

The effect of cultural modelling on leadership profiling of the Cambodian manager

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Management research has predominantly focused on national studies of large nations, while smaller nations have been largely ignored. In addition, although Confucian Asia has been extensively studied, dharmic Asia and the Mekong region have not. This study, therefore, considers Cambodia, using the conceptual framework of Selvarajah *et al.* (Selvarajah, C., Duignan, P., Nuttman, C. and Suppiah, C., 1995. In search of the Asian leader: An exploratory study of dimensions that relates to excellence in leadership. *Management international review: Journal of international business*, 35 (1), 29–34), which has been previously used to understand a variety of eastern and western leadership behaviours. This study on Cambodia, similar to previous studies, has demonstrated the importance of cultural context when considering leadership behaviour. In Cambodia, the influence of religion and its turbulent past make this a particularly interesting study of managerial leadership and the implications to management and theory development are discussed.

Keywords: culture; deference for authority; individualism; leadership; pragmatism; Theravada Buddhism

Introduction

Cambodia is a nation that has been ravaged by war, both externally generated as a consequence of the Vietnam War and its own Civil War during the Pol Pot regime. These conflicts have resulted both directly (through the elimination or ‘re-educating’ the educated elite to the agrarian way of life) and indirectly (undermining the educational infrastructure and the business environment) in the dissipation of ‘the pool of talented managers’ (Chiu 2007, p. 435) within Cambodia. Bargawi (2005) suggests that this destruction of the country’s human resources has left no other option but for Cambodia to liberalize its investment permits to bring foreign professional managers, technicians and supervisors into Cambodia. This human resource crisis and the resulting human capacity-building exercise are shaping the behavioural values of Cambodian managers. To date, there has been no research conducted on the perceptions of managerial values within the Cambodian workplace. Research such as this will provide useful insights for managers who have been – and continue to be – brought in from other countries to support the development of Cambodian industries.

The experiences of Cambodia’s past conflict, its adjustment to expatriate management influences and its embeddedness to dharmic traditions make this a particularly interesting work. This research seeks to develop an understanding of work and leadership values as

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perceived by local Cambodian managers. While extensive literature has charted managerial values of countries such as Thailand (for example, Niffenegger *et al.* 2006, Limsila and Ogunlana 2007, Cuong and Swierczek 2008, Yukongdi 2010) and Vietnam (for example, Berrell and Hoa 1999, Quang and Vuong 2002, Thang *et al.* 2007, Tuan 2010), a distinct paucity of empirical studies is evident in the other Mekong countries. Some studies, such as in Boehnlein *et al.* (1999), Chandler (1998), Pran (1997) and Peang-meth (1991), have provided an initial explanation for the behaviour of Cambodians based on their adherence to *dharmic*¹ philosophies and the Theravada Buddhist traditions of authority, individual pursuit of achievement, social interaction and balance. However, their perspectives have yet to be translated into the study of leadership and/or managerial values. As very few studies have considered dharmic influences on managerial values, the findings from this study will extend the boundaries of current leadership theories.

Unlike Confucian influence in East Asian management thinking (see, for example, Hofstede and Bond 1988, Chen 2004, Tsui *et al.* 2004, Taormina and Selvarajah 2005, Cheng 2011) and Protestant Ethics in western management thinking (see, for example, George 1987, Carr 2003, Weber-Berg 2011, Weber *et al.* 2002), the influence of dharmic philosophies on countries within Asia, especially the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, is not adequately covered. This study explores the Cambodian context – as a Southeast Asian country – where the dharmic traditions are propagated through Theravada Buddhism, which is the national religion of the country. The cultural traditions of countries such as Cambodia have roots in Pali² and Sanskrit³ philosophies, which are similar to the Buddhist practices of Sri Lanka. The authors also acknowledge some of the Hindu practices in Cambodia as these are still evident in the Cambodian society and influence managerial and leadership values.

Literature review

As mentioned earlier, Cambodia is predominantly a Theravada Buddhist nation and researchers (see Inglehart and Baker 2000) have emphasized that religion has the potential to influence behaviour – and at extension, managerial and leadership behaviours. Although this research does not directly explore religious tenets⁴, it does refer to the religious tenets associated with distinct behaviours as they are expected to influence the perceptions of the respondents. The following section therefore provides a brief understanding of the Theravada Buddhist philosophy before providing the theoretical content for this leadership study.

Theravada Buddhism

The social fabric of Cambodia is intertwined with the religious practices derived from Hinduism over the first twelve centuries of this Common Era, and from Buddhism thereafter (Mabbett and Chandler 1995, Chandler 1998). Though Buddhism's root religion is Hinduism, Cambodians found the non-existence of an eternal blissful self (soul) or *atman* in Buddhism appealing. There are two main branches of Buddhism, with Theravada Buddhism predominant in Southeast Asian nations, having arrived from India through Sri Lanka and Mahayana Buddhism journeying overland from India into Northeast Asia. Buddhism has a special appeal as it encouraged individuals to improve their futures through their own initiative and work (Peang-meth 1991), not bound by caste restrictions⁵ (Doniger and Smith 2000). The emphasis in perfecting oneself culminates in reincarnation, a central concept in Buddhism and is based on the concept of *karma*,

which concerns the effects of individuals' thoughts and deeds during their both present and past lives, and *dharmā*⁶, their righteous duty.

Theravada Buddhism avoids both pluralism and monism through the teaching of analysis and synthesis. Ghose (2007) contends that the inner mind has to be 'awakened.' This school of thought teaches the aspirant to achieve the goal of the 'worthy one' by seeking answers through engaging in valid thought and experience. Understanding this principle is important when seeking reasons for the tolerant social behaviour within these societies. Buddha's teaching is in essence about overcoming *dukkha* or suffering which is ubiquitous (Hayes 2002). The teachings of Buddha, as Toneatto (2002) reflects, are to use a strict analytical approach to developing insights to suffering and its alleviation. The first stage in this process is then recognizing the four steps in achieving the Noble Truth (Lamberton 2005, p. 56):

- (1) human suffering is seen as a human failing;
- (2) the cause of suffering being selfish desire;
- (3) the cessation of suffering requires the removal of desire; and
- (4) following the Noble Eightfold Path leads to liberation from suffering.

Each individual is expected to have their own life experiences, their own *karma* or actions, and ultimately the individual has to seek cessation from suffering guided by the Noble Eightfold Path (Marlatt 2002). The Noble Eightfold Path, in essence, directs individuals to seek the right wisdom *panna*⁷ with regards to *view* and *intention*; the right ethical conduct *sila*⁸ in regard to *speech*, *action* and *livelihood*; and the right mental discipline *samadhi*⁹ in regard to *effort*, *mindfulness* and *concentration*. The Noble Eightfold Path is achieved only by avoiding extremes in all its dimensions because the scriptures advocate the *Middle Path*¹⁰ in all things. In the following section, an overview of extant leadership studies is provided, before describing how Theravada Buddhism is incorporated into this study of leadership and managerial values.

