



SOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN OMAN AND BAHRAIN

Talal Hamad Humood AlRawahi

*PhD student, Faculty of Leadership & Management,
Islamic Science University of Malaysia, Malaysia*

Dr. Noona Sammari

*Associate Professor, Faculty of Leadership & Management,
Islamic Science University of Malaysia, Malaysia*

Dr Suhaila AlHashemi

*Assistant Professor, College of Economics & Political
Science, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman*

ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS:
*decision making,
leader, leadership,
leadership
rehabilitation, social
factors, leading
qualification.*

Decision making is part of our daily life, choices we have and alternatives we develop and our choice in selecting the most suitable alternative which is sometimes not the best. The aim of this study is to detect the impact of social life on the leading rehabilitation decision making in the Sultanate of Oman and Kingdom of Bahrain. The study used the descriptive analytical approach using questionnaires distributed to 121 leaders from various sectors both in Oman and Bahrain. The results revealed there is no statistically significant mean difference at (0.05) significance level between the mean of social life degrees which influence leading rehabilitation decision making and the following factors: gender, education, age, original home, status of the family, income level, social raising and the education of the parents. This indicates that leaders are independent upon their own experiences and thoughts, and that the other factors are tools that would help them in the process.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the link and mediator between individuals and their aspirations and organizations can build their strategies and plans on such individuals (Danylova & Salata, 2017). As work environments have become more complex, and volatile with globalization and other changes and transformations world wide, managers and supervisors recognize that successful organizational performance requires employees to function and think like managers and supervisors themselves. This requires demonstrating problem solving and initiative far beyond job requirements (Campbell & Campbell, 2011). Attributional approaches to leadership argue that leadership is an inferred disposition or internal quality based on commonly held prototypes because individuals can have no direct knowledge of others' internal qualities, and any conclusions they draw about another person's leadership abilities reflect judgmental inferences based on observed behavior. Further, behaviors accepted as evidence of leadership ability can vary dramatically across different groups (Campbell & Campbell, 2011). Such internal factors could be a result of childhood upbringing, the standard of living of the family, existence of parents during childhood and many other factors that will be discussed in this study.

HYPOTHESIS

- 1- There is no statistically significant mean difference at (0.05) significance level between the mean of social life degrees which influence leading rehabilitation decision making due to gender (male/female).
- 2- There is no statistically significant mean difference at (0.05) significance level between the mean of social life degrees which influence leading rehabilitation decision making due to education level (diploma or lower/bachelor/master or above).
- 3- There is no statistically significant mean difference at (0.05) significance level between the mean of social life degrees which influence leading rehabilitation decision making due to age category (less than 30 years/from 30 to 40 years/from 41 to 50 years/more than 50 years).
- 4- There is no statistically significant mean difference at (0.05) significance level between the mean of social life degrees which influence leading rehabilitation decision making due to original home area (village/city/capital).

- 5- There is no statistically significant mean difference at (0.05) significance level between the mean of social life degrees which influence leading rehabilitation decision making due to living status of family during childhood age (low/average/good/high).
- 6- There is no statistically significant mean difference at (0.05) significance level between the mean of social life degrees which influence leading rehabilitation decision making due to family social status during the age of social raising (with both mother and father and stable/with both mother and father but not stable/with father only/with mother only/with one of the family relatives other than mother or father).
- 7- There is no statistically significant mean difference at (0.05) significance level between the mean of social life degrees which influence leading rehabilitation decision making due to parental education level (illiterate/diploma or lower/bachelor/master or above).

