge of the business
QUESTION15	Communication, decision making	Decision making, communication, Empowerment
QUESTION16	Yes	Yes
QUESTION17	Empowerment, decision making, change management	None

QUESTION18	Knowledge of the business	The power to say 'No'
QUESTION19	not asked	Flexibility
QUESTION20	Measure of competency	no gap
QUESTION21	Training	System re-evaluation
QUESTION22	They do not understand	It is neutral
QUESTION23		Leadership training programs
QUESTION24	Attending conferences	Courses
QUESTION25	Courses	
QUESTION26	Eliminating corruption	Proper implementation of the 360 evaluation system
QUESTION27	Implementation	not sure
QUESTION28	Professional facilitation	Promotion to be a team leader