The context of leadership studies

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in leadership studies across cultures and several research books on global leadership, such as House *et al.* (2004) and Chhokar *et al.* (2008), have been published. Despite this growing interest, Morrison (2000) argues that very little has been published on characteristics, antecedents, competencies and developmental strategies of leadership and management. Javidan *et al.* (2006, p. 68) have acknowledged, 'Advice to global managers needs to be specific enough to help them understand how to act in different surroundings.' It is this specificity that we aim to address in this publication.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2009) describe three layers of culture in society as leading from the explicit to the implicit. The most explicit layer and the most visible is that of artefacts and products produced by a culture. The next layer relates to norms and values, which reflect a deeper, more implicit culture. Finally the most implicit layer or core of a culture is its assumptions. Within any one national culture or even organizational culture there may be sub-cultures with potentially many subgroups, which will all display the three layers of culture. Religious subgroups may exist, as may subgroups defined by class or race.

This line of inquiry is also reflected in the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) research project (see Javidan and House 2001, House *et al.* 2002). This study conceptualized and developed nine cultural dimensions; of these some were similar to those developed in the works of other researchers such as

Hofstede, Trompenaars, and Kluckhohn and Stodtbeck. However, as Javidan *et al.* (2006, p. 72) explain, 'the manner in which we conceptualized and operationalized them was different.' The purpose of the GLOBE study was to examine the inter-relationships between societal culture, organizational culture and organizational leadership in countries across the world.

In this study, we acknowledge the importance of cultural contextualization where 'culture colours nearly every aspect of human behaviour,' and therefore 'a working knowledge of culture and its influences can be useful to executives operating in a multicultural business environment' (Javidan *et al.* 2006, p. 67). The approach taken in the current research is also conceptualized and operationalized differently. The objective of this research is to relate managerial values to leadership using a four-dimensional framework consisting of personal qualities; managerial style; the demands of the organization; and the influences represented in the political, economic and social environment. The general hypothesis is that the leadership values of managers are expressed through these four dimensions. In seeking perspectives on managerial leadership in organizations in Cambodia, the expectation is that these values are manifested through reference to the qualities of an individual, the nature of management, the nature of the organization and the nature of the environment in which the organization operates.

Theoretical framework

In this study, we make the assertion that cultural imperatives, such as the doctrines of Theravada Buddhism, influence leadership behaviour. In so doing, we acknowledge that 'culture is . . . a purely mental phenomenon and hence a psychological phenomenon and hence constrained by psychological processes of cognition and learning' (D'Andrade 2001, p. 243). This view of culture is quite different to Hall (1976), Hofstede (1980), and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2009) who base their cultural categorization and measurement on the basis of dominant cultural value orientations. In this study, perceptions are viewed as knowledge that is mentally organized in the form of schemas or mental structures (Singh 2002). It is from this anthropological viewpoint that we look at Cambodia's culture and its influence on leader behaviours.

Based on the above reasoning, the theory underlying our approach is similar to the cultural models presented by Hilton (1998). On the basis of his ethnographical fieldwork in Cambodia, he discusses Cambodian cultural models relating to face and honour in the Cambodian society. Very much like other Southeast Asian cultures, Cambodia exhibits strong hierarchical tendencies (Martin 1994, Ledgerwood 1990, Hilton 1998) that give rise to legitimized authority, power, moral order, respect, obedience, honour and obedience to social superiors. Relationships in Cambodia tend to be 'structured vertically in terms of power, status, and patronage' (Hilton 1998, p. 98).

Hilton refers to this as the cultural model theory of 'natural inequality' and proposes that the cultural model has two origins. Initially the early inhabitants of Southeast Asia were often led by 'big people' or 'men of prowess' with certain personal or 'soul stuff' that differentiated them from others in their societies. The Hindu concept of 'potency, power and hierarchical incorporation' reinforced this cultural model (Hilton, p. 99). With the advent of Buddhism, the notion of merit and karma determining an individual's social status as a consequence of past actions intensified, legitimizing this natural inequality on a moral basis.

Hilton (1998, p. 100) explores a second theory to support the individualistic nature of Cambodians and suggests the cultural model theory of 'hierarchical mobility' where

‘one can enhance one’s status in a variety of ways, such as by increasing one’s wealth, knowledge, occupational level, political position, influence, and merit.’ Hilton, therefore, purports that in the Buddhist doctrine status is not set at birth and that through individual pursuit and initiative one is able to rise in status.

These two notions of conformity and the contradictory notion of independence will be explored further in this research to provide explanation of leader behaviours in Cambodian organizations.

Hypotheses framing

In this study, we use the conceptual framework for leadership described in Selvarajah *et al.* (1995). This original model was developed for studying managerial leadership in Asia and was based on both western literature (for example, Stogdill and Coons 1957, Hunt and Larson 1979, Takala 1998, Peters and Waterman 1983, Xu *et al.* 1985, Bennis 1989, Yukl 1989) and eastern literature (for example, Sinha 1980, Misumi 1984, Ling 1989, Swierczek 1991, Ling *et al.* 1992). From a group of 94 value statements (see Selvarajah *et al.* 1995, Taormina and Selvarajah 2005¹¹), a group of researchers from six ASEAN countries (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) created four broad categories for the study of excellent leaders: Personal Qualities (PQ), Managerial Behaviours (MB), Organizational Demands (OD) and Environmental Influences (EI). The value statements within the above categories were then subjected to a Q-sort by Asian managers who were attending executive programmes at the Asian Institute of Management in Manila and at the Vocational Technical Institute, a Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) institute located in Brunei Darussalam. Based on this work, scales for Perspectives of an Excellent Leader (EL) and the four cultural dimensions – OD, PQ, MB and EI – have been constructed using the statements provided in the Appendix.

EL describes the combination of behaviours and attitudes desirable for good leadership within a certain cultural context (Selvarajah and Meyer 2008b). *PQ* are the personal values, skills, attitudes, behaviour and qualities of an individual. They emphasize morality, religion, inter-personal relationships and communication. *MB* cover a person’s nature, values, attitudes, actions and styles when performing managerial duties. They emphasize persuasive powers. *OD* are the ways a manager responds to the goals, objectives, structures and issues in an organization. They emphasize the importance of organizational prosperity. *EI* are external factors that influence the success of the entire organization. They emphasize the importance of scanning and evaluating the external environment for opportunities. The four-dimensional framework of Selvarajah *et al.* (1995) has been successfully applied in numerous studies both in Asia (for example, Taormina and Selvarajah 2005; Selvarajah 2008; Selvarajah and Meyer 2006, 2008a, 2008b) and in Europe (Waal *et al.* 2002).

Hypotheses

Each of the above four concepts will be interpreted in the Cambodian context. Through factor analysis it is found that PQ separates into two areas (individualism and respect), MB separates into three areas (Pragmatism, Tolerance and Decision-making) while EI separates into two areas (Environmental Tracking and Embracing Change). However, OD seems to relate to only one area – Deference for Authority. In the following section, we provide explanation for each construct with supporting hypotheses.

Personal qualities: individualism

Takei (1998) explains that members in a group may share a collective identity, even though individual members may have multiple identities. Groups have social or collective memory, which binds relationships but this may not be at the expense of individual pursuits. Hofstede (1980, 2007) describes some countries as being more collectivist than others. For example, India, Iran, Japan and the Arab countries are less collectivist than China, Indonesia and Korea. Hofstede (1980) explains collectivism and individualism as opposite ends of a social spectrum where collectivism is seen to stand for a tightly knit social framework where relatives, kin or other in-group members are expected to look after an individual in exchange for unquestionable loyalty; while in an individualistic society, there is a loosely knit social framework and the individuals are expected to look after themselves and immediate families only. Erez and Early (1993) simply define collectivism as supporting group interest and individualism as emphasizing self-interests.