AIM OF THE STUDY

The descriptive analytical study was used to understand the impact of social life in leading rehabilitation decision making and the impact of the social factors as reflected in the hypothesis on the leader’s decision making process.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive analytical method was followed in this study, using questionnaires to a group of leading personalities in the Sultanate of Oman and Kingdom of Bahrain from various sectors and social backgrounds. Total sample size was 121, 70 from Oman and 51 from Bahrain.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research in administrative, leadership or personal decision-making is one of the most important areas of study. Understanding the factors of social life that influence the decision-making process, and the building of the leadership character, which, according to the researchers’ knowledge, is

a rare topic that knocked its doors in the Arab world. Such factors are presented below. Social factors influence the leader’s style and decision making to a certain extent, according to a study conducted by AlHashemi (2017, 2013,2006) where managers in both Bahrain and Oman did indicate that social factors such as family, friends and culture plays a role in influencing their leadership style. However, as for decision making, the majority of the managers indicated that they used the consultative style (shura) in decision making.

Social factors influencing the decision making process

Individual personality and development are influenced by the environment and certain factors that play a role in making appropriate decisions regarding their lives. Variables such as the presence of parents at a young age, standard of living, educational possibilities, and vulnerability to friends have a limited impact on the leader’s decision making (Palmira, Lock & Wheeler, 2013), in the sense that it does not fundamentally affect the decision making of the leadership qualification and this is somewhat in line with the results of several studies such as Canfield (2015), Campbell & Campbell (2011). In their study, they pointed out that there was a link between the personality traits, the behaviour and the patterns that the leader followed with the circumstances of the organization related to the characteristics of the organizational context, the nature of the task involved, and the abilities and experience of the persons concerned. This is associated with the leadership personality decision making process. The results of their studies found that patterns Leadership and leader experience have a significant impact on individual behaviors and decision-making (Alhashemi,2017; Azemi, 2017)

ANALYSIS & RESULTS

The Hypothesis were tested and the following section presents the details of the analysis of the factors (variables):

Nationality: The results showed no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) according to Nationality in the study scopes which indicates that regardless of the nationality, both Omanis and Bahrainis share similar characteristics, and this is shown in Fig2 below:

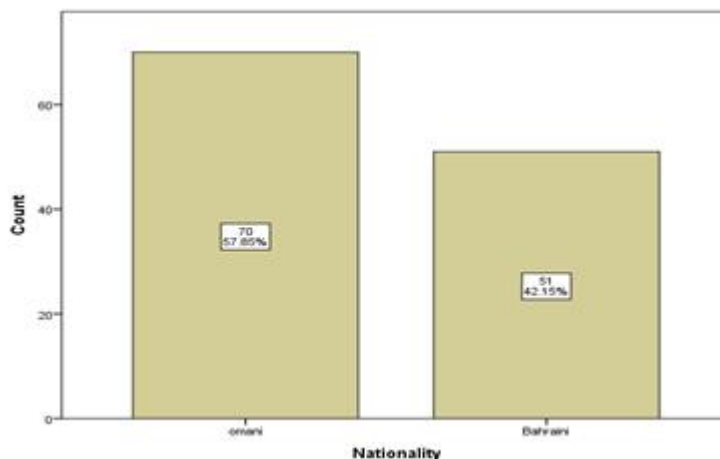


Fig 2 Nationality

Gender: Regarding Gender, results revealed no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) in every scopes according to Gender for both the Omani and Bahraini leaders,

illustrated in Table 1.1 and 1.2. The details of the gender for both samples are illustrated in Fig3

Table 1.1 The means and deviation of the study sample (Omanis) according to Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
The focus of parents availability when young	male	42	3.84	0.46	0.373	0.544
	female	28	3.71	0.56		
The center of educational potential	male	42	3.26	0.80	0.268	0.606
	female	28	3.52	0.77		
Affected by friends	male	42	3.10	0.78	0.155	0.695
	female	28	2.87	0.82		
Axis of self-construction	male	42	4.05	0.49	2.399	0.126
	female	28	4.21	0.34		

Table 1.2 The means and deviation of the study sample (Bahrainis) according to Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
The focus of parents availability when young	male	30	3.76	0.50	0.136	0.714
	female	21	3.81	0.59		
The center of educational potential	male	30	3.39	0.76	0.011	0.918
	female	21	3.33	0.80		
Affected by friends	male	30	2.99	0.62	2.452	0.124
	female	21	2.77	0.31		
Axis of self-construction	male	30	4.02	0.47	1.132	0.293
	female	21	3.87	0.37		

