

Leadership and Culture: Exploratory Study on the Perception of Leadership Among Montenegrin and Turkish Hospitality Employees

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Leadership and Culture:
Exploratory Study on the Perception of
Leadership Among Montenegrin and
Turkish Hospitality Employees

CAST-HSPT- 490: Senior Capstone Project

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Abstract:

This paper focused on employee preferences in the Turkish and Montenegrin cultures, by analyzing the connection of leadership philosophies and norms of culture. For the purpose of obtaining insight into the relationship of leadership and organizational culture to practices of leadership, as well as how they have an effect on employee workplace stress minimization and enhancement of work efficiency, the impact of leadership styles and culture on employee preferences was explored. The idea of culture is thoroughly examined, with an emphasis on organizational culture, which is referred to as a group of beliefs, norms, and procedures that direct and influence all team members' behavior. The study additionally examined the various leadership philosophies, such as transactional and transformational leadership, and how they relate.

Key Words: Leadership, Culture, Leadership Style, Montenegro, Turkey.

Introduction

Leaders take on many roles in organizational culture, especially today in the new era of globalization. Leaders are the ones who aim to meet the objectives of the organization, and organizational culture, in order to provide coordination in the process of achieving success for employees and the organization. Furthermore, organizations are the ones who operate the environment. According to Çekmecelioglu (2018), this environment fits in: “structure of culture, which includes specific characteristics, value judgments, and certain behavioral patterns, play a decisive role”.

It could be stated that culture is indeed a factor that influences the enterprise's operations and is a significant issue in the context of leadership (Erdogan, 1991). In this study, in the context of employees' preferences in the Turkish and Montenegrin cultures. The research will provide a result on the impact of leadership styles and culture on employees' preferences. So, leadership and organizational culture might make substantial advice contributions to leadership practices, with a gradual decrease in job stress as well as an enhancement in work performance among employees.

Culture

Culture at first glance doesn't seem too exciting and seems so broad that its meaning seems diluted. It was true even in 1952, Kroeber and Kluckhohn identified 164 definitions of cultures (as stated in Heyes,2020). From this, how one could even prematurely conclude that it is not a particularly important concept. However, if it is explored more deeply, it provides valuable insights, leading to the realization that culture is something crucial for humanity and that we are neglecting it to our detriment.

So, what is “culture” as a term when we have numerous definitions and theories? While a variety of definitions have been suggested, this research paper will use the definition first suggested by Schein & Schein (2017) who defined it as follows: “The concept of culture implies structural stability, depth, breadth, and patterning or integration that results from the fact that culture is for the group a learned phenomenon just as personality and character are for individuals learned phenomena.” So, the question has been raised, where and how leadership relates to a culture of society and organizational culture in today's modern business world?

Organizational Culture

Organization as a single term is very broad, but when we connect it with "culture" the term that has over 164 definitions as stated in Heyes (2020). How well, can it be defined as "Organizational culture"? Wong (2020) in her latest article said that organizational culture is "the collection of values, expectations, and practices that guide and inform the actions of all team members... a collection of traits that make your company what it is".

A tremendous corporate culture demonstrates positive characteristics that lead to improved performance, whereas a broken culture of the company introduces traits that can stymie even the greatest successful organizations (Wong, 2020). In an organizational culture that business provides services, customer satisfactions are essential for success for service businesses.

Culture might even be an even more prominent aspect considering that it has been correlated to work-related attitudes (Birnbaum & Somers, 2016) and can influence both group and individual behavior (Trefry, 2006). Leaders inside the hospitality industry and organization lacks direct influence on customer perceptions of excellence or employee performance (Ueno, 2010). Consequently, establishing a compelling service-oriented cultural environment may be among one of the few organizational influence strategies open to corporate leaders.

Leadership

The term leadership is all about a vision, values, and creating the organizational culture within companies. Now, when it comes to cultural development, learning takes place through the leadership of a founder or entrepreneur. In this research for example, we will use two of the greatest rulers of this century, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, and Josip Broz Tito, to better understand the cultural background of leadership within these two countries.

Both used their authority to demand some new behavior in their followers to aim for goals. Based on it, if the group encounters a problem, it will be the leadership's responsibility to come up with a fresh solution, both in the culture and hospitality industry. Past studies showed that leadership can be divided based on cultural beliefs, or in other words, the characteristics of the leader.