On closer examination of the above definitions, it can be construed that aspects of individualistic values could influence collectivism and *vice versa*. For example, the Theravada Buddhist philosophy encapsulating the concept of dharma urges individual salvation or, as Taylor (1996, p. 19) explains, 'each individual is responsible for his or her own enlightenment.' Therefore, in the final analysis, balance is sought between authority, individual pursuit of achievement and social interaction (Benveniste 2000, Lamberton 2005). In this context individualism can be seen as an important personal quality construct that operates to provide balance in the Cambodian society, allowing the hierarchical mobility that Hilton (1998) emphasizes. This gives rise to the first hypothesis that will be tested in this study.

Hypothesis 1: Individualism is an important mediating construct in the Cambodian culture and this will influence managers' perception of what constitutes an excellent leader.

Personal qualities: respect

In his article on Asian management, Hofstede (2007) states that Asian cultures score relatively high on measures of respect (Power Distance). Behavioural norms relating to respect are transferred in parent-child relationships and as Hofstede (2007, p. 417) emphasizes, these relationships are extended and 'they determine the role of respect for authority in organizations'.

The social balance in Cambodian organizations is also based on respect for each individual's existence (Hilton 1998). The leader, as a person in authority, is to be respected as the leader's position is an achieved status and is seen as a culmination of good karma (actions or deeds). This view is akin to servant leadership where the leader is seen as a nurturing person (Sendjaya and Sarros 2002). However, Taylor (1996, p. 19) expresses the view that the doctrine of non-violence embedded in Buddhism 'is a call for a respect for the autonomy of each person, demanding a minimal use of coercion in human affairs.'

In Cambodian society, respect for leaders and for individuals is therefore a valued personal quality construct and this provides the basis for the second hypothesis in this research.

Hypothesis 2: Respect is an important value in the Cambodian culture and this will influence managers' perception of what constitutes an excellent leader.

Organizational demand: deference for authority

Presthus (1960, p. 86) defines authority 'as the capacity to evoke compliance in others.' He adds that in formal organizations interpersonal relationships are 'structured in terms of the prescribed authority of the actors.' Therefore, while organizations are designed to achieve bigger goals, these must engage 'instruments of motivation and direction to overcome the individual goals of their members.'

The Cambodian flag bears Angkor Wat, the glory of the Cambodian people's former greatness, and this symbolism 'plays a profound and complex role in the display of the national identity of the people of Cambodia' (Fletcher *et al.* 2007, p. 386). Angkor Wat, the ancient ruins of a Hindu–Buddhist kingdom that lasted for over 1500 years, has become the symbol for uniting the nation under dharmic traditions. The *Devaraja* or 'God-king', a concept from the Hindu pyramid style of authority relationship, has permeated to the present-day authority structure in Cambodia (Peang-meth 1991, Hilton 1998, Ojendal and Antlov 1998, Roberts 2002). Throughout Cambodian history, including foreign rule, Pol Pot's regime, the communist period and the monarchy era, Cambodia knew only absolutist rule (Ledgerwood and Un 2003). The acceptance of democracy in Cambodia in 1993 was thus indeed a challenge to established traditions (Roberts 2002).

Ojendal and Antlov (1998) are of the view that the authority structure within the Cambodian culture creates a superior–subordinate relationship where loyalty and allegiance are based on hierarchy. This also supports the effect of karma where a person's station in the present life includes the experiences of previous incarnations. It is this philosophy that has given scope to patronage and the hierarchical observance of social relations and status (Peang-meth 1991, Chandler 1998, Kakar and Kakar 2007). In other words, each person has to respect and obey those higher up in the social hierarchy as they are seen to have earned their status meritoriously. A person with rank is seen as having earned his position in life, with good karma, and is therefore to be respected. The hierarchy relationship system is also found in India, which shares similar dharmic principles (Kakar and Kakar 2007).

As Chandler (1998) claims, the value attached to subordination through status entrenches feudalistic behaviour and leads to subjection under autocratic rule. This acceptance of one's station in life by the Cambodians suited the French administrators who referred to them as docile (Chandler 1998). Ojendal and Antlov (1998, p. 525) further argue that although Cambodia accepted the institution of democratic elections in 1993 and a constitutional monarchy was established, 'the high tolerance towards authoritarianism among neighbouring ASEAN countries has paved the way for Cambodia returning to authoritarianism.'

On the basis of this understanding, the following hypothesis is forwarded for testing.

Hypothesis 3: In Cambodian organizations, deference for authority is the most important characteristic for an excellent leader.

Managerial behaviour: pragmatism

Theravada Buddhism (and Buddhism in general) promotes the Middle Path where the expected cultural environment emphasizes coexistence, tolerance and individual initiative to benefit the common good of the community (Lamberton 2005, Wongtada *et al.* 1998). Buddhist precepts identify 'desire' as the root cause of all suffering and removal of suffering involves tolerance and acceptance of differences (Gethin 1998, Novick 1999). As emphasized by Lamberton (2005, p. 60) 'Activity within a Buddhist economy must

contribute to the well-being of each of the three interconnected spheres of human existence, the individual, society and the environment.'

On the basis of the belief of seeking balance, the following hypothesis pertaining to pragmatism is therefore forwarded for testing.

Hypothesis 4: In Cambodia, perceptions of what makes an EL can be understood in terms of pragmatism.

Managerial behaviour: tolerance

As mentioned, the Middle Path promotes a preference for balance rather than extreme views and definitive judgements on what is right and wrong or what is good and evil. The social structure supports mindfulness (Kumar 2002, Lamberton 2005), compassion (Kumar 2002, Gyatso 1994), being non-judgemental and present-centred awareness (Kabat-Zinn 1990), as each individual seeks the right balance in life (Kumar 2002, Brazier 1995). This suggests that the Cambodians are highly tolerant and accept dichotomous views.

On the basis of this understanding, the following hypothesis is forwarded for testing.

Hypothesis 5: In Cambodia, perceptions of what makes an EL can be understood in terms of tolerance.

Managerial behaviour: decision-making

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) define styles of leadership as being influenced by 'area of freedom afforded subordinates' (cited in Vroom 2000, p. 83). Their reference is to the organizational cultural boundaries within which leadership decision-making operates. Hilton (1998) suggests that the political resolve is not to avoid being trapped in natural inequality but to enhance improvements using factors related to the cultural concept of hierarchical mobility. The turbulent changes in the Cambodian society have therefore strengthened the resolve to excel and to be forward-looking, suggesting an increase in the importance of decision-making skills.

On the basis of the above understanding, the following hypothesis is to be tested.

Hypothesis 6: In Cambodia, perceptions of what makes an EL can be understood in terms of timely independent decision-making.

Environmental influence: embracing change

As discussed, Cambodians have had a turbulent history. However, as a member of the ASEAN community and its acceptance to full membership in the World Trade Organization in 2004, the nation is looking at accelerating economic development (Sjoberg and Sjöholm 2006, Winter 2007) and is attracting foreign investment (Chiu 2007). On the basis of this evaluation, the nation will be seeking managers who will embrace change to enhance sustainable economic growth (Buysse and Verbeke 2003).