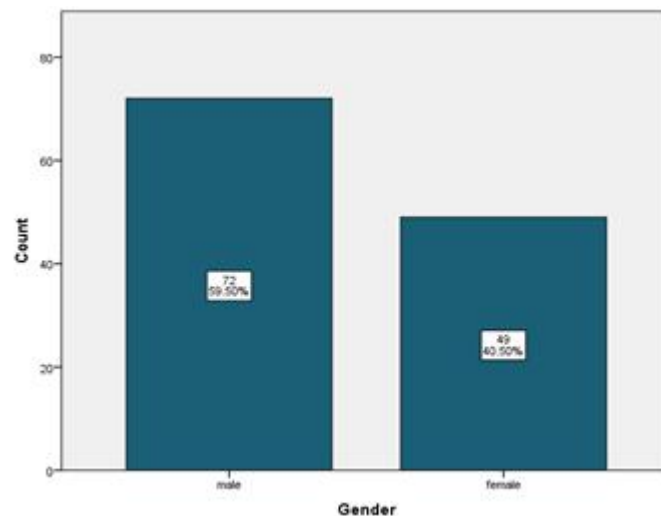


Fig 3 Gender for Omanis and Bahrainis

Age: The results revealed that age was not significant in the influence on the leader’s decision making process (look at so whether the leader is young or mature, there is minimum Table 2). Age distribution is shown in Fig 4.

Table 2 The means and deviation of the study sample (Omanis) according to Age

Age	n		The focus of parents availability when young	The center of educational potential	Affected by friends	Axis of self-construction
Total(Omanis)	70	Mean	3.79	3.37	3.01	4.12
		Std. Deviation	0.51	0.79	0.80	0.44
Total(Bahrainis)	51	Mean	3.78	3.36	2.90	3.96
		Std. Deviation	0.53	0.77	0.52	0.43

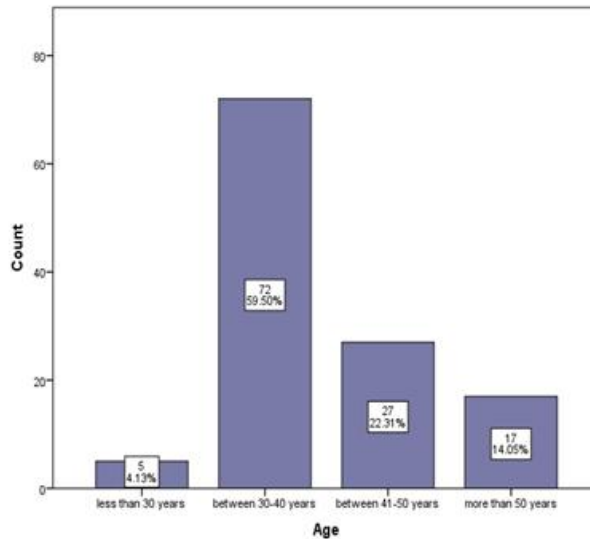


Fig 4 Age Characteristics

Qualification: There are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) in every scopes according to Qualifications for both Omani and Bahraini leaders and there

are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) according to Qualifications in the study scopes (refer to Table 3). The characteristics of the sample is illustrated in Fig 4.