According to Politis (2001), Picture 1. provides an overview of established leadership styles. The creator of these leadership styles theories was James MacGregor Burns (Wikipedia.com). Burns was the one who claimed that leadership occurs in one of two ways: transactionally or transformative. Transactional leadership is built on the organization's bureaucratic power and legitimacy.

Additionally, he contends that transactional leaders heavily rely on corporate rewards and punishments to affect worker efficiency since they are focused on task completion and compliance among employees. On the contrary side, he described transformational leadership as an approach for influencing others by referencing loftier ideas and ethical principles.

Transformational leaders must be able to build and explain a vision for their followers, they must believe in the leader's credibility characteristics (Tracey & Hinkin, 1998) stated by Tucker and Russell (2004). As stated by Kužnin and Walker in (2017) original ideas proposed by Burns and Bass “concluded that transactional and transformational leadership styles are inter-connected and that they are prerequisites for each other”. Figure 1. shows the characteristics of transformational and transactional leadership (Odumeru, 2013).

Transformational Leadership	Transactional Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready to discuss with employees about plans before execution. • Employees complete goal through superior principles and ethics. • Motivates employees by give priority to group interests first. • Works to transform the organizational traditions by implementing new thoughts. • Individualized reflection: Each behavior is intended for each person to convey kindness and support. • Intellectual stimulation: support new and creative ideas to solve problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't feel easy to discuss with employees about plans. • Leader set rewards and punishments for employees to accomplish the goal. • Motivates employees by tempting their self-interest. • Works surrounded by the organizational traditions. • Management-by-exception: continue the status quo. • Pressure corrects actions to recover performance.

Figure 1. *Transformational vs. Transactional Leadership (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013).*

Leadership history in Turkey

Leadership in Turkey dates to the time of the Ottoman Empire and the rule of the sultans. However, one of the most influential leaders of today's Turkey as already mentioned was Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1939), for the Turkish people he was one of the first "role models" or as we say nowadays "leader".

Based on historical reports Kemal Ataturk was the founder of modern Turkey, on October 29, 1923, Turkey became a republic headed by Atatürk as the first president. Back then, "Ataturk epitomizes the model of charismatic leadership, which stretches to all aspects of his public and private life and presents a strong archetype of leadership in Turkey" (Ozbilgin, 2011).

Looking into Figure 1, (Odemeru & Ogbonna, 2013) Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was a transformational leader. With that Ataturk offered charm, kindness, paternalism, statesmanship, intellectualism, strategic thinking, and steadfast commitment to democratic, secular, and modernist cultural values.

Even though little is known about Atatürk and his life work, Atatürk was always seen from the side of military force and based on his management of the army (Elkins, 2015) Picture 2. stated that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk emerged today's Turkish model of leadership style.

Leadership history in Montenegro

Unlike Turkey, Montenegro (Black Mountain) has been under many different governments throughout history, from Austro-Hungarian to the Ottoman Empire. But the most significant period for Montenegro happened when today became part of Yugoslavia.

Roucek (2006) in his research claims that Yugoslavia was formed in 1918. But today, what is meant by the term former Yugoslavia, "is the territory that was up to 25 June 1991 known as The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)." (ICTY.ORG, n.d.). Even though the SFRY was founded then, and consisted of six countries (Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina),

The influence of Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980), when he became president and ruler of SFRY in 1945, influenced leadership as a term in all these countries. During Tito's reign, it is considered that he was the first communist leader in power (Banac, 2022). According to (Wikipedia.com) some historians criticize Tito as a president of authoritarianism, while others saw him as a benevolent dictator.

Based on these facts if we look deeper into Tito's characteristics in Figure 1. "we" can easily conclude that Josip Broz Tito was both a transformational and transactional leader, but a mostly benevolent dictator.

Elkins (2015) Picture 3. claims that a man in power can get away with a lot, and this was the case with Josip Broz Tito, not only he gets away with a lot but, he is also considered guilty of the death of Josef Stalin in 1953. Even if today's leadership style model has been researched only in Serbia, it can easily be relevant for Montenegro, and the background of Josip Broz Tito's rule as a potential creator of this model in communism.