Traditionally, the Cambodians have been perceived as fatalistic and reluctant to change (Chandler 1998). Chandler believes that the notion of changelessness, a characteristic observed by the French colonial administrators, is a myth as Cambodian history highlights major transformations. This suggests that culturally Cambodians are

pragmatic and readily accept socially responsible change. The recent growth in the Cambodian economy (see Chiu 2007) also suggests that acceptance of change will continue to be perceived as an important leadership behaviour in the future. This then leads to the next hypothesis.

Hypothesis 7: In Cambodia, managers' perceptions of what makes an EL can be understood in terms of accepting and embracing socially responsible change.

Environmental influence: tracking change

As Buysse and Verbeke (2003, p. 453) contend, 'most large manufacturing firms now devote substantial time and resources to environmental management'. Given Cambodia's recent history and its strong desire to be engaged in the global economy, proactive strategies will be adopted to encourage foreign investment and to build human capacity to support economic development. This requires the need to plan and identify trends that support work performance, international competitiveness and a work culture that will be attractive to an international workforce. On the basis of this understanding, the following hypothesis is forwarded for testing.

Hypothesis 8: In Cambodia, managers' perceptions of what makes an EL can be understood in terms of environmental tracking.

It is within this cultural framework, which encompasses its past glory and future aspirations, that managerial leadership behaviours in Cambodia are studied.

Research methodology

This research attempts to study the perception of leadership and its variability among Cambodian managers. The research strategy involved triangulation, using both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. In seeking an appropriate research strategy, triangulation was selected as it provides for a cross-cultural examination of facts in the pursuit of the same phenomenon. This research strategy supports both validation and inquiry in the study in that triangulation is seen as a useful 'method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data' (O'Donoghue and Punch 2003, p. 78). Therefore, triangulation, employing a number of approaches, was used to authenticate this research, especially to provide a cultural explanation for the managerial leadership behaviour in Cambodia. This approach was considered necessary given the paucity of written material on all aspects of Cambodian life generally and management behaviour literature specifically. As noted earlier, the period during Pol Pot was destructive, which included destroying of literature that did not support the feudalistic life-style advocated by the Khmer Rouge.

The principal researcher spent more than 25 days over five trips to Cambodia to familiarize himself with the local culture. The use of two research associates in Cambodia, personal interviews with five managers, discussions with the Director General of Higher Education and the Senior Minister of Education, document search in libraries and the Royal Cambodian Museum in Phnom Penh, visit to Angkor Wat and a workshop at Build Bright University provided the scope for the cultural contextualizing of the research. Therefore, triangulation of material, both visual and written, supported the quantitative survey and formed the basis of the research strategy.

The back-translation of the questionnaire from English to Khmer (Cambodian) was completed with the assistance of our Cambodian research associates and an international

PhD student of Cambodian ethnicity studying in Melbourne. With the approval from the Vice-Rector of Build Bright University in Phnom Penh and ethics approval from Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, the field research commenced in January 2008. Neither the participants nor their organizations were required to be identified in the survey.

In preparation for the field survey, the principal researcher worked closely with research associates in Cambodia. A four-page managerial leadership questionnaire was mailed out to managers employed in both the private and public sectors and who were alumni of Cambodia's largest university, the Build Bright University in Phnom Penh. The alumni of this university are employed in organizations throughout Cambodia. A sample of 1000 managers was randomly selected and the questionnaires were posted with reply-paid return envelopes. In addition, all the working-managers in a class of 76 MBA students at Build Bright University's Siem Reap campus completed the questionnaire. Of the 226 questionnaires returned, 217 were useable, giving a 20% effective overall return rate. Responses were sought on a 1–5 importance scale for each of the 94 managerial leadership value statements.

Non-response bias and common method variance are important considerations in this study. The first of these issues is addressed below and is found to be unimportant. Common method bias may arise due to social desirability or other response bias effects whenever data are collected using a single instrument. Podsakoff *et al.* (2003) compares several statistical methods for controlling for common method bias. He stresses the fact that techniques used to control for common method variance should be at the item level rather than the construct level. Unfortunately, all the items used in this study were measures for managerial leadership. This means that a measure for common method variance cannot be constructed using any of these items because this would remove the leadership context. This makes it impossible to control for any common method bias using statistical techniques.

As mentioned earlier, the work of Selvarajah *et al.* (1995) provided the basis for the development of the constructs for the four dimensions (PQ, MB, OD and EI) and the dependent construct, EL, but certain improvements are introduced in the current survey. In particular, to produce discriminant validity between the constructs, the EL statements are not included in any of the other four dimensions. In addition, using an oblimin rotation to allow for correlations between the emerging constructs, exploratory factor analyses based on the principal axis factoring method were used to define the constructs required to address the hypotheses stated above. The creation of eight constructs predicting the EL construct followed as a result of this analysis. Items that reduced the internal validity of the constructs, as measured by confirmatory factor analysis, were removed. Constructs with a Cronbach's α of above 0.70 are reliable while constructs with a Cronbach's α value of below 0.70 are regarded as sufficiently reliable in an exploratory study only if they exceed 0.60 (Hair *et al.* 2005). Confirmatory factor analysis is used to check the factor structure of the constructs (as shown in the Appendix). Models that produce a root-mean-squared error of approximation (RMSEA) of less than 0.08, a goodness-of-fit statistic (GFI) of above 0.90 and a normed χ^2 statistic (CMIN/DF) of less than 3 may be assumed to possess internal validity (Arbuckle and Wothke 1999).

Regression and structural equation modelling are used to test the eight hypotheses. SPSS v20 and AMOS v19 are the software packages used for the above analyses.

Analysis of results

As shown in Table 1, 82% of the respondents were men and 18% were women. Ninety percent of the respondents belonged to the Theravada Buddhist faith while the remaining

Table 1. Sample demographics ($N = 217$).

Variables	Categories	Percentage
Gender	Males	82
	Females	18
Religion	Theravada Buddha	90
	Muslim/Christian	10
Age	Under 35	60
	35–40	21
	41–50	13
	Over 50	6
Sector	Private	58
	Government	25
	NGO	17
Position	Senior manager	14
	Middle manager	53
	Line manager	33
Organization size	At most 50 FTEs	36
	51–500 FTEs	42
	More than 500 FTEs	22
Department size	At most 10 FTEs	46
	11–25 FTEs	28
	More than 25 FTEs	26

were Muslims and Christians. This reflects the population composition in Cambodia (Clayton 2005). It was a relatively young sample in that 60% of the respondents were under 35 with 81% of respondents aged 40 and below. Only 6% of the sample population was aged over 50. The majority of the respondents (58%) were employed in the private sector with 25% employed in the government sector and 17% employed by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The majority (53%) of the managers classified themselves as middle managers. Senior managers constituted 14% of the sample while line managers constituted 33%. Only 36% of the managers were employed by organizations with at most 50 employees, while 46% of managers worked in departments with at most 10 employees. No industry classification, except for a breakdown based on private, public and NGO categorization, was sought in the questionnaire.

Exploratory factor analysis provided support for the first eight hypotheses, suggesting that EI should be measured in terms of two constructs (Environmental Tracking and Embracing Change); PQ should also be measured in terms of two constructs (Individualism and Respect) with three constructs in the case of MB (Pragmatism, Decision-Making and Tolerance). However, only one construct was required for each of the OD and EL dimensions. As shown in Table 2, scales developed for these constructs had reasonable reliability as measured using Cronbach's α , and good internal validity as indicated by the confirmatory factor analysis results shown in the Appendix. Modification indices indicated that these constructs exhibited reasonable discriminant validity in that each value statement had higher correlations for its specified construct than for any other construct.