Table 3 The means and deviation of the study sample according to Qualifications

Qualification	n		The focus of parents availability when young	The center of educational potential	Affected by friends	Axis of self-construction
Total (Omanis)	70	Mean	3.79	3.37	3.01	4.12
		Std. Deviation	0.51	0.79	0.80	0.44
Total (Bahrainis)	51	Mean	3.78	3.36	2.90	3.96
		Std. Deviation	0.53	0.77	0.52	0.43

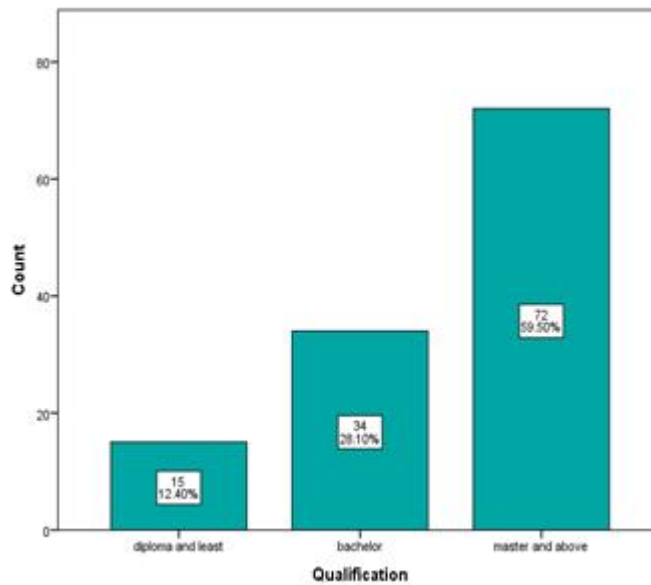


Fig 5 Qualification of Sample

Original home: By original home here is the birth place and upbringing of the leaders, were they living in the city or outside the city in villages (details are in Appendix 1). There are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) according to Original home for Omani leader and there are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) according

to Original home in the study. The differences in the means for city (refer to Table 4). There are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) according to Original home. Characteristics of the sample's original home is illustrated in Fig 6.

Table 4 The means and deviation of the study sample according to Original home

Original home	n		The focus of parents availability when young	The center of educational potential	Affected by friends	Axis of self-construction
Total(Omanis)	70	Mean	3.79	3.37	3.01	4.12
		Std. Deviation	0.51	0.79	0.80	0.44
Total	51	Mean	3.78	3.36	2.90	3.96
		Std. Deviation	0.53	0.77	0.52	0.43

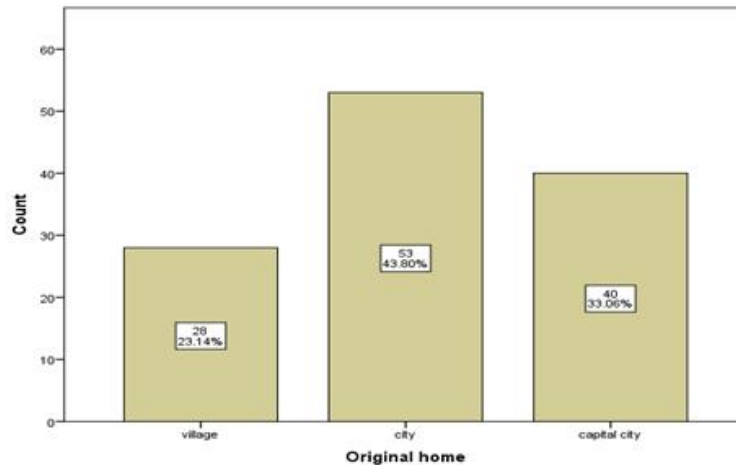


Fig 6 Percentages of Original home for both Oman and Bahrain

Physical condition: There are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) according to The physical condition of the family in the study scopes except The focus of parents availability when young for Omani leader and the differences in the means for stability while there are no

differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) in every scopes according to The physical condition of the family for Bahraini leader (Table 5.1 & 5.2). To view the characteristics of the physical condition of the total samples refer to Fig 7.

Table 5.1 The means and deviation of the study sample according to The physical condition of the family (Oman sample)

The physical condition of the family	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.	
The focus of parents availability when young	stability	48	3.88	0.40	9.218	0.003
	changing	22	3.59	0.65		
The center of educational potential	stability	48	3.41	0.80	0.004	0.951
	changing	22	3.26	0.80		
Affected by friends	stability	48	2.97	0.78	1.334	0.252
	changing	22	3.08	0.85		
Axis of self-construction	stability	48	4.15	0.47	1.241	0.269
	changing	22	4.04	0.38		

The table (5.1) indicates that there are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) according to The physical condition of the family in the study scopes except The focus

of parents availability when young. and the differences in the means for stability.