Turkish Culture

Turkey is a country where numerous civilizations have fought throughout history, and today it is a modern autonomous country where East and West meet. This magnificent country exudes the magical notes of the world where you are surrounded by the scents of spices, colorful food, the beauty of nature, unique buildings, and even cultural heritage.

Turkish cultural values are built through religion and Atatürk's reforms. According to Lewis (2018) in his 4th edition, he defined twelve Turkish values. For staying on the right track, this study will only mention those that are relevant to leadership and culture in hospitality, such as:

- Belief in one's own honesty, reliability
- National pride
- Hospitality, gallantry
- Warmth, likeability
- Preservation of heritage
- Small dominances
- Adherence to Kemal Atatürk's reforms

Regarding hospitality culture in Turkey, there are several claims that while visiting and staying in Turkey you will never be only a tourist rather "you are basically a guest for them which means you deserve great hospitality". (Dulger, 2015)

Thanks to its rich culture and geographical location, Turkey is home to many different cultures, religions, and nationalities. Turkish customs of culture rest on the strong preservation of tradition and religion, to which the younger generations are introduced at an early age, thus it is a reason for strengthening the cultural and national identity of the entire nation.

Some of their customs of culture are religion, huge respect for the elderly, traditions of drinking tea, and Turkish brandy, as great importance in business. When it comes to communication and gesture, Turkish tradition and culture sometimes imply frequent communications through gesticulation, which most often includes dramatic hand waving, clucking, and quoting holy words.

Since most of the inhabitants of Turkey are of the Islamic faith and pray on the floor, it is very important to maintain spatial cleanliness, both in homes and in hotels. One of the most important things in Turkish culture is "definitely customary for visitors to take their shoes off and leave them at the entrance before entering a house" (Dulger, 2015).

Montenegrin Culture

As a result of its unique geographic location at the meeting point of East and West, Montenegro has a varied range of cultural traditions. This nation has a rich cultural legacy because of being a hub where many civilizations have interacted throughout history. Today's traces of Mediterranean, Central European, Eastern European, and Oriental influences may be found in Montenegro, claims portomontenegro.com (n.d).

History combined with the distinctive Montenegrin contribution results in a culture that is interesting, endearing, and exceptional. The people of Montenegro are quite passionate while discussing their culture and are highly proud of it. This is so because our ethnic and national identities are rooted in our culture.

Tradition, art, music, language, and food are the main elements of Montenegrin culture and represent a good basis for anyone who wants to get to know Montenegro as we know it today. As Lewis (2018) points out some of the values same as he did for Turkish culture in the 4th edition of the book – “Were culture collide”. He points out major Montenegrin values, such as:

- Charm
- Generosity
- Stubbornness
- Hospitality
- Impulsiveness
- Unpredictability
- Loquacity

Montenegrin heritage and customs are significant in many ways, not least because habits are handed down from generation to generation. This type of custom best depicts our country's heritage and makes it appealing to people across the entire world.

Regarding Montenegrin hospitality culture, visitors coming to this country have always been treated with dignity and respect. The legendary Montenegrin hospitality can be felt no matter where you go. For example, whenever you have a friend or visitor at your house for any reason, you must always provide sweets and brandy. This is a long-standing tradition that is still highly regarded today.

Introduction Summary

This research paper examines the impact of leadership styles and culture on employees' preferences in the Turkish and Montenegrin cultures. It suggests that leadership and organizational culture can make substantial contributions to leadership practices, with a gradual decrease in job stress and an enhancement in work performance among employees. It also looks deeper into how leadership relates to a culture of society and organizational culture in today's modern business world. Organizational culture is the collection of values, expectations, and practices that guide and inform the actions of all team members. It is essential for success for service businesses, and can influence both group and individual behavior.

This research paper will examine the impact of leadership styles and culture on employees' preferences in the Turkish and Montenegrin cultures. It will use the definition first suggested by Schein & Schein (2017) which states that “culture implies structural stability, depth, breadth, and patterning or integration that results from the fact that culture is for the group a learned phenomenon just as personality and character are for individuals”. The question is how leadership relates to a culture of society and organizational culture in today's modern business world.

Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of this research paper was to compare and realize how culture influences perception and preferences between two countries, Turkey, and Montenegro. The approach that was implemented consisted of gathering data and information from Turkish and Montenegrin people, with the end goal to find out how much culture influences their preferences in leadership.