Descriptive statistics and correlations for each of the scales developed for the above nine constructs are presented in Table 2. All the correlations are significant at the 0.1% level and mean values are high for all constructs, indicating that all dimensions are regarded as important in a leader.

Multivariate analysis of variance tests were used to compare the various demographic groups in regards to the mean values for these scales. No significant differences were

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and correlations for scales.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Mean	4.38	3.89	3.79	4.12	3.73	4.44	4.00	4.12	4.28
Standard deviation	0.52	0.73	0.76	0.65	0.73	0.57	0.54	0.65	0.66
Cronbach's α	0.873	0.761	0.704	0.726	0.653	0.790	0.739	0.660	0.708
1. Excellent leader	1	0.66	0.54	0.71	0.44	0.76	0.76	0.65	0.70
2. Environ tracking	0.66	1	0.55	0.51	0.37	0.54	0.56	0.53	0.47
3. Embrace change	0.54	0.55	1	0.47	0.33	0.34	0.53	0.46	0.42
4. Tolerance	0.71	0.51	0.47	1	0.32	0.58	0.67	0.58	0.55
5. Decision-making	0.44	0.37	0.33	0.32	1	0.43	0.42	0.33	0.44
6. Pragmatism	0.76	0.54	0.34	0.58	0.43	1	0.65	0.60	0.64
7. Deference for authority	0.76	0.56	0.53	0.67	0.42	0.65	1	0.59	0.58
8. Individualism	0.65	0.53	0.46	0.58	0.33	0.60	0.59	1	0.47
9. Respect	0.70	0.47	0.42	0.55	0.44	0.64	0.58	0.47	1

obtained at a 1% significance level, suggesting that the various gender, age, ethnicity, position and industry groups are similar in terms of their perceptions of what constitutes the important characteristics of a leader.

Non-response bias is usually assessed on the basis that later respondents are more closely related to non-respondents than early respondents (Armstrong and Overton 1977). However, for part of the data used in this study there was a 100% response rate, making it possible to test for non-response bias by comparing this data with the rest of the data. This was initially investigated using parametric (analysis of variance, ANOVA) and non-parametric (Kruskal–Wallis) tests for differences in the scales developed in the study. As shown in Table 3, no significant differences were found for any of the constructs included in this study. In view of this result it can be assumed that non-response bias is unlikely to have had an adverse effect on this study, but this conclusion will be explored further using the Heckman (1979) method in the following section.

Next, the two data sources were compared in terms of their demographic characteristics. χ^2 -Tests of association showed that there were no significant differences in terms of gender ($\chi^2 = 1.48$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.477$), ethnicity ($\chi^2 = 2.75$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.253$), age ($\chi^2 = 5.45$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.065$), size of organization ($\chi^2 = 12.69$, $df = 8$, $p = 0.477$) or size of department ($\chi^2 = 6.25$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.181$). This further confirms that non-response bias is unlikely to have affected the results.

Table 3. Non-response bias check using scales.

Constructs	ANOVA test		Kruskal–Wallis test	
	$F(2,212)$	p	$\chi^2(1)$	p
Excellent leader	1.121	0.328	3.08	0.214
Environmental Tracking	1.040	0.355	2.19	0.334
Embracing change	0.764	0.467	2.10	0.351
Tolerance	2.378	0.095	3.46	0.177
Decision-making	1.364	0.258	3.08	0.214
Pragmatism	0.451	0.637	1.82	0.403
Deference for authority	2.534	0.082	3.76	0.153
Individualism	0.924	0.399	0.63	0.729
Respect	1.447	0.238	2.42	0.298

Regression model for excellent leader

Table 3 shows the results for a multiple regression model designed to predict what makes an EL in terms of the four-dimensional framework of Selvarajah *et al.* (1995). This model was also fitted with Heckman's Mills ratio included as an independent variable to check for non-response bias. The coefficient for the Mills ratio was not significant [$t(205) = 1.427, p = 0.155$] and there was little change in the coefficients for the other independent variables, confirming that non-response bias is not a problem in this study. The equation given in Table 4 explains 79% of the variation in the EL dimension using the OD (Deference for Authority), EI (Environmental Tracking and Embracing Change), PQ (Respect and Individualism) and MB (Pragmatism, Decision-Making and Tolerance) dimensions. The raw correlations between the EL dimension and its predictors shown in Table 4 are all positively significant with p -values of less than 0.001. However, the partial correlations for Decision-Making, Embracing Change and Individualism are not significant in Table 4, suggesting mediation effects. In addition, the partial correlation for Deference for Authority is much weaker than its raw correlation with EL, supporting the existence of a partial mediation effect for this construct. The variance inflation factors (VIF) are less than 10 for all the predictor variables, confirming the discriminant validity of the predictor scales.

On the basis of the above regression and after the deletion of two outliers, a structural model for Managerial Leadership in Cambodia has been developed in Figure 1. The more important relationships are shown using thicker lines. This model explains 75% of the variation in EL scores, providing some support for the hypotheses and a reasonable fit for the data (CMIN/DF = 2.106, GFI = 0.972, RMSEA = 0.072). The model suggests that the MB (Tolerance, Decision-Making and Pragmatism) and OD (Deference for Authority) behaviour of leaders will only be truly successful when supported by PQ (Individualism and Respect). This is not a surprising result considering the fact that 90% of the sample gave their religion as Buddhist. In Cambodia, it seems that the religion and cultural heritage of Cambodian managers mediates their perceptions of the effects of Deference for Authority on EL. The relative importance of each of the EL predictors is presented in Table 5, using total standardized effect sizes.

Discussion

After years of human rights violation, Cambodia is on the path of rediscovering its Buddhist roots (Ledgerwood and Un 2003). In this study, the cultural contextualization has

Table 4. Regression model for excellent leader.

Model	Standardized coefficients (β)	t -statistic (df = 208)	p	VIF	Raw correlations	Partial correlations
2. Environmental tracking	0.149	3.387	0.001	1.89	0.66	0.23
3. Embracing change	0.075	1.792	0.075	1.74	0.54	0.12
4. Tolerance	0.162	3.443	0.001	2.19	0.71	0.23
5. Decision-making	0.006	0.174	0.862	1.36	0.44	0.01
6. Pragmatism	0.264	5.153	<0.001	2.58	0.76	0.34
7. Deference for authority	0.207	4.005	<0.001	2.64	0.76	0.27
8. Individualism	0.075	1.666	0.097	1.98	0.65	0.12
9. Respect	0.177	3.927	<0.001	2.00	0.70	0.13