Table 5.1 The means and deviation of the study sample according to The physical condition of the family (Bahrain sample)

The physical condition of the family		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
The focus of parents availability when young	stability	45	3.83	0.49	1.946	0.169
	changing	6	3.35	0.71		
The center of educational potential	stability	45	3.40	0.80	3.841	0.056
	changing	6	3.04	0.33		
Affected by friends	stability	45	2.91	0.54	0.168	0.684
	changing	6	2.83	0.40		
Axis of self-construction	stability	45	4.00	0.42	0.041	0.84
	changing	6	3.62	0.38		

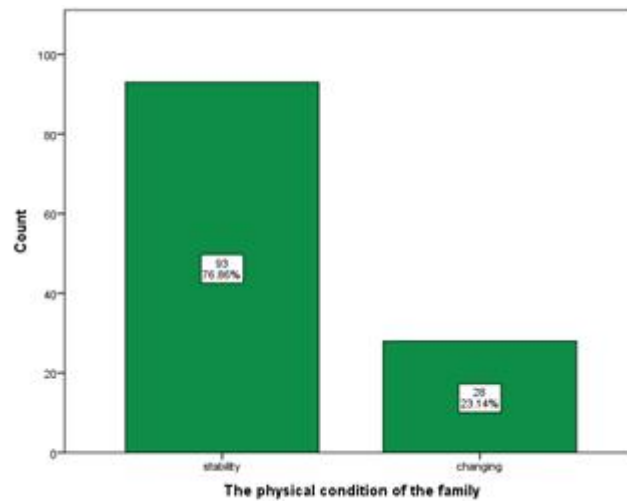


Fig:8

Social status: There are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) in every scopes according to The social status of the family during socialization for both the

Omani and Bahraini leaders as shown in Table 6.1 and 6.2 and illustrated in Fig 9.

Table 6.1 The means and deviation of the study sample according to The social status of the family during socialization (Oman)

The social status of the family during socialization	n		The focus of parents availability when young	The center of educational potential	Affected by friends	Axis of self-construction
without stability with parents	9	Mean	3.78	3.63	3.46	4.12
		Std. Deviation	0.51	0.63	0.92	0.39
with father only	3	Mean	3.31	3.26	2.79	4.04
		Std. Deviation	0.89	0.72	1.02	0.73
with mother only	7	Mean	3.76	3.19	2.97	4.04
		Std. Deviation	0.51	1.13	0.86	0.21
Total	19	Mean	3.70	3.41	3.18	4.08
		Std. Deviation	0.57	0.84	0.91	0.38

Table 6.2 The means and deviation of the study sample according to The social status of the family during socialization (Bahrain)

The social status of the family during socialization		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
The focus of parents availability when young	stability with parents	47	3.77	0.51	1.472	0.231
	without stability with parents	3	3.72	0.92		
The center of educational potential	stability with parents	47	3.42	0.75	0.02	0.889
	without stability with parents	3	2.63	0.90		
Affected by friends	stability with parents	47	2.91	0.53	0.083	0.774
	without stability with parents	3	3.00	0.42		
Axis of self-construction	stability with parents	47	3.96	0.44	1.346	0.252
	without stability with parents	3	3.72	0.22		