Participants

The ideal number of participants hoping to reply was eighty, forty of Montenegrin citizens and forty Turkish citizens. The total number of people participating in this survey was (N=40). Demographically 43.9% are from Turkey and 56.1% from Montenegro. In total, there were 53.7% of Male participants and 46.3% of Female participants. Pilot study was done on family, friends, and mentor, in order to check whether question are understandable and well structured. One-half of the target participants, were Montenegrin students from hospitality at RIT University, while the other half were hospitality students from Turkey at ABU University. Of which the total number of Montenegrin participants was N=22, male n=9 and female n=13, while the total number of Turkish participants was N=18, male n=13, female n=5.

Primarily, the age group was split into five categories: 18-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, and 40 or more. Out of five categories, the first dominant age category was from students 18 to 24 years for both Montenegro and Turkey. In this category from Turkey, we had (N=11) participants, male n=7 and female n=4. From Montenegro, (N=15) male number was much lower n=4, while

female participants were almost double $n=11$. In the second dominant category from 25 to 29. Turkey's total number was ($N=3$), male $n=2$ and female $n=1$. On the other side in Montenegro, the total number of participants was ($N=4$), male $n=2$ and female $n=2$.

In the other three categories, the number of participants was zero or one, it varied from one female to zero males or the other way around. To provide consistency and trustworthiness in this survey, the participants were selected from two universities I was part of. Participants were approached by official mail from both Universities, which was assured to provide them with an anonymous online survey. While other participants were testing pilots coming from networking pages like LinkedIn and Facebook - those were relatives or friends from both countries. The online survey was provided from March 20 until April 1st.

Instrument (Survey)

For the instrument, this research paper was using the survey in English. The survey "Dimensions of Culture" was provided by GLOBE studies with additional demographic questions, to specific ages, gender, and county of participants. The survey consisted of nine categories. Uncertainty avoidance is the first category that explains how well a society's tolerance for erratic and unplanned events influences social standards, organizational practices, and personal actions.

Following there is power distance - which describes the power of the social structure in culture. 3. institutional collectivism - in-group collectivism represents the extent to which group loyalty, pride, and cohesion are shown, and it defines the extent to which the allocation of resources among some of the group is accepted. 4. in-Group collectivism - defines the degree to which individuals stay loyal, prideful, and togetherness inside their families or organizations.

Fifth is gender egalitarianism - which represents how much a group does to reduce gender inequity. 6. assertiveness - represents a constructive way to interact. It is the capacity to stand up for us honestly and respectfully. 7. future orientation - examines how much a person considers the future, foresees possible outcomes, and makes plans before acting. 8. performance orientation - is defined by the conviction that success comes from having greater talent and rising above one's peers.

The last category in this survey was a humane orientation which shows the extent to which a group or culture supports and honors those who treat others with fairness, generosity, friendliness, and kindness. In each of these categories, there is a set of two questions with a 7-dimensional space scale. Data collected were calculated by the mean and standard deviation served as validation of the replies' trustworthiness.

Results

Uncertainty Avoidance

This is the first category that opens the survey with two questions related to society and social standards in culture. Results showed that on a scale from 1 to 7, one stood for strongly disagree and seven for strongly disagree. On the first question, 47.5% of participants put 5 on the scale, which means that they can agree and relate to it but not that much.

Figure 2. shows that results that were speared into two categories show that Montenegrin citizens (M=5, STD=1.35) and Turkish citizens (M=4, STD=1.17) have a very close opinion regarding orderliness and consistency.

While, on the second question Figure 3. the highest score was in the middle, where even 27.5% of participants claim that they do not know how sure they are that the city standards are spelled out so well. Montenegrin citizens (M=4, STD=1.72) and Turkish citizens (M=5, STD=1.13). This shows us that in the second question, answers are slightly twisted and that in Turkey societal requirements are better spelled out than in Montenegro.