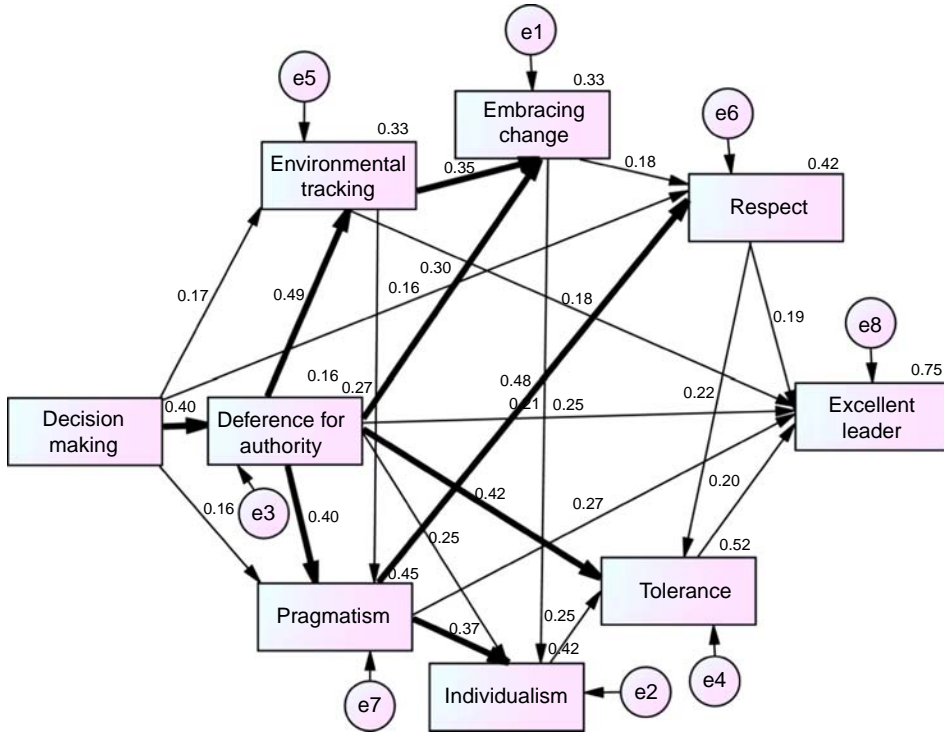


Figure 1. Managerial leadership model for Cambodia (significant β coefficients and R^2 values shown).

sought to capture this transformational change and emphasize the religious and social history perspectives in explaining managerial leadership in Cambodia.

On the basis of discussion in the results section, the framework developed by Selvarajah *et al.* (1995) is largely supported and can therefore be used to describe the perceptions of Cambodian managers with regards to leadership behaviours. This study supports the four-dimensional framework – PQ, MB, OD and EI – in explaining what constitutes an EL within this context. As expected, Cambodian cultural factors have influenced the four-dimensional framework and have resulted in an eight-construct cultural model explaining EL in Cambodian organizations.

In Appendix 1 ‘motivate employees’ is the most important predictor for an EL in this study. However, ‘be honest’ and ‘give recognition for good work’ have higher average ratings than ‘motivate employees’. This finding suggests that honesty and giving recognition to employees for good work are most appreciated of all the value statements. Given the nation’s bleak history, there is a growing desire in the country to motivate and recognize individual and collective performance of its employees. However, as an interviewee expressed ‘the tolerant and submissive behaviour of the people have been abused in the past by dominant individuals.’ Cambodians by nature are fatalistic and Pol Pot used this weakness in the Cambodian culture, as did the colonialists, to enforce autocratic or tyrannical rule. The forgiving nature of the Cambodians has not been understood and has been viewed as a weakness (see Taylor 1996, 1999; Ledgerwood and Un 2003). In the next section, we discuss specifically the eight hypotheses presented in this research. Table 5 provides an overview of the support levels for the eight hypotheses.

Table 5. Support for hypotheses.

Hypothesis	Value statements that support the hypotheses	Total standardized effect size	Support
H1. Individualism is an important mediating construct in the Cambodian culture and this will influence managers' perception of what constitutes an excellent leader.	PQ Be an initiator—not a follower PQ Be consistent with dealing with people PQ Be practical PQ Deal calmly in tense situations	0.049	Weak
H2. Respect for others is an important value in the Cambodian culture and this will influence managers' perception of what constitutes an excellent leader.	PQ Return favours PQ Treat most people as if they are trustworthy and honest PQ Respect the self-esteem of others	0.231	Strong
H3. In Cambodian organizations, the deference for authority is the most important construct for an excellent leader.	OD Support decisions made jointly by others OD Give priority to long-term goals OD Share power OD Adapt to changing working conditions OD Act as a member of the team OD Adjust organizational structures and rules to the realities of practice OD Focus on maximizing productivity	0.665	Very strong
H4. In Cambodia, perceptions of what makes an Excellent Leader can be understood in terms of Pragmatism.	MB Think about the specific details of any particular problem MB Be logical when solving problems MB Focus on the task in hand MB Tell subordinated what to do and how to do it	0.403	Very strong
H5. In Cambodia, perceptions of what makes an Excellent Leader can be understood in terms of tolerance.	MB Trust those to whom work is delegated MB Consider suggestions made by subordinates MB Listen to an understand the problems of others	0.200	Strong
H6. In Cambodia, perceptions of what makes an Excellent Leader can be understood in terms of timely independent decision-making.	MB Make decisions earlier rather than later MB Make work decisions quickly MB Make decisions without depending too much on others	0.413	Very strong
H7. In Cambodia, managers' perceptions of what makes an Excellent Leader can be understood in terms of accepting and embracing socially responsible change.	EI Foster an international perspective in the organization EI Have a multicultural orientation and approach EI Identify social trends that may have an impact on work	0.052	Weak
H8. In Cambodia, managers' perceptions of what makes an Excellent Leader can be understood in terms of environmental tracking.	EI Constantly evaluate emerging technologies EI Check constantly for problems and opportunities EI Study laws and regulations that may have an impact on work EI Use economic indicators for planning purposes	0.304	Strong

In the Cambodian context, PQ is a mediating influence about the manager's perception of an EL. PQ, as a leadership dimension, is made up of two factors: Individualism and Respect (see Appendix 2). Support for both these constructs was evident in the interviews and discussions with participants in the workshop where many emphasized the importance of the 'individual journey' and exploration of the 'self' during periods that they spend as lay monks. Respect, many saw as originating from the concept of 'self' and the individual worth. Therefore, the impacts of MB, EI and OD are only fully realized if these behaviours support Individualism and Respect. These values are closely associated with the philosophies of Theravada Buddhism where respect for the individual 'self' is emphasized. H1 and H2 are thus supported with stronger support shown in the case of respect.

OD relates to the way a manager responds to the goals, objectives, structures and issues in an organization (Selvarajah *et al.* 1995). OD, in this research, is made up of a single construct, Deference for Authority. As shown in Appendix 3, the item 'support decisions made jointly with others' is the best indicator for Deference for Authority. But, as reported in Taormina and Selvarajah (2005), long-term goals and a strategic orientation are also important indicators for Deference for Authority. The strong support for this variable as a predictor for EL suggests that in Cambodia collective decision-making is valued over individual decision-making, giving support for Hofstede's (1980, 2007) exposition of the importance of the collective value system among Asians. Nevertheless, we should interpret this finding with some caution because in this study individualism, though having a weak relationship, is seen as a mediating construct between Deference for Authority and EL. But the results of this study clearly suggest that Deference for Authority remains the most important characteristic of a leader in Cambodia.

An important aspect that was not reflected in the survey results but was mentioned in a number of interviews and aptly captured in one interview 'Boss is never wrong – do not confront superiors in front of others or when they are angry. The boss should never lose face.' Other studies within the region, such as by Yukongdi (2010), however, reported low-level support for autocratic and paternalistic leadership styles among Thai managers. This could be due to the differences in variables in the constructs and also that Yukongdi measured employee perception of leadership behaviour effectiveness while this research measured manager's perception of leadership behaviours in their organizations. The third factor could be that although Thailand is also a dharmic nation, its independence and lack of colonial influence could affect different outcomes in that country. A similar comparative study in Thailand may produce a base for comparison with Cambodia. In our study, as reflected in Table 3, Hypothesis 3, Deference for Authority as the most important construct supporting EL, is supported.