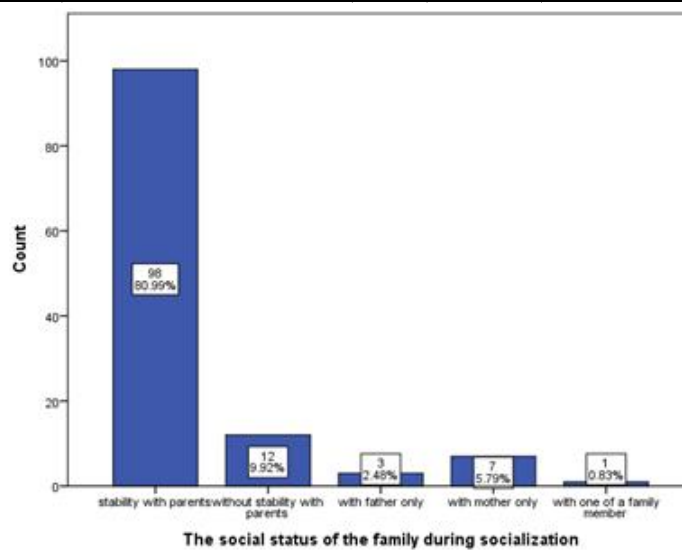


Fig:9 Layout of the social status of the family for total sample

Education level of the parents: There are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) in every scopes according to Educational level of parents for Omani leader and there are no differences in terms of statistics at a level of (0.05) according to Educational level of parents in the

study scopes except The center of educational potential for Bahraini leader between diploma and less and illiterate. The differences in the means are for diploma and less (refer to Table 7.1 and 7.2).

Table 7.1 The means and deviation of the study sample according to Educational level of parents (Oman)

Educational level of parents	n		The focus of parents availability when young	The center of educational potential	Affected by friends	Axis of self-construction
illiterate	27	Mean	3.69	3.31	2.94	4.16
		Std. Deviation	0.60	0.82	0.77	0.50
diploma and least	32	Mean	3.80	3.40	2.95	4.08
		Std. Deviation	0.47	0.82	0.87	0.40
bachelor	9	Mean	4.04	3.44	3.42	4.15
		Std. Deviation	0.32	0.73	0.61	0.49
Total	68	Mean	3.79	3.37	3.01	4.12
		Std. Deviation	0.51	0.80	0.80	0.45

Table 7.1 The means and deviation of the study sample according to Educational level of parents (Oman)

Educational level of parents	n		The focus of parents availability when young	The center of educational potential	Affected by friends	Axis of self-construction
illiterate	22	Mean	3.69	3.01	2.95	3.98
		Std. Deviation	0.54	0.74	0.66	0.46
diploma and least	21	Mean	3.84	3.67	2.77	3.89
		Std. Deviation	0.48	0.59	0.39	0.44
master and above	6	Mean	3.74	3.39	3.08	4.09
		Std. Deviation	0.73	1.05	0.33	0.38
Total	49	Mean	3.76	3.34	2.89	3.96
		Std. Deviation	0.54	0.77	0.53	0.44