1. In my society, orderliness and consistency are stressed, even at the expense of experimentation and innovation.
40 responses

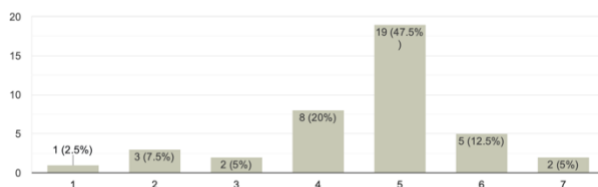


Figure 2. Q&A number one

2. In my society, societal requirements and instructions are spelled out in detail so citizens know what they are expected to do.
40 responses



Figure 3. Q&A number two

Power Distance

This category and the set of questions are related to the strengths of social cultural hierarchy. For the first question 1 stands for weather citizens of Montenegro or Turkey, question their leaders when they disagree with him/her, and point seven stands for weather they obey him/her or not. As many as 27.5% of participants circled the point four on scale, which is the middle ground. What is interesting is that the second higher answer that was used by 22.5% participants was set at point five on scale (Figure 4.) – which means that they obey their leaders but not totally. In this section, Montenegrin citizens ($M=4$, $STD=1.88$) and Turkish citizens ($M=5$, $STD=1.68$).

In the second questions STD form Montenegrin people was 2.25 which showed that Montenegrin people either did not understand the question well or that they have a different opinion regarding this question and because of this the data of the analysis cannot be relevant and analyzed properly.

Last two categories on this survey were performance orientation and human orientation that led to what both cultures think towards society, individuals, friendliness, and whether they believe that success is the result of superior ability.

1. In my society, students are encouraged to strive for continuously improved performance.

40 responses

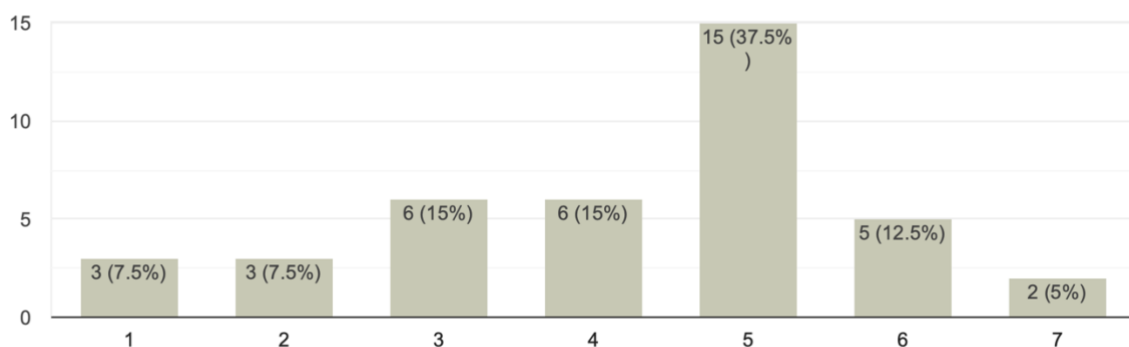


Figure 4. *Q&A three*

Figure 4. Shows how both Montenegrin and Turkish participants think about how well they as students are encouraged to strive for improvements. Even if opinions are divided, we can see that even 37.5% of participants believe that they are encouraged, but not encouraged just enough for the tasks to be done. In this section, Montenegrin citizens ($M=4$, $STD=1.67$) and Turkish citizens ($M=4$, $STD=1.45$). This leads to the conclusion that in both cultures, the situation is the same.

Regarding another question, the question was whether people are rewarded for their excellent performance or not. Once again, Montenegrin and Turkish participants had a mutual agreement regarding answers, as the mean was 4 and the standard deviation equals 1.4. The conclusion is next, 35% of participants agree that they are rewarded for their performance, on the other hand, 22.5% disagree with this statement, while 20% of them were uncertain whether people in their society are rewarded.

Discussion

The purpose of this research paper was to explore the impact of leadership styles and cultural background on employee preferences in the Turkish and Montenegrin cultures. Especially in the present age of globalization, leadership is essential to corporate success. Based on results gathered from survey analysis, it is shown that organizational functions in a certain cultural environment have an impact on how leaders run and how they lead.

Although culture is a vast topic with many meanings and theories, it is an essential component of humanity that must be examined more thoroughly. This research emphasized organizational culture and culture as an examined connection between leadership and culture. By examining the leadership styles of Turkish and Montenegrin organizations, the paper identifies commonalities and differences in leadership practices that can explain employee preferences.