MB refers to a person's nature, values, attitudes, actions and styles when performing managerial duties. In the Cambodian context, the MB dimension (see Appendix 5) is constructed as having three constructs: Pragmatism, Decision-Making and Tolerance. These three MB constructs are strongly supported as important predictors in the Cambodian managers' perceptions of an EL. Thus, H4, H5 and H6 are very strongly supported. For managers who stress Decision-Making, Deference for Authority is more important. However, Pragmatism and Tolerance serve partially to mediate the relationship between Deference for Authority and EL. Managers who favour Deference for Authority also tend to favour Tolerance and Pragmatism. In support of deference for authority, an interviewee reflected thus 'Cambodians work day to day, more than concern for the future. Work to live but future is important.' Another interviewee expressed in support of tolerance 'The worker should support family interest first and the manager must treat employee as a family member and establish hierarchical relationship.'

EI are all external factors that influence the success of the entire organization, in particular economical, political, cultural and legal factors (Selvarajah *et al.* 1995). In this study, EI is made up of two factors: Environmental Tracking and Embracing Changes. Both these EI constructs are viewed as mediating factors in the Cambodian managers' perception of what constitutes an EL in the organization. Therefore, H7 and H8 are supported in this research with stronger support for environmental tracking than embracing change. As shown in Appendix 4, the Cambodians perceive that tracking and embracing environmental changes are important for a nation that is looking at accelerating economic growth. The most important item in tracking change is 'checking constantly for problems and opportunities' and 'constantly evaluating emerging technologies.' These are important operational tasks of managers and in regard to the strategic task of embracing change, the support is for 'having a multicultural orientation and approach' and fostering an international perspective'. The downside to taking advantage of the new opportunities is reflected by one interviewee when he said 'the country has a lot of catching up (to do); all of a sudden it has been thrown into a globalizing world'. All the interviewees echo this sentiment and helplessness.

It is interesting to note that the Cambodian managers, members of a relatively monocultural society, have supported multiculturalism. However, economic growth and development is taking place with increasing foreign direct investment from other Asian countries, especially China (Beech 2005), so working with a multicultural international workforce is becoming increasingly important.

The open-ended discussions with the interviewees provided insights to the behaviour of Cambodians in the organizations and to the behaviour of Cambodians generally. All the interviewees were of the view that their cultural traditions are similar to the traditions of their western neighbouring countries of Thailand and Laos and are very different to the cultural traditions of Vietnam. The quantitative results of the study have shown that there is no difference between the perceptions between genders. However, it is interesting that although Cambodian culture leans towards matrilineal arrangements (Zimmer and Kim 2001) an interviewee, a male bank manager had the following to say; 'when assigning job task we need to differentiate tasks on the basis of gender as women will complain if given the same level of work tasks (as men). Although there is no difference (between job) positions job expectations are less (for women) than (for) men.' A female interviewee, an IT executive added, 'Now there is progress. Equal pay for equal work applies but often, the bonuses can be different.'

Time is also viewed as negotiable. For example, one of the participants in the focus group said, 'sometimes we have to be flexible with datelines, 8 am can mean 9 am and telling the employee off would be loss of face. Sometimes when work is not completed at 9 am, the boss will sit with the employee to finish.' Another focus member added, 'At official functions, protocol demands that the employee(s) are on time or before the boss.'

These results suggest that both religion and social history have served to formulate perceptions of what constitutes leadership in Cambodian organizations. Armed with the understanding of these influences, how should international managers best engage with the Cambodian workforce?

Implications

We believe that this contribution makes some contribution to the theory and practice of managerial leadership. First, in a practical sense, the research raises the awareness of cultural dimensions in a fast-growing part of the ASEAN region, namely the Mekong

nations. In this regard, we specifically look at managerial leader behaviours in Cambodia where the majority of its people are of the Theravada Buddhist faith.

Second, from a theoretical development point of view, these religious influences are peculiar to Cambodians whose experiences are reflected in the eight-cultural-construct model explained in this work. Therefore, the definition of managerial leadership excellence in organizations in Cambodia needs to be defined within the cultural context of its people. This has clear implications for what Hilton (1998) emphasizes as the need for building culturally based theories. Further studies within the Mekong nations may suggest a regional interpretation to leadership behaviour that may have some cultural validity.

Third, from both theoretical and practical perspectives, it is possible to explain the cultural context of leader behaviours of managers in Cambodian organizations within these cultural models. Understanding Theravada Buddhism, the Indian philosophies embedded in the Hindu epics of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, the colonial influences and the recent political turbulence is important for understanding the cultural make-up of the Cambodian workforce. The Cambodians are easy-going people whose destinies are guided by *karma* or actions and they avoid being judgemental of others as this could affect their own destiny. Respecting the self-esteem of others within authority lines is accepted; however, this does not prevent the Cambodians from seeking changes as progress of the individual along the *karmic* path is expected.

Therefore, seen from a Theravada Buddhist perspective, organizations should engage the right perspective, understanding and vision. These benefit the *sangha*¹² or organization and should be understood from the Buddhist idea of *anicca* or impermanence, illustrating the illusionary relationship of matter to *atta*¹³ or self. This view is important in understanding the Cambodian manager's acceptance of changes in the environment and belief in the hierarchical nature of society.

Fourth, it must be noted that historical and social factors contribute to the way management is practiced in Cambodia. For example, Cambodia's geographical positioning in ASEAN, its closeness to both India and China, is important in understanding the changing value perspectives that impact on the notion of managerial leadership. Though the number of overseas Chinese is small as many left Cambodia during Pol Pot's regime and many were executed, with the recent engagement with China, especially Hong Kong, the numbers of Chinese expatriate are growing (Chiu 2007). The influence of China will have an effect on the management culture in Cambodia in years to come. As explained by the Senior Minister of Education, 'it is important to know that Cambodia sees itself more as an "Indianised" or Sanskritised nation because the Indian cultural values have influenced the economic and social activities for centuries.' It is in this context that leadership should be understood in Cambodia. Understanding the various influences and providing a cultural contextualization provide the basis for understanding leadership in Cambodia.

Limitations of the study

This study is based on the ratings of importance of 94 items in terms of managerial leadership. This means that common variance bias may have affected the results. However, as commented by Meade *et al.* (2007) while not trivial, common variance bias is often minor in magnitude. Also the work of Siemsen *et al.* (2010) with respect to multivariate linear relationships shows that common method bias generally decreases when additional independent variables are included in the model. In this study, there are eight leadership dimensions that are tested simultaneously, suggesting that common method variance has been addressed to some extent in the analysis itself.

Admittedly, a research design, which allowed an objective measure of EL as the dependent variable, would have been preferable. However, this is not easily done and even well-known studies such as House's GLOBE study have been unable to achieve this. Podsakoff *et al.* (2003) has suggested several research designs, which can be used to reduce the effect of common method variance and it is suggested that future research should consider some of these procedural remedies. In addition, it is suggested that items allowing the measurement of possible causes of common method variance, such as social desirability, be included in the questionnaire, allowing the use of statistical remedies for common method variance.