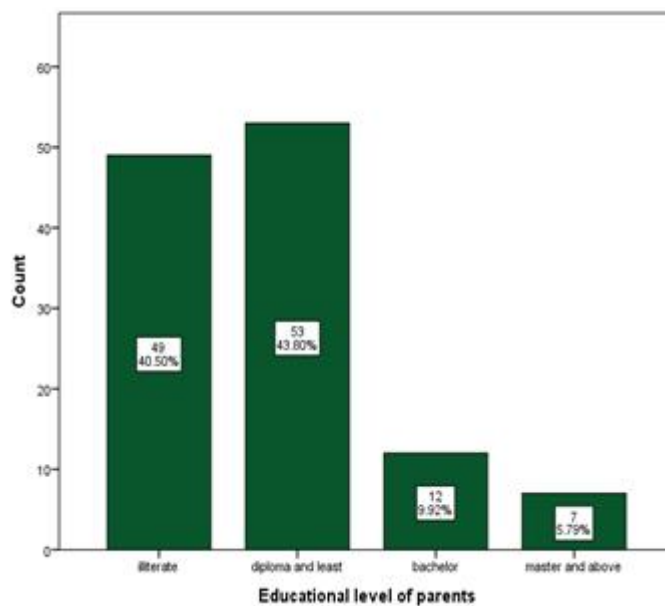


Fig 10

RECOMMENDATIONS & PROPOSALS

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are proposed. Firstly, the study will enable to researchers and practitioners in these areas to research further on the topic and perhaps include a wider sample and extend to other GCC countries. The study will also provide opportunities for support in conducting such studies. Secondly, the study proposes to construct training programmes in leadership and decision making to rehabilitate the young leaders in schools and universities. The main aim would be to develop the skills of the young generation in building those skills through the establishment of centres or units specializing in leadership training and development. Thirdly, exploiting the various media visible and audible in providing media programs by distinguished senior leaders, to talk about their social lives, what they have gone through, and talk about the success stories of other leaders to inspire young people and others to reach their goals. Last but not least, conducting in-depth interviews with key leaders and success stories in Bahrain and Oman.

REFERENCES

1. AlHashemi, S.I (2017). *Management profession and culture in transition: A case of Oman, TÉKHNE - Review of Applied Management Studies* 15, 108-116. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tekhne.2017.11.003>
2. AlHashemi, S.I (2006). *Leadership & Emotional Intelligence, A Study of Bahraini Managers. Thesis (PhD). Napier University, Edinburgh, Scotland.*
3. AlHashemi, Suhaila E. (June, 2013). *Challenges Facing Omani Managers in the Public Sector, The Role of Change and Culture, International Forum of Researchers, Students and Academician, International Business Review (IBR), vol 3, issue 2, pp190-197.*
4. Azemi Azemi Ferid, (2017). *The Role of Leadership in Community Partnership, Organizational Changes and Decision-Making Process in Addressing Crime Issues, and Terrorism, Eurasian Journal of Social Sciences, 5(3), 19-23, DOI: 10.15604/ejss.2017.05.03.003.*
5. Campbell, D. and Campbell, K. (2011). *Impact of Decision-Making Empowerment on Attributions of Leadership, Military Psychology, 23 pp. 154-179.*

6. Canfield, Jack. (2015). *The Success Principles, How to get from where you are to where you want to be. USA.* Harper Collins Publishers.
7. Carlyle, Thomas. (2015). *On Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History.* Createspace Independent Publisher.
8. Danylova, Tetiana & Salata, Halyna (2017). *Worldview Aspects of Leadership Phenomenon: Problem Statement, Traektoriâ Nauki, Vol 3, Iss 11, Pp 3001-3005.*
9. Palmira Faraci, Michael Lock, Robert Wheeler (2013) *Assessing leadership decision-making styles: psychometric properties of the Leadership Judgement Indicator , Dove Medical Press Limited.*

Appendix 1 Details of Original home for Omanis and Bahrainis

Analyze of Variance (ANOVA) for Original home (Oman)

Original home		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
The focus of parents availability when young	Between Groups	0.79	2	0.395	1.573	0.215
	Within Groups	16.83	67	0.251		
	Total	17.62	69			
The center of educational potential	Between Groups	0.686	2	0.343	0.536	0.588
	Within Groups	42.898	67	0.64		
	Total	43.584	69			
Affected by friends	Between Groups	3.113	2	1.556	2.546	0.086
	Within Groups	40.959	67	0.611		
	Total	44.071	69			
Axis of self-construction	Between Groups	0.04	2	0.02	0.1	0.905
	Within Groups	13.487	67	0.201		
	Total	13.527	69			

Analyze of Variance (ANOVA) for Original home

Original home		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
The focus of parents availability when young	Between Groups	1.872	2	0.936	3.658	0.033
	Within Groups	12.284	48	0.256		
	Total	14.157	50			
The center of educational potential	Between Groups	2.466	2	1.233	2.181	0.124
	Within Groups	27.136	48	0.565		
	Total	29.601	50			
Affected by friends	Between Groups	0.102	2	0.051	0.182	0.834
	Within Groups	13.482	48	0.281		
	Total	13.584	50			
Axis of self-construction	Between Groups	0.183	2	0.092	0.482	0.621
	Within Groups	9.137	48	0.19		
	Total	9.32	50			