Commonalities that occurred are that men are settled on higher position, that in society girls are not encouraged to attain higher education, and that genially people are not rewarded for their excellent performance in workplace. On the other hand, differences that occurred were regarding; assertiveness in society, economy system and weather they obey leaders or not – Turkish participants clearly stated that they obey their leaders, while Montenegrin participants said that they prefer to question their leaders when the disagreement occurs.

Overall, the paper seeks to contribute to the ongoing discussion of how culture and leadership practices intersect in the modern business world. It is hoped that this paper will provide valuable insights for business leaders and researchers alike, helping to improve organizational culture and enhance employee performance and well-being.

According to a different study, participatory leadership was more common in Montenegrin organizations than authoritarian leadership in Turkish organizations (Erdogan, 1991). This study proved that organizational success depends on both leadership and culture, and they are interdependent. Organizational operations and leadership techniques are influenced by culture, and leadership practices contribute to creating organizational culture.

Depending on the cultural environment, various leadership philosophies, such as transactional and transformational, greatly impact employee preferences (Odemeru & Ogbonna, 2013). This research discovered that Montenegrin citizens prefer transactional leadership, while Turkish citizens prefer transformational leadership, as shown in the leadership style model. (Picture 1 and 2.)

Success in the current globalized era depends on understanding the link between leadership and culture. In other words, each category might help us to better understand the cultural background, and how future employees coming from different cultural backgrounds react to different leadership styles. In addition, the study also looked at different segments of culture.

Finally, the findings demonstrated that culture has an impact on employees' preferences for organizational structure and leader selection. Our behaviors and decisions are influenced by the beliefs, values, and views that culture shapes in us. Our cultural upbringing has an impact on our perceptions of and attitudes toward situations and other people. For instance, the emphasis placed on individuality or collectivism in our culture may affect how we prioritize our own aims over those of the collective, and vice versa.

Similar to how risk-taking, obedience, or independence are viewed culturally, these attitudes might influence how we make decisions. Additionally, culture gives us a framework for understanding the environment we live in. It helps us grasp what is acceptable and unacceptable, desirable and unpleasant, and right and wrong. Culture has an impact on how we interpret information and form opinions.

For instance, cultural variations in communication methods, thought processes, and emotional displays might cause misunderstandings and disagreements while making decisions. Therefore, it's critical to be conscious of our cultural prejudices and presumptions while making decisions, especially in circumstances that involve other cultures. In conclusion, culture significantly influences our choices and actions, so it is essential to appreciate cultural variety and be aware of it in order to make thoughtful, inclusive choices.

However, there may be some situations in which culture has no direct impact on our choices. For instance, our decision-making process can also be influenced by our own experiences, education, and personality features. In addition, there are circumstances in which cultural norms and values may not be pertinent or appropriate, such as in the scientific or technical sectors. In these circumstances, cultural preferences are less important than objective standards and empirical data.

Even in these situations, nevertheless, cultural variables can still have an indirect impact on our decision-making by affecting our attitudes and views of the decision-making process. Thus, even while culture may not be the only factor influencing our choices, it is an essential one that cannot be disregarded.

In conclusion, the overall results are quite positive. Additionally, this research showed that models of leadership styles shown in Picture 1. & Picture 2. are fully reliable and correct even now. Taking all of that into consideration, I would say that history also played a crucial part in this research. Given the fact that once in the past Montenegro was part of the Ottoman Empire, we can say that some of the cultural roots and traditions are still shared between Turkey and Montenegro.

Limitations

Regarding the findings of this research, there are at least two potential drawbacks. The first drawback is to a limited sample size, which may not be sufficient to produce the most accurate results. People who take part in this poll could be another possible limitation. We are unsure of the reliability of survey respondents' responses because the main demographic of participation was students.

For upcoming academics who wish to delve more into the subject of leadership and culture as a quick way to understand employee preferences in a firm. I advise concentrating on identifying the most advantageous and covert method of data collection, such as focus group or observation. Additionally, it is important to consider both the history and broader context of these two nations. For example, the countries of the Western Balkans or the countries of the Middle East.

Appendix

Established Dimensions of Leadership Style

Transformational Leadership Behaviour (Bass, 1985)

- Attributed Charisma
- Individual Consideration
- Intellectual Stimulation

Transactional Leadership Behaviour (Bass, 1985)

- Contingent Reward
- Management-by-Exception

Figure 2.



Picture 1



Picture 2.

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