As in all research designs, we acknowledge human error as a contributing factor in the selection of variables that represent each construct. Objective assessment to cover all eventualities is not humanly possible and this is recognized in this research.

The constructs could well do with more explanation within the religious influences, especially the dharmic influences based on Pali and Sanskrit philosophies.

Conclusion

The purpose of this work was to explore the influence of contextual factors on leadership behaviours in Cambodian organizations. The structural model used in this research was sufficiently robust to provide eight distinct cultural constructs that explained relationships between leadership behaviour and conceptions of Excellent Leadership in Cambodian organizations. Value interpretations employing dharmic philosophies, especially from Theravada Buddhism, were used to relate these constructs to conceptions of an EL.

Evidence was found in this research to suggest that the decision-making process of Cambodian managers with regard to being an excellent leader is mediated by culture-based constructs of tolerance, individualism, respect, pragmatism, change orientation and deference for authority. Of these, deference for authority and pragmatism stand out as being the strongest mediators.

'This research cries out for some qualitative analysis, especially in the discussion section' was an important feedback from one of seven *APBR* reviewers. Though some qualitative evidence and material from triangulation has been incorporated, this, we feel, is still insufficient to describe and support the quantitative analysis of this research. A discourse on dharmic philosophies and their influence on management and leadership thought in countries that embrace these philosophies is overdue. We expect to explore some of these in a series of qualitative research studies building from the largely quantitative methodology used in this research.

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Notes

1. Theravada Buddhist philosophies are based on the concept of *dharma*, which emphasizes duties in the pursuit of individual salvation through self-realization. Following a virtuous path or righteous duties remove or lessen the effect of *karma* where actions of past and present lives may either aid or prevent salvation. Bad karma could lead to reincarnation to a lesser being and good karma could lead to breaking the cycle of rebirths or being reborn into a higher-order being.
2. Pali is a derivative of Sanskrit and became the language vehicle through which Theravada Buddhism went to Sri Lanka and countries in Southeast Asia.
3. Mainly the Hindu traditions and values attached to *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* are legendary epics based on the adventures of Lord Rama, the Hindu deity of preservation. The epics are based on moral values that guide good conduct and honour and have guided the realms of Southeast Asia for the past two millennia.
4. For a concise summary of the key concepts covering Buddhist philosophies, read Kumar (2002).
5. The existence of the caste system in Hinduism is enshrined in the *Manavadharmasashtra*, or Laws of Manu. The Laws of Manu became the standard source of authority from the start of the Common Era and during the British Colonial period in India, it became a tool with which to rule the people of the Hindu faith.
6. Dharma is the central concept that explains the 'ultimate truth' or reality of the universe based not on a God-head but through reasoning. The symbol of Dharma is the wheel and is the central motif in the Indian national flag.
7. *Prajna* in Sanskrit and *panna* in Pali. Pali is a derivative of Sanskrit and is the Buddhist script used in Cambodia and was brought to Cambodia from Sri Lanka in the thirteenth century.
8. *sila* in both Sanskrit and in Pali.
9. *samadhi* in Sanskrit and in Pali.
10. The *Middle Path* promotes a neutral stance, being upright and having an unbiased position when establishing relationships between thought and behaviour and between behaviour and its consequences. In the Buddhist tenets, based on human behaviour, the Middle Path provides (1) the process of human activity (The Law of Dependent Origination) and (2) how humans can overcome the consequences or effects of human activity (The Noble Eightfold Path).
11. Both these papers reported on the pilot studies carried out to test the conceptual framework and a pilot sample in five ASEAN countries.
12. May also mean community of Buddhist or the monastic community.
13. *Atta* (in Pali) and *atman* (in Sanskrit) refer to 'self'.

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Appendix 1. Leadership confirmatory factor analysis

Leadership (β)	Mean	SD	
0.729	4.44	0.809	Motivate employees
0.680	4.32	0.731	Have a strategic vision for the organization
0.665	4.56	0.621	Give recognition for good work
0.659	4.22	0.835	Continue to learn how to improve performance
0.593	4.70	0.585	Be honest
0.599	4.07	0.816	Create a sense of purpose and enthusiasm in the workplace
0.664	4.32	0.856	Develop strategies to gain competitive edge in the industry
0.623	4.37	0.727	Have confidence when dealing with work and with people
0.755	3.73	0.932	Organize work time effectively

Note: CMIN/DF = 2.512, GFI = 0.932, RMSEA = 0.084.

Appendix 2. Personal qualities confirmatory factor analysis

Personal qualities (β)	Individualism (β)	Respect (β)	Mean	SD	
0.839					Individualism
0.797					Respect
	0.578		4.09	1.022	Be an initiator—not a follower
	0.639		4.09	0.904	Be consistent with dealing with people
	0.559		4.26	0.780	Be practical
	0.521		4.04	0.961	Deal calmly in tense situations
		0.740	4.33	0.840	Return favours
		0.615	4.29	0.772	Treat most people as if they are trustworthy and honest
		0.662	4.22	0.880	Respect the self-esteem of others

Note: CMIN/DF = 1.654; GFI = 0.973; RMSEA = 0.055.

Appendix 3. Organizational demand confirmatory factor analysis

Deference for authority (β)	Mean	SD	
0.594	3.95	0.832	Support decisions made jointly by others
0.586	4.06	0.774	Give priority to long-term goals
0.619	3.92	0.886	Share power
0.444	4.16	0.849	Adapt to changing working conditions
0.518	4.16	0.803	Act as a member of the team
0.519	3.95	0.832	Adjust organizational structures and rules to the realities of practice
0.495	4.06	0.774	Focus on maximizing productivity

Note: CMIN/DF = 1.084; GFI = 0.980; RMSEA = 0.020.

Appendix 4. Environmental influence confirmatory factor analysis

Environmental influence (β)	Tracking (β)	Embracing change (β)	Mean	SD	
0.826					Tracking
0.866					Embracing change
	0.742		4.02	0.906	Constantly evaluate emerging technologies
	0.811		4.12	0.952	Check constantly for problems and opportunities
	0.584		3.70	1.032	Study laws and regulations that may have an impact on work
	0.542		3.78	1.002	Use economic indicators for planning purposes
		0.662	3.81	0.902	Foster an international perspective in the organization
		0.710	3.77	0.968	Have a multicultural orientation and approach
		0.637	4.02	0.906	Identify social trends that may have an impact on work

Note: CMIN/DF = 1.639; GFI = 0.965; RMSEA = 0.054.

Appendix 5. Managerial Behaviour Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Manag. behav. (β)	Pragmatism (β)	Decision-making (β)	Tolerance (β)	Mean	SD	
0.979						Pragmatism
0.617						Decision-making
0.767						Tolerance
		0.721		3.89	0.931	Make decisions earlier rather than later
		0.604		3.84	0.899	Make work decisions quickly
		0.534		3.46	1.013	Make decisions without depending too much on others
			0.629	3.98	0.771	Trust those to whom work is delegated
			0.692	4.15	0.820	Consider suggestions made by subordinates
			0.736	4.23	0.835	Listen to an understand the problems of others
	0.774			4.39	0.750	Think about the specific details of any particular problem
	0.634			4.56	0.649	Be logical when solving problems
	0.696			4.49	0.753	Focus on the task in hand
	0.700			4.31	0.777	Tell subordinates what to do and how to do it

Note: CMIN/DF = 1.468; GFI = 0.917; RMSEA = 0.047

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